

**REGULAR MEETING
OF THE NEW BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
~MINUTES~**

PRESENT: MAYOR MITCHELL, MR. AMARAL, MR. COTTER, DR. FINNERTY
MR. LIVRAMENTO, MR. NOBREGA, MR. OLIVEIRA

ABSENT: NONE

IN ATTENDANCE: DR. DURKIN, DR. DEFALCO, DR. RABINOVITCH, MS. EMSLEY, MS. BETTENCOURT, MS.
WALMSLEY, MR. O'LEARY, MR. CARVALHO, MRS. DUNAWAY (Recording Secretary)

Student Representative, Katherine Gomes, was in attendance.

Approval of Minutes: (Supporting documents labeled "3")

The Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Amaral and seconded by Mr. Livramento, to accept the following meeting minutes as presented: (Supporting documents "3")

- Facilities Sub Committee: January 7, 2016
- Regular Meeting: January 11, 2016
- Finance Sub Committee: February 4, 2016
- Regular Meeting: February 17, 2016
- Regular Meeting: March 14, 2016
- Budget Meeting: March 21, 2016

Superintendent's Report (Dr. Durkin): (Supporting documents labeled "4")

**Superintendent Update
2015-2016**

School Committee Meeting
April 11, 2016

Student Learning Goal

- The district's goal is for all schools to achieve a 40% reduction in number of students not proficient or advanced in literacy and math. Schools will also stretch toward moving 10% more students to the advanced level.

ELA MOY Growth Galileo Data

Grade	Expected Growth	Average Growth	Growth
2	52	55	+3
3	27	54	+27
4	25	25	-1
5	16	50	+34
6	10	52	+42
7	4	9	+5
8	7	1	-6
9	6	16	+10
10	10	13	+3

MATH MOY Growth Galileo Data

Grade	Expected Growth	Average Growth	Growth
2	64	114	+50
3	65	99	+34
4	55	74	+19
5	52	63	+11
6	40	60	+20
7	24	38	+14
8	30	27	-3
9 (Algebra I)	28	46	+18
10 (Geometry)	32	22	-10

Dr. Durkin explained the BOY and MOY standards are the same and what is making a difference is the level of instruction. Teachers are making a difference.

Expected Growth in ELA and Math by Classroom BOY - MOY

School Year	Not Maintained	Maintained	Exceeded
2014-2015	55	93	28
2015-2016	28	81	98

PROFICIENCY - ELA GALILEO (SHOULD BE AROUND 60%)

Grade	BOY	MOY	Difference
2	45%	49%	+4%
3	42%	53%	+11%
4	47%	45%	-2%
5	45%	55%	+10%
6	46%	61%	+15%
7	41%	42%	+1%
8	36%	32%	-4%
9	42%	47%	+5%
10	35%	37%	+2%

PROFICIENCY - MATH GALILEO (SHOULD BE AROUND 60%)

Grade Level	BOY Proficiency	MOY Proficiency	Difference
2	43%	63%	+20%
3	43%	56%	+13%
4	36%	41%	+5%
5	30%	36%	+6%
6	40%	44%	+4%
7	27%	38%	+11%
8	30%	27%	-3%
9 (Algebra)	47%	54%	+7%
10 (Geometry)	44%	35%	-9%

Professional Practice Goal

- Extensive and ongoing coaching and supervisory practice using learning wall tools with all principals, particularly new principals that will result in their development as strong instructional leaders and competent operational managers through clear indicators of measurable growth.

Building Leadership Capacity

Feedback → Coaching → Supervision → Evaluation

- Collaborative Principal Support:
 - Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
 - Quartet, Triad School Visits
- "Warm Feedback"
- "Cool Feedback"
- Recommendations

Professional Practice Goal

- Conditions for a positive and safe school climate will be reviewed indicated by: school-wide understanding of expected behaviors and responsibilities, development of a tiered intervention system, and an effective school-wide climate committee involving all stakeholders. Data points will be collected for PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention System) which is in the process of being implemented at Keith, Roosevelt, and Normandin through a tiered system of school support.

In regard to Building Leadership Capacity, Dr. Durkin explained that the visits were not to evaluate teachers but to support principals. With respect to the Professional Practice Goal, Dr. Durkin said it was a work in progress including the work with the newly formed Ad Hoc Committee on School Climate.

School Culture and Climate

Philosophy/Approach

- Building Relationships
- Progressive Discipline
- Tiered Infractions and Consequences
- Understanding and buy-in within and across schools

School Culture and Climate

Behavior Support Systems

- PBIS
- Engaging Schools
- AP floor meetings
- Check-in grade level team meetings
- Individual safety and behavior plans
- Clear and consistent communication
- Use of ASPEN for communication and follow-up (NBHS)
- Follow-up: timely, directed, and communicated back to the teacher

Dr. Durkin explained that with progressive discipline, consequences are made clear. Consistency is improving. Teacher talks at schools are currently taking place to learn from them what is working and what is not. It is important to have dialogue with them. Follow-up may have been missing, now there is progress.

School Culture and Climate

Student Accountability Systems

- Conferences
- Wrap Around Services
- Detention
- Suspension

Statewide PBIS Pilot

Parker, Gomes, RMS and KMS

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District Improvement Goal

- By the end of the year, 100% of evaluators will be demonstrating improvement in providing growth-producing feedback to those they supervise through the quality of their observations, coaching cycle work plans, and overall use of the educator evaluation tool to improve teacher performance.

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Dr. Durkin stated that families are getting the services they need and in regard to suspensions, we are aware of the legal ramifications. PBIS Pilot – State advisors are offering feedback – Is pilot working as it should?

Dr. Durkin said that principals evaluate teachers. Mapping time around teachers schedules are taken into consideration with respect to the contract.

Ensuring Appropriate and Timely Feedback to Staff

- Adhering to contractual guidelines
- Mapping out announced and unannounced observations
- Keeping to timelines for clarifying conversations, written feedback and follow-up
- Prioritizing areas of need for all; differentiating areas of need for some

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District Improvement Goal

- Both student achievement and wellness will be enhanced through purposeful strategic partnerships and a focus on innovation in reaching excellence.

(HS Algebra MTLC Project, Working Cities Proposal, Proposed STEAM Innovation School, New Bedford Housing Authority, Early Education Consortium, Education & Industry Coordinating Council)

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Ms. Emsley offers support and ensures that the contract is being followed.

District Improvement Strategy Goal

Strategic Partnerships

- Dual Enrollment at NBHS
- New Bedford High School Data – Mobile Technology (Dr. Jacobs)
- STEAM Innovation Work – Normandin
- Expanded Learning Time Grants (ELT) – submitted for Hayden McFadden/Normandin
- Work with New Bedford Housing Authority (NBHA)
- Pre-K Expansion Grant
- Education and Industry Coordinating Council (EICC)
- Working Cities Application and Submission

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Mobile Technology at NBHS Summary of Interim Findings

- Beginning of year (BOY) benchmarks implemented in September, 2015 and mid-year completed in January, 2016
- The average grade level proficiency in mathematics at the BOY for 9th grade Algebra I students was between grade 5 and 7
- 9th grade student growth in mathematics has increased by 39 points in pilot classes versus 9 points in non-pilot classes
- 63% of students participating in pilot met the middle of year benchmarks versus 48% in non-pilot classes

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Dr. Durkin stated that 68 middle school students were enrolled in the 9th grade dual enrollment at NBHS. Out of the 68, 55 students will be going to NBHS. Only 20% may be attending a high school other than New Bedford High School.

The New Bedford Housing Authority has funded iPads and books for the Pacheco School.

The Pre-K grant will be used for four full day programs for three year olds and four full day programs for four year olds. These programs me

Student Perceptions (Pilot Only)

"I feel comfortable using computers after taking this class."	89%
"I enjoy the projects and activities we do in this class."	88%
"I feel that my ability to be successful in math has improved since taking this class."	90%

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Parent Perceptions

"She is always on her device doing her homework and she enjoys it. I don't know what she's doing but she's doing math; She is always doing math and using her tablet at home."

"We talk about school every day/he has never said anything negative about the class/he's been positive about learning math/he finds using the tablets pretty cool."

"It is clear that he is understanding math a lot more. Until he went to high school his math grades were not that great, but since the beginning of the year, his grades have been great."

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Teacher Perceptions

"The pilot program has changed the way these students view math. They are more engaged than I have ever seen before and during class. The use of the tablet has broken the barrier for students who once feared math."

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District Improvement Goal

- The FY17 Budget will be devised and proposed according to agreed-upon timelines emphasizing the need for accelerated improvement, so that increased teaching and learning resources and increased time on learning will be realized.

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FY 17 Budget Process

- Preliminary Budget – presented 3/14/16
- Working Session – March 21
- Original needs-based request reduced from \$137.9 to \$129.8
- Conveyed that minimum net school spending will be allocated \$126.5
- Continued work on cost center/school reductions
- Working session dates– April 12, April 25, April 27, May 2, May 3
- Budget Hearing – May 9

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STUDENT SURVEY

How connected do you feel to your teacher?

Before 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015
55%	29% (48)	74%	97% (98)	85%	48% (51)	85%	95% (95)

How much do you feel that you are learning?

Before 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015
45%	48% (48)	45%	48% (48)	43%	18% (18)	44%	31% (31)

Overall, how much do you feel that you are learning?

Before 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015
55%	34% (34)	57%	87% (87)	43%	42% (42)	67%	87% (87)

How much do you feel that you are learning?

Before 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015
55%	27% (27)	57%	87% (87)	43%	42% (42)	67%	87% (87)

Overall, how much do you feel that you are learning?

Before 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015	Before 2015	After 2015
55%	45% (45)	48%	48% (48)	43%	42% (42)	67%	48% (48)

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Dr. Durkin said the district is looking for more positive data and not celebrating since half the students are not feeling connected. She did note that there is some optimism and progress.

District Improvement Goal

- By the end of the year, more than 70% of families and community members who respond to a survey will demonstrate a favorable response concerning the overall direction of New Bedford Public Schools.

- a) There will be a 10% increase in survey participation.
- b) More than 50% of students surveyed in Grades 6-12 will positively assert that they feel connected to the adults in their school.

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The Committee asked Dr. Durkin questions in regard to her report.

Mr. Amaral asked where the 13 students are going who are involved with the Dual Enrollment program. Dr. Durkin said that they applied to other schools, such as GNBVRTHS but have not been accepted yet.

To a question from Mr. Livramento regarding the Pre-K program, Dr. Durkin responded that 200 students could be served and the ultimate goal is to have all students have some Pre-K experience. Kindergarten challenges come from an array of needs of students. NBPS has a strong partnership with programs such as Headstart, NorthStar Learning, Little Peoples College, etc.

Dr. Durkin commented that principals are responsible for the teaching that goes on in classrooms. Feedback is given frequently to teachers to see how they are progressing and where they may need support. Feedback is both warm and cool. At times it can be challenging or is not accepted. It is not for everyone.

Mr. Cotter asked Dr. Durkin why the district has lost over 100 of years of experience of teachers leaving if she felt that we have a strong investment in the teachers and principals in the district. Mr. Cotter commented that that he did think that we have a strong investment in our staff. Dr. Durkin responded that she will match our district's professional development, the level of coaching and support given to staff to any other urban district in terms of the investment we have placed in it.

Regarding dual enrollment, Mr. Cotter asked how MCAS scores are going to be factored in. Dr. DeFalco answered that tests will be proctored in students' own middle schools and the scores will be counted towards middle schools as well.

Mayor Mitchell confirmed that pre-k attendance is not mandatory. Dr. Durkin replied that parents must send their children to school by Grade 1. She also added that there are waiting lists for children to attend pre-k.

Regarding, PBIS, Mayor Mitchell agreed that we want to measure as much as we can to see if it is succeeding but we have to restore confidence in parents and teachers that classrooms are orderly and discipline is maintained in schools.

Laura Richane and Thomas Pandiscio from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education gave the Accelerated Improvement Plan Monitoring Report for December 2015-March 2016.

Ms. Richane stated that some issues stood out including the district's support for instructional leaders and also notable is the wide implementation of the district's plan. All administrators and teachers have taken part in sustaining this effort.

The following objectives were reviewed along with a PowerPoint presentation:

Strategic Objective 1: Prepare all NBPS students for college and career success by implementing rigorous standards and using data to monitor student progress in attaining those standards to a level of proficiency.

Strategic Objective 2: Develop effective systems and structures to support the unique academic and social-emotional needs of all students.

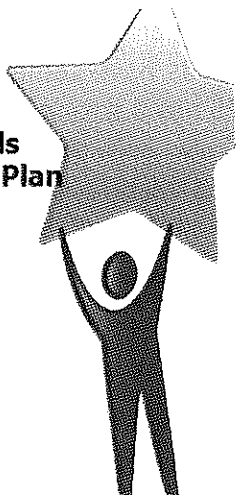
Strategic Objective 3: Expand school and staff capacity to deliver effective, engaging, and rigorous instruction to all students (Professional Development).

Strategic Objective 4: Create, communicate, build, and support momentum for the vision of NBPS that will be embraced by the New Bedford community and all of its stakeholders.

New Bedford Public Schools Accelerated Improvement Plan Monitoring Report

Presentation to the School Committee
April 11, 2016

DEPARTMENT OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION



Introduction

- Reporting period: December–March
- Continued support for instructional leaders
- Wide participation in AIP implementation
- AIP priorities:
 - Coordinating curriculum, instruction, assessment and data use
 - Establishing student support systems
 - Building principals' and teachers' instructional skills
 - Increasing family engagement



Illustration of Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Highlights

- Integration of priority learning standards, instruction, assessments, & data cycles
- Galileo middle-of-year assessments
- School-based professional development
- Improved attendance at PBIS pilot schools
- Family involvement and communication



Illustration of Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Next Steps

- Continue to analyze school climate indicators to measure the impact of PBIS pilot and make improvements as necessary:
 - Attendance data
 - Discipline data
 - Middle school survey
- Continue to focus on the work of principals
- Implement plan to use middle-of-year data to guide instructional improvement



Illustration of Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

After the report, Ms. Richane commented that four years ago the district was struggling to write a plan as it was big challenge. Now, the plan is very ambitious and it is all about meeting children's needs. She continued that turnaround is not easy but there is a vision and people are working tirelessly in New Bedford and they are focused on the right things. She advised the Committee to keep the vision and momentum.

Public Comment

- Herbert Hern – Former teacher/concern about discipline problems in schools.
- Antoinette Costa – Parent/concern about Common Core and PARCC
- Melissa St. Pierre – Community member/concern about parents' negativity/impact on children
- Robert French – Community member/concern for lack of understanding in regard to troubled students
- Marlene Pollock – Community member/concern for underprivileged kids/suggested solutions
- Kaylee Reynolds – Student/concern about bullying and disruption in her classroom
- Brandi Mosher – Parent/concern for lack of discipline at Keith Middle School
- Janele Goldman – Parent/concern about testing and PARCC
- Amber Osterman – Parent/refusing to have her child tested/PARCC
- Jen Duarte – Parent/refusing to have her child tested/PARCC
- John Barreira – Parent/lack of lunches/lunchtime at Keith Middle School
- Michelle Furtado – Community member/PARCC opt out
- Erin Finnegan – Parent/several school issues
- Omayra Saez – Student/concern about classroom disruptions at Keith Middle School

Business Office Report (Dr. Rabinovitch): (Supporting documents labeled "6A"):

Dr. Rabinovitch explained to the Committee this was the time in the fiscal year that the budget was reviewed and he requested approval to balance out the accounts.

The Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Amaral and seconded by Mr. Oliveira, to balance out the accounts related the FY 2016 budget.

Financial Statement

- Salary Spend-down Report: The current number is less than projected. The balance will grow due to money that was previously put aside for the Paraprofessionals' added compensation that is not needed. This is a result of the contract not being ratified by the union.
- Schools – Numbers are as expected and there are no difficulties.

Transfer of Funds

- Dr. Rabinovitch explained the transfers that needed the approval of the full committee. This item was reviewed and referred by the Finance Sub Committee.

The Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Amaral, to approve the following transfer of funds:

REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF FUNDS

April Meeting FOR APPROVAL:

Org	Func	Obj	Description	Org	Func	Obj	Description	Amount	Reason
41039551	2430	540005	Normandin Classroom Supplies	41038420	2210	511480	Normandin Clerical Overtime	500.00	To cover overtime through the end of the school year
20633080	2410	580008	Sped Textbooks DW	20630566	9300	522210	Tuition Sped Private High Day	35,000.00	To help cover out of district special ed tuition costs
20639540	2440	520004	Instr Svs Sped Contracted Svs	20630044	2800	520004	Psychological Contracted Svs	75,000.00	For DW Psychological services
25438442	4230	520004	Maint Equip Tech Contr Svs	25435483	7500	580008	Acquisiiton Vehicles Tech Svs	9,390	Lease of electric cars

Dr. Rabinovitch continued with a summary of the current Massachusetts School Building Association (MSBA) projects:

I. MSBA

1. Hannigan

- There is full control of the Emma Street property that is needed for the project

2. Taylor @ Sea Lab

- New utility pole/transformer has been installed

3. Four Elementary Schools Accelerated Repair Projects

- There is a Public Funding Agreement (PFA) – Projects will go out to bid.

Personnel Report (Ms. Emsley) (Supporting document labeled "6B")

Ms. Emsley reviewed the personnel report with the Committee. She reported that there were 22 appointments, three retirements and seven resignations since the last report in March. She also reported that there were approximately 150 people who visited the job fair in early April. There were many interested candidates.

The Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Mr. Oliveira, to accept the Personnel Report.

Several members gave reports including Mr. Oliveira who gave an update on the newly formed Ad Hoc Committee on School Climate. He explained that the Committee was assessing current protocols to make future recommendations.

The student representative gave her report.

At this time, Mayor Mitchell introduced a proposal by the New Bedford Bay Sox to sell beer at the Bay Sox games. The proposal entails transferring a portion of the property at Paul Walsh field to the City Council in

order to go through the proper licensing channels. Mayor Mitchell explained that the proposal was already examined by his office, the City Solicitor's office, the Police Department and licensing offices/boards.

Pat O'Connor, Manager of the Bay Sox addressed the Committee. He explained that the new facilities costs/fees have risen substantially for the use of Paul Walsh Field. He said he was coming before the Committee to ask for the process to begin to allow the Bay Sox to sell beer at the games to raise funds to pay these costs. He added that it was a crucial point for the team in regard to finances and stated that similar teams have had success and have had no issues. He went on to point out that the Bay Sox are also involved with benevolent matters in the community.

Mr. O'Connor said his proposal is to have a small area near the first base line designated to serve and consume beer. The beverages will be provided by a vendor and controlled by the appropriate commission. Beer would only be served during Bay Sox games and security will be supplied.

Mayor Mitchell added that the concession will be governed by the same rules and permits as other establishments and feels that it will be valuable and is a useful proposal. He went on to state that the challenge is the state law that prohibits alcohol on school grounds. Walsh Field is the only place the Bay Sox can play in the city; therefore the proposal is to have the School Committee transfer the property to the City Council and to continue through the proper channels.

Mr. Livramento asked if other teams are selling beer and how much revenue would this be bringing to the team. Mr. O'Connor responded that two other teams are selling beer and six or seven others are contemplating it. Mr. O'Connor said that the revenue won't be significant but it may grow interest, increase ticket sales and gain more sponsorship. To an added question by Livramento in regard to current fund raising, Mr. O'Connor replied that they are seeking revenue by gaining sponsors and increasing sales by issuing coupons to non-profit organizations and adding more firework shows. Mr. O'Connor also added that the Bay Sox would be diligent in securing the area, and recognizes that children will be present.

At this time Mr. Nobrega made a motion to approve the proposal. It was seconded by Dr. Finnerty. Discussion/questions/comments followed:

Mr. Cotter thanked Mr. O'Connor for all that he has done and commented that he had no doubt that all precautions would be put into place. He asked that the Committee approve the proposal.

To questions asked by Dr. Finnerty, Mr. O'Connor answered that beer would be sold from 6:00 to the middle of the seventh inning. The sale and consumption would be monitored by the vendor who is TIP certified and a Bay Sox manager and no police officer will be assigned. Players will not be allowed to purchase beer. Most players are freshman – juniors in college.

Mr. Oliveira stated that he didn't disagree with the added value that the Bay Sox brings to the city, as they are a top level organization, but he will not support it on philosophical differences and disagreed with the way they are trying to close the revenue gap.

Mr. Amaral stated that he was skeptical about the proposal and asked several questions. Mr. O'Connor responded that minors will not be allowed in the area in question and Bay Sox staff will be handling security

but will consider hiring a police officer if necessary and will speak with the licensing board about the requirement.

Mr. Amaral asked Dr. Rabinovitch what the liability risk would be and if the school department would need liability insurance. Dr. Rabinovitch responded that he would look into it.

At this time, Mr. Amaral offered an amendment to the motion asking for an annual renewal and a clause that the property could revert back to the school department. The motion was seconded by Mr. Livramento.

Dr. Finnerty asked if there are any provisions in place to safeguard the proposal. Mayor Mitchell responded that it would be under the jurisdiction of the Licensing Board who would respond to any complaints, just as they would with any other establishment in the city.

Mr. Amaral asked Mr. O'Connor if the teams that are currently selling beer were located on school grounds, to which Mr. O'Connor said they are not.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – No	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – No	Mr. Livramento - Yes
Mr. Nobrega – No	Dr. Finnerty – No
Mr. Oliveira - No	

2 – Yeas 5 – Nays 0 – Absent

The amended motion failed.

On the original motion, the Committee voted to approve a proposal to transfer a portion of property located at Paul Walsh Field (Assessor's Map 63, Lot 2) as follows: (Supporting document "7-A")

The Committee voted 4 – 3 in favor.

1. to notify the New Bedford City Council, acting by and through its Property Committee, that the property shown as a portion of Assessor's Map 63, Lot 2, New Bedford, Massachusetts as shown on a plan entitled "Paul Walsh Field" (the Property") may be used for limited purposes other than educational purposes as set forth herein;
2. to transfer the Property to the New Bedford City Council so that the City's Licensing Board may decide to permit the operation of a beer concession on the Property only during home games of the New Bedford Bay Sox;
3. that this vote of the School Committee be and is hereby conditioned upon the New Bedford City Council, accepting the property;
4. that this vote of the School Committee be and is hereby conditioned upon the City of New Bedford Licensing Board in fact issuing a license(s) permitting the sale of beer at the concession as aforesaid

with appropriate conditions that ensure public safety and eliminate the risk of alcohol consumption by minors as the Licensing Board deems necessary and appropriate, and specifically that beer may be served and consumed only during Bay Sox games and within the limits of the Property; and

5. that in the event of the failure of these conditions, the Property shall revert back to the custody and control of the New Bedford School Committee as though this vote had not been taken.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – No
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - No
Mr. Nobrega – Yes	Dr. Finnerty – Yes
Mr. Oliveira - No	

4 – Yeas 3 – Nays 0 – Absent

Dr. Rabinovitch explained to the Committee that a vote was needed to allow the Superintendent to submit a Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in regard to the Parker Elementary which includes the replacement of windows. (Supported document “7-B”)

Mr. Cotter asked if there are PCBs in the window areas, especially in the caulking surrounding the window. He also asked if the installation would be done when staff/students are not in the building.

Dr. Rabinovitch explained that all precautions will be taken and the removal will be treated as if there are PCBs present. He also informed the Committee that no work will be done if the building is occupied by staff and students.

The Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Dr. Finnerty and seconded by Mr. Oliveira, to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the following Statement of Interest (SOI) dated January 22, 2016, for the John Avery Parker School located at 705 County Street, New Bedford. The SOI describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future:

John Avery Parker

- Priority 5: Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility.
- Deficiencies: The window/door systems in the building are original and are antiquated and require repair or replacement. The original boilers require repair or replacement as they show signs of contamination and deterioration.

The School Committee of New Bedford hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

The Committee voted UNANIMOUSLY, on a motion by Dr. Finnerty and seconded by Mr. Livramento, to approve the 2016-17 School Calendar. (This schedule is for all schools except Gomes, Hayden McFadden, Parker and Renaissance Elementary Schools.) (Supporting document "7-C")

Dr. Durkin asked to read the following into the record:

I appreciate the opportunity to share with the Committee and the community information on PARCC testing. As you may recall, this committee voted in June, 2014 in favor of my recommendation to make the change from MCAS to PARCC testing. That recommendation was based on that PARCC would serve as a more rigorous assessment of the MA standards that New Bedford Public Schools has embraced in all of its teaching and learning reform work. Last year, New Bedford's students, in Grades 3-8, despite PARCC being a more difficult test, showed more progress in English Language Arts (ELA) than 51% of their counterparts across the state – outperforming all the Commissioner's districts with the exception of one in terms of the growth they achieved. Sixteen (16) out of our 21 schools made achievement gains and increased their percentile rank. When the Committee took that vote in June, 2014, there were two options on the table: remain with MCAS or switch to PARCC. There was no third option as is being proposed tonight with wording that confuses and, in some ways, sanctions our kids not to participate in state testing.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has clearly stated that "testing is a mandatory part of the curriculum, the same as a spelling test or a math test and statewide assessments are useful when all students take them. Neither the state nor the district has an opt-out form." State testing is required as part of key pieces of legislation that go back in the legal arena. The 1993 Education Reform Law directed the state board of education to develop and administer a statewide assessment. The 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) added the federal mandate for annual statewide testing. The recently reauthorized Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, replacing NCLB) reiterated the same. And state testing requirements are part of Chapter 70 funding as well as state policies.

It has now come to our attention that parents may wish to choose to have their child refuse to participate in state testing. Refusing to take the test is not new. However, I believe that the decision to participate or not participate is not being made with the educational issues in mind.

New Bedford is a Level 4 district and with that Level 4 designation comes heavy and deep scrutiny by the Commissioner and DESE. As one of the lowest performing districts in the state, we MUST demonstrate progress and results in every school. I will discuss first progress from the student perspective and then I will talk about that progress from the school/district perspective.

Last year, our New Bedford children showed their brilliance, "taking a harder test" and doing well. We need to sustain that progress and those results this year. For families who are concerned about their child participating, come up to the school – talk to the principal and teachers and unpack your concerns. Just as we are here to listen to concerns you may have about how much homework your child is getting, how they are getting along with their peers, what is happening on the bus, or concerns about what they are learning --- talk with us about their participating in PARCC. We want to hear you – but we also ask that you hear why this is important for your child – for every child.

For a long time in New Bedford, the state test served as an “autopsy” in this district. We would get the results in June and realize then that we did not do so well – this was after the fact too little and too late. Now just as we do for our health, we have “check-ups” along the way during the school year. We look at what each child is learning at the beginning of the year, the middle of the year and many times in between. We do this so that we can see what each child is successful at, what they are struggling with, and what we as educators need to do differently to help every child be successful. Without these check-ups, we would not be doing our job to have New Bedford’s children ready and eager to “show what they know” and how they have improved by the end of the year state testing. We know that children tend to absorb the anxieties and fears of the adults around them – that is why we encourage our children to simply do their best. If your child is expressing that he or she is stressed or feeling anxious, we need to work together to give your child the right message at school and at home. We know tests are part of so many things we want to aspire in life – being able to drive, becoming a nurse, a firefighter, a policeman, and a teacher. We want our children to know that, if they work hard, that they will have the confidence to take on any challenge before them. PARCC is a shorter test – much shorter than MCAS – and gives us a snapshot of how much your child has learned this past year. We want that snapshot available for every child.

I also want to discuss what participation means from the school and district perspective. We know we have schools rated Level 1 -5, as their accountability ratings - Level 1 being the highest performing and Level 5 being the lowest performing. In New Bedford, we have three (3) Level 1 schools, six (6) Level 2 schools, eleven (11) Level 3 schools, two (2) Level 4 schools, and one (1) Level 5 school. We want every student to participate in every school. We also have many smaller schools – every student who should be participating in Grades 3-8 and in Grade 10 counts. If fewer than 95% of a school’s students take the statewide assessment, the school cannot be designated as a Level 1 school regardless of how well the other students may do on the test. If fewer than 90% of a school’s students take the assessment, that school regardless of its test scores, can earn a designation no higher than Level 3. Though the Commissioner and the state board of education has allowed schools who are using PARCC as a more difficult test to be held harmless this year in terms of their achievement accountability levels, schools will not be held harmless due to their participation rate. As of today, one school, the Swift School, is dropping below the 90% participation rate and is in serious jeopardy of declining from a Level 1 school to Level 3. Again, I encourage Swift parents, and all parents, to meet and talk with their principals to address any and all concerns that they may have about their child participating.

In conclusion, I say to you, as your Superintendent, that the stakes are very high for New Bedford. I have had many discussions with DESE this past week given the vigilance that we need to have to ensure that our reform agenda remains on course and that we continue to make progress. We have a responsibility to make sure that progress continues to happen.

Thank you and I will be happy to take any questions from committee members.

Mr. Amaral also read a statement in regard to his proposal about MCAS/PARCC testing.

The use of high-stakes standardized testing in schools has long been a contentious issue. In an Excerpt from article from The Atlantic’s article, titled “What Happens When Students Boycott a Standardized Test?” The movement to opt out of nationwide exams is gaining traction—and forcing policymakers to rethink the role of such assessments in public education.

But perhaps the most obvious distinction from years past, at least now, is that significant resistance to the standardized tests has organized in a growing number of states—to the point of mass boycotts in certain communities. This movement was jumpstarted by parents and has since garnered the support of the teachers' unions. And now it's getting some ammunition from the students themselves. This campaign isn't only raising pressing concerns about the validity of standardized tests, it's also revealing the extent to which the foray into a new era of test-driven accountability and debates surrounding this reform could end up damaging the country's public education system. After all, the consequences of an exam boycott could be just as severe as those that come with over-testing; finding a compromise is certainly preferable to too much or too little."

Mr. Amaral continued that 670,000 students refused state tests across the country last year. This is an ongoing phenomenon across the country, and it's appearing here in New Bedford as well. I understand the superintendent feels strongly about the test as a means of assessing our students, but I feel we have to acknowledge this sentiment in our community and this resolution is a vehicle for us to do that.

The resolution before you is not necessarily a change in policy but rather a reinforcement of existing practice. As noted in a memo from Commissioner Chester, who has also written to the Mayor, families and students have the ability to refuse to participate in MCAS/PARCC testing. In the event that they do, the district is supposed to reach out to the family to explain the purpose of the test and answer questions or concerns they may have. If the family maintains their refusal, that is to be respected by the district. There are no negative consequences for students, except for the high school students that must take the test to graduate.

This resolution is based on one passed by the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee. Clearly that's a different community than ours. But the same issue has also crossed the desk of the Worcester school committee among others. We are not the only community trying to grapple with this. There are three different bills at the state house calling for three-year moratoriums on the use of high-stakes standardized tests, the requirement that a student pass a state test to get a diploma, and the five-level accountability system we all know too well. Additionally, another has been filed to more clearly establish the right of parents to opt their children out of state or district-mandated standardized tests, respectively.

The state says that everyone is required to take the test, but that some may refuse but I think the gray area there obligates us to discuss this and how we will navigate that here. In the Commissioner's letter to us here today, it states that "it is not appropriate for public officials, in their official capacity, to encourage parents to ignore the legal requirements currently in place". To clarify, this resolution does not do that. This resolution confirms that the district will hold no consequence to any student or parent who makes an informed decision not to take the test. It does not encourage anyone to do anything.

Undoubtedly, we are confined by the law. Personal beliefs aside, it isn't a School Committee's or Department's or staff's role at all to encourage test refusal. But we can acknowledge that some in our community may oppose these tests and reiterate that they may exercise the discretion that they have.

Note that it is still a graduation requirement. That cannot be avoided. It is legally required for graduation. No high school student should be refusing or opting out without understanding the implications of such a decision.

Mr. Amaral concluded that we aren't the only group talking about this and it didn't just start here. He said he respects the opinion of Superintendent, the Administration and his colleagues but he happy to discuss the issue here tonight.

Mr. Amaral proposed the following motion to inform parents of their right to refuse MCAS/PARCC testing. It was seconded by Mr. Cotter.

By law, students, in consultation with their families, have the right to refuse state-wide standardized tests such as MCAS and PARCC. Consistent with prior practice, students along with their families, who choose to exercise a student's right to opt out of these assessments—either by a statement or a note from parents or guardians—will not be subject to any form of negative consequences from the school district. As per the request of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, school officials may contact parents to provide them with information about the test and test participation.

Opting out will not have negative implications for grades or class placement of any individual student. High School students should be aware that Massachusetts regulations dictate that a passing score on the tenth grade level MCAS is required for graduation. Educators who choose to discuss the right to refuse with their students or with parents shall not be subject to any form of retribution by anyone in the New Bedford Public Schools. We are pleased to reaffirm that free speech is a fundamental right of all members of our educational community.

A discussion ensued including comments as follows:

Mr. Cotter stated that we need to concentrate on teaching and discipline and is concerned that high stakes testing causes stress and anxiety. He also mentioned attending a class that discussed how stress plays a part in how students learn and behave in the classroom, in the home, etc. He said this is why he wanted to co-sponsor the resolution. Parents have the right to make the decision not to have their child take the test.

Mr. Cotter commented that he was not intimidated by a letter from the Commissioner and cited a statement in the letter that *a student will be considered absent, which in turn can affect their school's accountability rating*. Absent means they were not in school, not that they didn't take the test. You have to account for the child's attendance.

He also mentioned that the letter stated that *"tenth graders who refuse to participate may jeopardize their high school diploma"*. Mr. Cotter said that he found it interesting that it says "may jeopardize".

Mr. Cotter went on to say that in the Commissioner's letter, it states that aid to New Bedford has increased from \$51 to \$125 million since the education reform law was enacted in 1993 and that the Foundation Budget Review Commission is recommending an increase in public education, *"but when a school committee takes the position that it does not want to be held accountable for student learning, it undermines the arguments for more funding."* Mr. Cotter stated that the argument might be that we should be funding our student's education regardless of test results.

He went on to say that the letter states that *"it is not appropriate for public officials, in their official capacity, to encourage parents to ignore the legal requirements currently in place"*. Mr. Cotter commented that there

are no legal requirement put in place, parents have the right to refuse to have their child tested. He went on to say that undo stress is being put on children and families.

Give the parents the right to do what is best for their child, we as a district should not be dictating what is right for their child

Mr. Livramento stated that this confuses the parent by telling them they have the option to opt out. We need to take the high stakes off the table. It is not high stakes testing - it is testing to prepare students for the tests in tenth grade. They need to take the steps in testing to be ready when they are older.

This is an aid to our students and tells them they are capable and can succeed. It is a detriment to the other students who take the test only to find the school at Level 3 due to lack of participation.

Dr. Finnerty said that the DESE has not done a good job in explaining this and now we are muddled down in the issue. He continued by using the example that many people believe that children cannot come to school because they are not inoculated but parents can refuse due to religious objections. There may be a field trip somewhere as part of the unit and parents can refuse to send their child as it is their right. There should be some discussion with parents when it comes to these decisions.

Dr. Finnerty stated that the statute is clear, the parent can refuse, but this (resolution) goes too far as it gives the impression the School Committee is in favor.

Mayor Mitchell stated that all across America there is a debate and his own personal belief is that there is too much testing but it can be a valuable tool in assessment and realignment of resources. He asked Dr. Durkin if she had received any threats about negative consequences. Dr. Durkin stated that she had not.

Dr. Durkin stated that the district will take their direction from the DESE but at this time there are no documents as to what information will be provided to parents if they refuse to have their children participate.

The Committee voted down the request to adopt the resolution presented by Mr. Amaral and Mr. Cotter in regard to MCAS/PARCC testing: (Supporting document 7-D)

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – No	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - No
Mr. Nobrega – No	Dr. Finnerty – No
Mr. Oliveira - No	

2 – Yeas 5 – Nays 0 – Absent

At 10:00 P.M., Dr. Finnerty left the meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Amaral, the Committee voted to approve a recommended list of proprietary items to be incorporated into the specifications of the new Hannigan Elementary School building as follows: (Supporting document 7-E)

1. Boilers-Viessman Boilers
2. Roof Top Units-1)AAON or 2) Annex Air
3. Building Automation Systems-Niagara (Siemens)

On a motion by Mr. Cotter and seconded by Mr. Oliveira, the Committee voted to approve the following Out-of-State Field Trips: (Supporting documents 7-F)

- Kindergarten Team/Pulaski School - permission to take 90 students and 18 chaperones to Rhode Island on June 13, 2016, to visit the Roger Williams Park Zoo (No cost to the district.)
- Grade Five Teachers/Carney Academy – permission to take 96 students and 14 chaperones to Rhode Island on June 9, 2016, to visit the Museum of Natural History and Planetarium. (No cost to the district.)
- Grade One Teachers/Carney Academy – permission to take 106 students and 22 chaperones to Rhode Island on June 2, 2016, to visit the Roger Williams Park Zoo (No cost to the district.)
- Grade Three Teachers/Carney Academy – permission to take 123 students and 18 chaperones to Rhode Island on June 6, 2016, to visit the Roger Williams Park Zoo (No cost to the district.)
- Chris Chambers/Band Instructor/Normandin Middle School – permission to take 100 students and five chaperones to Rhode Island, to perform at McCoy Stadium before the Pawtucket Red Sox game on May 6, 2016. (No cost to the district.)

On a motion by Mr. Amaral and seconded by Mr. Oliveira, the Committee voted to approve the following requests for Out-of-State Conferences: (Supporting documents 7-G)

- Manuel Acevedo/Teacher/NBHS – permission to travel to Troy, NY from July 18 – 29, 2016, to attend the Cisco Networking Academy Training. (No cost to the local budget – grant funded.)
- Jane Jacobsen/Robert Kolbeck/Robert Perrotti/Peter Schuyler – permission to travel to Orlando, FL, from July 18 - 20, 2016, to attend the National Academy Foundation (NAF) Conference. (No cost to the local budget – grant funded.)

On a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Amaral, the Committee voted to take Item 7L out of order.

On a motion by Mr. Amaral and seconded by Mr. Oliveira, the Committee voted to approve a request from Bernadette Coelho/Headmaster/NBHS, to schedule the New Bedford High School 2016 Graduation Exercises on Thursday, June 9, 2016, to be held at Dr. Paul Walsh Field at 7:00 P.M. (Supporting document “7-L”)

At 10:06 P.M., on a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Livramento, the Committee voted to go into Executive Session, with the intent to return to Open Session, for the following purposes:

- To discuss strategies with respect to negotiations with union personnel:
 - Unit A – New Bedford Educators Association
 - Unit B – New Bedford Educators Association
 - New Bedford Federation of Paraprofessionals
 - American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

- To discuss strategy in regard to litigation

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - Yes
Mr. Nobrega – Yes	Dr. Finnerty – Absent
Mr. Oliveira - Yes	

6 – Yeas 0 – Nays 1 – Absent

At 10:42 P.M. on a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Livramento, the Committee voted to return to Open Session.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - Yes
Mr. Nobrega – Yes	Dr. Finnerty – Absent
Mr. Oliveira - Yes	

6 – Yeas 0 – Nays 1 – Absent

On a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Amaral, the Committee voted to ratify a Memorandum of Agreement between the School Committee and Unit A of the New Bedford Educators Association, as modified, for the purpose of altering compensation, hours, and working conditions and/or other provisions to the collective bargaining agreements of teachers and other staff, covered by such agreements, at Hayden McFadden Elementary School. (Supporting document 7-H)

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - Yes
Mr. Nobrega – Yes	Dr. Finnerty – Absent
Mr. Oliveira - Yes	

6– Yeas 0 – Nays 1 – Absent

On a motion by Mr. Livramento and seconded by Mr. Oliveira, the Committee voted to ratify a Memorandum of Agreement between the School Committee and Unit B of the New Bedford Educators Association, as modified, for the purpose of altering compensation, hours, and working conditions and/or other provisions to the collective bargaining agreements of administrators, covered by such agreements, at Hayden McFadden Elementary School. (Supporting document 7-I)

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - Yes
Mr. Nobrega – Yes	Dr. Finnerty – Absent
Mr. Oliveira - Yes	

6– Yeas 0 – Nays 1 – Absent

On a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Amaral, the Committee voted to authorize the Superintendent to work with the Committee’s Labor Counsel to file a petition for mediation and fact finding on behalf of the Committee with the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations requesting the appointment of a state mediator to help the Committee and the AFT- Paraprofessional Union to resolve issues of compensation and other terms and conditions of employment and to reach a successor collective bargaining agreement. (Supporting document 7-J)

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - Yes
Mr. Nobrega – Yes	Dr. Finnerty – Absent
Mr. Oliveira - Yes	

6– Yeas 0 – Nays 1 – Absent

On a motion by Mr. Amaral and seconded by Mr. Livramento, the Committee voted to ratify a Memorandum of Agreement between the School Committee and New Bedford Federation of Paraprofessionals - AFT, as modified, for the purpose of altering compensation, hours, and working conditions and/or other provisions to the collective bargaining agreement of paraprofessionals, covered by such agreement, at Hayden McFadden Elementary School. (Supporting document 7-K)

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – Yes
Mr. Cotter – Yes	Mr. Livramento - Yes
Mr. Nobrega – Yes	Dr. Finnerty – Absent
Mr. Oliveira - Yes	

6– Yeas 0 – Nays 1 – Absent

At 10:45 P.M. on a motion by Mr. Nobrega and seconded by Mr. Cotter, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

The roll call vote was as follows:

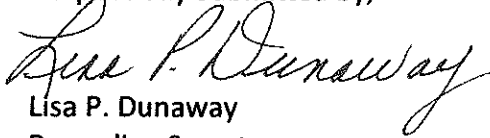
Mayor Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Amaral – Yes
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Mr. Cotter – Yes
Mr. Nobrega – Yes
Mr. Oliveira - Yes

Mr. Livramento - Yes
Dr. Finnerty – Absent

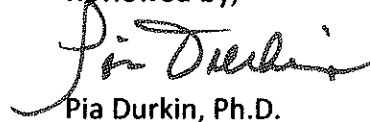
6– Yeas 0 – Nays 1 – Absent

Respectfully Submitted by,



Lisa P. Dunaway
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by,



Pia Durkin, Ph.D.
Superintendent, Secretary/School Committee