

**NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Ashby, Pepperell, and Townsend, Massachusetts
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, December 4, 2017**

PRESENT

Chairperson	Randee Rusch	Member, At Large
Vice Chairperson	William Hackler	Member, At Large
	Anne Adams	Member, Pepperell
	Jonna Clermont	Member, Pepperell
	Lisa Martin	Member, Pepperell
	Crystal Messamore	Member, Ashby ~ Remote Participation
	Michael Morgan	Member, At Large ~ Absent
	Susan Robbins	Member, Townsend
	Robert Templeton	Member, Townsend

ALSO PRESENT

Joan Landers	Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Milligan	Assistant Superintendent
Nancy Haines	Business Manager
NMRSD Staff	
Parents and Community Members	

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.
2. The chairperson hereby informs the committee and audience members that the meeting is being recorded.
3. The next regularly scheduled school committee meeting will be held on Monday, December 18, 2017, at North Middlesex Regional High School, Room 120, at 7:00 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

The chair asked whether any items needed to be removed from the consent agenda.

1. Approval of Minutes
 - November 6, 2017, School Committee Meeting
 - Approval of Past Executive Session Minutes (Nurses Unit and Custodial Unit)
2. Acceptance of Donations
 - Donation in the amount of \$250.00 to the Nissitissit Middle School from the Travelers-Cyber Grants, Inc.
3. Approval of Out-of-State/Country Field Trips
 - Gateway, STEPS, and ACHIEVE students will travel to the Pheasant Lane Mall in Nashua, NH, on December 8, 2017

A motion was made by Jonna Clermont and seconded by William Hackler to approve the consent agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler yes; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore abstained; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: seven yes, one abstention; the motion passed.

PRESENTATION

1. Powers and Sullivan ~ Richard Sullivan ~ North Middlesex Regional School District FY 17 Audit
Richard Sullivan presented the findings of the 2017 district audit that was conducted at the end of

June 2017. He commented that the business office was “audit ready” and the information was complete, accurate, and timely. Mr. Sullivan commended Nancy Haines and the business office staff for their efforts. He advised the committee that the district needs to address and create a “Fraud Risk Assessment.”

2. State Assessment Results ~ Nancy Milligan

Nancy Milligan, Assistant Superintendent, presented the 2017 MCAS assessment results to the school committee. A copy of the presentation is available at <http://nmrsd.org/nmrsd>.

3. Grant funding to pilot Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) ~Superintendent Landers

Superintendent Landers informed the committee that the district is receiving grant funding from Nashoba Valley Health Care and the Community Foundation of North Central MA in the amount of \$8,790.00. The grant funding will be used at Hawthorne Brook Middle School to support a pilot implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS). Superintendent Landers thanked Mrs. Shepherd-Gay for acquiring this grant funding for our students; her efforts are greatly appreciated.

REPORTS/INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Student Representative Report - Paige Zacharakis

Paige reported that the Thanksgiving pep rally was a lot of fun, focusing on NM’s student athletes. The annual powderpuff fundraiser game was held at Hawthorne Brook Middle School due to site construction at the high school. The event exceeded expectations. Paige reminded everyone that the winter festival fair would be held on Friday, December 15, from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. A variety of local vendors will be present at the fair. The student council will be hosting the Faculty Cheer Breakfast on December 22, 2017. In January, the student council will start their lymphoma and leukemia drive to collect coins from students. Paige also let the committee know that on January 18, 2018 the student council will be hosting the principals’ dinner at 6:00 p.m. All members of the school committee are invited to attend this event. The student council will also be hosting the senior citizens’ breakfast on March 21, 2018.

2. Superintendent’s Report

a. Superintendent Landers shared with the committee that Principal Taylor will be sending out a survey to parents asking for feedback on the location of North Middlesex Regional High School’s graduation.

b. Superintendent Landers, Athletic Director Mr. Fisk, Principal Taylor, and Mr. Templeton held a meeting to review options for a turf field at the high school as well as financial funding opportunities. Mrs. Landers will be working with Mrs. Haines regarding financing options. Some turf companies offer incentives, and there are also grants available.

c. Accelerated Repair Projects Update

Mr. Hackler reported that the subcommittee toured the Squannacook facility on November 7, 2017, and met on November 29th to discuss the office space and square footage of the building. There are still some outstanding items the subcommittee is discussing, and another meeting will be scheduled to address these issues.

3. Building Committee Report – Update

Mr. Templeton explained that the building committee is working on the abatement issue at the old high school. A meeting to address this matter is scheduled for Monday, December 11, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.; any progress made during this meeting will be reported.

4. Public Communications - 10 minutes will be allotted

Mr. Richard Lee, a Townsend resident and a member of the Townsend Community Couples Club informed the school committee that the club raised funds for a new “Welcome to Townsend” sign. The club is requesting approval to install the sign on the North Middlesex Regional High School property on Route 119, near the location of the old school marquee. The club will partner with Trenton Goyette, an Eagle Scout candidate, who has volunteered to install the signs as part of his

Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Marciniak, a parent in the district, informed the committee that he and Cecelia Doucette have been giving testimony for the last several weeks on several bills that have been in front of the legislators. The two bills, H.2030 (an Act relative to best management practices for wireless networks in schools and public institutions of higher education) and H.2779 have passed at the joint committee and are now going to the Department of Public Health. Mr. Marcineac is also watching Bill S.108, an Act relative to the safe use of hand-held devices by children. Mr. Marineac stated that he met with Senator Eileen Donoghue to discuss his Wi-Fi concerns. Mr. Marcineac invited everyone to attend a screening of a documentary on the topic held at the Lawrence Public Library on February 21, 2018.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Warrant Subcommittee

Available for Committee review are accounts payable warrants 18-1102, 18-1109, 18-1116, 18-1121, and 18-1130, and payroll warrants for November 9, 2017 and November 22, 2017. The warrants have been reviewed and signed by the warrant subcommittee.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Footsteps2Brilliance

Superintendent Landers requested to move this item to the December 18, 2017 school committee meeting. Superintendent Landers informed the committee that the anonymous donor and United Way have committed the funds to the school district, and Mrs. Janssen will be submitting the Memorandum of Understanding to the district for the next school committee meeting.

2. Superintendent Search ~ Consultant Interviews

Dorothy Presser, Field Director, Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), presented her organization's proposal for the executive search for our new Superintendent of Schools. Mrs. Presser reviewed the scope of services offered by MASC. If selected, Mrs. Presser would serve as the Lead Consultant for the search.

A discussion ensued between the school committee members and the consultant.

Mr. Bettencourt, E.D., Executive Director, New England School Development Council (NESDEC), presented his organization's proposal for the executive search for the Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Bettencourt reviewed the scope of services offered by NESDEC. He indicated that, if selected, there would be three NESDEC staff members who would serve as consultants on the search.

A discussion ensued between the consultant and school committee members. Committee members asked Dr. Bettencourt questions regarding specifics of the search process and how the three consultants would engage with the committee.

Following the consultants' departure from the meeting, the committee members provided feedback on the presentations.

Mrs. Rusch informed the committee that the search subcommittee composed of Mrs. Robbins, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Martin, and Mrs. Rusch had reviewed both submitted proposals.

Mrs. Robbins reported that she has spoken with five references provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). All the references were very impressed with Mrs. Presser's ability. One community was deciding between NESDEC and MASC, and they chose MASC because of the credentials of Mrs. Presser. One district shared that they had decided on the MASC due to a prior relationship they had with the organization through the MASC's support of school committees.

Mrs. Adams reported that she has spoken with a couple of references provided by NESDEC. The feedback on NESDEC has been very enthusiastic, and the references have been impressed with NESDEC's consultants and the candidates that they have brought forward. All the references that Mrs. Adams spoke to were very happy with the candidates they selected.

A motion was made by Susan Robbins and seconded by Anne Adams to accept the proposal submitted by NESDEC for the executive search for the new Superintendent of Schools.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler no; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore yes; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: seven yes, one no, the motion passed.

A motion was made by Susan Robbins and seconded by Rob Templeton to authorize the search subcommittee comprised of Mrs. Adams, Ms. Martin, Mrs. Robbins, and Mrs. Rusch to negotiate and execute the contract with NESDEC.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler yes; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore yes; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: Unanimously passed

NEW BUSINESS

1. School Committee review of the NMRHS activity clubs per Policy JFJ:

A motion was made by Susan Robbins and seconded by Jonna Clermont to move the inactive student activities funds to the principal line.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler yes; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore yes; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: Unanimously passed

2. School Committee review of Article 6: Section E. 2 (a) Request for an additional extra-curricular stipend under Performing Arts, Musical Director for an increase from 1 musical production to 2 musical productions for 2017-2018:

A motion was made by Robert Templeton and seconded by Susan Robbins to increase the musical director stipend from 1 production to 2 productions for the 2017/2018 school year.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler yes; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore yes; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: Unanimously passed

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Susan Robbins to convene in executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)

(2) to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel.

(3) to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for collective bargaining with the North Middlesex Regional School District Educational Support Personnel Unit, Teachers Unit, Secretarial Unit, Nurses Association and Custodial Unit.

The motion was seconded by school committee member Jonna Clermont.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler yes; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore yes; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: Unanimously passed

The committee will now be meeting in executive session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)

(2) to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel.

(3) to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for collective bargaining with the North Middlesex Regional School District Educational Support Personnel Unit, Teachers Unit, Secretarial Unit, Nurses Association and Custodial Unit because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee.

The Committee will reconvene in open session.

The Committee adjourned to executive session at 9:41 p.m.

The Committee returned to open session at 9:48 p.m.

Mrs. Rusch informed the public that, in executive session, the committee voted to accept a Memorandum of Agreement with the Custodial Unit that included updated language to Article XVIII, Vacation Leave, to include the following language: "Upon request, under extenuating circumstances, the Superintendent may allow an employee to carry over unused vacation time into the next fiscal year. This allowance will be reviewed and approved in writing by the Superintendent of Schools."

A motion was made by William Hackler and seconded by Jonna Clermont to accept the Memorandum of Agreement with the custodial unit.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler yes; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore abstained; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: Unanimously passed

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by William Hackler and seconded by Jonna Clermont to adjourn.

Roll Call Vote: Anne Adams yes; Robert Templeton yes; William Hackler yes; Jonna Clermont yes; Susan Robbins yes; Lisa Martin yes; Crystal Messamore abstained; Randee Rusch yes.

Vote: Unanimously passed

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Bilotta-Simeone, Recording Secretary