

**NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

September 25, 2012

SCHOOL COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE: Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Kara Keith, Lynn Colletti and Reta Rupich

ADMINISTRATION IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Wood, Superintendent of Schools, George King, Assistant Superintendent

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Federspiel called the meeting to order at 6:17 PM in the School Committee Conference Room.

Ms. Federspiel stated she believes most of the public attendees are here to discuss their concerns of the safety at the high school. Ms. Federspiel advised that this topic is not on the agenda as it is not a voting issue for the school committee but that does not mean the topic cannot be discussed, this topic can be discuss in the citizens comments section on the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Topics on consent agenda included:

September 28, 2012 Warrant

<u>WARRANT NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
3273	9/28/12	VENDOR	\$ 481,957.59
3274	9/28/12	BENEFIT	\$ 647,396.03
3275	9/28/12	PAYROLL	\$1,182,028.76

Minutes of the September 11, 2012 meeting

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence from Stow resident regarding safety at NRHS
Correspondence from Stow resident regarding safety at NRHS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Wood reviewed his Superintendent's report; *(The Superintendent's Report is available in full on the NRSD website at <http://www.nrsd.net>)*

Topics included:

- Science Lab Renovation
- School Nutrition Rules Change
- Substantial Detrimental Effect
- MCAS Reporting

School Library Strategic Plan

Ms. Cindy Larsen, Technology and Library Media Curriculum Coordinator for the district introduced the district Library Media Specialist, Betty Ogborn, MRE, Susan Farr, Hale, Pat Fontes, NRHS, Cindy Erle, LBMS and Kara Wilson, Center. Ms. Larsen reviewed the library media strategic plan. Ms. Larsen stated the strategic plan is being submitted to allow the district to apply for grant funds, many nonprofit organizations require a strategic plan to be in place to apply for grants.

MOTION

Julie Fay made a motion to endorse the Library Media five (5) year strategic plan as presented on 9/25/2012 seconded by Jeff Odell **IN FAVOR:** Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Kara Keith, Reta Rupich and Lynn Colletti **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0-0)**

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Student Advisory Report

Ms. Bennett reported:

- Girls Field hockey is 6-1-0 with an away game against Oakmont regional tomorrow! Go team!
- Nashoba Football is 3-0 and goes up against Holy Name on Friday! I have great confidence in their abilities as a team for this one.
- Golf is 2-3-1, but they're on the rise! They won their last game and they have one against Wachussett tomorrow.
- 4-1-1 boys soccer! They went up against Leominster today!
- Girls Soccer is UNDEFEATED! They are 6-0! They also went up against Leominster today.
- Band concert has been changed to Wednesday October 11th!
- The Student advisory council will start meeting with Dr. Graham within the next month to discuss pertinent issues that pertain to the student body.
- The first Central Massachusetts Regional Student Advisory Council meeting is next Wednesday There we will also discuss the issues that concern the central Massachusetts region.

Finance Subcommittee

Ms. Busch reported the warrants were approved and Mr. King provided an update on the field and track.

Personnel Subcommittee

No Report

Policy Subcommittee

Ms. Federspiel reported the subcommittee met last week and continued work on the Online Communication Policy, work will continue and it will be presented to the school committee at a future meeting.

ESBC

Ms. Colletti advised the ribbon cutting for The Center School was held last Saturday.

SPED PAC

No Report

NEW BUSINESS

Assabet Valley Collaborative Board Member Appointment

Mr. Wood advised annually as part of our charter we have to appoint a member to the Assabet Valley Collaborative for which we are a member. Mr. Wood provided a review of the functions of the collaborative and the role it plays with our district. Mr. Wood stated the collaborative is center mostly around providing SPED services to the member school districts of the collaborative. Mr. Wood stated he is currently chair of the board and have been for three years, this year however there is a new law in affect that requires the charter to be rewritten that permits the school committee to either appoint the Superintendent or any member of their committee.

MOTION

Jeff Odell made a motion to appoint Michael Wood to the Board of Assabet Valley Collaborative seconded by Kara Keith **IN FAVOR:** Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Kara Keith, Reta Rupich and Lynn Colletti **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0-0)**

Assabet Valley Collaborative Borrowing Announcement

Mr. Wood stated by law whenever a collaborative borrows funds, a public announcement to it's member school districts must be made. Mr. Wood advised they current run a school in Marlboro and are hoping to continue at that location and the funds being borrowed are to renovate the current facility. Mr. Wood also stated that funds are not coming out of the NRSD budget, that Assabet is a tuition based program and we only pay for the students from our district that attend, so therefore if they have an increase in their budget we would only see it through an increase in the per student tuition charged to NRSD.

Private School Approvals

Mr. Wood advised he visited Browning Elementary/So. Lancaster Academy and they have met all the requirements on the checklist and is recommending them for private school approval within the district. Mr. Wood provided a review of the requirements.

MOTION

Jeff Odell made a motion to accept the recommendation of Michael Wood as noted in the memo dated 9/25/12 to approve Browning Elementary/So. Lancaster Academy, a private school within the Nashoba District and seconded by Maureen Busch **IN FAVOR:** Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Lynn Colletti, Reta Rupich and Kara Keith **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0-0)**

Pompositticut Closure/ Pompositticut Terminate Lease with Town of Stow

Mr. Wood advised The Center School is now open and we have vacated the Pompositticut School, we have a lease with the Town of Stow for the Pompositticut School and it is now an appropriate time that we notify the State that we are closing that building as an elementary school so it will stop appearing on MSAC data and other state gathered/reported data. Mr. Wood also advised that it is also the appropriate time for you to give notice to the Town of Stow that we no longer have use for the building and that we are terminating the lease.

MOTION

Maureen Busch made a motion; The Nashoba Regional School Committee, having no educational purpose or rationale for the use of Pompositticut Elementary School located at 511 Great Road, Stow, MA 01775 effective 8/31/2012 seconded by Jeff Odell **IN FAVOR:** Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Lynn Colletti, Reta Rupich and Kara Keith **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0-0)**

MOTION

Maureen Busch made a motion; The Nashoba Regional School Committee wishes to express their gratitude to the citizens of the Town of Stow for the lease of Pompositticut Elementary School, however, the purposeful use of this building for educational purposes has ended. We are hereby notifying the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Stow that we intend to end the lease on October 31, 2012 seconded by Kara Wilson **IN FAVOR:** Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Lynn Colletti, Reta Rupich and Kara Keith **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0-0)**

OLD BUSINESS

School Committee Norms

Ms. Federspiel advised a vote is needed for the norms that were developed before the summer break. Ms. Federspiel reviewed the Norms in the packet.

MOTION

Reta Rupich made a motion to approve the school committee norms developed in June 2012 for the 2012-2013 school year seconded by Julie Fay **IN FAVOR:** Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Kara Keith, Reta Rupich and Lynn Colletti **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0-0)**

School Advisory Councils Communication

Ms. Federspiel advised this topic is something she had approached Mr. Wood about, looking for more communication between the school councils and the school committee. Ms. Federspiel advised she is not asking the school committee to get involved in the councils, this is just to keep the communication open between councils and school committees. Mr. Wood has asked the councils to come to our meetings once a month and report out on what's going on in their buildings. Council presentations will be staggered and will begin at our next meeting.

Safety at Nashoba Regional High School

Mr. Wood advised what he wrote in his report and many citizens who are here tonight have shared with him, this is something that as administrators is dealt with on a regular basis in terms of looking at the overall organization and safety of our schools. We prided our district for the ability to look at every student as an individual and take their needs into consideration as well as the needs of the overall school. Mr. Wood advised there was a very significant event over the summer impacting three of our students and as stated by the law there needs to be substantial detrimental effect on the school to be able to exclude a student. Mr. Wood stated the way these situations have been always been handled is to make sure the student attends school. Mr. Wood stated our job is to make sure all students are safe, we do have a system in place for security, it always has been in place and it there for every student. Mr. Wood stated he would like to compliment Dr. Graham, his administrative staff, the guidance staff and the entire faculty at the high school for doing a great job in handling a "different" kind of opening to the school year.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Ms. Federspiel reiterated she believes most of the public attendees are here to discuss their concerns of the safety at the high school. Ms. Federspiel again advised that this topic is not a voting issue for the school committee but that does not mean the topic cannot be discussed and citizens are welcome to voice their concerns at this forum.

Citizens from the member towns attended the meeting to address their concerns regarding the safety at the high school and the allowance to two students under house arrest to be allowed to attend school. Some the residents that attended are David Elkins, Kim Seatter, Paula Bachtell, Therese Magnusson, Elizabeth Aarons, Kathy King, Douglas and Eleanore Recko, Sarah Kilkeny and Ellen Piccioli (not all attendees are listed as the sign in sheet was not completed).

The following concerns were raised and comments made were:

- Q:** If the school committee does not have jurisdiction over the Superintendent and his decision making who does?
- A:** Jeff Odell stated that the school committee does not have jurisdiction over the day to day decisions of the Superintendent; the school committee hires the Superintendent and therefore can decide not to renew his contract.
- Q:** Can a zero tolerance policy be established, and would we be able to achieve that tonight and make a decision based on that?
- A:** Ms. Federspiel advised a policy revision was not on the posted agenda for tonight's meeting so therefore cannot be addressed tonight. Ms. Federspiel also stated there is a Policy Subcommittee that could address that on their next agenda.
- Q:** Is there any way for the school to know if a student brings a weapon into school, there are no metal detectors and is the school committee thinking about the civil liability of a law suit if something were to happen with these students who have past history? Is the policy to be reactive and not proactive?
- A:** Mr. Wood stated, no we have no way of knowing if these students, or any students has a weapon on them when they enter school. Mr. Wood also stated the administration does not act reactive to situations; we act respond to information before a situation occurs.
- Q:** What is the definition of a substantial detrimental effect?
- A:** Mr. Wood replied there can be many different components; it can be a number of students coming to guidance reporting they can't concentrate; it can be an event that takes the focus off learning.
- Q:** Who made the decision to allow the students to attend school?
- A:** Dr. Graham stated the law states it is the decision of the Principal to make the decision to exclude a student from school, and that although he did consult with the Superintendent; it was his decision to allow the students to remain in school.
- Q:** Do you have enough past knowledge, being a new principal to make this kind of decision?
- A:** Dr. Graham replied that obviously he does not have history with the students, but he has spoken to his administration and faculty of have both knowledge and history with these students. Dr. Graham stated this was not a decision he made lightly and it boiled down to two things for him, first is the safety of all students, and prior to the opening of school I was convinced, based on the information I had, we would have a safe opening and currently I still believe we have a safe environment. The second issue was the law, as a principal I have an obligation to follow the law. Dr. Graham stated he would be comfortable with changing his decision if he received additional information that would warrant him to do so.
- Q:** What steps are being taken to make sure the accused students are monitored in the hallways, bathrooms and being searched?
- A:** Dr. Graham replied the students are not currently being searched but they are going to be and are aware, as are the parents they are subject to search of their person and property at any time.
- Q:** We do not have a full time police detail, correct? It was suggested may now is the time to look at that option.
- A:** No, the Bolton police do regular visits and walk throughs.

In closure Ms. Federspiel stated the meeting will conclude at 9:00 pm as she believes most concerns have been voiced and previously voiced concerns are now being repeated

MOTION

Reta Rupich made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 pm seconded by Jeff Odell **IN FAVOR:** Nancy Federspiel, Maureen Busch, Kathy Owen, Jeffrey Odell, Julie Fay, Kara Keith, Reta Rupich and Lynn Colletti **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (8-0-0)**

Respectfully Submitted,
Aleta Masterson
Executive Assistant