



**MEETING OF THE
NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
AD HOC CELL PHONE POLICY COMMITTEE**



Thursday, January 15, 2026 ~ 4:15 pm - 5:45 pm
By Videoconference

MINUTES

Approved: February 5, 2026

Documents Reviewed

JJICA Cell Phone Policy Working Draft
NHS Student Union Cell Phone Policy Statement
Draft Q&A

- I. **Announcement** that Meeting is Being Videorecorded - [Recording](#)
- II. **Roll Call** - Holly Ghazey called the meeting to order at 4:15 pm. This meeting took place by videoconference and the roll and all votes taken were done so remotely.

Kat Allen	Absent
Holly Ghazey	Aye
Ann Hennessey	Absent
Rebecca LeBeau	Aye
Keddie Loughrey	Absent
Sarah Marcus	Aye
Dawn Nims	Absent
Ana-Lucia Ohm	Aye
Savvy Park	Absent
Kate Parrott	Absent
Susan Sullivan	Aye

Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra	Member Tiffany Jewell	Member Robbie Saner Sullivan	Member Alenda Bartoli
Member Anat Weisenfreund	Member Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe	Member Michael Stein	Member Amy Martyn
	Member Cindy Mahoney	Member Valerie Reiss	

Diane Zamer	Aye
Portia Bonner	Aye
QUORUM	Aye

III. **Review of December 4, 2025 Minutes** - Holly Ghazey made a motion, seconded by Portia Bonner, to approve the minutes as amended. The roll call vote follows.

Kat Allen	Absent
Holly Ghazey	Aye
Ann Hennessey	Absent
Rebecca LeBeau	Aye
Keddie Loughrey	Absent
Sarah Marcus	Aye
Dawn Nims	Absent
Ana-Lucia Ohm	Aye
Savvy Park	Absent
Kate Parrott	Absent
Susan Sullivan	Aye
Diane Zamer	Aye
Portia Bonner	Aye
VOTE	Aye 7 Absent 6

IV. **Report from administrators who visited Chicopee with suggestions of how to prepare JFK and NHS for the roll out of the cell phone policy** - Diane Zamer reported that it was helpful to see the check-in process in action. She described the process. The magnets are rolled on carts outside the school where students wait in line. The counseling team manages the process with support from security and administrative staff. She said there were eight adults involved in the process. Each student displays their phone and the staff verifies that it is turned off. Students with sensory needs enter through a separate entrance. Students who do not bring their pouches place their phones in a zip-loc bag that is stored in the guidance department. There was resistance from parents, especially those who students are on a 504. During a recent lockdown, students

broke their pouches open. She said that enforcement isn't uniform; teachers are supposed to take a phone and call security. The school acknowledges that many of the phones are fake. HRHS has external sites, e.g., the fire station, where students can unlock their phones. Diane Zamer expressed concern about students using their phones in the bathroom which will exacerbate the high school's challenges with bathrooms. In response to a question from Holly Ghazey, Diane Zamer said the entire check-in process takes 15 minutes. Rebecca LeBeau said that Chicopee teachers have duties in their contract. Superintendent Bonner said that NPS could offer a stipend; hall monitors could assist in the check-in process and then monitor bathrooms.

V. Student Union's Statement at December School Committee - Ana-Lucia Ohm was asked to provide a summary of the Student Union's statement that was presented at the December 12, 2025 School Committee meeting. She said that one of the students' chief concerns is the high cost associated with the policy. She also recommended a slow roll out of a no-personal-device policy. She said that teachers should also put their phones in pouches. She expressed concern that students will break pouches. She asked for a policy waiver for juniors and seniors. Students using velcro pouches, those on 504s, would be subject to unwarranted attention. She said that the check-in process could cause students to be late.

VI. Finalization of the Draft Policy - Superintendent Bonner walked the Committee through the draft policy which was edited in live time. The Committee discussed what the policy regarding earbuds should be permitted. Ana-Lucia Ohm recommended that only wired earbuds be permitted. Sarah Marcus recommended that the introduction speak to the objectives of the policy, i.e., to create a better community in which people are engaged and not distracted. Sue Sullivan echoed this thought. Holly Ghazey recommended including Chicopee-like language about the staff's right to search for cell phones. Superintendent Bonner shared a draft Q&A about the policy. The solution for unlocking phones if not done so at school requires resolution. Sue Sullivan said that Western Mass Reconnect would be happy to host parent forums about the policy.

VII. Educating Caregivers - Tabled to next meeting.

VIII. Adjourn - Sue Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Holly Ghazey, to adjourn. There being no quorum, a roll call vote was not taken. The meeting adjourned at 5:57 pm.