

Natick Public Schools  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
May 18, 2015

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, May 18, 2015 at 7:15 p.m. in the School Committee Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Town Hall. Chair Mistrot called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Members Present: Anne Blanchard, Tom Campbell, Dirk Coburn, Paul Laurent, Amy Mistrot, Firkins Reed, Lisa Tabenkin

Others present:	Peter Sanchioni	Superintendent of Schools
	Anna Nolin	Assistant Superintendent
	Timothy Luff	Director of Student Services
	Liam Hurley	Director of Finance
	James Araujo	Teacher Representative
	Sharon Reilly	Recording Secretary
	Sarah Strand	Student Representative

**Approval of Out of State Travel - NHS Astronomy**

Ms. Kristie Loncich, NHS Physics and Astronomy Teacher, requested approval for the NHS Astronomy Class/Space Team to potentially travel out of state on June 6<sup>th</sup> (depending on weather) to conduct a space balloon launch. The launch destination will depend on the prevailing winds that day. Mr. Coburn moved to approve this trip to launch when and where ready. Mr. Laurent seconded. It was unanimously approved.

**Final Approval of James Lavezzo Memorial**

Mr. Paul Adams came before the School Committee on behalf of the Natick Mens' Softball Team with the final plans for the James Lavezzo Memorial for the naming of the Memorial School Softball Field 1 in memory of former Natick Public Schools long term employee Jim Lavezzo. He provided the School Committee with pictures of the granite stone and wording for the plaque. An unveiling event is planned for May 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the field. \$4500 has been raised to date. A fundraiser concert will be held at TCAN sometime in July where any excess funds will be used for a scholarship in Jim's name. Mr. Coburn made a motion for the School Committee to waive its Naming Policy (see excerpt from policy that follows)

**MEMORIALS FOR DECEASED STUDENTS OR STAFF**

*The School Committee recognizes that the death of a student or member of the staff is deeply felt by the school community. As places designed primarily to support learning, school sites should not serve as the main venue for permanent memorials for students or staff.*

*Permanent memorials for deceased students or staff shall be limited in form to perpetual awards or scholarships.*

Mr. Laurent seconded. It was unanimously approved to waive the policy.

Mr. Coburn moved to approve the final plans for the memorial. Ms. Reed seconded. It was unanimously approved.

### **Public Speak**

Chair Mistrot called forward Ms. Jean Whitney, Ms. Jill Kovatsis, Ms. Lisa Tabenkin and Janice Ockerby to commend them for their efforts in planning the After Prom Party held this past Friday from 12-5:00 a.m. Chair Mistrot also recognized other members of the After Prom Party: Jeanne McCabe, Tina Savoia, Shelley Juppe, Jane Boyle, Kathleen Glennon, Jeanne Holihan, Cindy McGuire, Robin McBlane, and Bill Marston. Chair Mistrot reported that this party was a huge success - 506 students attended with 206 students staying until 4 a.m. Ms. Jean Whitney, Chair for the After Prom Party Committee, and involved for the past 5 years will be stepping down. Members thanked Ms. Whitney for all that she has done over the years to improve this event and making it a success.

### **Wellness Goal Update - Karen Rufo, Dr. Tracy Gladstone**

Ms. Karen Rufo, Nurse Leader, provided an update to the district wellness goal and spoke about the initiatives that have been put in place to improve academic achievement and to reduce undue stress and pressure for students and staff. She spoke to the following:

#### **HIGH SCHOOL INITIATIVES**

- Stress Relief before Finals Fair
- SBIRT Screenings
- Hey NHS..... How are you?
- RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) Classes
- Car Simulator TEEN D.R.I.V.E
- NTY Work
- Therapeutic Art Teacher
- Acts of Kindness
- “Take 3” Pilot for Staff
- Music in Café
- Rolling Rallies in Fall
- Stress Slides
- Pet Therapy
- Reminder of No Homework over vacations and religious holidays

#### **DISTRICTWIDE INITIATIVES**

- Pet Therapy
- Special Olympics June 1st
- Benson Henry Institute Classes
  - Staff
  - Student
  - Parent
- Stress Management in Clinics
- Collaboration with NTY on Prevention Week and Red Ribbon Activities
- District Wide Stress Committee-(Staff & Student)

Ms. Rufo reported on several activities that the nurses and clinics have been involved in:

- Diabetes Grant
- Special Olympics
- Clinic Manipulatives/Plans
- Lynn Lyons Presentation
- Benson Henry Institute Classes
- Dr Owen's Sleep Presentation
- Opioid Conference
- EpiPen Co-pays

Dr. Tracy Gladstone, Ph.D., Wellesley Centers for Women & Boston Children's Hospital discussed a program that she will be implementing at Natick High School in the Fall called *Hey NHS. . .how are you?* – a teen depression prevention initiative made possible with a grant from the Metrowest Health Foundation. She provided a detailed overview of the program including statistics on mental illness in youth, adolescent depression and consequences including suicide behaviors and the importance of prevention and treatment. She reviewed in detail how this new teen depression prevention initiative will be administered at the high school which will include parental permission, input and involvement. Dr. Gladstone responded to questions from Committee members. A request was made for Dr. Gladstone to come back mid-year (January timeframe) to provide an update on this initiative.

Committee members thanked Ms. Rufo and Dr. Gladstone for all that they have done.

### **Report from Natick Together for Youth**

Ms. Katie Sugarman, Executive Director of Natick Together for Youth (NTY), provided an update on Natick Together for Youth – “a community based coalition whose mission is to promote a safe, health, and drug-free community through the collaboration of public and private groups, organizations, and individuals, using proven, effective strategies to reduce risk factors and increase resiliency among youth.” The coalition is made up of:

- Clergy and Community Organizations
- School Administrators and Nurses
- Public Health Officials
- Parents and Businesspeople
- High School Peer Leaders– NASSA
- Police and Town Officials

The update included a detailed review of many programs and activities such as:

#### **Ongoing meetings and work groups**

- Monthly coalition meetings,
- Frequent work group meetings
- Bi-weekly high school student group meetings

#### **2014-2015 Events and Activities**

- Policy & Enforcement
- Education & Community Awareness
- Community Connection & Collaboration

- Resources, Supports & Healthy Alternative Activities
- Coalition Development & Sustainability

### **What's Next**

- Strategic Planning
- Identify topics for 2015-2016 educational events
- Increase sustainability of Coalition - secure funding for after September 2016

Ms. Reed, who has been very involved with this group, stated that managing this coalition is a huge endeavor that will yield important information for our community. She encouraged people in the community to get involved with this great group of people who bring so much to the table.

Committee members thanked Ms. Sugarman for this overview and all that she has done with the program.

### **Update on Middle School Foreign Language Program**

Dr. Nolin reported on the District Goal of: “online classes will be evaluated as a means to expand the world languages pathways into grades 5-6.” She reviewed the piloted program offered in 2013-2014 school year – The Middlebury curated Exposure 1 online courses for French at Kennedy and Spanish at Wilson which was implemented to determine if students in grade 7 and 8 could work online in their language while teachers would be redeployed to grades 5 & 6. It was determined that the courses were good, however, students would not be successful mastering the language working independently on their own.

Dr. Nolin also spoke about the following piloted programs:

- Gradpoint from Pearson
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade French class at Wilson through TEC Connections Academy
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade French class at Kennedy through TEC Connections Academy

It was determined that:

- Gradpoint is only a class supplement akin to a digital textbook
- More than 50% of the students dropped out of the online classes
- Determined negative impact to specials exploration
- Age of grade 6 students and their emerging independent study skills made experiences variable
- Courses were not robust enough to mimic classes (no live lessons, narrated PPTs)

Other programs were explored in the spring of 2015 where costs, scheduling, staffing, other specials, etc. were taken into consideration and the following consensus was reached:

- We value the idea of earlier language
- Hard choices and costs need to be assumed
- The product does not exist yet to make us comfortable with a wholly online model for this age group
- Middle school students are still learning how to learn and struggle more with a wholly online interface for language acquisition
- For advanced students, the online work has been doable (most had French speaking parents) good results
- We are not comfortable reducing the amount of specials exploration during this identity forming time period.

A discussion continued and questions were responded to. Dr. Nolin and the administration will continue to look at practices and programs as they don't want to give up on expanding world languages pathways into the lower grades.

Ms. Jeannette Szretter, Natick resident and lifelong language teacher came forward and reiterated the importance of having a qualified teacher in the classroom to teach language classes. She commended the School Committee for looking at the goal to expand languages to the lower grades and hopes that they not let go of this goal and can come up with some creative out of the box options in the future.

### **Approval of Amendments to the TEC Agreement**

This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

### **Review and Discussion of District Policies - Sections A,D, I, J**

This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

### **Update on Financial Planning Committee Meeting**

Chair Mistrot did not have much to report on from the last Financial Planning Committee meeting. A discussion on on the statutory requirements associated with evaluating and joining the state Group Insurance Commission (GIC) was to be held but was postponed due to an injury of the speaker.

### **To award contract for laser printer service**

Mr. Hurley requested that the School Committee award a contract to Expert Laser Services, Inc. to provide laser printer service and supplies. This is a one year contract for the FY16 school year with two additional one year options for extension to cover the FY17 and FY18 school years at the sole discretion of the School Committee. In compliance with M.G.L., Chapter 30B, a quote (RFQ#15-04) was solicited for this award and sent to three potential vendors. Only one quote submission was received from Expert Laser Services, Inc., the vendor currently contracted for this service. Mr. Hurley is pleased with the service being provided by Expert Laser Services, Inc. Mr. Campbell moved to award the contract for laser printer service and supplies to Expert Laser Services, Inc. Mr. Coburn seconded. It was unanimously approved.

### **Approval of Donations**

Mr. Hurley requested that the School Committee accept the following donation:

<u>Source/Donation</u>	<u>Amount/Value</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
First Congregational Church	\$1,005.00	Donation to Family & Friends of Natick METCO

Mr. Campbell moved to accept this donation. Mr. Laurent seconded. It was unanimously approved.

## Members Concerns

Mr. James Araujo, Teacher Representative and current Co-President of the Education Association of Natick (EAN) introduced Kaitlin Mattison and Chad Longley who will be taking over as Co-Presidents of the EAN in June. School Committee members welcomed Ms. Mattison and Mr. Longley and look forward to working with them.

Mr. Campbell provided the School Committee with a draft resolution for retiring Principal Rosemary Vickery which he will be bringing back to the next meeting for the Committee's approval. If anyone has any substantive edits, please let him know.

At 10:05 p.m., Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn. Mr. Laurent seconded. It was unanimously approved.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Peter Sanchioni, Ph.D.  
Superintendent  
Secretary to the School Committee

Sharon Reilly  
Recording Secretary

### **Documents provided via NovusAgenda**

District Policy Manual via NPS website  
Out of State Travel Request - NHS Astronomy  
Proposed Amendments to the TEC Agreement  
Request to award contract for laser printer service  
Request to approve donations  
Middle School Foreign Language Program Presentation  
Wellness Presentations  
Natick Together for Youth Presentation

### **Documents handed out**

James Lavezzo Memorial photos  
Draft Resolution