



MEETING OF THE NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

February 12, 2026 ~ 7:12 pm - 12:08 pm

Hybrid Meeting

JFK Middle School Community Room and by Videoconference



MINUTES

Approved: March 12, 2026

Documents Reviewed

NASE Statement in Solidarity with Our Immigrant Neighbors
 February SEPAC Report.pdf
 Meeting Minutes - December 11, 2025
 SAC Meeting Minutes - December 11, 2025
 Meeting Minutes - December 23, 2025
 Meeting Minutes - January 8, 2026
 Meeting Minutes - January 22, 2026
 Field Trip: Eighth Grade to Washington, DC, May 27 - May 30
 Field Trip: NHS Mass. Pre-Apprentice Training Group to New England Laborers Training Academy, Pomfret, CT, March 4
 Field Trip: Eighth Grade to Wright Flight, Windsor Locks, CT, March 26
 Donation: Leeds PTO for Fifth Grade Field Trip - \$1300
 Donation: JSS PTO for Field Trip - \$1515
 2026-27 School Calendar
 Missed Services Memorandum from Director Holloway
 Student Services Update February 2026
 Northampton Program Evaluation Grades 6-12
 Cell Phone Policy Working Draft 2025
 2026-2027 Program of Study
 O-26.011 An Order to Make a \$290,317 Midyear Appropriation to NPS

Attending: Mayor Sciarra, Member Bartoli, Member Weisenfreund, Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, Member Martyn, Member Mahoney, Member Reiss, Member Jewell

Absent: Member Saner Sullivan, Member Stein

Also Attending: Superintendent Bonner, Business Administrator Jones, Director of Student Services Matt Holloway, Principal Ben Taglieri, Student Representative Ana-Lucia Ohm

I. **Announcement** that Meeting is Being Videorecorded - [Recording](#)

II. **Roll Call** - Mayor Sciarra called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm and the roll was called.

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 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 | |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Present |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Present |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Present |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Present |
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Present |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Present |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Present |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Present |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| QUORUM | Present |

III. **Student Representative Report** - Student Representative Ana-Lucia Ohm reported on a number of NHS activities including, but not limited to, the musical, an associated fundraiser, and Valentine singing telegrams. She reported that yesterday’s altercation at NHS lasted for approximately one hour and was scary.

IV. **Public Comment - Summary**

Raymond Pacquette, NHS teacher, read a resolution from NASE which was ratified yesterday.

We, the Northampton Association of School Employees, write to express our opposition to the escalating militarism of the United States government, including the illegal US intervention in Venezuela and the escalation of ICE violence against communities inside of the US. As educators, it is our role to prepare children for society. We want a future for our children where there is less violence, not more, where cooperation is used instead of force, and where all people, regardless of their language, color, or national origin, can live as neighbors. The US government’s increasing militarism stands in stark opposition to everything we want for our students and our community. Contrary to the rhetoric of the administration, bombing a sovereign nation and kidnapping their president will not make us safer. Instead, it ensures that more resources are allotted to weapons, military personnel, and training - all of which have a direct relationship to the expansion of the police state at home. We know from history that the weapons and repression tactics that the US military uses abroad are always turned around to suppress dissent at home. Nor do we believe that kidnapping, imprisoning, and deporting our community members will lead to safety. We love our students and their families. ICE’s extrajudicial violence is what is making us unsafe. ICE’s use of racial profiling, arbitrary detention, and excessive force against protesters and journalists violates our human rights. Our students come to school afraid of action being taken against their families and the families of their classmates. We demand that the federal government end this violent repression. We further demand that funds be reapportioned to life-giving public programs: public schools, childcare, healthcare, and food assistance. We want to walk into school in the morning knowing that we are preparing children for a free society that cares for all of its people. Be it further resolved that NASE will create an Immigrant Solidarity Subcommittee, open to all NASE members, in order to accomplish the following:

1. Distribute a member survey to better understand how NASE members and their students, families, and communities are being affected by ICE’s actions, and connect them to opportunities to organize in response.

2. Organize and publicize know-your-rights, bystander, rapid response, and other immigrant defense trainings for school staff and the community.
3. Study existing school protocols regarding federal agents coming to Northampton schools and recommend necessary updates, including signage at all school entrances.
4. Collect, create, and distribute materials for members, students, and the community, such as buttons, know-your-rights signs, hotline cards, etc.
5. Connect with local community groups (such as LUCE and The Pioneer Valley Workers Center) and fellow unions to build or support existing community-watch networks, accompaniment programs, food delivery, rapid response networks and/or other community organizing efforts.

Drew Richard, Northampton - Said he is considering choosing out for a charter or private school for his children due to the large tech deployment in schools and he has met other families who are considering the same. He asked the Committee to implement a bell-to-bell cell phone policy.

Margie Riddle, Leeds - Said that education is largely an interpersonal endeavor between teachers, students, and parents. She said that effective lessons do not come from data-driven instruction or computer games. Assessments are most effective when designed by teachers. She asked that members attend the VINS dog show.

Angela Wack, Northampton - Expressed concern about the absence of continuity in learning relative to the high school schedule.

Lisa Modenos, Florence - Read an edited-for-length version of the email received from SEPAC:

"Despite repeated requests for transparency, Director Holloway and Superintendent Bonner have chosen not to share data on missed IEP services. During the discussion tonight, you have an opportunity to insist upon transparency and oversight in this matter. The CPAC Executive Board urges you to do so. For the last 6 months, NPS has been required to maintain, quote, a system for tracking which students miss special education services and supports on a particular day due to staff vacancies or daily staff absences, end quote. While the system has its origin in a state mandate, CPAC leadership has continuously maintained that the breakdown in trust and communication between caregivers and district administrators can only be addressed through the establishment of a more shared reality. This mandated system is an opportunity for growth. Some caregivers perceive that missed IEP services are rampant in the district. District administrators claim otherwise. PRS provided evidence for service violations, and the district is now required to collect data on how many services are missed each day, with the caveat that the data only reflects missed services due to staff absences. In this regard, it represents an optimistic measurement. The PRS complaint occurred because there wasn't transparency or accountability around missed services. A key question is whether the purpose of the system is only to satisfy a state demand, or to help all of us be more accountable and transparent. As a School Committee, you have an oversight function, and you ought to take data from the system into account. Furthermore, administrators are now seeking to rebuild trust with the community by hiring outside facilitators. This goal is poorly served by continued opacity. Highlights of how data sharing requests have gone since September: September 25, CPAC highlighted the need for transparency. Dr. Bonner denied our request to participate in developing the

monitoring system. October through December 25, 2025, CPAC includes a monthly request that data from the monitoring system be shared. December 9, 2025, Director Holloway shared that 14 families have been notified that their student had missed services that met a district-defined threshold. January and February 26, while appreciative of the notification of those families, CPAC emphasized that most cases of missed services would not be captured by this reporting metric, and that more transparency was needed. In your role as School Committee, we urge you to provide oversight in the delivery of special education services.”

Ms. Modenos added that the data provided by the District are not indicative of reality for special education children. Many families aren't even aware that their child's IEP is being violated due to a lack of transparency and a reporting metric designed to render those violations invisible and not be counted. She asked the School Committee to push for transparency and advocate for special education rights.

Dan Breindel, Northampton - Said that the School Committee doesn't decide how much money is given to the schools. He asked for a review of classroom tech education saying cell phones are being taken away while iPads are being given to kindergarteners. He said NPS is outsourcing to Murdoch.

Debra Thompson, Northampton - Said that the second part of the CASE report revealed systemic challenges for some of District children, which she described as frustrating and heartbreaking. She said the problems are not a result of staff absences alone and asked the Committee to advocate for additional staffing, take steps to support the more marginalized students in our district, address the inequities of the students receiving or identified to receive special education, and fully fund schools in a way that is equitable and just for all students.

Laura Carney, Florence - Encouraged the Committee to institute a bell-to-bell phone-free policy. She said a primary concern is understanding the flexibility in opting for paper-based alternatives when needed and how NPS resources are used to support the EdTech programs, including student time during a 6-hour day spent training on using apps. She said outcome data on apps are not readily available or are biased. She said we owe it to students to verify that school dollars are spent on resources that have proven positive impacts.

Quaverly Rothenberg, Northampton - Questioned the benefits of the high school block schedule which she says deprives students of 25% of their academic career. She said the District is trying to fix the violative problem of learning strategies. She said that additional classes during the day would help the schedule be less discriminatory and that collective bargaining should be reopened. She said that it is the policies and funding that matter.

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V. Announcements

Member Mahoney expressed appreciation to Public Comment speakers, first responders at the NHS altercation, and JFK students who stood out against ICE. She announced a March 9 SEPAC meeting and an out-of-district families meeting on February 26. She said tonight's meeting has an overarching theme of reestablishing trust with the administration.

Member Martyn encouraged people to enter LUCE's telephone hot line on their phones. She said it is an important way to reduce fear and the spreading of rumors.

Member Jewell reported on the Northampton Youth Health Coalition demands for safety in the community with infrastructure and policing in particular, safety in schools, connection, equity, decision-making, and to have better mental health access, autonomy, and support. The response to these demands are restorative practices. 2025 Teen Health Survey data were reviewed. In summary, overall substance use is down and mental health is improving. Also reviewed was what is affecting students of color and the LGBTQIA community for whom disparities are observed.

Business Administrator Jones announced her mid-August retirement. She said there will be other staffing changes in the Business Office as well and she will work toward a smooth transition.

- VI. Recommended Actions I** - Member Weisenfreund removed the January 8, 2026 minutes. Member Martyn made a motion, seconded by Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, to approve the December 11, 2025, the December 11, 2025 SAC, December 23, 2025, and the January 22, 2026 meeting minutes. The motion passed by acclamation. Members Weisenfreund and Martyn requested corrections to the January 8, 2026 minutes, which the clerk will present at the March 12 School Committee meeting.

VII. Recommended Actions II

- A. Field Trip: Eighth Grade to Washington, DC, May 27 - May 30
- B. Field Trip: NHS Mass. Pre-Apprentice Training Group to New England Laborers Training Academy, Pomfret, CT, March 4
- C. Field Trip: Eighth Grade to Wright Flight, Windsor Locks, CT, March 26
- D. Donation: Leeds PTO for Fifth Grade Field Trip - \$1300
- E. Donation: JSS PTO for Field Trip - \$1515

Member Jewell made a motion, seconded by Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, to approve Items A - E. The motion was passed by acclamation.

VIII. Reports & Recommendations

- A. Superintendent's Report - Member Weisenfreund made a point of order that the District-run out-of-school-time program was referred at the December 11 meeting to the Budget & Property and Curriculum Subcommittees. She said the Committee's directive was not followed. She noted that Member Stein had requested that this item be on the February Budget & Property Subcommittee agenda and that request was not honored. Member Weisenfreund made a motion to table this agenda item and Items E, F, and G under New Business and to ask the Superintendent to follow the School Committee's directive to work with the Subcommittees to develop the program and make recommendations to the whole body. Member Jewell seconded the motion. Superintendent Bonner described the impact of delaying a vote, and thus hiring. Member Montgomery-Tamakloe said she has been receiving input from caregivers that the program as drafted does not meet their needs. There was discussion of the need to follow through on School Committee decisions. Member Bartoli made a motion to amend the motion to include the provision that the joint subcommittee

meeting be held before March 12. This motion passed by acclamation with one abstention (Bartoli). A roll call vote was held on the motion.

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| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Nay |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Nay |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Aye |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Aye |
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Aye |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Aye |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Aye |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Aye |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| VOTE | Aye 6 Nay 2 Absent 2 |

1. *Inclusion, Public Safety, and the Rule of Law* - Superintendent Bonner reaffirmed NPS’s commitment to maintaining a secure learning environment. She said that safety concerns and emergency situations are communicated on Parent Square. She asked that caregivers rely on official District communications rather than social media. Caregivers are asked to keep their contact information current. She said that the District operates in compliance with FERPA and personal information is not disclosed to outside agencies, including federal immigration authorities, unless a valid judicial warrant or subpoena is presented. She described the protocol should ICE present at a school. The same protocol applies to students on school buses. The protocols have been continuously issued to staff. Former School Committee members, building teams, social workers, and the Superintendent attended a training, Know Your Rights, which was sponsored by the Office for Refugees and Immigrants and the Attorney General's Office. The AGO will sponsor an updated training next week. Superintendent Bonner said she would continue to update families through the newsletter. In response to a question from Member Martyn, Superintendent Bonner said that there have been efforts to train new staff in the protocol. Principals and administrative staff participated in role-playing recently. She said it’s important to keep an officer within a designated space. Director Lieber educated crossing guards. In response to a question from Member Mahoney, Superintendent Bonner said she would ensure the newly hired hall monitors receive education in the protocol.

2. *Out-of-School Care (IGNITE) Update* - Tabled.

B. Business Administrator’s Report - Business Administrator Jones reported that the review of warrants is going well and that Member Saner Sullivan is doing a careful review. She said that, going forward, budget review will take place in the Budget & Property Subcommittee and that group would bring forward any issues

to the School Committee. She said she will continue to provide monthly reports to the School Committee. In response to a question from Member Jewell, Superintendent Bonner said that Human Resources conducts exit interviews or surveys, but staff do not choose to participate.

C. Director of Student Services Report

1. *Missed IEP Services* - Director Holloway gave a [presentation](#) on Student Services that covered lapsed services reporting, a sample report, IEP team deliberation of the effect of missed services, and compensatory service models. In response to a question from Member Reiss, Director Holloway said that reasons for missed services include staff and student absences, the coverage chain, and staff vacancies. He said that caregiver communications are conducted on a two-week rolling basis. Caregivers receive an email which triggers a team meeting. In response to a question from Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, he said that the threshold was developed by group consensus. Educational harm is determined using an assessment of the student's progress. He said that DESE has approved the tracking system as a whole. Director Holloway said that the system is increasing awareness of patterns and has forced them not to fall into patterns with coverage decisions. Member Weisenfreund said that SEPAC is requesting data for all missed services. Director Holloway responded that the sample report meets staff needs and goals. Aggregated data would not have integrity. Member Martyn said that releasing the data would contribute to rebuilding trust and transparency and that users could be taught how to interpret the data. Members discussed solutions to the denominator issue. Director Holloway said that this would be a substantial lift. Superintendent Bonner asked the Committee to reconsider the request saying that a part-time person would be required to compile the data. Members discussed the importance of this data to SEPAC. Director Holloway emphasized the importance of not releasing staff and student personal information. Member Weisenfreund made a motion, seconded by Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, to direct the Superintendent to direct the Director of Student Services to meet with SEPAC members and provide them with the data they are requesting before the next meeting. Member Mahoney said that SEPAC's Board has a different perspective about being included in the conversation and that they do not believe they were part of the decision-making about the threshold. She raised the possibility that two sets of data are needed.

Member Montgomery-Tamakloe made a motion, seconded by Member Weisenfreund, to suspend the rules to end the meeting at 11 pm. The roll call vote follows.

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| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Aye |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Nay |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Aye |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Aye |

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Aye |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Nay |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Aye |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Aye |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| VOTE | Aye 6 Nay 2 Absent 2 |

The roll call vote on the motion follows.

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Aye |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Aye |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Aye |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Aye |
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Aye |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Aye |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Aye |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Aye |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| VOTE | Aye 8 Absent 2 |

2. *CASE Report* - Director Holloway presented recommendations made in the CASE Collaborative's *Special Education Program Evaluation, Secondary Level Grades 6-12+* which was commissioned to review District elementary and secondary special education programs as they connect to a multi-tiered system of student support. The recommendations were accompanied by perceived readiness to accomplish these things, a potential timeline, and context. Report author Ann Donovan made recommendations in five key areas including inclusive special education services, curriculum and instruction, specialized programs, the high school schedule, and inclusive services. Director Holloway reviewed the recommendations. Member Weisenfreund asked for the key elements that contribute to readiness determinations and for the staffing implications. Director Holloway responded that staffing will be put forward in the Superintendent's budget. He said that families are informed of program changes in a monthly newsletter distributed on Parent Square. Relative to work performed related to the elementary school CASE report, RISE programming has been built and Principals Stern and Brown shared information about their programs with SEPAC. There has been community-building activity. A question was raised about autism certification. Director Holloway responded that people licensed in severe needs have completed an intensive master's degree program. He said that there are few individuals in the workforce who

have that certification and that his strategy is to use resources at hand. He emphasized the value and importance of collegiality among the special education teams.

D. Curriculum Subcommittee Report - Member Jewell entered the following into the record:

"We met with Director Kate Messmer who shared the history of the Hate Crimes and Bias Prevention Grant -- The decision was made to pursue this particular grant to support the work of JFK Middle School, mostly because their data indicated there was an increase in bias incidents, language use/misuse, etc. The grant also requires that we work with a community partner and so we are working with the Collaborative for Educational Services who we've worked with before, specifically around restorative justice. We were awarded \$30,000 most of which will be paid to the Collaborative. The principals were given an opportunity to discuss some of the challenges they were facing in implementing the restorative justice program. And the second part of the grant enables the collaborative to work with students. (Student participation is voluntary. There will be, roughly- 15-20 students, 5-7 from each grade. Students who need accommodations will have their accommodations met so they may fully participate in the program.) Staff are not mandated to do this work. We already have a restorative practices group that is established in the district. There are already teachers who are teacher leaders within JFK and some have expressed their excitement about their involvement in the process. Regarding the concrete data of hate incidents, et al., -- some of that information can be found on the DESE site (which is about a year behind); Messmer also uses the discipline data from Open Architects. The next steps, when the grant runs out, include having student leaders from the middle school (as we currently have a strong group of young folks from NHS) and then to extend it appropriately to the elementary schools as we go forward. The restorative practices tie in with the social-emotional learning that we currently have and the program that we use (Second Step) has an anti-bullying component to it. At the elementary level, many of our teachers are trained in responsive classroom practices, (morning meetings, how to treat one another, how to talk to one another, how to engage with one another in other settings, like the playground, or at lunch, etc.). The message that our teachers are getting is to be consistent in how they use language and consistent in how they respond to any kind of incident that needs to be addressed. The grant will help move things forward and the intention is to continue the work even when the grant runs out.

Update on the Identified 9th Grade Cohort and Reading Program - Taglieri and Nicholas shared background information about how students were identified for the reading program at NHS. At the end of last school year, R. Nicholas did some testing with rising 8th grade students. This was the first time they did this type of screening. The initial round of testing allowed us to identify the students who were still struggling to learn to read. Nicholas uncovered that we had about 20 to 25 students (current 9th graders) who are still in the process of learning to read. We have two teachers at NHS who are trained in direct reading instruction. The majority of the students who are in the specialized reading classes that were created already had a reading component in their IEPs. The high school doesn't currently have an identified curriculum that it uses in the same way that the elementary schools do. (Messmer, Nicholas, and Taglieri have been in discussion of implementing Language Live, which is a specific program for secondary readers.) We have one Literacy Coach who is doing the work of many and that is not sustainable. We also need more time and opportunities for professional development that support this work at the secondary level. Some of the steps that have they're taking to learn more about how many students are still struggling with grade-level

literacy/accessing grade-level texts and content: 1.) Prioritizing 9th grade classes be the smallest classes in the school because this type of literacy deficit isn't just an ELA concern. 2.) Providing coaching for teachers in how to make grade-level text accessible to students who are not at grade-level reading. Nicholas made herself available and the plan was to have that type of coaching occur during Flex Block, but unfortunately it was unable to occur with the changes. 3.) Identify which students are in this tier of needing additional support with literacy instruction. This can be done with a good screening instrument/assessment tool. (Using CAPTA Assess Read Basic, which is an adolescent literacy screener, which includes things like syntax, reading efficiency, morphology, vocabulary etc. This screening tool is also efficient- doesn't take a long time and is easy for classroom teachers to administer, and it also gives results of what students are struggling with.) There isn't a quick fix. It's going to take a few years like it has at the elementary school level. We need more teachers at the secondary level who are trained in direct reading instruction. The elementary teachers started their training right after the pandemic, and we now have about 80-90% of our K-2 teachers trained and about 70% of our 3-5 teachers trained. We're on the right trajectory. *In the Middle School, students who demonstrated, on those assessments that they were struggling with reading were automatically placed in intervention this past year at. The reading interventionist, Diana Ajjin is doing much more intervention this year using Rewards, which is an Anita Archer program. And students who are in the Literacy Center, which is the most needy students, are going to be... and this has There are two research-based programs being used with students who need more of those foundational skills work.* Rachel Nicholas offered to present to the school committee about the science of reading and the process that we've gone through as a district. Messmer shared a little of the history of the PRISM I grant with K-5. Looking at MCAS data, our subgroups, you know, from our multi-language learners, to our students with disabilities, to our students of color, to our students with high needs, to our low-income students, all of those subgroups perform below the state average. We also only are at a 46% rate for meeting or exceeding expectations for our entire student population. Messmer looked at what was being taught in the middle school because that had already been done at the elementary level and the determination that there wasn't an aligned curriculum being taught. With the assessment data (mentioned previously) the district applied for a PRISM III grant (which is for secondary literacy). One of the requirements of the grant is that the district support half the cost of the purchase of a curriculum, we can only use whatever curriculum we purchase (the state will support half the cost) with the range of costs of possible curriculums that were identified as high-quality instructional materials could be as high as a total of \$120,000, or it could be as low as \$50,000. The state chose the professional development provider, School Kit who has done professional development for principals around instructional leadership. They've also provided professional development to what we created a curriculum council. A curriculum council has been created, which has met, at the time of our meeting, twice. One of the vendors, School Kit also came to the district several times to do instructional leadership work. They also did a landscape analysis and made determinations based on their observations, assignment reviews, and surveys. Teachers requested that the state evaluate what they're teaching, rather than look at another curriculum. Messmer shared she thinks the state has no intention to do that, so we need to follow what the grant is asking us to do."

- E. Budget & Property Subcommittee Report - Member Martyn reported that the Subcommittee received an orientation to financial reporting. She said the Subcommittee discussed the importance of collaboration with the Finance

Committee in ensuring an understanding between the City Council and the School Committee about the budget.

- D. Ad Hoc Cell Phone Policy Committee Report - Superintendent Bonner provided background on the development of the policy which originated in the Rules & Policy Subcommittee and was later referred to an ad hoc committee chartered by the Mayor in October 2025. The group was charged with gathering information, reviewing existing legislation, and drafting a recommendation for the School Committee. She said that, over the course of five meetings and additional independent work, the Committee developed a comprehensive policy designed to address academic distractions, social development, and emergency communication. She said that NPS plans to implement a pilot bell-to-bell cell phone policy for the 2026-2027 school year. Superintendent Bonner reviewed the draft policy. She sought permission to post the draft policy for caregiver input and said she will bring a final draft to the March meeting for a first reading. Member Weisenfreund said that the draft policy does not address student concerns and does not lay out fiscal considerations. Member Weisenfreund made a motion, seconded by Member Bartoli, to refer the policy to the Rules & Policy Subcommittee. Member Montgomery-Tamakloe expressed agreement that this work is in the purview of the Subcommittee. Mayor Sciarra expressed disappointment that the draft is not being presented to caregivers for comment. The roll call vote follows.

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| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Nay |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Aye |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Aye |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Aye |
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Aye |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Aye |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Aye |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Aye |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| VOTE | Aye 7 Nay 1 Absent 2 |

- E. Preliminary Superintendent Search Committee Report - Mayor Sciarra thanked Members Bartoli and Jewell for assisting in the appointment of the 15-member Committee. She asked the newly elected chair, Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, to present next steps. Member Montgomery-Tamakloe said the Committee has decided to have anti-bias training. The next meeting will focus on finalizing the hiring rubric and the development of interview questions.
- F. SEPAC & ELPAC Report - Member Mahoney reported that out-of-district families want greater understanding from the community and to be included in NPS announcements. She said that this is an extraordinarily stressful and

destabilizing time for some ELPAC families. School staff are working to support the caregivers. [February SEPAC Report.pdf](#)

- G. March 2 Retreat Update - Member Bartoli reported that Members Reiss and Jewell are assisting with organizing the retreat. A decision on a facilitator will be made next week. Mayor Sciarra asked the Committee if it would be willing to include Attorney Taylor on the agenda and the Committee consented.

IX. New Business *(the agenda order was adjusted to accommodate presenters)*

- A. Open Meeting Law & Conflict of Interest - In the interest of time, Atty. Taylor’s presentation was rescheduled for the March 2 retreat. She spoke to deliberations between meetings which she said are the most common OML violation. She said that members cannot communicate with a quorum which is defined as six people. She cautioned against email chains. She said the public needs to be able to rely on transparent processes.

Member Weisenfreund made a motion, seconded by Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, to suspend the rules and extend the meeting until 11:45 pm. The roll call vote follows.

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|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Aye |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Nay |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Aye |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Aye |
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Nay |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Nay |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Aye |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Aye |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| VOTE | Aye 5 Nay 3 Absent 2 |

The motion failed. Member Martyn made a motion, seconded by Member Bartoli, to extend the meeting until 11:30 pm. The roll call vote follows.

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| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Aye |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Aye |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Aye |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Aye |
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Aye |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Nay |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Aye |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Aye |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| VOTE | Aye 7 |

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| | Nay 1 Absent 2 |
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Atty. Taylor went on to describe that the quorum for subcommittees is two members and subcommittee members cannot communicate about the business of the subcommittee between meetings. She said that members must sign a certification of OML training and submit it to the City Clerk’s Office. In response to a question from the Clerk, Atty. Taylor said that best practice is for subcommittees to set future agendas at the end of a meeting. Requests for agenda items should not be sent to the entire subcommittee.

- B. VOTE: Proposal To Designate March 18 as a Half-Day for Students to Compensate for the Teacher Workday Cancelled on December 3 - Member Montgomery-Tamakloe made a motion, seconded by Member Mahoney, to designate March 18 as a half-day for students to compensate for the teacher workday cancelled on December 3. The motion passed by acclamation.

- C. VOTE: 2026-2027 Program of Study - Principal Taglieri said that a course in AP Comparative Government is being added. Speaking to the AB Day schedule, he said that its introduction is a first step in growing a more robust course offering and that additional avenues may be pursued. He said he did not believe it would be impactful relative to staffing. All proposed classes will be general education. No students will have an every-other-day strategies class in their IEP. If it proves to be effective, the next step would be to offer courses such as math, world language, and courses that benefit from continuity of instruction throughout the year. He said that the SEPAC Board is aware that this is a first step. He said that the changes started organically at NHS, but that now it may make sense to form a working group. Principal Taglieri confirmed that half-credit courses would count toward meeting graduation requirements. The program will be introduced to students in class meetings in early-March. He said that smaller class sizes than usual will be permitted to get the program off the ground. Course registration begins in March. Member Mahoney made a motion, seconded by Member Martyn, to approve the 2026-2027 Program of Study. The motion passed by voice vote with Member Montgomery-Tomokloe voting nay and Member Weisenfreund abstaining.

- D. VOTE: 2026-2027 School Year Calendar - Superintendent Bonner said that NASE has requested that the school year begin earlier than set forth in the contract. Convocation will be held on August 20, the first day of school will be August 26 with kindergarteners starting on August 31. School will end on June 11. Five snow days are included. In response to a question from Member Bartoli, Superintendent Bonner said the District doesn’t honor religious holidays and that they are considered an excused absence. Member Martyn made a motion, seconded by Member Montgomery-Tamakloe, to approve the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar. The motion passed by acclamation with Member Jewell voting nay.

- E. VOTE: Accept Appropriation Submitted by Mayor and Approved by City Council on February 5, 2026 - Mayor Sciarra asked the School Committee to accept the \$290,317 appropriation to the Northampton Public Schools. She said the \$123,000 requested by Student Services will be covered by circuit breaker funds. Multiple capital items totalling \$91,050 either were already on the capital improvement plan, had been put forward for the capital plan for next year, or are now being added. Member Weisenfreund made a point of information asking why this required a vote. Mayor Sciarra responded that the Committee must accept the appropriation. Member Weisenfreund additionally asked what the result would be if the Committee did not vote to accept the appropriation. Mayor Sciarra responded the funds would not be directed to the schools. Member Weisenfreund asked whether this vote represented agreement with the line items. Mayor Sciarra responded no. Member Bartoli made a motion, seconded by Member Reiss, to accept the appropriations submitted by the Mayor and approved by the City Council on February 5, 2026. The motion passed unanimously by acclamation.
- F. VOTE: IGNITE Director Job Description - Tabled.
- G. VOTE: IGNITE Site Coordinator Job Description - Tabled.
- H. VOTE: IGNITE Travel Nurse Job Description - Tabled.

X. Future Business

- A. Future Discussion Topics - Member Weisenfreund requested that the CASE report, child find procedures, the FY26 mid-year appropriation process, and District policies regarding ICE be included as future discussion topics.
- B. Future Business & Meetings
 - 1. Rules & Policy Subcommittee, February 25, 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm, by videoconference
 - 2. School Committee Retreat, March 2, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm, location TBD
 - 3. Budget & Property Subcommittee, March 9, 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm, by videoconference
 - 4. School Committee, March 12, 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm, Hybrid: JFK Community Room and by videoconference

- XI. Executive Session** - Member Montgomery-Tamakloe made a motion, seconded by Member Bartoli, to enter Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7), "To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements" ("Purpose 7"), for the purpose of reviewing and approving executive session minutes to comply with the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g), and pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21 (a)(3), "To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Mayor Sciarra said the Committee would not return to public session. The roll call vote follows.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra | Aye |
| W1 Alena Bartoli | Aye |
| W2 Anat Weisenfreund | Aye |
| W3 Renika Montgomery-Tamakloe | Aye |
| W4 Michael Stein | Absent |
| W5 Amy Martyn | Aye |
| W6 Cindy Mahoney | Aye |
| W7 Valerie Reiss | Aye |
| AL Tiffany Jewell | Aye |
| AL Robbie Saner Sullivan | Absent |
| VOTE | Aye 8 Absent 2 |

The public session was adjourned at 11:25 pm.