

*Natick Public Schools  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
May 2, 2022*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, May 2, 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, Dr. Shai Fuxman

Members Missing: Hayley Sonneborn

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

At approximately 6:05pm, Chair Collins moved for approval for the School Committee to enter into Executive Session for this purpose:

1. To Conduct Strategy With Respect to Litigation, Specifically an Arbitration, Administrative Assistants, if an Open Meeting May Have a Detrimental Effect on the Litigating Position of the Public Body and the Chair so Declares;

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

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Ms. McDonough – Yes

Chair Collins - Yes

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

Chair Collins stated that the School Committee will be returning to open session at approximately 6:30pm. The School Committee proceeded to a private room to conduct this session.

At approximately 6:35pm, the School Committee returned to open session.

**Public Hearing on School Choice**

Dr. McKenzie read the Public Hearing notice and provided the following information:

Yearly vote by school committee to open or close the program for the year. Applications are chosen by lottery based on open slots. Program has been closed for two years. District is reimbursed for student attendance but not at same rate as PP cost. The regular day school choice tuition rate is \$5,000 per student for school districts and \$8,572 per student for Commonwealth virtual schools, including a \$75 per student administrative fee. An incremental cost is also added to the tuition for each special education student reflecting the additional cost of the services that they are receiving. This amount is determined using the same methodology for specific services that is used for the special education circuit breaker program. Students are admitted and must be allowed to remain until they graduate, no matter how program develops.

METCO is not a part of this program, it is a separate desegregation, busing program. Dr. McKenzie also confirmed the current number of students in the program and their grade levels. Dr. Nolin does not recommend the School Committee opening school choice at this time. Chair Collins asked if anyone from the public would like to speak. Ms. Julie Belben, Framingham resident with two children currently in the school choice program spoke. She currently has a 2nd & 4th grader at Brown School. She has an incoming kindergarten student that she asked that her last child be included in the program. She understands the thoughts to move away. With her daughter not being able to join, she will have three kids at different schools. The School Committee will take a vote at the next meeting. At approximately 7:02pm Dr. McKenzie moved to close the Public Hearing. Ms. McDonough seconded. It was approved unanimously 6-0-0.

### **Public Speak**

Chair Collins asked if anyone wished to participate in Public Speak. Ms. Kim Calcill from Natick stepped up to the podium and shared her opinion regarding the volunteer and in class events policy that requires proof of vaccinations to attend. She believes the policy is discriminatory.

### **Announcements:**

Dr. Nolin reminded the community about the External Communications Survey. Reaching an entire school community in today's digital and mobile world requires planning. As a district, we're examining the best methods to connect with families and our community. We're asking for your feedback via this survey as we evaluate our communications efforts. Please take five minutes to provide your input. Thank you for your insight! Also coming up:

May 1-14: National Music Week

May 2-6: Teacher Appreciation Week

May 3: Eid Al-Fitr

May 5: National Teacher Appreciation Day

May 6: Kindergarten Only - No School

May 6: School Lunch Hero Day

Month of May: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Virtual Coffee Hour: Tuesday, May 17, 6:00 - 6:45 p.m. - Dismantling Systemic Barriers for Equitable Access to Opportunity

Jazz Competition at NHS for region, Friday 5:45pm

Last Day of School Set by School Committee, SY 2022-23 calendar also updated. The School Committee voted Monday, April 25, 2022 to approve the last day of school as June 21, 2022 (early release) for all schools EXCEPT Lilja School. Lilja School will have a full day of school on June 21, 2022 and their last day will be on June 22, 2022 (early release). Also, the 2022-2023 school year calendar was modified. The first day of school is Wednesday, August 31 and there will be a full day of school the Friday before Labor Day, September 2.

SPARK Kindness has two events coming up, please visit [sparkkindness.org](http://sparkkindness.org) for more information.

### **Presentation of Entry Plan for Director of Teaching, Learning, and Innovation**

Ms. Sue Balboni, Director of Teaching, Learning & Innovation gave a presentation. She reviewed and explained the entry plan process and goal. She gave a summary of findings of our students, teachers and staff, Principals, as well as our leaders in Central Office. She reviewed communication, our collaboration, our organizational structure and seeing cross building collaboration due to virtual meetings. She continued by reviewing our strengths and growth areas, as well as what our data analysis tells us. Ms. Balboni completed her presentation with next steps.

### **Analysis of High School Writing Programs in the Region**

Ms. Balboni gave a presentation whose purpose was to analyze our high school writing curriculum to determine if we are providing a rigorous curriculum. Her findings were that Natick has a well-structured and rigorous writing curriculum as compared to neighboring towns. Many districts are focused more on the process of writing rather than length. Through meetings with the High School English department, they are dedicated to ensuring that our students are prepared for life beyond high school and continue to assess their expectations to meet the needs of our students. All districts are incorporating the Speaking and Listening standards into their assessment of student skills, i.e. presentations, book discussions and speech writing. Many surrounding districts are finding that students are struggling post-pandemic with stamina. Some districts have adjusted the course load for English teachers to allow time for analyzing student writing to give effective feedback, including an additional block for grading. Using student performance and data we will expand the number of students allowed in workshop to address gaps in writing skills. On Demand tutoring will be available with a specific writing feedback service Grades 5-12 and study hall support for students who are experiencing Ds or Fs in English classes. Her data sources were Natick college admissions data, MCAS, high school data, middle school data, PreK-elementary data, Writing Analysis.

### **Facilities Year End Summary and Updates**

Bill Spratt, Director of Facilities, gave a presentation. He reviewed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. He reviewed Facilities FY22 work and accomplishments. He went on to review the upcoming summer operations and changes. He reviewed custodial benchmarking and that the bottom line is Natick is significantly understaffed in custodial work. Better equipment and a training program can help support the cleaning effort, but more staff is needed. Mr. Spratt explained his development of a five-year capital stewardship plan and the future of his department.

### **Special Education Prepayment Overview for FY23**

Dr. Nolin gave an Overview for FY23—she is seeking a motion to allow us to prepay up to \$2.54 million dollars in special education collaborative and out of district tuitions. This will then allow us to develop a firmer list of grant and prepay surplus spending positions for next year.

3 month of Private Tuition=\$1,046,244

1 year of Collaborative=\$1,497,079

Total=\$2,543,323

Chair Collins motioned to authorize the Superintendent to prepay up to 3 months of out of district special education tuition costs and up to one year of education collaborative tuition costs for FY23 \$2.54 million in Special Education Collaborative and out of district tuitions. Ms. Gorseth seconded. The motion passed unanimously 6-0-0.

### **Strategic Planning Overview**

Dr. Nolin explained that we will begin the 5th year of our 5- year strategic plan. As in the creation of the first plan, a community engagement and stakeholder participation process is best practice to refresh and revise our district's goals and plans, and, we are a community that values our interaction with our community as we plan and lead. She believes it is time now to consider the process we would like to undertake to set up the next version of the plan for the district. We have options. Her hope is that the School Committee will consider this a collaborative process with the Superintendent. We design and execute it together. We both have aspects of responsibility for the plan. Dr. Nolin is seeking the direction the Committee would like to take as we need to plan and possibly fund such a project to be executed next year throughout the year to end with a new plan launched in fall of 2023.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of Updated Policies JICE, EEAG and GDQD

2. Approval of Donations

Ms. McDonough moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Dr. McKenzie seconded. The motion passed unanimously 6-0-0.

At approximately 9:49pm, Dr. Fuxman moved to adjourn. Dr. McKenzie seconded. It was unanimously approved by those present 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

Facilities Presentation

Director of Teaching, Learning & Innovation presentation

Dr. Nolin memo

Data and analysis of high school writing

2021/2022 School Year Calendar

2022/2023 School Year Calendar

Policies - JICE, EEAG and GDQD