

NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

November 15, 2007

SCHOOL COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE: Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, Richard Fly, Lynn Colletti (arrived 6:14), Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Mel Govindan, Cristina Shea

ABSENT: David Horne

ADMINISTRATION IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Wood, Superintendent of Schools, Sally Sullivan, Director of Teaching and Learning, Jeremy Roche, Principal of NRHS, Suzanne Wintle

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cathy Giunta called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. in the Office of the Superintendent.

APPROVAL OF THE WARRANTS OF OCTOBER 4, 2007

<u>WARRANT NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
2832	11/16/07	VENDOR	\$254,407.52
2833	11/16/07	BENEFIT	\$422,829.44
2830	11/16/07	PAYROLL	\$ 1,038,751.90

MOTION

Monica Campobasso made a motion to approve the warrants as detailed in the memo dated 11/15/07 and noted above and seconded by Brian Burke **IN FAVOR:** Richard Fly, Monica CampoBasso, Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Brian Burke, and Mel Govindan **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0-0)**

APPROVAL OF THE November 1, 2007 MINUTES

MOTION

Brian Burke made a motion to approve the minutes November 1, 2007, as furnished and possibly amended and seconded by Mel Govindan. **IN FAVOR:** Richard Fly, Monica CampoBasso, Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, and Brian Burke **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0-1, Govindan)**

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Wood reviewed the correspondence in the evening's packet, which included:

- ◆ Memo from Massachusetts Sports and Physical Fitness Foundation, INC.
- ◆ MCAS analysis slides by school
- ◆ FY 09 ADMIN Budget Letter
- ◆ Facilities Draft Minutes, November 9 Meeting
- ◆ Lamoreaux and Pagano Draft options for Admin Space
- ◆ Finance Draft Minutes, November 9 Meeting
- ◆ An email correspondence from Stow resident Ellen Sturgis was mentioned and will be included in the next meeting's packet

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

(The Superintendent's Report is available in full on the NRSD website at <http://www.nrsd.net>)

Mr. Wood reviewed his written report to the committee. Topics included:

- ◆ High School Schedule Proposed Change
- ◆ Invitation to Parents to participate in calendar committee
- ◆ Tri Town Update
 - In addition to the report, Ms. Giunta mentioned that Bolton Selectman Curt Plante asked if the District should explore through a survey the desire for a regional middle

school. Ms. Giunta responded that PK -8 is the town's area of interest for building needs and the town already has a mechanism when it conducts its town's census to ask such questions. Mr. Burke added that selectmen committed to having the PEAG budgets reviewed by district administration for possible connections with the schools.

- ◆ Student accident in front of the high school
- ◆ EMT Recognition of 20 years of service

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Ex-Officio Report by Ms. Shea

Ms. Shea reported that currently Nashoba is the site of a lot of old and new. Following are items included in her report:

As fall comes to a close, so do fall sports at Nashoba. Last Saturday at the district invitational in Gardener, Nashoba Cross Country proved itself. The boys' team came in 1st overall, as the district champions, and will race this Saturday at the state competition. Senior Anthony Raduazo, who broke the school's record for the 5K a few weeks back, came in 1st. The girls came in 5th overall, and two of our runners, Lindsey Horowitz, and Molly Porcher are going to race in states this weekend. Also, Nashoba's cheerleaders and Field hockey have made it far this year. The Varsity Cheer squad qualified for regionals and came in 3rd at the competition. Our Field Hockey team left the season as 3nd in the district, losing in the 2nd game of the three district games.

For football, things are far from over. The annual Thanksgiving Day game is home this year against Northmiddlesex. The team has had a lot of success, last Friday, winning against Oakmont.

Luckily, winter sports are coming to fill the void of fall sports gone. On Tuesday, Nashoba had its winter sports meeting. This year's winter sports include indoor track, wrestling, basketball, ice hockey, and skiing.

During the lull between sport seasons, Nashoba held its 2nd annual matball tournament. Unfortunately the AP Calc team was quickly eliminated. We also have 3 performances of our fall play this weekend and our powder puff game tomorrow, run by our Student Council. Keeping the traditions alive, Student Council is also running its Thanksgiving Food drive from now until Thanksgiving.

At the same time, many students can smile about the abundance of field trips lately, including sociology's jail field trip, and senior English's Hamlet field trip (we are going into Boston tomorrow). Students are also smiling at the near vacation. Leading up to the vacation is Nashoba's spirit week, concluding in Wed.'s pep rally, which is sure to be an interesting display of Nashoba's character.

That's the news at Nashoba right now!

- ◆ At the conclusion of Ms Shea's report, Ms. Giunta mentioned that Ms. Shea was chosen as the recipient of the Bridges to Nicaragua Award, enabling her to travel for a week to Nicaragua with a medical team to assist and learn about medical needs, culture, and language. This award is sponsored by a physician who lives in Bolton, Brian Lisse.

Facilities Subcommittee, by Mr. Govindan

Mr. Govindan reported on the recent meeting with Lamoreaux and Pagano, and expressed his disappointment that the options did not include looking at two buildings in Lancaster. Mr. Adams asked that there be financials included that show the cost of these two options and others that are potential options. Ms. Campobasso expressed concern that Admin space at the high school would take away from student space expansion in the future. Mr. Wood stated that the Lancaster properties can be options, however, when the architects met with Lancaster officials there was a conflicting message as to how much space would be available. The question of purchase and long term lease also remain an issue for the Lancaster properties.

Finance Subcommittee, by Mr. Burke

Mr. Burke reported out for the finance committee noting that the committee asked that the issue of Police Details at the high school (school resource officer) be examined and was assured by Mr. King that the Policy Committee will be looking into the matter.

Policy Subcommittee, by Mr. Adams

No Report

Personnel Subcommittee, by Mr. Adams

No Report

SPED PAC, by Mr. Burke

Mr. Burke shared that Ms. Bobbi Laird, School Psychologist for NASHOBA, presented on the special education process, and families' rights. He also announced that there will be a holiday celebration on December 12 at 3:30 at the Florence Sawyer School to meet and greet for families with students having special needs and their siblings.

ESBS by Ms. Colletti

Ms. Colletti informed the committee that there will be an informational meeting for interested parties in the Owner's Project Manager's role for the Stow Building Project on Friday, November 16, 2007 at 10:30 at the Town Building.

CCC by Cathy Giunta

Ms. Giunta reiterated that there will be a reception for Alumni at the Annual Thanksgiving Game on Thursday, November 22, from 9:00 am to 10:00 am in the cafeteria.

NEW BUSINESS

MCAS Action Plans

Ms. Sally Sullivan, Director of Teaching and Learning, gave an overview of the MCAS Action Plans throughout the district. (See Slide Presentation Attachment). Ms. Sullivan highlighted student success plans, greater monitors on a more regular basis, and ability to respond with professional development at the time of need. Ms. Sullivan also reviewed the assessments that we do currently throughout the district. Ms. Campobasso asked why, with the assessments being done, more was not done at Mary Rowlandson (MRE). Mr. Wood responded that it's not that teachers did not respond, the question is whether they used the right interventions for the right period of time to tell whether things were working in time to know whether they were performing well against the standards assessed in the MCAS. Mr. Govindan followed with why if we know the series aren't teaching basic math, why we don't use something else. Mr. Wood responded that the series do teach basic math. He went on to say that teachers need to assess more regularly, and use a spiraling approach to maintain information on competency of basic skills so that students don't regress. Mr. Burke added that the graphs provided by the Teaching and Learning Department were excellent, but wanted to know when the committee could expect to see the data on students with IEP and their impact on MRE. Mr. Wood responded it's being worked on, but possibly as early as our next meeting. He also added that everyone should not forget that the committee wants to see more in the proficient and advanced range as well. Mr. Burke asked if the school slides in the packet tonight could be placed on the web site.

High School Schedule

Part I – "The Build"

Mr. Jeremy Roche, Principal of Nashoba Regional High School, gave an overview of how the schedule gets built. This process impacts section choices, class sizes, and class placement in the schedule. (See Slide Presentation attached.) After the presentation, Mr. Wood inquired as to how we prepare then for the students who move in over the summer and Mr. Roche explained that other than identifying the number of sections early on, it was difficult to prepare for the impact of an unknown student or number of students. Ms. Campobasso asked about the number of combined level courses taught, to which Mr. Roche responded that there were a few, mostly in foreign language. There was one in Technology Education and in Drafting.

Part II – “Daily Schedule”

Mr. Jeremy Roche, Principal of Nashoba Regional High School, gave an overview (See presentation slides) of a daily schedule proposal reached on 11-14-07 as a result of the 2005 NEASC report's recommendation that the school examine its current schedule and look to provide more equity and choice in the allotted time for student learning in all content. The new schedule will call for fewer courses that will be assigned five credits, and therefore fewer additional laboratory periods. Mr. Roche stressed that the expectation was that science will continue to use laboratory experiences to teach the application of concepts. Mr. Govindan asked about how the rotating block works, to which Mr. Roche referred to previous slides showing the movement of the 75 minute period throughout the seven day cycle. Mr. Govindan followed with a question of how the current array of 5, 6, and 8 credit courses restrict student choices. Mr. Roche explained that when the students take these courses it limits the courses they can take because there are two classes scheduled for some portion of the current 8 day cycle. Mr. Roche added that there are honors exploratory science classes that are four (4) credit courses and the Engineering to the future class is a four (4) credit course. Ms. Campobasso asked Science Department Chairperson, Dan D'Amore, what his thoughts were of the new schedule. Mr. D'Amore said that he has taught at Nashoba for over thirty years and this was the first time that there was ever truly a consensus on anything. When asked how this new schedule meets the issue raised in the NEASC report, Mr. Roche responded that the choice now will reside clearly with the student and parents as to how best to meet science requirements with either a four, five, six or eight credit course, and will depend on their desires, interests and future goals. Ms. Campobasso expressed her hope that the guidance counselors and science teachers will advise, mentor and coach students, especially those that have a glimmer of interest, but might choose not to take the course because of competing demands. Mr. Adams shared his experience for both of his students when they had to take a science class during the summer because the schedule did not allow his children to take Latin and Band as well.

Mr. Govindan asked if there was any interest in looking at adding an honors chemistry and physics class. Mr. Roche said that it was a topic of discussion, but that was concern that such a move would drain the AP class enrollment. He added that there is also an issue with why have honors when it is weighted the same as AP.

Mr. Burke asked about the drop period schedule model. Mr. Roche explained that this is when the schedule had seven periods but each day dropped one so that in a cycle of seven days every class was seen only six times, but noted that the faculty overwhelmingly valued the need to see students every day.

Ms. Colletti inquired as to the relationship between the Leadership and Organization goal and the schedule to which Mr. Roche explained that it was one of about fifteen strands that define the goal.

NRHS student John Stefos presented a petition to the Superintendent of Schools, and to the School Committee, on behalf of over two hundred students, supporting *not* losing laboratory classes. Mr. Wood thanked Mr. Stefos and complimented him on how he and his fellow students engaged in the civic process to communicate their opinions. Mr. Roche and Ms. Giunta shared similar comments.

Ms. Giunta opened the floor for comments from the parents and citizens who gathered for the meeting. Mr. Jim Gray, Stow, said this schedule sounded a lot like his experience at Blue Hill Vocational Technical School. Ms. Janet Moffat, Stow, a biology teacher herself in another district, asked if this schedule would allow teachers to cover the frameworks? How do I communicate with my child about the choices, where do I learn about the differences? She ended with sixty five minutes is too short. Mr. Roche responded that they are currently examining the curriculum so that the timing is right to make this adjustment and to look at when in the curriculum they will provide application experiences. He pointed out that Nashoba was number one in the Commonwealth with Technology Education MCAS this past year. Ms. Ellen Sturgis, Stow, pointed out that students have three years of exposure to the Technology Education standards, however. She went on further to ask if we are at risk of changing something that is working (referring to current academic success). She was concerned that the school is placing too much of a burden on the student. Mr. Roche responded saying that students will have to make the choice, and their other choices will play a role in what they ultimately take for a final schedule. Currently only about 70% of the students get all or most of the courses they choose. Most schools are closer to about 80%. He was not sure if they would get to 80% with this change. Ms. Susan Holmes, Stow, asked if under the current proposal it will meet college requirements for a laboratory course. Mr. Roche said yes, and Mr. Govindan concurred. Ms. Giunta added that we shouldn't confuse the fact that a four credit course is not a laboratory based course. Mr. Monture, Lancaster, asked if

Nashoba requires laboratory courses. Mr. Roche said not specifically, no. Mr. Ed Deluca, Stow, asked how much it would help by adding additional music classes like orchestra. Mr. Roche noted that he hasn't looked at that in particular. Ms. Moffat, Stow, asked if the school could look at having a two year AP course, noting that it might open the schedule as it has done in her school. Mr. Roche said he would investigate that further.

OLD BUSINESS

There were none.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Kate Weiss-Gordon, Bolton, inquired as to the status of the turf field project and whether if it was not totally funded by a capital campaign, the school committee was prepared to support it through operations. Ms. Giunta responded that nothing was final but that the committee was committed to addressing what has been outlined in terms of the deficiencies. Mr. Wood added that the proximity of being within zone one for the well, limiting chemical fertilizers, and the lack of success because of overuse with organic fertilizers and the general consensus that it will help address the field conditions for the other fields at the high school made this option a high priority. Ms. Giunta stated that the problem wasn't that the current field can't grow grass. The problem is that there is not enough field space to support all our sports, and just adding grass only really addresses having a football field where Nashoba needs an athletic field that would support other sports besides football. Ms. Weiss-Gordon was encouraged to contact Mr. Spratt for further details about turf management and suggestions that the University of Massachusetts had a turf management program that might be of assistance.

Executive Session (9:05 PM)

MOTION

Motion moved by Ms. CampoBasso to enter into Executive Session, to include Michael L. Wood, Superintendent of Schools, for the purposes of discussing negotiation strategy for Units A and C and that there will be no further public business at the conclusion of the session, seconded by Mr. Govindan **IN FAVOR:** Richard Fly, Monica CampoBasso, Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Mel Govindan, and Lynne Colletti **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0-0) (Note: Mr. Burke left prior to the start of the executive session.)**

MOTION

Motion moved by Ms. CampoBasso to adjourn Seconded by Mr. Adams **IN FAVOR:** Richard Fly, Monica CampoBasso, Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, and Lynne Colletti **VOTED AND PASSED 6-0-0 UNANIMOUS**

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael L. Wood
Superintendent of Schools