

*Natick Public Schools
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
April 4, 2022*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, April 4, 2022 at 6:00pm via an in-person and virtual meeting. Dr. Anna Nolin called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:04pm.

Members Present: Julie McDonough, Elise Gorseth, Dr. Donna McKenzie, Catherine Brunell, Cathi Collins, Hayley Sonneborn, Dr. Shai Fuxman (stated he was participating remotely)

Others Present: Dr. Anna Nolin Superintendent
Mr. Tim Luff Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Peter Gray Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Sue Balboni Director of Teaching, Learning & Innovation
Ms. Rose McDermott Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary
Mr. Jefferson Wood Teacher Representative (remotely)

Reorganization of the School Committee

Dr. Nolin welcomed Ms. Gorseth to the School Committee and reviewed the reorganization process. Dr. Nolin extended her hand to the Committee and asked that we make a new dynamic School Committee full of trust, collaboration and teamwork. Dr. Nolin hopes the past has been erased and a collaborative future is in store. Dr. Nolin asked for a nomination for the office of Chairperson from the floor. Ms. McDonough nominated Cathi Collins for the role of Chair. Ms. Brunell seconded. Dr. Nolin asked for a roll call vote.

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn - Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Abstain

Ms. Collins – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-1.

Dr. Nolin turned the meeting over to Chair Collins. Ms. Collins asked for a nomination for the office of Vice Chairperson. Chair Collins nominated Hayley Sonneborn. Ms. McDonough seconded. Chair Collins asked for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn - Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Abstain

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Chair Collins - Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-1.

Chair Collins asked for a nomination for the office of Clerk. Ms. McDonough nominated Donna McKenzie. Chair Collins seconded. Chair Collins asked for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes
Ms. Sonneborn - Yes
Dr. McKenzie – Yes
Ms. McDonough – Yes
Chair Collins - Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

Chair Collins appointed Rose McDermott as the Recording Secretary. Ms. McDonough seconded. No vote was necessary. Chair Collins reaffirmed that Murphy, Hesse, Toomey and Lehane, LLP will be retained as our counsel for another year. Subcommittee and liaison assignments will be reviewed at the next regular meeting to afford members the opportunity to review their availability. Dr. Nolin thanked outgoing member Henry Haugland for his many years of service. He has done a lot for the Committee and for her, personally. Dr. Nolin thanked Julie McDonough for the last three years, with two of them being the most challenging due to the pandemic.

At approximately 6:15pm, Chair Collins moved for approval for the School Committee to enter into Executive Session for this purpose:

1. To Conduct Contract Negotiations with Nonunion Personnel; (Superintendent)
2. To comply with or act under the authority of any general or special law, specifically Chapter 30A, Section 21(g)(1) The public body, or its chair or designee, shall, at reasonable intervals, review the minutes of executive sessions to determine if the provisions of this subsection warrant continued non-disclosure.

Dr. McKenzie seconded. Chair Collins called for a roll call vote. All in favor of entering into Executive Session for this purpose:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes
Ms. Gorseth – Yes
Ms. Brunell – Yes
Ms. Sonneborn - Yes
Dr. McKenzie – Yes
Ms. McDonough – Yes
Chair Collins - Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

Chair Collins stated that the School Committee will be returning to open session at approximately 6:45pm. The School Committee proceeded to a private room to conduct this session.

At approximately 6:46pm, the School Committee returned to open session.

Announcements

Dr. Nolin introduced Craig Chisholm, Director of Music announced the honors of the Show Choir and their Director, Kate Burns and the Jazz Band (Craig Chisholm, Director) have obtained since our last meeting. On Saturday, March 26th, the Natick High School Jazz Ensemble performed at the MAJE State Finals in Norwood. For the second time in two festival appearances, they received the Gold medal rating, with Outstanding musicianship awards going to Michael Scorpa on Alto Sax and Samuel Kim on Piano. These two students were also recognized for outstanding musicianship at the University New Hampshire Jazz Festival on March 12th. As a result of this Gold medal performance, the Natick High School Jazz Ensemble will be performing at the Hatch Shell on the Boston Esplanade on May 15th. This is a free concert, and the best high school jazz bands in Massachusetts will perform on that day. Additionally, all of the jazz groups from Natick will be performing at the first annual Natick Jazz Festival on the night of May 6th at Natick AMvets, presented by the Natick Parents' Music Association. More information is available from Craig Chisholm, Director of Music for the Town of Natick. or from the Natick Parents' Music

association Facebook page. Congratulations to the Kate Burns, Director and the Natick High School West Street Singers on the completion of their first year as a competitive show choir. West Street Singers is a group of 24 singer-dancers who travel and compete with their friends in West Street Sound, our show band. At the New England Show Choir Showdown in Andover, MA, Singers swept their division; winning best vocals, best choreography, best show design, and earning the Grand Champion title. West Street Sound was the top-scoring band in the division as well. The group closed out their season at the Eastern Show Choir Festival in Waltham on Saturday, where they also won best vocals, best choreography, best show design, and Grand Champion. Throughout the season, West Street Singers and Sound were praised by judges and host schools for their poise, professionalism, and friendliness. The students have embraced the show choir community and make friends everywhere they go. Their shared passion for music and performance unites them. Dr. Nolin informed the community that the Annual Performance Report of the School System has been mailed to all homes and is posted on our website. Dr. Nolin reminded the community for parents, caregivers, educators, community members and older high school students. Loved to Death: Effective Relationships and the Prevention of Dating and Break-Up Violence on Tuesday, April 5 at 6:30pm at Natick High School. Please visit www.sparkkindness.com for more information. Dr. Nolin is very proud of the Policy Subcommittee who are hosting a listening session on homework, holidays and cultural/religious calendars on April 5, 7-9pm. Link: Join Zoom Meeting <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85869025524?pwd=aWN2elA3SC85dlRNZ0Z2cVgwd3h5QT09> Meeting ID: 858 6902 5524 Passcode: 671190

Public Speak

Chair Collins asked if there was anyone present who wanted to participate in public speak. Ms. Corey Spaulding, spoke about being the accidental whistleblower who has exposed ongoing fraud in Natick. She reviewed her version of events. She believes there is corruption and facts are being misrepresented to the public.

Review of Academic Achievement Data (MCAS/Renaissance)

Dr. Nolin reviewed the School Committee's purview in teaching and learning. Ms. Balboni gave a review of the data. Large data analysis desks had been shared previously with the community and School Committee. Ms. Balboni reviewed the Strategic Plan alignment:

- Addresses goals 1 and 2 of the strategic plan relative to student achievement, subgroup performance tracking and removing barriers to equitable access to learning.
- Addresses systematized language, process, forms and access to resources in the RTI process.
- Addresses student learning goals for Superintendent, Asst. Super, Director of TLI, Principals and all K-12 staff relative to student growth goals.
- Addresses goal 5 for parent engagement and responding to the listening sessions particularly around dyslexia identification in the RTI process and consistent communication. Data use and consistent process. She reviewed the multiple pieces of data to track student progress.

Ms. Balboni compared midterm exams given in common subjects between 2019 and 2021. She reviewed the Renaissance Learning Star Assessment. This is the benchmark assessment given to every student in reading and math. We took away a lot of information from the dyslexia listening sessions. Mr. Tim Luff, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, will be presenting on June 6th on the broad scope surrounding the science of reading and flagging dyslexia. Ms. Balboni reviewed all of the data types used. We are looking for growth of 40%-60% across all groups. She discussed the Response to Intervention process, how students are identified and that this serves to help place students in the various supports groups that will allow them to grow toward the skills. Ms. Balboni completed her presentation with an overview of what the data told us and what our next steps are.

At approximately 8:02pm, Ms. Sonneborn left the meeting.

Special Education Update

Tim Luff, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services provided an update. He reviewed the need for an additional paraprofessional to address IEP needs. This is a temporary position and will end at the end of the school year. The funds will come out of circuit breaker for this position.

Enrollment Update and 2022-23 Enrollment Projections/Johnson Transition

Dr. Nolin gave an update. There's not much of a change from the March enrollment data. Dr. Nolin reviewed the current numbers. She cautioned everyone that it's very early to be making judgements about enrollment and provided the procedure that our enrollment office uses in order to create these projections. They capture all the data. Impacting school enrollment this year is the reassignment of the incoming Johnson students to other schools. We have met with all of the families in incoming kindergarten, and most of the current kindergarten and first grade families. These numbers were predicted through our birth rates and has been a trend that we have experienced in the past. Dr. Nolin informed the community that we typically get our initial information from the Town Census. However, the Town Clerk has deemed that most residents fill out the census for voting purposes and don't usually list children's information.

Review of Vacancies for Subcommittee Assignments

Chair Collins asked for volunteers for the paraprofessional and administrative assistants negotiating teams. Chair Collins reviewed the days of the week that those unions would like to meet. She asked for volunteers and Ms. Brunell expressed interest in being on the paraprofessional negotiating team. Dr. Fuxman also volunteered for the administrative assistant's team. Chair Collins reminded everyone that we are in the final year of our strategic plan. We will be developing a strategy of how we are going to do that and what type of subcommittee will be created, if necessary.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of School Committee Minutes of February 28, 2022 and Executive Session Minutes of February 28, 2022
2. Approval of Out of State Travel - May 2022 - Destination Imagination's Global Finals

Ms. McDonough moved approval. Ms. Brunell seconded. Chair Collins asked for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Chair Collins - Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-0.

Action Items

1. Vote to Amend the Superintendent's Contract

Chair Collins informed the community that this was discussed and voted in Executive Session and needs to be voted in open session as well. Ms. McDonough moved to approve the amendment to the Superintendent's contract for the FY22 school year with the date changed to April 4, 2022. Dr. McKenzie seconded. Chair Collins asked for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Brunell – No

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Chair Collins - Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 5-1-0.

Ms. Brunell's vote is not indicating that she doesn't support the Superintendent's great work. It's an indication that this conversation needs to be more holistic across our district and Town. Dr. McKenzie stated that we are only giving the Superintendent back that of which is in her contract. Dr. Nolin wanted to inform the community that in subsequent years, she intends to be a vacationer. However, in her role of CEO of this company, she wanted to make sure that the district is not responsible for similar obligations for our other leaders. She was on so that others were sure to take their vacation time. Those were benefits they signed a contract for.

Members Concerns/Updates

Mr. Jefferson Wood, teacher representative gave his thanks and appreciation to Mr. Haugland for his years of service. He also extended his congratulations to Ms. Gorseth.

Future Meeting Dates/Agenda Items

Chair Collins explained what this agenda item is for. She reminded of the Committee of the document shared that holds a list of items to be discussed. Ms. Brunell asked that we look at the redistricting/reassignment plan holistically and consider that at a meeting prior to the end of the year. Chair Collins explained the difference between the two. Ms. Brunell would like us to look at the map as a Committee to understand where students are being moved and understand why. How it impacts current and future students. Mr. Luff, reminded the Committee about not entering into debate. Ms. Brunell would like to discuss the student reps at the norms meeting. Chair Collins also included the teacher representative. Dr. McKenzie would like diversity, equity and inclusion amongst ourselves.

At approximately 8:44pm Ms. McDonough moved to adjourn. Dr. McKenzie seconded. Chair Collins asked for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Ms. Gorseth – Yes

Ms. Brunell – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Chair Collins - Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-0.

Anna Nolin

Superintendent

Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Rose McDermott

Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Attest: _____

Documents Provided in Novus Agenda and materials used at this meeting:

Superintendent's Presentation

Executive Session Minutes

School Committee Minutes of February 28, 2022 and Executive Session Minutes of February 28, 2022

Enrollment Projections

Subcommittee Assignments

Academic Achievement Data

Out of State Travel Documents