

*Natick Public Schools
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 11, 2021*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, January 11, 2021 at 6:30pm via a Virtual Meeting. Chair McDonough called the meeting to order and took roll call at 6:35pm.

Members Present: Julie McDonough, Henry Haugland, Donna McKenzie, Matthew Brand, Cathi Collins, Shai Fuxman,

Members Missing: Hayley Sonneborn arrived during Executive Session

Others Present: Dr. Anna Nolin Superintendent
Mr. Tim Luff Assistant Superintendent
Kirk Downing Assistant Superintendent
Marianne Davis Director of Human Resources
Ms. Rose McDermott Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Chair McDonough moved for approval for the School Committee to enter into Executive Session for this purpose:

1. 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.
2. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with Non-Union Personnel; Director of Communications, Planning & Budget Analyst, Part Time Clerical, Tutors, Coaches, Instrumental Accompanists, Late Bus Coverage, Cafeteria Monitor, Substitute Coordinator, Permanent Substitute Teacher, PSAT Proctors and Floaters, On-Line Learning Coordinator, Wellness Center Supervisor, NHS Student Supervisor, Wall of Achievement Coordinators, Virtual Education Supervisor, FEIP & KEIP Tutors, All Central Office Administration, All Principals, Dean of Students, Nurse Leader, Director of Student Services, PIT Nurse, Nurse Assistant, Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Certified Licensed Assistant, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & School Committee; Administrative Assistant to Director of Human Resources, Substitutes for: Administrative Assistants, Teachers & Paraprofessionals, Long Term Teachers, Paraprofessionals & Nurses, Permanent Teacher Sub, Math Club Interventionist, Nurses, ABA Tech Sub, Long Term Title 1, Food Service, Mini University/Professional Development, Curriculum Writing, Instructors for graduate credits, Study Group Facilitator & Leader, Instructors for all workshops, all ASAP Staff, All Summer School staff, Metco Personnel - (Director & Academic Liaison) Instrumental Music Instructors, Grant & Self Funding Positions: (Data Entry Clerk I Clerical, Technology Workshop Presenters, Summer Technology Training, Project Coordinator, BOKS Instructors), Technology: (Network Manager & Engineer, Deployment Specialist, Data Manager of C.A.S., Manager of Data, Quality and Controls, Data, Budget & Control Analyst, Help Desk Manager, Technicians, Intern) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position, and the chair so declares;

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

Dr. Fuxman – Yes
Mr. Haugland – Yes
Dr. McKenzie – Yes
Mr. Brand – Yes
Ms. Collins – Yes
Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by a vote of those present 6-0-0. Chair McDonough stated that the School Committee would be returning to the general session at approximately 7:00pm. The School Committee proceeded to a private virtual meeting to conduct this session.

At 7:09pm, the School Committee returned to open session.

Announcements:

Dr. Fuxman read a statement from the School Committee. The statement was condemning the violence and criminal acts that occurred in Washington D.C. on Wednesday, January 6, 2021.

Public Speak

Due to the nature of a virtual meeting, the instructions from the Attorney General were to submit public remarks via email to Chair McDonough. Chair McDonough received no remarks via email.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval/Acceptance of the Bennett Hemenway PTO Budget
2. Approval of School Committee Meeting Minutes of November 9, 2020 and November 30, 2020 and Executive Session Minutes of November 9, 2020 and November 30, 2020

Mr. Brand moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Ms. Sonneborn seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote.

Dr. Fuxman – Yes
Mr. Haugland – Yes
Dr. McKenzie – Yes
Mr. Brand – Yes
Ms. Sonneborn - Yes
Ms. Collins – Yes
Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by a vote of those present 7-0-0.

Action Items

1. Acceptance and Recognition of Knights of Columbus Donation – Mr. Brand moved approval. Ms. Sonneborn seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote.

Dr. Fuxman – Yes
Mr. Haugland – Yes
Dr. McKenzie – Yes
Mr. Brand – Yes
Ms. Sonneborn - Yes
Ms. Collins – Yes
Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by a vote of those present 7-0-0.

2. Approval of School Committee Meeting Start Times to 6:30 PM for the Remainder of the 20/21 School Year - Mr. Brand moved approval. Dr. McKenzie seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote.

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Mr. Haugland – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Mr. Brand – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn - Yes

Ms. Collins – Yes

Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by a vote of those present 7-0-0.

Recognition of Students Receiving MASS Superintendents Award

Dr. Nolin recognized two students who demonstrated academic excellence. She conveyed that she did not want this virtual moment to change the specialness, excitement and honor for receiving this award. First recipient was Ryan Scully. Ryan Scully is a top student, a highly principled and trustworthy individual, and a thoughtful young woman who thinks deeply about ways to make a positive impact on the world. Ryan stands out to me for her independence and commitment to taking initiatives for all the right reasons. She is on pace to graduate at the very top of a strong senior class, with a nearly flawless high school transcript showcasing her ability to excel across all disciplines. She is the Class of 2021 recipient of the Harvard Book Award, earned superlative SAT and AP scores, and is an active member of the National Honor Society. Also, an extremely active member of her church, Ryan has participated proactively in humanitarian community service through related opportunities such as Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos, which support children with insecure housing in Latin America. She has held ever-greater levels of responsibility and leadership in NPH over the course of her high school career, while managing multiple other commitments including her role as a captain of the varsity girls' basketball team.

The second recipient was Spencer James Anderson. “We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.” While this memorable quotation by President John F. Kennedy is favored by Spencer Andersen, it also encapsulates the essence of Spencer’s scholastic accomplishments at Natick High. Freshman year, Spencer studied one of the hardest schedules available to students. As a senior he eclipsed this achievement, with another compelling program of study. Certainly, his flawless academic performance, and outstanding character warrant the highest recognition. Spencer does not wear this outstanding ability like a badge, moreover he is one of the most considerate, hardworking and humble students anyone may encounter. Whether tutoring, mentoring young soccer referees, or coaching youth basketball, Spencer is thoughtful, and kind. It would be difficult to pick Spencer out in a crowd, even though he has willingly embraced a staggering number of challenging courses by Natick High School standards. Furthermore, one of the most striking features of his transcript is academic versatility, and a recent SAT of 1550 validates his natural acumen and promise. Spencer joined the Natick Politics Club shortly after beginning high school, and more recently worked on a local Senate Campaign. Spencer believes it is important for young people to become politically active, though again he is not dogmatic or opinionated. His political convictions became apparent during a student led debate organized by the Politics Club. Alongside peers, Spencer took on the persona of a political figure, to ensure the student-body were better informed about Party policies prior to the November election. Impressively, Spencer chose to adopt contrary personal beliefs, and still spoke persuasively. Spencer is the sort of motivated, engaging and curious student who will make classes and lectures a lively environment and safe place for deliberation and discourse!

Recognition of Students Receiving National School Development Council Awards

Dr. Nolin recognized two students who demonstrated student leadership and academic growth. The first recipient was Nathan Pravda. Nathan possesses a keen analytical mind, makes deep commitments to his activities, and has an innate tendency towards helpfulness and doing the right thing. Nathan's academic record is truly exceptional: he has consistently made the high honor roll while taking the most demanding course loads possible, he has earned perfect scores on every Advanced Placement test he has taken to date, and he's our school's recipient of the prestigious Yale Book Award. Nathan is one of the most active members of our thriving instrumental music program: Mr. Chisholm describes him as an initiative-taker who "is involved in so much of the music program it's hard to quantify." He is a leader and founder of Natick High's West Street Klezmer music group, and a valued member of our Jazz Ensemble. Nathan has made meaningful contributions to his activities, from music, to Tae Kwon Do, to his leadership in the service-oriented youth group at his synagogue, and his years of commitment to the Boy Scouts, culminating in his Eagle Scout project this year of building outdoor seating for the town library.

The second recipient was Hannah Takasaki. Hannah is an industrious and disciplined student who is kind-hearted, passionate, and trustworthy. I have always been most impressed by her sincerity. She demonstrates a level of empathy not frequently typical of her peers. She has a gentle and caring nature, which shines through her warm and friendly smile. Hannah has consistently taken a rigorous program of studies throughout her tenure, enrolling in some of the most challenging coursework offered at the high school level. She displays exceptional time management and organizational skills, being able to balance an incredibly demanding academic schedule along with her extracurricular and personal pursuits. Hannah is both a member of the high school gymnastics team as well as a thriving pole-vaulter. She is an accomplished pianist who began training at the age of six and regularly performs with the Contemporary Music Seminar for the Young at the Rivers Conservatory. Hannah is a well-rounded young woman with unparalleled authenticity and warmth; it is impossible not to hold her in the highest regard.

Health Update - Vaccine for Teachers/Staff and and Public Health Thresholds

Dr. Nolin provided many updates to the community. There are models currently being discussed at a Board of Health meeting. They are in draft until they are voted during their meeting this evening. Mr. Mangan, Precinct 9 also assisted in providing information regarding pool testing.

- Hockey Program Two-Week Pause while we evaluate the situation
- (Draft) Metrics revision for local Board of Health will be voted this evening. (In-program spread, total sports closure of Brookline, Wellesley, Weymouth, Framingham, and for hockey only, Milton, Walpole about to return from two-week pause).
 - Same metrics as today, plus, school absenteeism and in-school or in-program spread tracking, cross community infection.
- Rates for Natick are trending up, we may meet the worrisome thresholds in the coming week.
- Remote and Hybrid updates are included tonight and meeting on 1/13/21, 7pm for any interested family.

If Schools have to move to remote per the public health department

- Causes will include in-school transmission (none so far), student absenteeism, staff coverage issues, community surges
- Two weeks of closure, working with our hybrid model would allow us to calm the virus surge, then will reassess
- Even in closure we will be running COVID attestation for staff and students checklist to track and contain virus
- Daily collaboration with Jim White and nurses to track and assess return to hybrid model.

Health Update: Vaccines and Future

- Free 6 week pool testing offered by DESE, will be examined, not a cure-all

- February - April Vaccination of Educators
- Moderna vaccine
- Caution: vaccinated teachers does not mean kids or parents are vaccinated. Hybrid and safety measures will still need to be in place.
- General population vaccination will come in waves, with a hoped for herd immunity by return to school next fall.
- Unclear future for vaccine for children; we will follow Dept. of Public Health guidance for a gradual return to school.

Space Study, Justin Humphreys of TBA Architects

Dr. Nolin introduced Justin Humphreys who will give an overview of the space study his firm conducted. Dr. Nolin also discussed the program space study committee that is being compiled. There will be town partners as well as parent representatives from all the schools and a School Committee member. Mr. Brand will be representing for the School Committee. Mr. Humphreys reviewed the goals and outcomes of this study. The contents of the report were as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Executive Summary
3. Existing Building Analysis
 - Space Utilization Analysis
 - Current Space Use Plans
 - MSBA Comparative Spreadsheets
 - Current Utilization Plans
 - Circulation Diagrams
 - Existing Conditions Photographs
4. Diagrams by School
 - Existing Space Use
 - Space Utilization
 - Site Plan Space Use
 - Before School Circulation & Programs
 - After School Circulation
 - Recess and Lunch Transitions

Appointment of a School Committee Member to Participate in REMAP Committee

Chair McDonough introduced Mr. James Errickson, Interim Town Administrator and Mr. James Freas, Community Development. Natick was one of six communities chosen for Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) Program. Communities across the state and the country are grappling with the daily impacts of the racial wealth divide, unequal law enforcement, and segregation. The public is raising critical questions about municipal hiring, decision-making, and funding priorities. Cities and towns are looking for ways to address racism transparently and effectively. But it's sometimes difficult to identify the ways to address the root causes of inequality, and strong differences of opinion within individual communities may bar the way to progress. That's why MAPC, GARE, and the FRBB created the REMAP program to support communities as they grapple with these difficult topics. The first four months of the year-long program will focus on training, reflection, and self-assessment. In the final eight months, each municipality will develop a racial equity municipal action plan and begin to implement elements of the plan. If successful, the program will help municipalities achieve tangible community-level economic and administration improvements and address institutional and structural policies and practices that contribute to racial inequity. Donna McKenzie was appointed to represent the School Committee.

Enrollment Report

Mr. Kirk Downing, Assistant Superintendent provided the traditional enrollment planning report broken down by grade and school. This report does not show the actual enrollment within the walls of brick and mortar schools because remote learning students are coded to classrooms in their home school for state reporting purposes. The admin assistants have been calling families who were previously enrolled in school this year and withdrew to homeschool or send their children to private schools. That work should be complete by February 1, 2021 to help us understand enrollment impact on staffing. Early indications show that homeschool kindergarteners will enroll in 1st grade with a handful of students electing to enter kindergarten. All confirmed kindergarten students who were enrolled in private kindergarten are scheduled to attend first grade. Specific data to date will be provided in the February 1, 2021 enrollment report.

Overview of Proposed FY22 Teaching, Learning & Innovation Budget

Mr. Kirk Downing, Assistant Superintendent gave a presentation on the budget. He reviewed what mandates mean to Natick's vision. He reviewed the TLI educational policy context. Mr. Downing also reviewed the investment in curriculum and instruction as well as the investment in assessments. Mr. Downing reviewed some budget adjustments; shifting all school based professional development to the TLI budget, shifting all digital learning professional development to TLI budget and remote learning tools shifted to digital learning budget (Edgenuity 6-12). All school-based PD budgets as well as the digital learning office PD budget were shifted to the the TLI budget to give the school committee and financial committee a comprehensive understanding of all PD across the system. Mr. Downing went on to review the TLI budget lines with an ending budget request of \$171,342.00.

Review of Recently Approved MOU with EAN Units (A,B,S and Title One)

Dr. Nolin gave notice that the School Committee voted for the most recent MOU which will be presented to the community on Wednesday. It has now been signed by everyone and supported by the union.

Naming of the Kennedy Middle School Planetarium (First Community Notice)

Chair McDonough spoke about the new planetarium at Kennedy Middle School. She spoke to the letter submitted by Representative Linsky proposing that the new planetarium be named after Mr. Ed Jameson. He was the first and only planetarium director. He was a beloved teacher in Natick. This will be discussed again at another meeting. Dr. Nolin has learned a lot about Mr. Jameson from other letters received. She has contacted Mr. Jameson and has invited him to consult on our use of the new planetarium.

At approximately 10:45pm, Mr. Brand motioned to adjourn. Dr. McKenzie seconded. Chair McDonough called for a roll call vote:

Dr. Fuxman – Yes

Mr. Haugland – Yes

Dr. McKenzie – Yes

Mr. Brand – Yes

Ms. Collins – Yes

Ms. Sonneborn - Yes

Chair McDonough – Yes

It was unanimously approved by a vote of those present 7-0-0.

Anna Nolin

Superintendent

Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Rose McDermott

Attest: _____

Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary

Documents Provided in Novus Agenda and materials used at this meeting can be found [here](#).
Anna Nolin