

**Nantucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2025**

Present Members: Chair Laura Gallagher Byrne, Vice-Chair Shantaw Bloise-Murphy, Timothy Lepore, Esmeralda Martinez, Vincent Murphy, and Superintendent Elizabeth Hallett.

The July 22, 2025, School Committee meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM in the Meeting Trailer, Room A by Chair Laura Gallagher Byrne. A motion was made by Vincent Murphy, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Announcement: this meeting is being audio and video recorded

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Hallett reported attending the annual MASS Executive Institute for District Leaders in Mashpee on July 15–17 with Mandy Bardsley and Mellisa Devitt. The conference theme, The Future Begins Now: Re-Imagining Education in Massachusetts, featured keynote speakers and sessions focused on innovation in education. She attended a session on co-teaching at the secondary level, which highlighted collaboration between special education and general education, as well as the expansion of co-teaching models for multilingual learners. This was especially relevant as the district is beginning similar work at the elementary and intermediate levels. She also attended a session on cell phone pouches led by the Northridge superintendent, who shared data showing significant improvements in student outcomes after implementing the policy in 2023. Superintendent Hallett expressed optimism about seeing similar results locally, with plans for a parent meeting to discuss implementation. Additionally, she listened to a panel on political leadership during challenging times, which addressed the pressures educational leaders face regarding curriculum and parent expectations.

Dr. Hallett reported that 19 of 24 open positions have been filled, leaving five vacancies: a first-grade teacher, a part-time floating school nurse, two special education teachers at CPS, a social worker at CPS, and a Tier 3 adjustment counselor at NHS. About six teaching assistant positions also remain open across the district. She expressed confidence that the district is in a good position overall, though special services continue to be the most challenging area to staff.

Ms. Bloise-Murphy asked about housing for new staff. Dr. Hallett deferred to Ms. Devitt, who reported several strong school-year rental options and a few year-round opportunities, noting that nearly all new hires have secured housing. Dr. Hallett thanked NET for their advertisement support and the community.

Presentations and discussions of issues to the Committee

2025 MAP Summative Data Results - Dr. Mandy Bardsley and Melissa Devitt

Dr. Bardsley outlined the plan to review growth, achievement, demographics, and special populations data, emphasizing the district's instructional vision as the foundation for decision-making. She noted that state MCAS data will soon be available, while MAP assessments serve as the district's universal screener to track learning and identify students needing additional support. She explained that growth and achievement are measured by percentiles, using medians to avoid skewed results. Achievement reflects fall assessment scores, while growth measures progress from fall to spring. The goal is for students to perform above the 50th percentile in both growth and achievement.

Ms. Devitt reported that spring assessment scores show progress for kindergarten, first, and second grades, with students moving in the right direction, though not yet in the target quadrant. She noted that the February–April period allowed significant learning gains. Looking ahead, NES will focus on strengthening literacy structures and routines, supported by the Prism 2 grant, which will fund additional level readers, science of reading training, and coaching from Boston Public Schools. While authentic text and writing programs are still needed, the district is carefully selecting resources due to cost. Overall, she emphasized that the school is moving in a positive direction,

as reflected in growth and achievement data. Ms. Devitt reported that while existing programs are in place, the focus will be on using them with fidelity to support growth. She noted the district still lacks authentic text and a comprehensive writing program, but resources are being carefully selected due to high costs. Literacy progress is showing gradual improvement, though most grades remain in the “yellow” zone for growth and achievement, below the target “green” and “blue” levels. Some grades showed slight gains, others small declines, and demographic data in math and ELA indicate that all student subgroups currently need improvement. Overall, the district is moving in the right direction, with plans to continue refining programs and collecting better data next year.

Dr. Bardsley went through and presented the Math data growth and achievement by grade. Along with the special populations and Demographic subgroups. She reported that NES and NIS are showing strong progress in math, with both schools now in the top-right quadrant for growth and achievement, though there is still room for improvement. CPS has begun to see positive changes after curriculum updates aligned with K–5 practices. Overall growth is strong across grades, with some fluctuations in individual achievement, and special populations and subgroups are generally meeting or exceeding projected growth, helping to close opportunity gaps. She noted that IEP students are meeting projected growth but may need additional support to match overall student growth. Next steps include continued professional development, using a conference-style model for teacher choice, onboarding new teachers, and supporting special education teachers with targeted resources. Dr. Bardsley emphasized the importance of using data to monitor achievement gaps and ensure all students have the support they need to succeed.

Dr. Lepore found the data encouraging.

Ms. Bloise Murphy asked why the 8th grade didn’t test.

Ms. Devitt explained testing fatigue in Grade 8; besides MAP, Grade 8 students have MCAS in ELA, Math, Science, and now Civics. We will revisit this next year.

Mr. Murphy asked about accessing data for students who are not meeting expectations.

Ms. Devitt explained that MAP score reports provide detailed guidance for both parents and teachers, showing areas where students excel or need support. The reports allow teachers to group students by skill level and provide targeted small-group or individual lessons. Dr. Bardsley noted that the MAP assessment is integrated with the math curriculum, and the district has used the data to guide professional development and improve the math intervention system.

Mr. Murphy asked whether data for the entire grade, including special populations and subgroups, have been analyzed to identify English learners or other groups who scored low in math, and whether additional support has been provided. Dr. Bardsley responded that English learners are included in the intervention system and receive support, but the data did not show them performing lower than other students. Mr. Murphy inquired if any subgroups were flagged. Dr. Bardsley said she wants to examine the data more closely. She noted that about 4% of students may be affected, but believes the issue may vary by specific programming rather than applying to all students on IEPs. Ms. Devitt added that the MAP reports provide detailed guidance for teachers and parents, allowing them to identify specific skills where students need support and to create targeted small-group or individual lessons. She noted that the data is integrated with the math curriculum and is used to guide professional development and improve the math intervention system.

Ms. Gallagher Byrne applauds the professional development style.

Superintendent Goals/Mid-Cycle Update - Superintendent Hallett

Dr. Hallett provided a mid-cycle update on her two-year superintendent evaluation, reviewing goals completed in 2023–24 and outlining priorities for the coming year. She noted that most goals are a continuation of prior work due to their scope and the limited time she had at the start of last year. Her first goal, professional practice, focuses on sustaining a culture of belonging and inclusion through collaborative engagement, supporting responsive classroom practices, restorative practices at NHS, and professional development for allies and leadership teams to strengthen cohesion, trust, and adaptive change across the district.

The second goal, student learning, emphasizes continued improvement in growth and achievement across ELA, literacy, math, science, and added social studies. Key actions include supporting the rollout of ELA and science of reading curricula, implementing targeted tiered interventions, and strengthening professional learning communities to ensure standards translate into actionable classroom practice.

Her third goal, district improvement, centers on safe and secure learning and working environments, including creating an action plan based on the safety audit, maintaining updated safety handbooks, fully implementing the

Raptor system, and overseeing network and cybersecurity improvements. She also highlighted the year-one adoption of the Yonder electronic device pouch program as part of safety and learning environment initiatives. The fourth goal focuses on strengthening partnerships with the community and district stakeholders. Dr. Hallett plans to launch a quarterly superintendent newsletter, enhance communication with media outlets, and reestablish the superintendent's student advisory to hear directly from students. She also noted the upcoming district website launch in August. Overall, Dr. Hallett emphasized continuity in her goals while incorporating new initiatives to support student learning, safety, and community engagement.

Committee discussions and votes to be taken

Vote to approve the donation from The Nantucket Education Trust to the Nantucket Community School Summer Boost for \$5,000.00. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the donation from the Community Foundation for Nantucket to the Nantucket Community School Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for \$20,000.00. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the donation from the Community Foundation for Nantucket to the Nantucket Community School Summer Boost program for \$11,000.00. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the donation from Egan Maritime Institute to the Nantucket High School Vocational Technical Horticulture program for Heather Ring for \$2,569.00 to be deposited into the gift account. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the donation from Egan Maritime Institute to the Nantucket High School Vocational Technical Horticulture program for Heather Ring for \$2,569.00 to be deposited into the gift account. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the donation from Egan Maritime Institute to the Nantucket High School Vocational Technical Horticulture program for Heather Ring for \$10,000.00 to be deposited into the gift account. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the 2025-2028 contract for Dr. Mandy Bardsley, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the 2025-2028 contract for Mellisa Devitt, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Operations.

Vote to approve the June 2, 2025, Reorganizational Meeting Minutes. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the June 3, 2025 Meeting Minutes. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the June 9, 2025 Scholarship Meeting Minutes. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the June 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve the June 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Vote to approve Transfers and Invoices. *Timothy Lepore made a motion to approve, seconded by Shantaw Bloise Murphy, and with no opposed vote, the motion was approved unanimously*

Agenda for the next meeting, August 19, 2025 - Retreat

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:02 PM by Shantaw Bloise-Murphy, seconded by Vincent Murphy, and with none opposed, the motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Bedell
School Committee Clerk