



**North Haven Public Schools**  
North Haven, Connecticut 06473

North Haven Public Schools  
Board of Education Meeting  
NHHS - Library  
221 Elm Street  
North Haven, CT 06473  
**Regular Meeting**

**Minutes**

Attendance: Randi Petersen, Goldie Adele, Eleni Diakogeorgiou, Amanda Gabriele, Marie Devlin, Thais Moore, Martin Rudnick, Jen Stewart, Director of Student Services, Howard Wardlow, Director of Finance, Operations and Human Resources, Melinda McKenna, Assistant Superintendent, Patrick Stirk, Superintendent of Schools

Ronald Bathrick and Joseph Solimene

Thursday, November 10, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Peterson opened the meeting acknowledging Veterans Day and lead the group in the Pledge Of Allegiance. Dr. Peterson also stated that the Board did not meet in October and stated that before beginning the meeting she wanted to hold a Moment of Silence for Bristol Police Lieutenant Dustin DeMonte and Bristol Police Sergeant Alex Hamzy, who lost their lives on October 12th. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with both of their families.

I. Approval of the September 8, 2022 Board of Education Meeting Minutes

MOTION: To approve the September 8, 2022 Board of Education Minutes

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
SECOND: Eleni Diakogeorgiou  
AYE: 7  
NAY: 0  
ABSTAIN: 0

II. Field Project Update from Lynn Sadosky

Information Item

Mrs. Sadosky, Director of Public Works gave the Board an update on the Track and Field project, stating that the original plan was to have the project compete in October, however that has changed and they are hoping it will open again in the Spring. There are a few items that need to be done in the next few months, including the goal posts, score board, fencing, and gates.

The Board asked Mrs. questions and Mrs. Sadosky answered accordingly.

III. Board of Education Student Representatives Reports

Information Item

Alex Ranciato reported:

- NHHS had a successful first quarter
- Fall Drama Production performed Acts of Comedy this past weekend
- Veterans Day Concert
- Homecoming is November 18th
- NHHS Nixh Bowl is November 23rd

- Senior to Senior Breakfast is December 7th

Dr. Petersen thanked everyone who called and emailed the Board since the last Board meeting and the Board appreciates all of your comments and concerns that were shared. Dr. Petersen stated North Haven is not banning any books, however there is always an option for a student to read a different text that still meets the instructional requirements if they are uncomfortable reading the assigned book. Dr. Petersen encouraged parents/students to talk to the teacher/administrator and have a conversation about it.

In regards to the teacher surveys, Dr. Petersen stated that all students have the option to opt out of Non-curricular surveys. They can opt out of all of it or part of it. Dr. Petersen again encourages students to have a conversation with the teachers if they choose to opt out.

#### IV. Public Comments on Non-agenda items

- Scott Freidman, Cooper Road - commented in favor of pronouns and appreciates North Haven is not banning books
- Tim Gabriele, Renee Lane - commented in favor of pronouns and surveys and thanked the Board, Teachers, and administrators for all they do for the students in North Haven
- Nick Gill, Grove Road - thanked the Board for all of their work on the Board, stating that he is in favor of pronouns, Inclusion, Surveys and not banning books.
- Josh Bornstein, Homewood Avenue, thanked the Board for their work in North Haven, stating that he is in favor of pronouns and does not agree with banning books. Mr. Bornstein also defended the negative comments made towards the teachers in North Haven in October.
- Christie Huntley - commented in favor of pronouns as well as not banning books and defending comments made at the October meeting

#### V. Consent Agenda

- Extended maternity leave for Robyn Albertson, Gr. 3 Teacher at Montowese
- Extended maternity leave for Erika Salerno, K/1 Teacher at Green Acres
- Extended maternity leave for Lara Cerilli, 2/3 Teacher at Green Acres
- Extended child rearing leave for Jennifer Frechette, Gr. 6 Language Arts Teacher at NHMS
- Retirement of Mary Anne Hardy, Math Teacher at NHHS, June 2023
- Resignation of Ava Carrano, Special Education Teacher at NHHS
- Resignation of Samantha Gettings, Gr. 8 Language Arts Teacher at NHMS

MOTION: To approve the items on the Consent Agenda

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
 SECOND: Goldie Adele  
 AYE: 7  
 NAY: 0  
 ABSTAIN: 0

Dr. Petersen acknowledged Mary Anne Hardy in the audience, and thanked her for her years here in North Haven and her service to our community.

VI. Board of Education Parent Representatives Reports - NO REPORT

Information Item

VII. Report of the Board of Education Chairperson or Designee

Information Item

Dr. Petersen reported that the Board Members have adopted a school. They are as follows:

- Goldie Adele - Clintonville
- Randi Petersen - Green Acres
- Martin Rudnick - Montowese
- Joe Solimene - Ridge Road
- Eleni Diakogeorgiou and Marie Devlin - NHMS
- Amanda Gabriele and Thais Moore - NHHS

#### VIII. Reports of Standing Committees:

1. ACES

Information Item

Mr. Rudnick reported:

- There is a shortage of Special Education Teachers
- Parent Programs to help parents at Mill Road School for families in need
- ECA Open House
- Learning Walk in Wolcott
- Shubert is running a Theatrical Program
- Renovation Project at Leder Hill
- Presented their "universal" school calendar
- Update on tuition rates for some of their schools

2. Curriculum, Instruction, and Planning

Information Item

Mrs. McKenna reported on two Curriculum and Instruction meetings:

- November 4, 2022
  - Field trips listed below
  - Proposed Clubs
  - Presentation by Tracy Gambardella, LA Coordinator highlighting LA at the MS Level
  - Proposal to shift the expectation from the Mastery based journal entries from 5 to 4
  - Discussion around offering one elective credit to students at NHHS who are in The English Learner course, which is an elective
- November 10, 2022
  - Discussed field trip to Newport, RI
  - Proposed Clubs
  - AP Course offering for next year called AP Human Geography (Gr. 10-12)
  - Decided to award students the option of not having to take their final exam in Science if they score a 3 or 4 on the State mandated Next Generation Science Assessment.
    - a. Approval of NHHS Band & Chorus field trip to Boston, MA- Festivals of Music on April 21-23, 2023
    - b. Approval of CMEA Southern Regional Auditions (Select NHHS students) Location TBD on November 19, 2022
    - c. Approval of NHHS Hockey Team field trip to Warwick, RI on February 4, 2023
    - d. Approval of NHHS Italian Class field trip to New York, NY- Tenement Museum on April 18, 2023 (tentative)
    - e. Approval of NHHS Culinary/Interior Design field trip to Newport, RI- various locations on November/December 2022

MOTION: To approve all of the 5 field trips listed above

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
SECOND: Eleni Diakogeorgiou  
AYE: 7  
NAY: 0  
ABSTAIN: 0

3. North Haven Education Foundation

Information Item

Mr. Stirk reported:

- Beginning fundraising and organizing a Comedy Night and/or Trivia Night
- Grant updates
- NHEF is hoping to expand their media platform
- NHEF is always looking for new members to join

4. Policy

Information Item

- a. First read of the following Policies:
  - Physical Activity, Undirected Play and Student Discipline Policy
  - Meal Charging Policy
  - Policy to Improve Completion Rates of the Free Application for

- Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  - Curricular Exemptions Policy
  - Student Attendance, Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism Policy
5. Ad Hoc District Calendar Information Item

Mrs. Diakogeorgiou reported the committee met to discuss the school calendars, holidays, days of observances. The committee is looking at all districts in our DRG. The committee reviewed State and Federal Holidays as well as reviewed some slides provided by Mr. Lawrence and the NHHS Diversity Club. There was some discussion around how holidays are codified with regards to student absenteeism.

Committee will meet again on November 29, 2022

- IX. Staff Communications Information Item
1. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Stirk shared that over the past couple of months he has taken the new Board Members, Mr. Rudnick and Mrs. Moore on tours of the schools with his goal being to join them in observing with an objective point of view. Mr. Stirk continued with the following statement:

*"During the tours, I found the instruction and support within North Haven Public Schools is nothing short of awe-inspiring. Each building has a culture of caring and a sense of purpose. Teachers at every school stopped us to brag and boast about their students and what is happening in their classrooms. One teacher had their door closed, saw us walk by, and then raced over to call us into his classroom so that we could witness what was happening with his students.*

*Our teachers and support staff are working diligently and passionately to do what is best for their students. I can see that the undo and unjust pressures placed upon our teachers are slowly stripping that passion away. For every teacher, the pressures of the job melt away when you are in your class doing what you love; however, I am beginning to worry that some of these forces are becoming insurmountable.*

*As a town that has always valued and supported education as well as the experts who are trusted to instruct our students...we all need to rally around our teachers right now. They need to feel the support and that their expertise is valued. They have dedicated their professional, and much of their personal, lives to this work. They care more deeply about this profession and your children than I could share or put into words this evening.*

*My hope in sharing this statement with you tonight is for us to recommit to those who are moving the district's work forward by teaching and caring for all students."*

2. Assistant Superintendent's Report Information Item

Mrs. McKenna reported:

- Attended a workshop at Goodwin University/University of Bridgeport regarding Technical Career courses
- Curriculum updates
- 24 Seniors took part in the Seal of Biliteracy Testing
- Elementary Level - Science of Reading update
- CPR training was done at the Professional Development Day for teachers, along with Stop the Bleed training. Some of the PE teachers in district went above and beyond to get outside training to become trainers themselves.
- Plans to attend leadership conferences - around how great leaders can support all students
- Elementary schools will have the unique opportunity to work with the North Haven Poet Laureate in January. There will be a poetry study in Grade 2 in all four schools and Gabriella Brand who was named the Poet Laureate of North Haven will share her writing and expertise with our students.

3. Director of Student Services' Report Information Item

Mrs. Stewart reported:

- The staff are doing a phenomenal job with the new CT SEDS system. The staff are writing quality IEPs to support our students. The staff was given time to work on IEPs. Mrs. Stewart will continue to check in with the staff to identify what support is needed, and appreciates the collaboration among colleagues when developing a student's IEP.
4. Director of Finance, Operations and Humans Resources
    - a. Director of Finance and Operations' Report Information Item

Mr. Wardlow reported:

- Spending continues to be steady
  - Monthly transfer update
  - Cafeteria fund - surplus update
  - Smartfunds update
  - Reserve account update (medical, workers compensation and special education)
  - Capital Project update
  - Town would like there to be a Memorandum of Understanding between the Town, Board of Finance, and the Board of Education that codifies the process at year end for the use of any excess funds in the remaining Board of Education's operating budget. Currently there is an informal agreement between the Board of Finance and the Board of Education that allows the BOE to move any excess funds into the capital projects fund.
- b. Approval of the 2022-2023 Monthly Financial Report, including recommended transfers

MOTION: to approve the 2022-2023 Monthly Financial Report, including recommended transfers

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
SECOND: Martin Rudnick  
AYE: 7  
NAY: 0  
ABSTAIN: 0

c. Approval of Utilization of Special Education Reserve Funds

MOTION: to approve the utilization of Special Education Reserve Funds

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
SECOND: Martin Rudnick  
AYE: 7  
NAY: 0  
ABSTAIN: 0

MOTION: to add a motion for the approval of the use of excess funds for free meals for all Students through December 31, 2022

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
SECOND: Goldie Adele  
AYE: 7  
NAY: 0  
ABSTAIN: 0

MOTION: To approve the use of excess funds for free meals for all students through December 31, 2022

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
SECOND: Goldie Adele  
AYE: 7  
NAY: 0  
ABSTAIN: 0

5. NHEA President, Krista Kaplan (CANCELED)  
X. Public Comments on Discussion/Action Items

Information Item

- Dan Krzmarzick, Lexington Gardens commented in favor of pronouns and that inclusion Works, whether in business or schools.
- Scott Leaman, Justine Drive commented in favor of pronouns and inclusion
- Lisa Leaman, Justine Drive commented in favor of diversity and inclusion, stating everyone benefits from inclusion and diversity
- Kristen Glen, Dell Avenue commented in favor of diversity and inclusion, and thanked the Board and Mr. Stirk for supporting teachers.

XI. Adjournment

MOTION : to adjourn at 8 p.m.

APPROVED

MOVED: Amanda Gabriele  
SECOND: Eleni Diakogeorgiou  
AYE: 7  
NAY: 0  
ABSTAIN: 0

Respectfully submitted,

*Randi Petersen*  
Vice Chairperson