



REGULAR MEETING
New Bedford School Committee
New Bedford High School, 230 Hathaway Blvd., New Bedford, MA
Monday, February 8, 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 (remotely), MR. JOHN OLIVEIRA

ABSENT:

IN ATTENDANCE: MR. THOMAS ANDERSON, MS. MARJORIE FERNANDES, MS. KAREN TREADUP, MR. ANDREW O'LEARY (remotely), MS. HEATHER EMSLEY, MR. ARTHUR MOTTA, MR. ROBERT TETREALT, NADIA ABOUCHANAB (Student Representative)

Meeting Start: 6:06 pm

- 1. *CALL TO ORDER*

- 2. *ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS*

The roll call was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

Mayor Jon Mitchell started the meeting with the 2021 School Committee Vice-Chair member election and invited a motion from the Committee.

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Joshua Amaral and seconded by Mr. Bruce Oliveira to nominate, Ms. Colleen Dawicki to the position of 2021 Vice-Chairperson for the New Bedford School Committee.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Jack Livramento and seconded by Mr. Joshua Amaral to accept the approval of the December 14, 2020 School Committee meeting minutes.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Joshua Amaral and seconded by Mr. Bruce Oliveira to accept the approval of the January 11, 2021 School Committee meeting minutes.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. John Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to accept the public comments and place on file.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes	Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes
Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes	Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes
Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes	Mayor Mitchell - Yes
Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes	7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

5. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Mayor Mitchell introduced and welcomed newly elected Student Representative, Ms. Nadia Abouchanab, Class of 2021, and recognized Ms. Hailee Duarte as the alternate student representative. Ms. Abouchanab shared events and news happening with New Bedford High School (NBHS) students. A few items she highlighted to the Committee were:

- Winter sports have begun. Boys and Girls Basketball teams had games this week with one being a home game for the Girls team tomorrow, February 9, 2021.
- All class officer positions have been filled including, the National Honor Society's and Student Advisory Council student representatives.
- Class officers are trying to be creative in getting seniors motivated and not discouraged in finishing the school year with the pandemic. Plans are in the works for an "Adopt a senior" mentor program working with underclassmen.
- The deadline for the class yearbook has been extended to August. It's been difficult for the yearbook staff to assemble due to Covid-19.
- There will be Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) workshops. The senior class has teamed up with the Gear Up program to help students get started.

6. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Thomas Anderson reminded the School Committee that it is the time of the year to look ahead at the budget. He started with a review of the New Bedford Public Schools (NBPS) 2021-2022 Investment Priorities. He stated the major buckets items are the areas of Technology, Human Capital, Extra-Curricular Activities and Facilities. NBPS will continue to dig deeper and move forward with its goals.

Technology

- Resources
- Software and Hardware

Human Capital

- Capacity Building
- Curriculum
- Special Education
- Technology Support

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Academic Clubs
- Athletics
- Performing Arts Program
- Enhanced Music Program

Facilities (grounds)

- Continue developing a Master Facilities Implementation Plan
- School Internal and External
- MSBA Projects

The Superintendent went on to discuss what the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) development plan will focus on. The four commitments were: Talent Development, Conditions for Student Success, Enhanced Core Instruction, and targeted Student Supports. The plan will intentionally focus on student subgroups who can achieve at the same high levels as their peers. It will adopt, deepen or continue specific evidence based programs that will close opportunity and achievement gaps and allocate resources to support it. It will also monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement amongst the subgroup. Family engagement will be included to access how best to meet a students' needs.

The Superintendent listed the following priority programs that are aligned with the focus, goals, objectives and outcomes in the NBPS Strategic Plan.

- *Increase student supports for social emotional/mental health and professional development for staff*
- *Expanded access to full-day, high-quality pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds, including potential collaboration with other local providers*
- *Research-based early literacy programs in Pre-K and early elementary grades*
- *Early College programs (under-represented in higher education)*
- *Support educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum*
- *Diversify the educator/admin. workforce (recruitment and retention)*
- *Leadership pipeline development programs for schools*
- *Staffing to expand student access to arts, athletics, and enrichment, and strategic scheduling to enable common planning time for teachers*

- *Strategies to recruit* and retain educators/administrators in hard-to-staff schools and positions
- *Facilities improvements* to create healthy and safe school environments

The continued investments that NBPS will focus on are:

- Strengthen Staff Development
- Maintain and Enhance Student Services
- Upgrade our Learning Spaces
- Address Yearly Contractual Increases
- Create a Healthy Organization (climate and culture)
- Expand Social Emotional Supports (teaching and learning process)
- Enhance Instructional Leadership (administrator, teacher support)
- Leverage Dedicated Parents and Supporters
- Eliminate the Opportunity Gap

The Superintendent told the Committee that Community Feedback Sessions were held to focus on reviewing the district goals and solicited feedback in regards to the increased funding stipulated by the SOA. The sessions were held on the following days:

- Community Engagement with students (Boys & Girls Club): Feb. 10
- Staff Feedback sessions: Feb. 11, 24, 26
- Planning Team Sessions: Feb.14 and March 13
- Community Engagement Forum: Feb. 27 (6:15 PM–7:30 PM)
- Community (YWCA) March 3 (5:30 PM)
- Buttonwood Senior Center: March 4 (7:00 PM)
- Community Organizations: March 16 (8:30 AM - 11:30 AM)

He went on to explain how NBPS will assess the impact on the teaching and learning process regarding the districts priorities. Future discussions are in the planning stages for: Special Education supports (*co-teaching, staffing and supports*), English Language supports (*staffing, translations, and programming*), Social Services to support social-emotional and physical health , Diversify educator and administrative workforce, Hire staff that best support student performance, College and career readiness (*pathways and partnerships*), Buildings/facilities improvements (*academic programming and safety*), Community partnerships and wraparound services, Expand Pre-Kindergarten (*increase seats for 3 and 4 year old's*) and Dropout Prevention (*increased graduation rates*).

The Superintendent shared a few general updates with the Committee on Learning Loss. He shared that as a country, significant investments need to be made to catch up and prevent further learning loss. NBPS is reviewing how to prevent further learning loss right now. NBPS has been working together with other districts administratively to collaborate: Fall River, Taunton, Bridgewater-Raynham, Somerset-Berkley and Seekonk.

He reminded the Committee that the NBPS Covid-19 tracker is being updated two days a week and the current cases as of the last ten days (1/31/21) are as follows:

	# In Building	% in Building
Staff	222	9.1%
Students	<u>396</u>	<u>4.0%</u>
TOTAL	618	5.1%
Last 10 Days	14 Staff, 22 Students	
	36 Total	

Committee member, Mr. Jack Livramento asked what NBPS is going to do to recoup the learning loss. The Superintendent shared one of the things being done is tutoring. NBPS is contracting with an outside tutoring company to provide 24-hour access to tutoring and will target grades 6 through 12. An additional piece going on is to be able to pay NBPS teachers to participate in tutoring students in grades K through 5.

The Superintendent closed out his report with information in regards to students transitioning back into classrooms. He understands that parents are nervous, but the process of returning is currently being looked at. It entails a lot of logistics, schools are working on the details and trying to find a balance for the return. Deputy Superintendent, Ms. Karen Treadup added that after-school and summer programming is being looked at and offered to targeted students.

7. OTHER REPORTS

Finance & Operations – Mr. Andrew O’Leary, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations began with the Function Code report. He brought the Committee attention to the budget number being worked with, \$179,162,500. He shared that there was \$6,503,133 in transfer and adjustments which gave a new working budget of \$185,665,633 and Chapter 70 funds increased to 3.2%. He added that he is working with the schools to ensure ordering of supplies are done at this time of year. Mr. O’Leary ran through the Health Insurance Spenddown, revolving accounts, salary report, transfer report and concluded with the grant report.

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. John Oliveira to accept the Transfer report as presented to the School Committee.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes

Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes

Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes

Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes

Mayor Mitchell - Yes

7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Christopher Cotter to accept the Finance & Operations report as presented to the School Committee.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes

Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes

Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes

Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes

Mayor Mitchell - Yes

7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

Personnel Report – Ms. Heather Emsley, Executive Director of Human Capital Services (HCS), shared that there were 17 appointments with 4 from Unit A, 2 from AFSCME, 5 paraprofessionals and 6 non-union, as well as, 1 non-union retirements. Ms. Emsley added that there were 5 resignations with 1 from Unit A, 2 non-union, 1 AFSCME and 1 paraprofessional. She concluded there was one transfer from Unit A.

Ms. Emsley update the Committee that the New Bedford Education Association (NBEA) Unit A bid process is still ongoing and due to technical issues with the website, the deadline has been extended to February 11th. She included that the Journey into Education and Teaching (JET) recruitment is ongoing and to get connected visit the Human Capital Services webpage by visiting www.newbedfordschools.org for more information.

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. John Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Jack Livramento to accept the Personnel report to place on file.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes

Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes

Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes

Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes

Mayor Mitchell - Yes

7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

School Committee Report – Member, Ms. Colleen Dawicki shared that the School Wellness Committee has been meeting to review the School Wellness Policy and the Policy Sub-Committee should see an update by spring and the full Committee by this summer. The YWCA hosted a Racism and the Economy series on Tuesday, January 12th and members, Mr. Bruce Oliveira and Mr. Joshua Amaral participated in the series. Ms. Dawicki ended her update on a personal note and added that Kindergarten registration starts on January 19th. She stated she is happy to be registering her child and everyone should check out the NBPS website for more information or call the Family Registration Center to set up an appointment.

Member, Mr. Jack Livramento shared that the School Resource Officers (SRO) working groups have begun and everyone is registered to attend the meetings. He added that he is on the research committee and is looking forward to working in the group and seeing how the group will move forward.

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The School Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY on a motion made by Mr. Bruce Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Joshua Amaral to enter into Executive Session for purpose #3 in respect to negotiations with union personnel:

- New Bedford Educator’s Association
- NBSSU
- Federal of Paraprofessionals

The roll call was as follows:

Mr. John Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Christopher Cotter – Yes

Mr. Jack Livramento – Yes

Mr. Bruce Oliveira – Yes

Mr. Joshua Amaral – Yes

Ms. Colleen Dawicki – Yes

Mayor Mitchell - Yes

7-Yeas, 0-Nays, 0-Absent

10. ADJOURN

Meeting Ended: 8:14 PM

Submitted by:



Marjorie Fernandes
Senior Executive Assistant
Recording Secretary, School Committee

Reviewed by:



Thomas Anderson
Superintendent
Secretary, School Committee

NOTICE: This meeting was recorded and can be viewed through New Bedford Cable Access at:
<https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/cable-access/>