



REGULAR MEETING
New Bedford School Committee
New Bedford High School, 230 Hathaway Blvd., New Bedford, MA
Monday, April 12, 2021
6:00 P.M.

This Meeting was fully remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G. L. c. 30A, Section 20.

PRESENT: MAYOR JON MITCHELL, MR. BRUCE OLIVEIRA, MR. CHRISTOPHER COTTER, MR. JACK LIVRAMENTO, MR. JOSHUA AMARAL, MS. COLLEEN DAWICKI

ABSENT: MR. JOHN OLIVEIRA

IN ATTENDANCE: MR. THOMAS ANDERSON, MS. MARJORIE FERNANDES, MS. KAREN TREADUP, MR. ANDREW O'LEARY, MS. HEATHER EMSLEY (REMOTE), MR. BRIAN TURNER (REMOTE), MR. ARTHUR MOTTA, MS. JENNIFER CARLING, MS. NADIA ABOUCHANAB (STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE)

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The roll call was as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr. John Oliveira – Absent | Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes |
| Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes | Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes |
| Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes | Mayor Mitchell – Yes |
| Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes | 6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent |

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Jack Livramento and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to approve the February 8, 2021 meeting minutes as presented to the School Committee.

The vote was as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr. John Oliveira – Absent | Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes |
| Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes | Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes |
| Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes | Mayor Mitchell - Yes |
| Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes | 6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent |

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Jack Livramento and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to approve the March 18, 2021 Transportation Sub-Committee meeting minutes as presented to the School Committee.

The vote was as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr. John Oliveira – Absent | Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes |
| Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes | Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes |

Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes

Mayor Mitchell - Yes
6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Christopher Cotter and seconded by Mr. Joshua Amaral to accept and place on file the public comments that were included in the School Committee member meeting packets.

The vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mayor Mitchell - Yes
6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent

4. *STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT*

Student Representative, Ms. Nadia Abouchanab began her report by informing the Committee that all students who are not registered fully remote are back to school full-time. She shared that her peers including herself feel a sense of relief and normalcy to be back and feel safe, and guidelines are being followed. Listed are some items she updated the Committee on:

- Wednesday, April 14th there will be a grade level assembly taking place via Microsoft TEAMS
- Senior Night was held on Saturday, April 10th for New Bedford High School (NBHS) football players, cheerleaders and band members.
- The Student Advisory Committee will be sponsoring a Clean Up day on Saturday, April 24th at Fort Taber located at 1000C Rodney French Blvd. from 11AM – 2PM.
- NBHS will be hosting a Financial Aid workshop on Saturday, May 1st.
- NBHS Drama Club recorded a “Shakespeare Special” for the special needs students.
- Three NBHS students were accepted into Harvard University and Ms. Abouchanab herself has made the decision to commit to Suffolk University.

5. *SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT*

Superintendent Thomas Anderson began his report with the in-person instruction expansion of the upper level grades. He shared elementary schools will be phased in by April 5th, middle schools by April 9th and NBHS grade 9 by April 5th & 6th and grades 10th – 12th will start on April 7th.

The Superintendent informed the Committee of supports for curriculum and instruction within the schools: tools and resources for high-quality learning and outcomes, expanding technology access including access for grades K-6, providing high-quality literacy materials and instruction, and supporting Facilities with additional building service workers. He also shared strategies that will be prioritized: meeting social-emotional needs of students and families, hiring school-based parent specialist, providing school-based social workers, and developing more focused and engaged students in grades K-6 with increasing access to art, music, science, physical education and health.

Deputy Superintendent, Ms. Karen Treadup went on to review the accountability progress that was made prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. She shared the participation rates of 11th and 12th graders in advanced coursework. She stated in 2018, 29.2% participated, in 2019, 34.1% participated and in 2020 (Covid-19 onset) it increased to 41.6% participating. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) set a target of 38.6% and NBPS exceeded that by +7.5%. The Superintendent stated that there was an increase in Advanced Placement (AP) testing in spite of the pandemic. He reviewed total enrollment in testing from school years 2016-2020 and

highlighted an increase of 96 students from 2019 to 2020. He added there was a 50%+ pass rate in 2020 and went on to review some SAT and PSAT participation. Member, Mr. Christopher Cotter put in a request for the amount of students participating in each of the AP courses being offered at the high school.

Ms. Treadup shared the chronic absenteeism rates and reviewed the attendance data, as well as, New Bedford Public School (NBPS) rates in comparison to state chronic absenteeism rates. She then shared the grade level rates for students meeting and exceeding expectations with results from Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) assessments from the beginning, middle and end of the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. Member, Mr. Bruce Oliveira asked if Ms. Treadup could provide the Committee with chronic absenteeism rates from the gateway cities in comparison to NBPS. Ms. Treadup responded that she would at a later date. Member, Ms. Colleen Dawicki had concerns about what would be done for learning loss. Ms. Treadup stated there is growth and NBPS's is moving in the right direction. She added that a variety of support programs are being added to address the learning loss: robust after-school and summer programs, tutoring and accelerated academies during April school vacation. Ms. Dawicki asked if information can be provided at the end of the school year as to who took advantage of the learning loss programs being offered.

Mr. Brian Turner, Curriculum, Data & Assessment Manager from the Office of Curriculum and Instruction presented an update to the Committee on the performance data and initiatives going on in the middle schools. He shared all three middle schools have new key math and reading initiatives. Overall progress is being made towards improvement through primary focus areas: building capacity of leaders and staff, strengthening core instruction and curriculum and establishing systematic data analysis for student achievement. He went on to share the DESE accountability data for 2018 and 2019 in English Language Arts (ELA) achievements and ELA growth. He added that DESE did not issue accountability determinations for the 2019-2020 school year due to the cancellation of state assessments and school closures related to Covid-19. Mr. Turner reviewed the district increase in the beginning of the year through STAR testing, i-Ready Math and i-Ready Reading placement gains. He reviewed the math and reading initiatives and concluded his update with attendance and engagement initiatives, including: attendance intervention tracking, home visits (155+), correspondence (1,800+) and enhancing electronic communications.

Executive Director of Strategic, Initiatives & Partnerships, Ms. Jennifer Ferland provided an update in regards to NBPS's Family, Institute for Student Success (FISS) program. Ms. Ferland shared that the Carlos Pacheco and Hayden McFadden Elementary Schools recently had graduating classes with 15 family participants in each class. Not all schools have the program and she is working to make this available at schools across the district. She shared that there has been positive feedback and families have requested to attend additional sessions. She added that it is a nine week program for families to learn how to work with teachers, what to expect from parent-teacher conferences, what attendance means, what is testing and how it works, etc. The program is offered in multiple languages. She concluded by sharing some partnership opportunities that are currently going on with the community partners.

Upon completion of the school updates the Superintendent began his fiscal year 2022 budget proposal. He began with the focus of essential areas of growth which included: access through equity, standards-based/grade tasks and assignments, instruction that fosters student thinking, deep student engagement and high expectations, bilingual staff. He went on to review his main NBPS 2022 investment priorities which included NBPS's will support classroom instruction and educators, including high quality curriculum, positive learning environments and bolstered instruction resources, as well as, support children and families by transforming their experience with direct supports for their critical needs that impact learning in the classroom.

He then reminded the Committee of the student population trends and poverty impact including access and equity within the district.

The Superintendent's budget priorities focus on leveraging partnerships to create more opportunities. One being, expansion of middle school academics: Foreign Languages, Algebra I, Civics, Dual Enrollment and International Baccalaureate programs. Some current and potential partnerships NBPS's has are: Greater New Bedford Youth Alliance containing 50 partners, a wide variety of local childcare providers, leadership collaborative projects, partnerships with higher education universities and colleges. He then reviewed the current key technology investments in place: School-wide Internet Access, Munis, Microsoft 365 agreement, ASPEC Student Information System, phone system, educator evaluation, web hosting communication applications, School Dude and Frontline AESOP attendance system. The goal is to continue to support and enhance the technology provided to students, teachers and staff.

Additionally, the priority programs which align with the goals, objectives and outcomes in the NBPS strategic plan, include: increasing student access to supports, expanded access to Pre-K, early literacy programs for Pre-K and early elementary grades, early college programs, high-quality and aligned curriculum, diversify educators and administration, leadership programs for schools, expand staffing for arts, athletics and enrichment including strategic schedules, recruit and retain hard to staff schools and positions, improve facilities to create healthy and safe school environments. The Superintendent shared that to date over 600 classrooms have been visited so far this year and the following results are seen within classrooms:

- Displays of learning
- Excellent student engagement
- Instructional dialogue in classrooms
- Trends/patterns illustrating that instruction is more targeted and aligned to DESE standards
- Technology infused in daily lessons
- Students demonstrating more critical and analytical thinking skills
- Students being challenged with more higher level assignments

Some of the curriculum investment priorities that are planned for the 2022 fiscal year are: benchmark assessment tools to accurately measure student growth, grade 3 reading comprehension and writing, special education and English learner space options and tier 1 supports, reading comprehension programs and writing strategies for math, as well as, K-8 literacy leadership, physical education/health and more offerings for the music program. The Superintendent provided a quick review of the key Human Capital investments for fiscal year 2020 and 2021 investments moving forward for 2021 and ended with a quick review of his main buckets moving forward. Superintendent Anderson closed out his budget presentation with Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Mr. Andrew O'Leary providing insight into the NBPS fiscal year 2022 balanced budget and operating budget including a breakdown of salaries, wages and general school expenses.

6. OTHER REPORTS

Finance & Operations - Mr. Andrew O'Leary, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations began with the Function Code Report. He shared that NBPS is slightly ahead of last year on the Function Code report compared to last year at this time. He then presented the General Expense Report, the Health Insurance Spenddown, the Salary Report, Transfer and Grant reports.

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter that the Transfers be approved as presented to the School Committee.

The vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Jack Livramento and seconded by Mr. Joshua Amaral to allow the Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee to sign off on transfers for the remainder of the fiscal year, June 30, 2021.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Joshua Amaral to accept the Finance and Operations reports as presented to the School Committee.

The vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

A. Personnel Report – Ms. Heather Emsley, Executive Director of Human Capital Services (HCS), shared that there were 14 appointments with 6 from Unit A, 1 from Unit B, 2 from AFSCME, 1 paraprofessional and 4 non-union, as well as, 1 Unit A retirements. Ms. Emsley added that there were 7 resignations with 1 from Unit A, 3 non-union, and 3 AFSCME. She concluded there were 27 transfers with 16 in-building from Unit A and 11 district-wide from Unit A.

Ms. Emsley updated the Committee on the following:

- NBPS’s Paraprofessional bid process is in the final stage of completion.
- NBPS’s Spring Step Challenge for employees started, Monday April 12th.
- DESE approved another year of emergency licensures.

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Joshua Amaral and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to place the Personnel report on file as presented to the School Committee.

The vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

B. School Committee Report – Chairman, Mayor Mitchell thanked everyone for their efforts in smoothly transitioning students back to classes full-time and as he has repeated often, another thank you to the NBPS custodial staff for their hard work and dedication over the past year.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing – School Choice 2021-2022

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Joshua Amaral and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to OPEN the Public Hearing for the 2021-2022 School Choice option.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Joshua Amaral and seconded by Mr. Bruce Oliveira to approve the 2021-2022 School Choice option.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Jack Livramento to CLOSE the Public Hearing for the 2021-2022 School Choice option.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

B. School Calendars

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Jack Livramento and seconded by Mr. Bruce Oliveira to approve the 2021-2022 District School Calendar and draft calendars for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years.

The vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

C. School Transportation Contract Renewal

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Jack Livramento to approve the transportation contract renewals for the 2021-2022 school year as presented to the School Committee.

The vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

D. Chief Technology Officer

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Joshua Amaral and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to approve a title change for the Information Technology Manager Position title to Chief Technology Officer as presented to the School Committee.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

E. Superintendent Review

Mayor Mitchell gave an overview of the mid-year evaluation process. He shared strong communications between the Committee and Superintendent Anderson and made the public aware that mid-year reviews are not formal due to the conversations that the Committee has publicly and privately with the Superintendent. The Committee moved on with its meeting agenda.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to enter into Executive Session for the following purpose (3):

To discuss bargaining updates with respect to negotiations with union and non-union personnel:

- NBSSU
- Federation of Paraprofessionals
- Deputy Superintendent
- Executive Director of Special Education & Student Services

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

9. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

A. Ratification vote for employment agreement with Mr. Matthew Kravitz for the Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services to begin on July 1, 2021.

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Joshua Amaral to authorize the employment of Mr. Matthew Kravitz as the Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services and approve the contract as presented.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	<i>6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent</i>

10. ADJOURN

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to adjourn the School Committee meeting.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Absent
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mayor Mitchell - Yes
6-Yeas, 0-Nays, 1-Absent

Meeting ended: 9:05 pm

Submitted by:



Marjorie Fernandes
Senior Executive Assistant
Recording Secretary, School Committee

Reviewed by:



Thomas Anderson
Superintendent
Secretary, School Committee