

*Natick Public Schools
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
December 1, 2014*

The School Committee held a meeting on Monday, December 1, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the School Committee Room, 3rd floor, Town Hall. Chair Mistrot called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

Others Present:	Peter Sanchioni	Superintendent of Schools
	Liam Hurley	Director of Finance
	Sharon Reilly	Recording Secretary

Update on METCO Program

Chair Mistrot introduced Dr. Kahris McLaughlin, President of the METCO Board, who was in attendance at the meeting. Dr. McLaughlin deferred her remarks to allow Gary Marion, former NHS student in the METCO program (Class of 1977), to express his gratitude for being a part of the METCO program and how it has affected his life in a positive way. Dr. McLaughlin then returned to the podium to explain that she came out from Boston this evening to affirm the METCO/Natick relationship in light of a recent story by Fox News in which inaccurate allegations were made about Natick's use of METCO funds. She stated that the statement was wrong, which accused Natick School Superintendent, Dr. Sanchioni, of the misappropriation of METCO funds in the hiring of a full-time guidance counselor for the Natick Public Schools. The METCO Board conducted a thorough examination of the Natick METCO Budget Plans which were submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education which show the inclusion of a guidance counselor within the METCO line item. METCO only performed a three-year audit, but this position has been included in the budget for at least the past three years. Dr. McLaughlin shared her support for Natick and affirmed unequivocally that Natick did not misappropriate METCO funds in any way. Dr. McLaughlin thanked Natick Public Schools for their consistent support of the METCO Program and wishes to repair any damages done to the relationship. In addition, a letter of apology was sent to Chair Mistrot and Dr. Sanchioni prior to this evening and has been shared with all Committee members. Members of the School Committee thanked Dr. McLaughlin for attending the School Committee meeting, for communicating so directly to clear the inaccurate allegations made against Natick, and for affirming the METCO/Natick collaboration, which they all agree is an important program in our town.

Public Speak

Chair Mistrot asked if anyone wished to come forward for Public Speak. Mr. Lev Tabenkin, Natick resident and parent, came forward to talk about the potential of changing school start times. He was directed to wait and speak to this when it is addressed as an item on tonight's agenda. Public Speak is a time for the public to speak on any topic that is not listed on the agenda. Comment on an agenda item must wait until that agenda item is taken up during the meeting.

Update on School Start Time Impact Study Task Force

Chair Mistrot provided an update on the school start time Impact Study Task Force. She reported that the next meeting will be held on December 10, 2014 where Mr. Timothy Collins, Athletic Director, will describe the impact of a later start time on the athletic programs, venues, etc. Chair Mistrot does not believe there will be much time for questions at the meeting due to the amount of material Mr. Collins will be presenting. As many questions as time allows will be answered. Any other questions may be forwarded to schoolcommittee@natickps.org and will be answered at the next meeting of the Task Force on December 17. Mr. Coburn indicated that he will be offering up a resolution for the School Committee to approve on the timing which would be for the School Committee to not consider any potential change to start times prior to the 2016/17 school year.

Chair Mistrot invited Mr. Lev Tabenkin, Natick resident and parent, back to the podium to speak to the potential change in school start times. Mr. Tabenkin urged the School Committee not to change the high school start time for the following reasons:

- it will cost the district money that it doesn't have – approximately \$133K which could better spent elsewhere in the NPS budget
- great things are happening in Natick schools – why break something that is working.
- 45 minutes isn't going to make a big difference – students have a buffer now with CDS in the morning, which is very important part of their day
- 82% of teachers don't want this change
- Potential of losing top 15-20% of the top teachers if change is implemented
- Creates havoc with after school activities and sports
- He urged the Committee to squash the proposal now

Mr. Brian King, Natick resident and parent also urged the Committee not to change the high school start time at this time where the district has implemented so many new programs that have yet to be measured. 82% of the teaching staff doesn't want the change. It also has a big impact on the sports programs. Give time for programs such as the PLC's and the 1:1 to be entrenched and be measured. Other things could be addressed – look at the time of day when kids are actually doing their work. He feels it would be catastrophic to throw another change into the mix at this time.

Mr. Brian Chamberlain, Natick resident and parent, urged the Committee to make sure they are being thoughtful and potentially include options not being investigated. Don't let gaining a few minutes drive your decision.

Chair Mistrot stated that the due diligence for studying the impact of any change to school start times will continue so that the best decision for Natick students will be made. She urged everyone to follow the work of the taskforce. Credible reasons for any decision are required. The process will be open and transparent leading to when the Committee has a foundation of information to make a decision.

Chair Mistrot indicated she will come back to this item after Ms. Grace Magley gives an update on the Natick Public Schools Innovation & Learning Summit.

Update on Natick Innovation and Learning Summit - Grace Magley

Ms. Grace Magley provided an update on the Natick Innovation and Learning Summit, held today (December 1) - a full day of Professional Learning to deepen Digital Teaching & Learning Practices for staff members. She reported that over 80 sessions were facilitated by expert practitioners on the tools, resources and instructional practices that Natick educators have requested. This included a session conducted by the keynote speaker, Steve Chinosi from Newton North High School, who along with his team held a session on his

Innovation Lab - MakerSpaces. All sessions were tagged by level and target audience to help educators choose the best sessions for their interest and level in order to deepen their professional practice. Staff members were able to select their courses in advance using an online scheduling tool. Ms. Magley shared videos and photos of staff in action. Ms. Magley also shared with the Committee the new logo created for the Summit:



created by High School Junior, Elise Rodman.

She indicated that lots of positive feedback has been received so far. Information from surveys will be reviewed and used for future planning. Dr. Sanchioni publicly commended Ms. Magley on her work on this “premiere conference”.

Update on School Start Time Impact Study Task Force (continued)

A discussion continued on the update of the School Start Time Impact Study Task Force. Mr. Coburn moved for approval for the School Committee to adopt a resolution that the School Committee will not consider a major change to the school start time schedule prior to the 2016-2017 school year, if at all, given that it is highly improbable to do due diligence on studying all areas impacted to face any change next year. Mr. Margil made the point that should it become apparent during the investigation process that the current option is not workable, the School Committee could end the start-time investigation entirely. Mr. Margil seconded. It was approved by an affirmative vote of six members present at the time. Ms. Reed was not in the room at the time of the vote.

Approval to add two release days for NHS 2014-2015 School Year

Dr. Sanchioni requested approval from the School Committee to add two additional early release days for NHS for the 2014-2015 school year - December 18, 2014 and March 25, 2015 (please note the March 25, 2015 date has since been changed to March 23, 2015). The purpose of these days is to allow staff time to complete the numerous tasks that have been assigned to them such as common assessments, DDM's, goals, evidence collection, recommendation writings, data analysis, etc. By including these days, NHS is still well above the 990 required hours of instruction. Mr. Margil moved to approve these additional release days for the high school. Mr. Laurent seconded. It was unanimously approved. Dr. Sanchioni indicated that there is the same need for additional staff time for the middle schools, however, these days wouldn't work with their schedule this year but it's something to think about for future years.

Approval of School Calendar for 2015-2016

Dr. Sanchioni requested that the School Committee approve the School Calendar for 2015-2016 which was presented to the School Committee at its meeting of November 17, 2014. This calendar has three additional release days for Middle School/High School from years past. Mr. Coburn requested having some sort of review next spring to make sure there is a need for these days. Mr. Margil moved to approve the school calendar for 2015-2016 as outlined. The first day of school for students will be September 1, 2015 with an end of date of June 20, 2016 if no snow days are used.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Reed moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of September 29, 2014, the Executive Session Minutes of November 3, 2014 and the School Committee Minutes of November 17, 2014. Mr. Laurent seconded. They were unanimously approved.

Members Concerns

Chair Mistrot will be polling the Committee to see if a retreat could be scheduled for December 8th for policy review, otherwise use the January 5th meeting for this purpose.

Mr. Margil has provided the School Committee with all the draft policies to date which have been posted on the website. He requested that all members read through these prior to the retreat and send him any edits that they feel are deal breakers and must be changed. He will try to get Mr. Jim Hardy from MASC to attend the retreat if he is available.

Mr. Margil also mentioned that revisions need to be made to the recently approved CORI/Background Check policy in order to comply with M.G.L. He will provide an updated draft policy.

Mr. Campbell stated that he was very impressed with the statements made this evening by Dr. McLaughlin, President of the METCO Board, and looks forward to a long standing relationship with METCO Inc. and the METCO program.

At 8:30 p.m., Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn. Mr. Margil seconded. It was unanimously approved.

Attest: _____

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

Sharon Reilly
Recording Secretary

Documents provided via Novus Agenda

School Committee Minutes - November 17, 2014

Memorandum requesting two additional release days for the high school for 2014-2015 school year

School Calendar for 2015-2016

METCO Coordinator Job Description

METCO Coordinator Hiring Timeline