Needham School Committee

Broadmeadow School
Performance Center

Tuesday, April 2, 2024

6:30 p.m.

Broadcast on the Needham Channel municipal and HD channels, live stream at: https://needhamchannel.org

Please click the link below to access meeting for Public Comments:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89354584283?pwd=OHE1alJTMzlhN3VwZ1puVHc5Wmdvdz09
Webinar ID: **893 5458 4283** Passcode: **446793** Or One tap mobile: +13126266799

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024 6:30 p.m.

Broadmeadow School Performance Center

Next School Committee Meeting: April 23, 2024 6:30 p.m.

Broadcast on the Needham Channel municipal and HD channels, live stream at: https://needhamchannel.org
Please click the link below to join the webinar for **Public Comments**:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89354584283?pwd=OHE1alJTMzlhN3VwZ1puVHc5Wmdvdz09

Webinar ID: **893 5458 4283** Passcode: **446793** Or One tap mobile: +13126266799

6:30 p.m. **Public Comments**

6:35 p.m. **School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates**

6:40 p.m. **Superintendent's Comments**
Recognition of Staff: Units C, D, E and Bus Drivers

6:50 p.m. **Consent Items**

1. Minutes of the Meetings of February 6, 2024, February 27, 2024 and March 5, 2024
2. FY24 Grants for Approval
3. FY24 Budget Transfers
4. Approve Allocation of 2023-24 Student Activity Photo Commissions
5. Create Girls JV Golf Team and Set Fee
6. Donations

Discussion Items

6:55 p.m. High Rock School Improvement Plan

7:40 p.m. Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: 9-12 English & Social Studies

8:20 p.m. **Action Item**

Vote ACCEPT Education Collaborative By-Laws - Revised

8:25 p.m. **School Committee Comments**

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **Public Comments**

Background Information:

- The School Committee Chair will offer the opportunity for the public to speak to the School Committee on issues not on the agenda.

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates**

Background Information:

- The Chair and subcommittee members may offer brief updates on issues not on the agenda.

Members of the School Committee available for comment:

Andrea Longo Carter, Chair
Elizabeth Lee, Vice-Chair
Connie Barr
Michael Greis
Michael O'Brien
Alisa Skatrud
Matthew Spengler
Lea Gruen, Student Representative

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **Superintendent's Comments**

Background Information:

Superintendent Daniel E. Gutekanst will apprise the School Committee of events, information, and matters of interest not on the agenda.

The Superintendent will recognize and express appreciation to Needham Public Schools staff who are members of Units C, D, E and bus and van drivers. Those units include clerical and technical staff, nutrition service workers, and instructional assistants.

Needham Public Schools

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **Consent Items**

1. Minutes of the Meetings of February 6, 2024, February 27, 2024 and March 5, 2024
2. FY24 Grants for Approval
3. FY24 Budget Transfers
4. Approve Allocation of 2023-24 Student Activity Photo Commissions
5. Create Girls JV Golf Team and Set Fee
6. Donations

Chair: "Does anyone wish to remove any items from the consent agenda?"

If none removed:

"There being no objection, these items are adopted by unanimous consent."

Needham School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
February 6, 2024

School Committee Chair Andrea Longo Carter called the meeting of February 6, 2024 to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members of the School Committee present were:

Andrea Longo Carter	Elizabeth Lee
Connie Barr	Michael Greis
Matthew Spengler	Alisa Skatrud
	Lea Gruen, Student Representative

Members of the Central Administration present were:

Dan Gutekanst	Alexandra McNeil
Anne Gulati	Mary Lammi
Carmen Williams	

Public Comments — Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates — SC Chair Subcommittee Comments

There were no School Committee Chair and Subcommittee updates.

Superintendent Comments — Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Gutekanst congratulated performing arts Pollard Middle School students who performed *Frozen* to a sold-out crowd last weekend.

The 2024 Massachusetts Music Educators Association All-State Festival will take place on March 22nd at the DCU Center and Boston Symphony Hall on March 23rd. Several students have been recognized and will participate in the state festival.

The Superintendent gave a shout out to the Elementary Honors Chorus who recently performed the National Anthem at a Boston College hockey game.

Consent Items — Consent Items

1. Minutes of the Meeting of December 19, 2023 and January 2, 2024 and January 16, 2024

2. Disposal of Surplus Items

Chair:
"Does anyone wish to remove any items from the consent agenda?"

If none removed:
"There being no objection, these items are adopted by unanimous consent."

Agenda Item: Discussion

Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: Wellness

Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: Wellness

Denise Domnarski presented along with Jon Grant and Courtney Todesco – and eighth grade students Cal and Owen Hammerstrand. Ms. Domnarski explained that the mission within the K-12 Wellness program is to equip students with the knowledge and skills to make healthy lifestyle choices throughout their lives. Their main focus is engaging students and learning through experience.

Mr. Grant commented that at High Rock, they try to incorporate team and group dynamics. In Health, they work through a decision-making process and then evaluate what will happen next based on the result of that decision. Ms. Todesco said at Pollard, every Health unit that they do has a skills focus. Ms. Domnarski remarked that at the High School, they are focusing on individual as well as community wellness.

Dr. Lee asked how the Sexual Education program supports students who are gender diverse. It was explained that sexuality is taught in several grades. In 8th grade Health, the first primary topic is focused around identity and sexuality. They focus on respectful language, empathy and gender expression stereotypes.

Agenda Item: Discussion

Pollard Middle School Improvement Plan

Pollard Middle School Improvement Plan

Dr. Tamatha Bibbo and the School Council members presented the School Improvement Plan. The School Council consists of a community member, four parents, four educators and four students (two 7th grade students and two 8th grade students).

Pollard holds monthly community meetings which highlight birthdays, shout outs and communication of events throughout the building. The advisory classes have circle meetings almost every day. The counselors host lunch groups for the smaller groups of students who need to meet more frequently to resolve a conflict with peers or just to come together to talk about something happening in their community.

Dr. Bibbo also explained that they are reducing suspensions in an effort to keep students in school. They are looking at their model around discipline as restorative rather than punitive.

7th grade ELA Book Club meets throughout the year to promote choice, improve reading stamina and amplify student voice. Family and caregiver communication has increased. Dr. Bibbo hosts twice-monthly chats on Zoom and sends a weekly newsletter to families. Student communication has also increased with a daily bulletin and a student-run TV show.

Dr. Lee commented that restorative practices have been useful for kids to resolve problems. She asked if they have experienced a broader impact of restorative practices from a parent or teacher perspective.

Dr. Bibbo explained that their focus is on prevention - to do the work ahead of time so that when students are in situations where something unexpected has happened, they can resolve it. Dr. Bibbo remarked how fortunate Pollard is to start each day with an Advisory period consisting of a group of 10-12 students with one adult. She said Advisory helps take a large building with almost 900 students and break it down into smaller chunks. This makes the building manageable and supportive.

Ms. Skatrud asked if there are pockets of resistance among teachers to do extra activities.

Dr. Bibbo said they decided there are non-negotiable activities, such as community meetings where they will plan the slides and theme for the staff. She said often teachers will make the meeting their own and be very excited about it.

Dr. Barr commented that the REAL Coalition met last week. An elementary principal in her group said they like both sides of restorative work: the proactive and the reactive. Students can then use what they have learned when they need to react to something.

Agenda Item: Discussion School Committee Policies

School Committee Policies

The School Committee reviewed the following policies which will be brought back to the Committee at a subsequent meeting for a vote.

Revision: Draft Policy IJNDB-1 Revision 1 Staff Responsible Use of Digital Resources and Rescission of Outdated Policies:

CA Administration Goals
CBA Qualifications and Duties of the Superintendent (Job Description)
CHA Development and Dissemination of Administrative Rules
GCDC Filling of Administrative Positions
GCPB Submission of Resignation
GDBDA Staff Leaves
GDLA Support Staff Visitations and Conferences
JBA *Gender Equity Policy**
JE School Attendance
JED Student Absences and Excuses
JEDA Truancy
JEDAA *Religious Absence**

**The content of these policies has been updated in more recent policies (e.g. Policy AC Non-Discrimination & Harassment), and student handbooks.*

Action Item

Approve Middle School and High School Programs of Studies

Approve Middle School and High School Programs of Studies

Dr. Gutekanst mentioned that there was reconsideration regarding an issue raised by Ms. Skatrud about Wellness and Physical Education at the High School. The staff responded to the concern and are providing flexibility for the staff in working with students and families.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the Needham School Committee approves the FY 2024-2025 Middle School and High School Programs of Studies as submitted.

Moved by Michael Greis and seconded by Alisa Skatrud.

The vote was 6-0-0.

Action Item

Approve Fees for FY25 Revolving Funds

Approve Fees for FY25 Revolving Funds: Preschool, Transportation, Community Education, Athletics and Nutrition Services

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the Needham School Committee approves the FY25 fees for Preschool, Transportation, Community Education, Athletics and Nutrition Services as submitted.

Moved by Michael Greis and seconded by Elizabeth Lee.

As the Committee is voting under the doctrine of the rule of necessity, the Chair called the roll.

Roll call vote: Matthew Spengler votes aye; Connie Barr votes aye; Michael Greis votes aye, Alisa Skatrud votes aye; Elizabeth Lee votes aye; Andrea Longo Carter votes aye.

The vote was 6-0-0.

School Committee Comments SC Comments

Ms. Skatrud reminded the community that Jazz Fest will take place at the High School on Friday February 9th. This event is free and there is a professional guest artist that has been rehearsing with the students.

Information Items Information Items

1. Presentation to Community Preservation Committee: Costs for Needham High School Tennis Courts Improvement

2. ACCEPT Education Collaborative FY24 Second Quarter Report

Adjourn

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Michael Greis moved, and Elizabeth Lee seconded the motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting of February 6, 2024. Adjourn

Vote: 6-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,
Chrissy McCourt

A list of all documents used at this School Committee meeting is available at:
School Committee packets 2023-24

Needham School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
February 27, 2024

School Committee Chair Andrea Longo Carter called the meeting of February 27, 2024 to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members of the School Committee present were:

Andrea Longo Carter	Elizabeth Lee
Connie Barr	Michael Greis
Michael O'Brien	Alisa Skatrud
Matthew Spengler (Remote)	
Lea Gruen, Student Representative	

Members of the Central Administration present were:

Dan Gutekanst	Alexandra McNeil
Anne Gulati	Mary Lammi
Carmen Williams	

Public Comments — Public Comments

There were no public comments.

School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates — SC Chair Subcommittee Comments

There were no School Committee Chair and Subcommittee updates.

Superintendent Comments — Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Gutekanst said he hoped everyone had a restful break and that they enjoyed the "No Snow Snow Day." He exclaimed that it would never happen again!

The Superintendent also congratulated Vann Hotchkiss on winning the Division 1 Boys State Diving Championship for the second year in a row. Vann scored 543.55 which was 20 points greater than the runner up.

Consent Agenda Consent Items

1. Minutes of the Meeting of January 23, 2024
2. Approve FY24 Grant
3. FY24 Budget Transfers
4. Accept Donations
5. Disposal of Surplus Item

Chair: "Does anyone wish to remove any items from the consent agenda?"
If none removed:

"There being no objection, these items are adopted by unanimous consent."

Agenda Item: Discussion Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: Middle School Math

Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: Middle School Math

Borkeny Sambou, Middle School Math Curriculum Leader; Sarah Burns and Rachael Silver, 8th and 7th Grade Math Teachers, as well as Pollard students presented.

Ms. Sambou explained that they use the foundations of The Portrait of a Needham Graduate for all their instructional decisions. The 8 Standards for Mathematical Practices especially speak to these competencies: Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers, Communicators and Collaborators and Empowered Learners. 7th Grade created a project called "Graphing City" which used creativity and imagination. Rachael Silver remarked that communication and collaboration is the best way to teach math. 8th Graders did a project called "Big Numbers" which used a visual or physical representation of a big number. One group used textbooks to compare the heights of mountains around the world. Another group compared the most common languages spoken in the world using letter height to represent the amount of people speaking that language.

Dr. Lee asked what this new type of math instruction offers that the traditional math instruction does not. Ms. Silver explained that this kind of math instruction teaches how to think and not just what to think.

Ms. Skatrud questioned how teachers are handling students who are doing extra math outside of school that looks different than the math they are doing in the classroom. Ms. Sambou remarked they value the diversity of each of their students. In each classroom, you will see multiple versions of each assignment.

Agenda Item: Discussion

Needham High School Improvement Plan

Needham High School Improvement Plan

Needham High School (NHS) Principal Aaron Sicotte and NHS School Council Co-Chair Catherine Brandish presented the Needham High School Improvement Plan. The three goal areas for School Year 2023-2024 are Culturally Responsive Teaching, Interdisciplinary Learning, and Social Emotional Learning.

Ms. Brandish explained that the two of the most important pieces of Social Emotional Learning were Mental Health Days and Own Your Piece/Peace. Mr. Sicotte said they are trying to elevate mental health on the same level as physical health.

Mr. Sicotte said there is outstanding work happening in the Interdisciplinary Program which mirrors how learning happens deeply within the brain.

Ms. Brandish exclaimed that X block is amazing! Students can talk with their teachers one-on-one and build connections Mr. Sicotte confirmed that X Block will be a foundation of the schedule regardless of what the bell schedule looks like.

Chair Longo Carter asked Mr. Sicotte about next steps. Mr. Sicotte explained that they would like to examine their grading system.

Agenda Item: Discussion

Needham High School Performance and Achievement Report

Needham High School Performance and Achievement Report

Mr. Sicotte explained that he views achievement broadly - beyond just testing data. He highlighted a few of the school's offerings in the Performing Arts, Pep Rally, several volunteer organizations, and Speech and Debate.

Mr. Spengler asked, "How do we define what achievement means?" He mentioned that SAT and ACT scores are tied to family income.

Dr. Lee said that she would like to see test score data disaggregated by student sub-groups to see who the district is not serving well.

Mr. O'Brien questioned how students choose which clubs and activities they will join and how we can capture students who are not able to participate due to

work or caring for family members. Mr. Sicotte remarked that we need to think broadly and inclusively when defining achievement.

Agenda Item: Action Action Items

Action Items

1. Approve Policy IJNDB-1 Revision 1 Staff Responsible Use of Digital Resources

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the Needham School Committee approves the Revision 1 Staff Responsible Use of Digital Resources Policy.

Moved by Connie Barr and seconded by Michael Greis.

Roll call vote: Connie Barr votes aye; Michael Greis votes aye; Alisa Skatrud votes aye; Mike O'Brien votes aye; Elizabeth Lee votes aye; Matthew Spengler (remote) votes aye; Andrea Longo Carter votes aye.

The motion carried. The vote was 7-0-0.

2. Rescind Outdated Policies
   - **CA:** Administration Goals
   - **CBA:** Qualifications and Duties of the Superintendent (Job Description)
   - **CHA:** Development and Dissemination of Administrative Rules
   - **GCDC:** Filing of Administrative Positions
   - **GCPB:** Submission of Resignation
   - **GDBDA:** Staff Leaves
   - **GDLA:** Support Staff Visitations and Conferences
   - **JBA:** Gender Equity Policy
   - **JE:** School Attendance
   - **JED:** Student Absences and Excuses
   - **JEDA:** Truancy
   - **JEDAA:** Religious Absence

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the Needham School Committee rescinds the Outdated Policies listed above as submitted.

Moved by Connie Barr and seconded by Michael Greis.

Roll call vote: Connie Barr votes aye; Michael Greis votes aye; Alisa Skatrud votes aye; Mike O'Brien votes aye; Elizabeth Lee votes aye; Matthew Spengler (remote) votes aye; Andrea Longo Carter votes aye.

The motion carried. The vote was 7-0-0.

School Committee Comments SC Comments

Dr. Lee commented that she was recently "Flocked" by the Class of 2024. Ms. Gruen explained that this is a very popular fundraiser but all the slots are full until the end of the school year. Any additional donations are welcome and can be made on My School Bucks.

Dr. Barr said that The League of Women Voters is hosting a program on March 20th at 6:30 PM in the Broadmeadow Performance Center. This hour-long presentation will explain how town government works. After the presentation, there will be a half hour for questions.

Ms. Skatrud remarked that tickets for the Needham High School production of *Les Miserables* are now on sale through the Needham High School website or My School Bucks.

A list of all documents used at this School Committee meeting is available at:
School Committee packets 2023-24

Adjourn Adjourn

At approximately 8:46 p.m., Michael Greis moved, and Alisa Skatrud seconded the motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting of February 27, 2024.

Roll call vote: Connie Barr votes aye; Michael Greis votes aye; Alisa Skatrud votes aye; Mike O'Brien votes aye; Elizabeth Lee votes aye; Matthew Spengler (remote) votes aye; Andrea Longo Carter votes aye.

The motion carried. The vote was 7-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chrissy McCourt

Needham School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
MARCH 5, 2024

School Committee Chair Andrea Longo Carter called the meeting of March 4, 2024 to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members of the School Committee present were:

Andrea Longo Carter	Elizabeth Lee
Connie Barr	Michael Greis
Michael O'Brien	Alisa Skatrud
Matthew Spengler	Lea Gruen, Student Representative

Members of the Central Administration present were:

Dan Gutekanst
Anne Gulati
Carmen Williams

Public Comments — Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates — SC Chair Subcommittee Comments

There were no School Committee Chair and Subcommittee updates.

Superintendent Comments — Superintendent's Comments

Dr. Gutekanst congratulated several Needham High School and Pollard students for receiving *The Boston Globe*'s Scholastic Art and Writing awards.

The Needham High School Jazz Band earned a perfect score at the Jazz MASA Festival. They now qualify for the State finals later this month. In addition, a few students received an award for Outstanding Musicianship.

Consent Agenda — Consent Items

1. FY24 Budget Transfers
2. Approve Overnight Student Trip

Chair: “Does anyone wish to remove any items from the consent agenda?”

If none removed:

“There being no objection, these items are adopted by unanimous consent.”

Agenda Item: Discussion Sunita William School Improvement Plan

Sunita Williams School Improvement Plan

Superintendent Gutekanst explained that he finally had the opportunity to interview Needham High School graduate and NASA astronaut Sunita Williams. Ms. Williams said it is an honor to have a school named after her; Superintendent Gutekanst remarked that she is the most engaging, genuine, energetic, and caring person.

Principal Kiana Brunson, together with Sunita Williams School Council Members, presented their School Improvement Plan. Last summer, there were several professional development meetings which focused on helping students return to a post-pandemic learning environment. From these meetings, they decided on three key school priorities: collaboration; culture; and community.

Ms. Brunson explained that deepening faculty collaboration around instructional practices and social-emotional supports will help their students thrive.

The Student Council, which is comprised of fourth and fifth grade students, is helping to build school culture at Sunita Williams. Daily student-led announcements also help create a strong sense of school community.

Ms. Skatrud asked Ms. Brunson to speak further about Special Ed/General Ed silos and the benefits of inclusive education. Ms. Brunson explained that breaking down the silos is still part of the work. She said all students can learn and thrive in different ways. All students have the right to grade-level curriculum and modify it in ways that they can digest.

Mr. Greis asked the Student Council members how they are using the unique space around the school. A fifth grade student remarked that they use the path and pond in the back of the school for Science class as well as Physical Education.

Ms. Gruen exclaimed that she thinks it is “super awesome” that students at a young age are getting involved in Student Council. She asked if the High School Student Council could mentor the Elementary School Student Council or could work together to plan a big town event.

Chair Longo Carter asked Ms. Crawford and Ms. Daly, the parent and community members on the School Council, respectively, about the parent community’s experience with a new building and principal. They explained that it took a little while but they are settling into their new space and new principal; their children have embraced being a Sunita Williams Wildcat.

Agenda Item: Discussion SEL & Mental Health Framework/Restorative Practices

Social Emotional Learning & Mental Health Framework/Restorative Practices

This presentation has been postponed.

Agenda Item: Discussion NEF 2024 Winter Grant Awards

Needham Education Foundation 2024 Winter Grant Awards

Needham Education Foundation (NEF) Board Member Caryn Conway presented the NEF 2024 Winter Grant Awards. She said there were eight grants awarded in the winter with a total of $43,258. One of the grants is for the International Society for Technology and Education seminar. Five Technology teachers will be attending this seminar in Denver. Another grant for Civil Rights entitled “Bringing History to Life” will fund the Integrative Teaching and Learning through Living Voices at elementary schools. The final grant that was highlighted is for Cooks After School Enrichment Program, an after- school partnership between the Needham Housing Authority and Eliot students

Mr. Greis commented that the NEF is taking successful grants from the past and taking them a step further.

Ms. Skatrud asked about the amount of grant applications now versus during the pandemic. Ms. Conway explained that they are getting a healthy amount of applications, especially for professional development.

Mr. Spengler remarked that the tutoring grant is the most effective way to support students and close opportunity gaps because it provides tutoring to families that

may not be able to afford local, private tutoring companies. He said this will make an impact in later life outcomes.

School Committee Comments SC Comments

Mr. O'Brien said on March 13th there will be an event at the Broadmeadow School sponsored by the Needham Community Council called "Nurturing Hope and Resilience in Children and Teens During Troubled Times" with Dr. Robert Brooks. Mr. O'Brien had the opportunity to chaperone the 8th Grade School Dance. He was impressed that there were 300 students in attendance - double the amount they had last year. The School Resource Officer and Fire Department were there to support the students.

Mr. Greis shared that "Art in Bloom" will take place on March 9th and 10th at the Needham Public Library. The event is a collaboration between the Garden Clubs and the Needham High School Fine and Performing Arts Department. Additionally, Sweet Honey In The Rock will be performing a sold-out show at the Great Hall.

Dr. Barr had the opportunity to visit Sunita Williams and Eliot last week where she was excited to see the students in action and see the work that they are doing.

Agenda Item: Information Items Information Items

· School Attending Children Report to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as of January 1, 2024

· FY2022-23 Student Activity Report

A list of all documents used at this School Committee meeting is available at: School Committee packets 2023-24

Adjourn Adjourn

At approximately 7:41 p.m., Michael Greis moved, and Connie Barr seconded the motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting of March 5, 2024.

Vote: 7-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Chrissy McCourt

NEEDHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item #: _____ **Date:** April 2, 2024

Item Title: **Approve FY 2023/24 Grants**

Item Description: The School Department has received $58,468 in new federal, state and local grants for the FY 2023/24 School Year:

- METCO Supplemental/ 317A-318 $58,468

A summary of 2023/24 grants awarded year-to-date is attached, with new grants highlighted in yellow.

Issues: M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53A and School Committee policy #DFC/KH authorize the School Committee to accept any grant of gifts or funds given for educational purposes by the federal or state government, charitable foundations, private corporations, PTCs or an individual. M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53A further stipulates that any monies received and accepted by the School Committee may be expended without further appropriation

Recommendation/Options: That the School Committee approves the receipt and acceptance of the additional grant funds totaling $58,468.

School Committee: **CONSENT**

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Gulati

Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

Federal, State & Local Grants:	ACCEPT'D FY20	AWARD FY21	AWARD FY22	AWARD FY23	AWARD FY24	$ INC/(DEC) OVR FY23	REVISED FY24	$ INC/(DEC) OVR FY24 Orig
Federal Grants								
Title IIA/ Improving Educator Quality/ 140	68,848	67,389	64,448	57,234	69,268	12,034		
Title I Part A/ 305	123,778	123,730	123,806	113,199	134,876	21,677		
Title III Part A/ English Language Acquisition/180	22,388	26,135	29,716	28,456	30,375	1,919		
Title IVA Part A/ Student Support & Academic Enrichment / 309	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	-		
SPED Program Improvement/ 274	-	33,974			43,950	43,950		
SPED IDEA Early Childhood/ 262	36,342	36,655	36,995	39,108	40,016	908		
SPED Early Childhood Program Improvement/298	-	2,581				-		
SPED IDEA Entitlement/240 (94-142)	1,330,637	1,387,811	1,424,475	1,464,116	1,525,046	60,930		
SPED IDEA Entitlement/240 (94-142) Resolution Funds				16,494	15,565	(929)		
CARES Act: Elementary & Secondary Emergency Relief Funds I (ESSER)/113 *	-	81,318	-		N/A	-		
CRRSA Act: Elementary & Secondary Emergency Relief Funds II (ESSER II)/115 *	-	303,310	-		N/A	-		
ARP Act: Elementary & Secondary Emergency Relief Funds III (ESSER III)/119			681,671		N/A	-		
ARP Act: Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) / 252			328,329		N/A	-		
ARP Act: Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) Early Childhood Grant/ 264			29,214		N/A	-		
ARP Act: Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) Homeless Children & Youth II/ 302			2,868		N/A	-		
Remote Learning Technology Essentials 117/118	-	23,540	-		N/A	-		
Summer and Vacation Learning Program Grant 114/333	-	12,000	-			-		
Summer School Expansion & Engagement/ 102			28,500			-		
CvRF School Reopening Grant/ 102	-	1,293,975	-		N/A	-		
CvRF For School Meal Programs		23,406	-		N/A	-		
School Programs Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement Program (10.555)			5,146		N/A	-		
P-EBT Local Administrative Cost Reimbursement			4,912		N/A	-		
School Nutrition Equipment Assistance for Schools/ 722			7,750			-		
School Nutrition Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) Funds			78,652			-		
Development & Expansion of High Quality Summer Learning/ 523				25,000	TBD	-		
High Quality Instructional Materials Implementation Grant/ 185				91,500	173,500	82,000		
Investigating History Pilot/ 585 or 653				5,977	11,000	5,023		
FY23 Deeper Learning 105 84-425				14,026	TBD	-		
						-		
State Grants:						-		
Academic Support/632 (MCAS Tutoring)	-	-	-			-		
Comprehensive School Health Services (CSHS) Grant	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	-		
METCO/ 317	1,197,675	1,248,094	1,379,761	1,461,326	1,461,326	-		
METCO Supplemental/ 317A-318	92,389	79,376	51,718	30,963	58,468	27,505		
Special Education Circuit Breaker **	1,587,130	1,715,214	2,064,060	2,663,393	3,024,710	361,317		
Coronavirus Prevention Fund	-	172,050	-		N/A	-		
Special Support Earmark/ 192	-	20,833	-		N/A	-		
Special Support Earmark/ 195 (Town DEI Initiative)			50,000		N/A	-		
COVID-19 Summer Programming Reimbursement/ 437			41,800		N/A	-		
Accelerating Mathematics Instruction for Students (In-Kind)			81,340	146,170	TBD	-		
Proficiency-Based Outcomes for Languages Other than English/ 189 (FY22)			7,885	6,000	TBD	-		
Proficiency-Based Outcomes for Languages Other than English/ 189 (FY23)				9,962	TBD	-		
COVID-19 Sick Wages Reimbursement (H. 90)			102,996		N/A	-		
COVID-19 Reimbursement for Personal Protective Masks (Ch22 Acts of 2022)***				6,370	N/A	-		
Teacher Diversification Pilot Program/ 216 (FY22)			19,366	19,367	N/A	-		
Teacher Diversification Pilot Program/ 253 (FY23 & FY24)				34,798	23,729	(11,069)		
DEI Earmark Extension				16,500	N/A	-		
Northeast Food for School Grant					34,120	34,120		
						-		
Local Grants:						-		
NEF Fall Grants	50,102	15,980	30,317	30,142	30,501	359		
NEF Winter Grants	34,296	45,524	32,541	45,049	39,008	(6,041)		
FY23 Winter Large: Cornelius Minor				10,200		(10,200)		
FY20 Winter Grants Additional Funds			255		N/A	-		
NEF Spring Grants	22,300	30,782	18,434	34,177	TBD	-		
NEF Summer Grants	-	3,000	-			-		
NEF Strengthening the Elementary Instructional Model	-	296,624	-			-		
NEF Collaborative Initiative	-	35,000	-		156,580	156,580		
Beth Israel Deaconess Life Skills	3,000	-	-			-		
Kate's Voice Music Therapy				2,200		(2,200)		
Needham Commission on Disabilities- Pollard ILC Grant					3,000	3,000		
METCO REI					14,000	14,000		
MCC Stars Residencies Grants (Williams and Eliot)			9,350			-		
Metrowest Health Foundation Pollard Middle School Wellness Initiative					10,000	10,000		
Metrowest Health Foundation Improving Student Health by Addressing Racial Discrimination	-	18,000				-		
	4,678,885	**7,206,301**	**6,846,305**	**6,481,727**	**7,009,038**	**804,883**	**-**	**-**

* Awarded for FY21, but accepted in FY20

** Circuit Breaker Reimbursement %s: FY20 Budget 72%; FY20 Actual 75%; FY21 Budget 75%, FY21 Actual; FY22 Budget 60%/ 60% of 25% Eligible Transportation, FY22 Actual 75%/75% of 25% Eligible Transportation; FY23 Budget 65%/ 65% of 50% Eligible Transportation, Actual 75%/ 75% of 75% Eligible Transportation; FY24 Budget 70%/ 75% of 100% Eligible Transportation, Actual 75%/ 57% of 100% Eligible Transportation

*** A total of $50,909.13 was received in FY23, and $44,539.13 was refunded, based on $6,370 in qualifying expendidtures.

NEEDHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item #: _____ **Date:** **April 2, 2024**

Item Title: **FY 2023/24 Budget Transfers**

Item Description: Transfer of FY24 budget allocations between line items in the following amounts:

Salaries	$0
Purchase of Service/Expense	$0**
Capital	$0
Net Change:	$0

** All transfers occur within this category.

Issues: Under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 34, and School Committee Policy #DBJ, the School Committee is empowered to make changes in allocations between line items within its budget, once approved by Town Meeting. In no case may a transfer result in the aggregate Operating Budget being more than authorized by the Town. Transfers between separate, non-operating appropriations are prohibited except as permitted by law.

Recommendation/Options: Approve the attached line-item budget transfers.

Rationale: The attached line-item budget transfers adjust the school operating budget to reflect anticipated expenditures during this fiscal year.

Implementation Implications:

Supporting Data: Attached listing of requested line-item budget transfers within the FY24 Operating Budget.

School Committee (circle one)

Action Information Discussion Consent Calendar

Central Administrator Town Counsel Sub-Committee: _____

Will report back to School Committee (date): _____

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Gulati

Anne Gulati
Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

G/L ACCOUNT #	DESCRIPTION	DEBIT	CREDIT
SALARIES			
NA	NA	-	
	SUBTOTAL SALARIES	**-**	**-**
PURCHASE OF SERVICE & EXPENSE			
DIR OF PROG DEV OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL	0001.3032.040.99.1220.099.99.520.030.5720.300.06	1,000.00	
DIR OF PROG DEV OTHER EXPENSES	0001.3032.040.99.1220.099.99.520.030.5780.300.06	1,000.00	
CURRICULUM DEV-DISTRICT-ALL OTHER EXP	0001.3132.005.10.2356.099.99.520.030.5780.300.06	1,889.00	
CURR DEV ED SUPPLIES - TEACH AIDS	0001.3132.005.25.2415.099.99.520.030.5512.300.05	3,086.00	
CURRICULUM DEV-HIGH ROCK-PROF AND TECHNICAL	0001.3132.005.26.2358.099.99.520.030.5300.300.04	3,000.00	
CURRICULUM DEV-POLLARD-PROF AND TECHNICAL	0001.3132.005.30.2358.099.99.520.030.5300.300.04	3,000.00	
CURRICULUM DEV-NHS-PROF AND TECHNICAL	0001.3132.005.40.2358.099.99.520.030.5300.300.04	3,000.00	
CURR DEV - ELI - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES - P&T S	0001.3132.040.22.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		2,255.00
CURR DEV - WILL - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES - P&T	0001.3132.040.23.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		2,255.00
CURR DEV - MIT - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES - P&T S	0001.3132.040.24.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		2,255.00
CURR DEV - NEW - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES - P&T	0001.3132.040.25.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		2,255.00
CURR DEV - HIGH ROCK - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES	0001.3132.040.26.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		2,255.00
CURR DEV - POLL - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES - P&T	0001.3132.040.30.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		1,000.00
CURR DEV - POLL - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES - P&T	0001.3132.040.40.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		1,000.00
CURR DEV - PRESCHOOL - INSTR SOFTWARE & LICENSES	0001.3132.040.50.2455.090.99.520.030.5305.300.04		2,700.00
	SUBTOTAL PURCHASE OF SERVICES & EXPENSE	**15,975.00**	**15,975.00**
CAPITAL OUTLAY			
N/A			
	SUBTOTAL CAPITAL	**-**	**-**
	GRAND TOTAL	**15,975.00**	**15,975.00**

NEEDHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item #: _____ **Date:** March 21, 2024

Item Title: **Approve Allocation of 2023/24 Student Activity Photo Commissions**

Description: In FY23, the students earned a total of $15,039.01 in photo commission revenue, resulting from the purchase of student pictures at the beginning of the year. The principals have recommended the following allocation of these funds to student clubs and class accounts:

SCHOOL	FISCAL YEAR	AMOUNT	APPROPRIATE TO
BROADMEADOW	FY24	$1,416.87	SPLIT EVENLY, K-5 (YOG 2031-2036)
ELIOT	FY24	$998.81	SPLIT EVENLY, K-5 (YOG 2031-2036)
SUNITA WILLIAMS	FY24	$1,421.99	SPLIT EVENLY, K-5 (YOG 2031-2036)
MITCHELL	FY24	$1,282.41	SPLIT BETWEEN YOG 2031 ($641.41) AND YOG 2032 ($641.00)
NEWMAN	FY24	$1,688.07	SPLIT EVENLY, K-5 (YOG 2031-2036) AND STUDENT COUNCIL
HIGH ROCK	FY24	$1,824.28	YOG 2030
POLLARD	FY24	$3,911.55	SPLIT EVENLY, YOG 2028 & YOG 2029
HIGH SCHOOL	FY24	$2,495.03	STUDENT COUNCIL
		$15,039.01	

At this time, the School Committee is requested to approve the allocation plan shown above.

Issues: School Committee Policy #IGDG/DIB specifies that interest income and undesignated earnings of the Student Activity Account will be retained by the fund and will be periodically allocated by the School Committee to purposes as recommended by the school principals. Year-end fund balances will be maintained with the class/club. Upon graduation, the class balance will be distributed according to the class vote. If there is no such vote, the School Committee shall approve the disposition of any residual balances, upon recommendation of the school principal.

Additionally, School Committee Policy #IGDG/DIB specifies that Commissions belong to the students and must be deposited to one or more specific student activity accounts, as approved by the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Principal.

Recommendation/Options: Approval of the aforementioned plan to allocate 2023/24 photo commission revenue to student clubs and class accounts.

School Committee (circle one)
Action Information Discussion Consent Calendar

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Gulati

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

NEEDHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item #: _____ **Date:** April 2, 2024

Item Title: **Create Girls JV Golf Team and Set Fee for FY24 and FY25**

Item Description: The NHS Athletics Department is proposing to create a girls' JV golf team, to complement the established boys' team. This request is for a temporary team in FY24 and FY25, with the intention that the FY26 budget would include this team on a formal basis. Title IX mandates that Needham establish equivalent extracurricular opportunities for boys and girls, among other requirements.

The FY24 request includes a coaching stipend of $1,200, as well as approximately $860 in team-related expenses, including transportation ($360) and uniforms ($500.) The 12-person team would be completely funded from user fees of $300/athlete, with $0 net operating contribution.

This new team would be formed in the Spring of 2024 and would continue into the Spring of 2025. Ongoing authorization would be subject to the budget process and a vote of the School Committee.

Recommendation/Options: That the School Committee approve the attached proposal to create a girls' JV golf team in FY24 and FY25.

Rationale:

Implementation Implications:

Supporting Data: Program Proposal dated March 6, 2024

School Committee (circle one)

Action Information Discussion Consent Calendar

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Gulati

Anne Gulati
Director of Financial Operations

NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL

A CARING COMMUNITY STRIVING FOR
PERSONAL GROWTH AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Ryan Madden
Director of Athletics

Wed, Mar 6, 2024

Assistant Superintendent Anne Gulati,

Re: Request for Additional Girls Golf Stipend - Spring Season

This memo requests an additional stipend of $1,200 for the Girls Golf Junior Varsity team this spring season. The current Unit A contract does not include a Junior Varsity stipend. Last year, the Varsity Coach's son coached the team as a volunteer, but I would like to request a stipend in the amount of $1,200 to compensate him for his time.

This is slightly lower than comparable Assistant or Junior Varsity positions, but the season is much shorter and the team will not meet as frequently.

Financial Breakdown:

Stipend Request: $1,200
Funding Source: User Fees - Projected $3,600 in user fees from twelve (12) participating student-athletes.
Estimated Expenses: $860
Transportation: $360 (estimated MFSAB costs)
Uniforms: $500 (estimated)

Additional Considerations:

- Non-Pensionable: The stipend will not be considered for pension calculations.
- Self-Funded: The program will be primarily self-funded through user fees.

With the growing interest of golf among female student-athletes, a Junior Varsity Team will ensure the program is sustainable and continues to build on the creation of the Varsity Program in 2023.

I believe this proposal presents a cost-effective opportunity to support and strengthen the Girls Golf Program. I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Thank you,

Ryan Madden

Ryan Madden
Director of Athletics

NEEDHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item#: _____ **Date**: April 2, 2024

Item Title: **Approve School Department Donations**

Item Description: Donations have been made to the Needham Public Schools in the amount of $5,160.21. A listing appears as an attachment to this agenda item.

Issues: M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53A and School Committee policy #DFC/KH authorize the School Committee to accept any grant of gifts or funds given for educational purposes by the federal or state government, charitable foundations, private corporations, PTCs or an individual. M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53A further stipulates that any monies received and accepted by the School Committee may be expended without further appropriation.

Recommendations/Options: That the School Committee accept with gratitude the attached donations totaling $5,160.21

School Committee: Consent Calendar

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Gulati

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

Donor	Recipient	Amount
Arabella Insurance Foundation, Inc.	Donation to the Mitchell Boston Symphony Orchestra Trip Transportation	$ 300.00
Claire Bourdeau of Needham	Dash and Dot Robots, with Accessories (In-Kind)	$ 300.00
Laboratory Robotics Interest Group of Sudbury	Donation to NHS Robotics Club	$ 2,500.00
Natalya Leschiner of Needham	Donation to NHS "You've Been Flocked" Fundraiser	$ 25.00
Lauren Mednick of Needham	Donation to NHS "You've Been Flocked" Fundraiser	$ 25.00
Amanda Weirup of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 25.00
Jeff Woods of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 45.00
Sarah Miller of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 45.00
Joan Hafner of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 60.00
Michele Baldassari of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 25.00
Steve Piela of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 45.00
Anonymous	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 385.00
Laura Brinkmann of Dedham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 25.00
William Antolinez of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 50.00
Melissa Batt of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 25.00
Amanda Doran of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 25.00
Lauren Tashie of Needham	Donation to NHS Space Club Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 25.00
Shawn Lear of Needham	Donation to NHS French Club's Doctors without Border Fundraiser	$ 50.00
Anonymous	Donation to NHS French Club's Doctors without Border Fundraiser (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 18.00
Orr Bernstein of Needham	Donation to NHS French Club's Doctors without Border Fundraiser	$ 100.00
Eric Snyder of Needham	Donation to NHS French Club's Doctors without Border Fundraiser	$ 20.00
Greg Grintchenko of Needham	Donation to NHS French Club's Doctors without Border Fundraiser	$ 20.00
Various	Donation to NHS French Club's Doctors without Border Fundraiser (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 170.00
Kristy Niaura of Needham	Donation to NHS National Honor Society's Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 50.00
Laura Raff of Needham	Donation to NHS National Honor Society's Parents' Night Out Fundraiser	$ 50.00
Various	NHS Class of 2027 Bake Sale Fundraiser (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 77.00
Various	NHS German Club Bake Sale Proceeds (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 79.00
Various	NHS Black Student Union Bake Sale Proceeds (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 51.21
Various	NHS Habitat for Humanity Parents' Night Out Fundraiser (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 880.00
Various	NHS Best Buddies Coffee Cart Fundraiser (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 44.00
Various	Birthday Book Donations (Aggregate Recognition)	$ 221.00
	TOTAL	**$ 5,160.21**

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **Discussion**

High Rock Middle School Improvement Plan

Background Information:

- The High Rock Middle School Council has worked collaboratively this past year to advise Principal Jessica Downey and develop and maintain the School Improvement Plan.

- In accordance with M.G. L. Chapter 71, Section 59c, the Superintendent has approved the High Rock Middle School Improvement Plan.

Persons Available for Presentation:

Dr. Jessica Downey, Principal of High Rock Middle School
Tamara Keough, teacher

School Council Parent Representatives and Students:
Vipul Bhushan and his daughter Vinishia Bhushan
John Cho and his son Sam Cho
Susan Moffit and her daughter Eleanor Clark

High Rock School

To: ***Dr. Daniel Gutekanst, Superintendent of Schools***
From: ***Dr. Jessica R. Downey, Principal***
Date: **March 22*, 2024***
RE: ***School Improvement Plan 2024***

On behalf of the High Rock School Council, administrators, staff, and students I am happy to present our School Improvement Plan (SIP) for the 2024-2027 school years. Through a collaborative effort, we have engaged in extensive discussions about the current state of education at High Rock. We examined our areas for growth and articulated our aspirations for future sixth graders.

We are pleased to share that our school values – Learning, Self-Discovery, and Caring for Others – continue to be strongly aligned with the District's mission, vision, and the guiding principles for middle level education.

A review of School Improvement Plans from 2010 to the present revealed consistent priorities across multiple years. These include:

- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Equity
- Academic Support & Access
- Space, Building, & Student Needs

Additionally, communication and grading/assessments have been emphasized in three out of the five most recent plans.

The current plan prioritizes the Portrait of a Needham Graduate Competencies to guide High Rock's future direction. Data and valuable stakeholder input have been central in shaping this new and improved SIP. The four District Priorities serve as the foundation for our eight School Goals:

District Priority 1: All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning
School Goal 1.1: Foster student agency, voice, and choice in all aspects of learning.
School Goal 1.2: Promote Equity & Culturally Proficient practices across all students' experiences
District Priority 2: All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning
School Goal 2.1: Develop common understandings and intentional opportunities for interdisciplinary learning
School Goal 2.2: Embed SEL strategies and mental health supports across the school.
School Goal 2.3: Implement with fidelity Restorative Practices
District Priority 3: All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments
School Goal 3.1: Increase connections with businesses, organizations and civic leaders to provide learning opportunities.
School Goal 3.2: Provide learning access and opportunity across all students' experiences
District Priority 4: Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students
School Goal 4.1: Participate in the middle school reunification project to ensure a smooth transition for students and staff.

I am grateful for the vision, effort, and commitment of the High Rock School Council members. Through collaborative efforts, we are confident this plan will significantly enhance the educational experience for all students at High Rock.

Be Yourself – Become a Community

High Rock School
School Improvement Plan
2024 - 2027

Presented to School Committee: April 2, 2024

School Council Members:

Administration
Jessica R. Downey, Principal

Teacher
Tamara Keough

Parents
Vipul Bhushan
John Cho
Susan Moffit
Sally Theran

Community Representative
Kathy Carell

Middle School Statement of Purpose

We dedicate ourselves to cultivating academic excellence, civic responsibility, and the personal growth of each member of our community.

***We Know**:*

Students enter Middle School at a critical phase of their development. They experience rapid physiological and emotional changes, an emerging sense of self, and an increased need for self-assertion. Cognitively, middle school students move from concrete toward abstract thinking. Middle school students strive for self-acceptance and a sense of belonging which shapes their behavior and perceptions. Healthy connections with adults and peers are crucial. Adult recognition reinforces students' sense of worth and their ability to balance extreme and competing developmental needs.

We Believe:

- ➢ All students can learn, and it happens at varying rates through multiple learning styles.
- ➢ Active learning requires taking risks, and mistakes are valuable for learning.
- ➢ Learning through a broad-based curriculum and exposure to different perspectives is integral to educating the whole child.
- ➢ Learners should feel safe, cared for, and valued.
- ➢ Learning requires a partnership between school, home, and the community.

We Work To Provide:

- ➢ A student-centered curriculum that is experiential, interdisciplinary, and exploratory.
- ➢ A staff that plays multiple roles in fostering student growth as they share knowledge, serve as role models, and respond to each individual's needs.
- ➢ A middle school environment that stresses civic and global awareness and each student's role as a member of a family, a community, and society at large.

We Strive To Develop:

- ➢ Creative and critical thinkers.
- ➢ Confident and open-minded risk-takers.
- ➢ Responsible and thoughtful decision-makers.
- ➢ Articulate and reflective communicators.
- ➢ Collaborative and socially conscious contributors to the community.

The Improvement Process:

The Needham Middle Schools are committed to an improvement process that addresses both the short and long-term needs of all students in their middle school years. Our *School Improvement Plans*, which are aligned with the *Needham Public Schools' District Goals*, establishes requisite strategies and actions that manifest themselves through our work and priority areas to support student achievement. We believe that it is necessary for staff, parents, students, and community to be involved and to work together in this process.

Needham Public Schools

MISSION:
A school and community partnership that creates excited learners, inspires excellence, & fosters integrity.

VISION:
Preparing ALL Needham Public Schools students to be:

- Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers;
- Communicators and Collaborators;
- Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors;
- Responsible and Resilient Individuals;
- Empowered Learners

CORE VALUES:

- Scholarship
- Community
- Citizenship
- Personal Growth

HIGH ROCK VALUES:
Learning, Self-Discovery, Caring for Others

NEEDHAM STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1. All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning

1A) Incorporate opportunities for student choice, independent learning, & personalized pathways
1B) Provide structures & experiences that enable student efficacy, leadership, and voice
1C) Teach students the content & skills necessary for them to grow personally and academically.

2. All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning

2A) Extend interdisciplinary teaching and learning practices Pre-K to 12
2B) Embed Portrait Competencies, Technology, Inclusive Practices, SEL, and Equity into all curricula and instructional practices
2C) Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills through multiple means of expression.

3. All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments

3A) Support and design classroom models and environments that foster collaboration & innovation
3B) Provide time, schedules, and spaces that promote learning objectives
3C) Complement instruction with accessible learning beyond the classroom, within the community, and in partnership with families.

4. Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students

4A) Provide staffing, facilities, and budget resources aligned to district priorities
4B) Implement a recruitment, retention, and development process for staff growth and diversity
4C) Establish a professional learning structure supporting equity and the Portrait vision.

HIGH ROCK COMMITMENT

We will be deliberate in our thinking, planning, and teaching so the diversity of our student needs and experiences will be at the center of our classrooms and school.

DISTRICT PRIORITY 1: All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning

DISTRICT FOCUS: Continue to expand UDL with a phased implementation that increases opportunities for agency, voice, & choice.

SCHOOL GOAL 1.1: Foster student agency, voice, and choice in all aspects of learning.

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Person(s) Responsible	Status
1.1.a	**Implement UDL principles in lesson planning and curriculum development.**	Students will gain a more accessible and engaging learning experience that caters to their individual strengths and learning styles.	Principal, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not Sta...
1.1.b	**Create opportunities for student choice in learning activities and assessments.**	Students will gain a sense of ownership, increased motivation, and a deeper understanding of the learning process.	Principal, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not Sta...
1.1.c	**Provide opportunities for student leadership and self-reflection.**	Students will gain valuable leadership skills, self-awareness, and the ability to learn from experiences.	Principal, Building Admin, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not Sta...

DISTRICT FOCUS: Establish content and learning standard objectives for culturally responsive instructional practices by grade level.

SCHOOL GOAL 1.2: Establish Equity & Culturally Responsive practices across all students' experiences

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Person(s) Responsible	Status
1.2.a	**Audit curriculum for content areas in need of attention and develop plans for improvement.**	Students will benefit from learning materials that are more inclusive, representative, and relevant to their diverse backgrounds and experiences.	Principal, Curriculum Leaders & Educators	Not St...
1.2.b	**Integrate culturally responsive practices and Equity education across the students' experience.**	Students will gain a stronger sense of belonging, a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives, and the ability to thrive in a globalized world.	Principal, Building Admin, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not St...
1.2.c	**Audit systems, protocols, and polices for areas in need of attention and develop plans for improvement.**	Students will gain a voice in shaping a more efficient, fair, and effective school environment.	Principal, Building Admin, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not St...

DISTRICT PRIORITY 2: All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning

DISTRICT FOCUS: Expand Interdisciplinary Learning

SCHOOL GOAL 2.1: Develop common understandings and intentional opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Person(s) Responsible	Status
2.1.a	**Provide professional development on effective interdisciplinary teaching practices.**	Teachers will gain the skills to create richer learning experiences for students, allowing them to connect knowledge across subjects and develop a broader understanding of the world.	Principal & Curriculum Leaders	Not St...
2.1.b	**Identify opportunities for interdisciplinary connections within the existing curriculum.**	Students will gain a deeper understanding of how different subjects relate to each other, creating a more cohesive and meaningful learning.	Principal, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not St...
2.1.c	**Create interdisciplinary projects and units that require collaboration across disciplines.**	Students will gain the valuable ability to connect knowledge from different subjects, fostering a more holistic understanding of the world.	Principal, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not St...

DISTRICT FOCUS: Implementation of the District's SELM Framework

SCHOOL GOAL 2.2: Embed SEL strategies and mental health supports across the school.

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
2.2.a	**Examine SELM Framework to understand the foundational principles necessary for all students to be successful.**	Students will gain a deeper understanding of the essential skills and mindsets needed to thrive in school and life.	Principal & Building Admin	Not St...
2.2.b	**Provide professional development on integrating SEL and MH Strategies across disciplines and the school.**	Students will gain a stronger foundation for social-emotional learning and mental health awareness.	Principal & Building Admin	Not St...
2.2.c	**Prioritize and support staff well-being.**	Students will benefit from a more positive and stable learning environment fostered by happy and engaged educators.	Principal, Building Admin, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not St...

DISTRICT FOCUS: Implement with fidelity Restorative Practices

SCHOOL GOAL 2.3: Implement with fidelity Restorative Practices

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
2.3.a	**Learn, develop, and implement restorative practices across the school community**	Students will gain a sense of community, empathy, and conflict resolution skills.	Principal, Building Admin, & Educators	Not St...

DISTRICT PRIORITY 3: All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments

DISTRICT FOCUS: Explore additional pathways to learning

SCHOOL GOAL 3.1: Increase connections with businesses, organizations and civic leaders to provide learning opportunities.

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
3.1.a	**Collaborate with community partners to offer field trips, service learning projects, and guest speakers.**	Students will gain a richer, more connected learning experience.	Principal, Building Admin, Curriculum Leaders, & Educators	Not St...

DISTRICT FOCUS: Pilot and Assess new scheduling options and models that provide consistent time on learning, student support, targeted intervention, collaboration, and teaming.

SCHOOL GOAL 3.2: Provide learning access and opportunity across all students' experiences

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
3.2.a	**Review and improve opportunities for Tier 1 support of all students during SLS block**	Students will benefit from a more universally effective learning environment that strengthens foundational skills and promotes success for all.	Principal, Building Admin, & Educators	Not Sta...
3.2.b	**Develop scheduling options that meet the diverse needs of the community.**	Students will benefit from increased access to educational opportunities and a more inclusive learning environment.	Principal & Building Admin	Not Sta...
3.2.c	**Address programmatic needs that are impacted by space limitations**	Students will benefit from a more optimized learning environment that maximizes available resources and fosters effective program implementation.	Principal & Building Admin	Not Sta...

DISTRICT PRIORITY 4: Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students

DISTRICT FOCUS: Implement master plan for Pollard

SCHOOL GOAL 4.1: Participate in the middle school reunification project to ensure a smooth transition for students and staff.

Number	Action Step	As a Result	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
4.1.a	**Participate actively in the middle school reunification planning process.**	The 6th grade school will benefit from a smoother transition for its students by collaborating on the planning process and ensuring their needs and voices are represented in the new middle school environment.	Principal	Not Started

A Glossary for High Rock School Parents and Community Members
Translating Educational Jargon

We use many terms and acronyms in schools on a daily basis that may be unfamiliar to people outside of education. We hope that this guide provides a better understanding of what we do here at High Rock School.

Advisory: This is a program designed for students in middle school. A group of 14 – 17 students meets with a faculty advisor on a regular basis to provide a home base where students feel safe, supported, and understood by staff and peers.

Armed Intruder Drills: Just like fire drills, the Needham Public Schools practice Armed Intruder Drills on an annual basis in their schools. Students in grades 6 - 12 are trained on responsive actions of evacuating, barricading, and countering in case of an unexpected situation that may bring harm to the community.

Atlas: This is a curriculum "mapping" tool that helps us keep track of curriculum to find overlaps, redundancies, and gaps.

CASEL: Collaborative for Academic and Social/ Emotional Learning. SEL learning standards and benchmarks articulate what students should know and be able to do in SEL from PreK to grade 12 and allow districts to outline intersections of SEL with standards in academic content areas, including the Common Core State Standards.

Cluster: This is the team of four "core subject" teachers (math, science, social studies, English) that works with a designated group of about 80 students. There are five clusters here at High Rock.

Common Core Standards: The Common Core Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students in Massachusetts are expected to learn, so teachers and parents can instruct and guide them appropriately. The standards are designed to be relevant to the real world reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers.

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Culturally Responsive Teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billings,1994). Scholars developed teaching methods and practices—broadly known as asset-based pedagogies—that incorporate students' cultural identities and lived experiences into the classroom as tools for effective instruction.[1]

Disciplinary Literacy: Disciplinary literacy refers to the specialized ways of reading, writing, reasoning, and communicating in different disciplines.

DI: Differentiated Instruction
We work to create lessons and assignments that take into account different learning styles and the varying strengths and weaknesses of students.

DESE: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Economically Disadvantaged (ED): A term used by government institutions in allocating free school meals to "a student who is a member of a household that meets the income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced-price meals (less than or equal to 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines)" or business grants.

Emotional Regulation: Controlling one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts in the pursuit of long-term goals. More specifically, emotional self-regulation refers to the ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulses

English Learner (EL): English learners, or ELs, are students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses.

Equity: Fair and just access, inclusion, and participation; the practice of nurturing a learning environment in which all children are empowered to grow, create, and achieve; freedom from bias and discrimination; an understanding that each child possesses personal gifts and attributes and brings these to the classroom which strengthen learning for all; a process by which we promote justice, engender respect, and inspire hope.

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[1] https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsive-teaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04

High Needs: DESE defines "high needs" as an unduplicated count of all students in a school or district belonging to at least one of the following individual subgroups: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and former ELL students, or low income students (eligible for free/reduced price school lunch). For a school to be considered to be making progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps, the cumulative PPI for both the "all students" group and high needs students must be 75 or higher in academic courses.

IDEA: **Individuals with Disabilities Act** This federal law regarding the education of special needs students has been on the books in various forms since 1975, with the latest revision and authorization going into effect on July 1, 2005.

IDEAS: Initiatives for Developing Equity and Achievement for Students. IDEAS will extend the professional learning opportunities available to school districts as they work to enhance the culturally proficient practices identified in Standards II and III of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Model Teacher Rubric.

Learning Management System (LMS): software for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of educational courses, training programs, or learning and development programs.

MCAS: **Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System** MCAS are the state tests that check to see how well students and districts are doing in understanding and implementing, respectively, the Massachusetts Common Core Standards.

METCO: **Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity** METCO is a state-funded, voluntary busing program, begun in 1966, that brings students from Boston to over 30 participating suburban communities. METCO enriches the diversity in participating school districts while offering an opportunity for students from Boston to attend suburban schools.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS): A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a framework for how school districts can build the necessary systems to ensure that each and every student receives a high quality educational experience. It is designed to support schools with proactively identifying and addressing the strengths and needs of all students by optimizing data-driven decision-making, progress monitoring, and the use of evidence-based supports and strategies with increasing intensity to sustain student growth.

My CAP: *My Career and Academic Plan* prepares students for college, career and civic readiness. The MyCAP process engages students in authentic postsecondary planning through a continuum of learning focused on the individual student's interests, skills and talents. This process allows students to be the drivers of their education and empowers them to connect their course taking with career interests, to seek out career development opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships, capstone projects, and to identify the personal, social, and behavioral skills needed to be successful in the workplace.[2]

NCE: Needham Community Education. This office runs programs ranging from Adult Education to SAT Preparation to Driver's Education to the Summer Explorations and the Summer Skills and Thrills Program. It oversees both High Rock After School (**R.A.S.**) and Pollard After School (**P.A.S.**) (see below).

Pathways to Restorative Communities: Grounded in the principles of Restorative Justice, [this Professional Learning Organization] uses Restorative Practices and Community Building Circles to give young people and adults the tools to build meaningful relationships and address the inevitable conflict that happens in any community when it does arise.[3]

PONG: Portrait of a Needham Graduate is the shared vision for the future for our Pre-K - 12 students in the Needham Public Schools. We are preparing all students to be: Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers, Communicators and Collaborators, Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors, Responsible and Resilient Individuals, and Empowered Learners.

Professional Development (PD): Adult to earn or maintain **professional** credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, attending conferences, and informal learning opportunities situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally incorporating an evaluative stage.[4]

Professional Learning Community (PLC): Grade level teams that collaborate to develop strategic goals aimed towards increasing student achievement.

Project Based Learning (PBL): A teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects.[5]

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[2] https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/mycap/
[3] https://www.pathways2rc.com/
[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_development
[5] https://www.pblworks.org/what-is-pbl

P.T.C.: Parent Teacher Council. This is the parent run organization that supports school activities and provides opportunities for community gatherings, home/school communication, and much more.

RTI: Response to Intervention. RTI is a method of academic intervention used to provide early, systematic assistance to children who are having difficulty learning. RTI seeks to prevent academic failure through early intervention, frequent progress measurement, and increasingly intensive research-based instructional interventions for children who continue to have difficulty.

Rubric: This is a description of what a finished piece of work should include or look like, with a rating scale (typically 1 through 4, with 4 indicating a very successful result) to help students and parents understand the basis for scores and grades.

SBE: Standards Based Education
Needham has made Standards Based Education one of its core goals. Curriculum is being designed to help students reach key standards or proficiencies in each subject area.

Structured Learning Support (SLS): At High Rock School, students have a Structured Learning Support class each day. SLS is a time where students will have time to focus on their learning and needs in a structured way. It is not a study hall. There are tasks you must complete on a daily and weekly basis. These tasks will help you grow as a learner while at High Rock School. During this class there is a mixture of independent reading, math practice, self organization and planning, teacher-led extra support and all cluster programming.

School Council: This is a group of parents, teachers, community members, and the school principal that is responsible for reviewing the school budget and developing an annual **SIP** (see below). The plan identifies areas for improvement, sets goals, and includes indications of progress toward meeting those goals.

SEL: Social and Emotional Learning
Needham is committed to making social and emotional learning an essential part of education. **SEL** is based on the pioneering work done at CASEL (a not-for-profit that works to advance the science and evidence-based practice of social and emotional learning: http://www.casel.org/). Through **SEL** we are working to ensure that children feel safe and supported in order to be able to learn most effectively.

SIP: School Improvement Plan. This is the annual report produced by the **School Council**. It includes goals for the school as well as indications of progress toward meeting the goals.

Spec Ed: Special Education. In 1975, Massachusetts led the nation in addressing educational equity for students with special needs (ages 3 – 22) with the law called Chapter 766. The federal law **IDEA** (see above) also governs the area of teaching children with special needs.

TAT: Teacher Assistant Team. The primary purpose of the High Rock TAT is to find ways to increase a student's success in the general education classroom by way of providing classroom teachers with strategies to effectively meet the learning needs within the general education population.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Universal design for learning (UDL) is a teaching approach that works to accommodate the needs and abilities of all learners and eliminates unnecessary hurdles in the learning process. This means developing a flexible learning environment in which information is presented in multiple ways, students engage in learning in a variety of ways, and students are provided options when demonstrating their learning. [6]

Glossary: Revised by the High Rock School Council, February 2024

[6] https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/designing-your-course/universal-design-learning#:~:text=Universal%20design%20for%20learning%20(UDL,hurdles%20in%20the%20learning%20process.

HIGH ROCK SCHOOL

School Improvement Plan
2024 - 2027

School Committee Meeting
April 2, 2024

DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Previous SIP adopted in April 2020

1 month after school closed due to the pandemic
6 months after Portrait of a Needham Graduate was adopted & rolled out in the District
PONG and District Priorities were applied to the "Needs at High Rock"

School Needs → Portrait Vision → SIP

Portrait Vision → School Needs → SIP

Now in 2024

PONG Competencies and District Priorities set the direction
Data and stakeholder voices maps the course for this new SIP

CONTINUOUS COMMITMENTS

We will be deliberate in our thinking, planning, and teaching so that the diversity of our student needs and experiences will be at the center of our classroom and school

4 OUT OF 5

SEL
Equity
Academic Support & Access
Space, Building, & Student Needs

3 OUT OF 5

Communication
Grading & Assessments

DISTRICT PRIORITY	SCHOOL GOAL
ALL STUDENTS ARE DRIVERS OF THEIR OWN LEARNING	• Foster **student agency, voice, and choice** in all aspects of learning. • Establish **equity and culturally proficient practices** across all students' experience.
ALL STUDENTS EXPERIENCE INTEGRATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING	• Develop common understandings & intentional opportunities for **interdisciplinary learning.** • Embed **SEL** strategies and **mental health supports** across the school. • Implement with fidelity **Restorative Practices**.
ALL STUDENTS WILL LEARN & GROW WITHIN ADAPTABLE ENVIRONMENTS	• Increase **connections** with businesses, organizations, and civic leaders to provide **learning opportunities.** • Provide **learning access and opportunity** across all students' experiences.
INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTS NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS	• Participate in the **middle school reunification** project to ensure a smooth transition for students and staff.

VOICES OF COMMUNITY

- **L** — LEARNING
- **SD** — SELF-DISCOVERY
- **C4O** — CARING FOR OTHERS

ADVISORY

	AWARENESS	MANAGEMENT
SELF	Self-Awareness **Knowledgeable** *Identity*	Self-Management **Capable** *Developing Sense of Agency*
SOCIAL	Social Awareness **Caring** *Valuing Diversity & Belonging*	Social Management **Responsible** *Curiosity & Cultural Competency*

- Getting to know you
- Personal WordSplash
- High Rock Tickets
- Advisory Circle
- SEL 4 Squares
- Understanding MS & Grades
- Indigenous People's Learning
- Pumpkin Decorating Contest
- Anti-Bullying
- Veterans' Day Learning
- Armed Intruder Preparation
- Thanksgiving Letters
- Community Service Ornaments
- Reflecting on Grades & Learning Styles
- One Word Goal Setting
- MLK JR & Changemakers
- Words Matter
- Pencils Rule
- Spirit Week
- March Madness
- What is integrity?
- SPHERO Car Races
- What is resilience?
- Banner Contest
- Personal Reflectio

PENCILS RULE!

Create a short phrase that reminds people of any of the messages we have discussed in advisory. The most important messages to focus on are:

- We take **pride in our community**
- We work to make sure everyone feels that **they belong**
- We are **responsible** for our words, actions, and impact on others
- We can make **positive changes** in the world around us
- We can **recognize bullying** and ways to **intervene**
- We can call out and **stop the use of hate speech and hateful acts**

Don't change yourself; change the world!

Think before you act - words have impact.

One stone of kindness makes a ripple, many stones make a community.

Share your ideas because sometimes they can change the world!

Come together. Be together. Listen, learn, create together.

Different yet one, divided by none.

We do it better together.

Stop the hate, no debate.

Just. Be. Kind.

SEL Focus: Social Awareness

	AWARENESS	MANAGEMENT
SELF	Self-Awareness Knowledgeable *Identity* Student: I am... Adult: I see you...	Self-Management Capable *Developing Sense of Agency* Student: I can... Adult: I believe in you...
SOCIAL	Social Awareness Caring *Valuing Diversity & Belonging* Student: I care... Adult: I care about you...	Social Management/Relationship Skills Responsible *Curiosity & Cultural Competency* Student: I will... Adult: I support you...

VOICES OF COMMUNITY

- **L** — LEARNING
- **SD** — SELF-DISCOVERY
- **C4O** — CARING FOR OTHERS

THANK YOU

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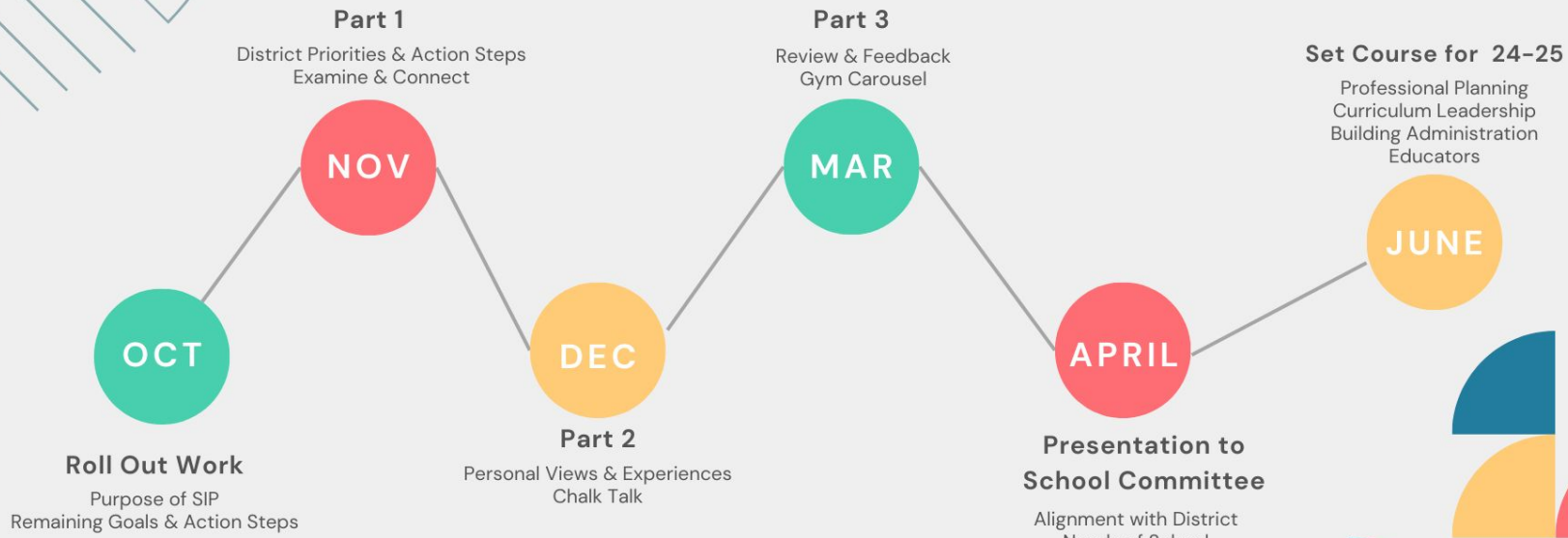
EXTRA SLIDES

YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT



Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **Discussion**

Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: Grade 9-12 English & Social Studies

Background Information:

- Throughout the school year, different schools and staff will share how one of the five attributes in the Portrait of a Needham Graduate are reflected in teaching and learning in the Needham Public Schools:

  Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers
  Communicators and Collaborators
  Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors
  Responsible and Resilient Individuals
  Empowered Learners

- The presentation will showcase some of the student work and student learning experiences connected to the Portrait of a Needham Graduate.

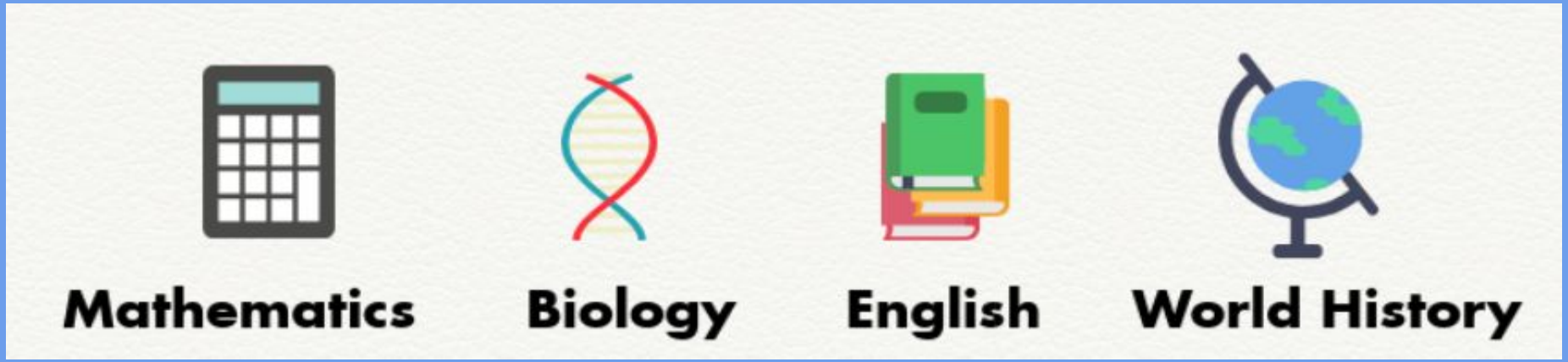
Persons Available for Presentation:

Patrick Gallagher, NHS English Department Chair
Stephen Plasko, NHS History & Social Sciences Department Chair
Karen McCalley, NHS English Teacher
Rosie Calland, NHS History Teacher

9 IP Students:
Jack Arvedon
Adham Khedr
Harrison O'Garr
Sylvie Ripin

PONG @ NHS - English & Social Studies

Ninth Grade Interdisciplinary Program (9IP)



A project-based approach to interdisciplinary learning in ninth grade Biology, English, Math, and Social Studies

9IP is …

- a pathway for students to learn in an interdisciplinary, collaborative, project-based environment.
- an opportunity to make connections between disciplines and develop a deeper understanding of the world around us.

Current 9IP Teachers

- English - Karen McCalley
- History - Rosie Calland
- Math - David Bookston
- Science - Jill Krajewski
- Special Education - Jeanette Word
- Teaching Assistant - Christine Butchart

Units of Study

Unit 1: Observations and Patterns
How do we make sense of the world around us?

Unit 2: Systems
How does the structure of a system relate to its function?

Unit 3: Power and Influence
How does power create influence and how are we influenced by power?

Unit 4: Disease
How, and why, have infectious disease outbreaks through history impacted groups of people differently?

Unit 5: Revolutions
How have revolutionary ideas changed society?

Our 9IP Projects

All Subjects: Farming Project (creating a website for a sustainable farm at NHS)

History and **Math**: Castle Design using quadratic functions

All Subjects: Disease + Equity (creating a documentary film on an infectious disease and its impact on different groups)

History and **English**: combined research paper on a historical revolutionary figure

Portrait of a Needham Graduate

Preparing All Needham Public Schools Students To Be ...

Creative Thinkers And Problem Solvers
Raise questions driven by curiosity; Analyze relevant information; Express creativity; Design and innovate solutions

Communicators And Collaborators
Listen effectively; Articulate ideas using a variety of communication strategies and skills; Interact with others respectfully and productively; Contribute to teamwork

Socially And Culturally Responsive Contributors
Understand and respect diversity; Act with empathy and courage to ensure equity, access, and an anti-racist culture; Address local and global issues through civic and community engagement

Responsible And Resilient Individuals
Take responsibility for actions; Make healthy choices to achieve physical and emotional well-being; Self advocate; Persist to overcome personal challenges; Adapt to change

Empowered Learners
Discover and integrate content from multiple disciplines; Engage in self-directed learning; Use technology to support learning and navigate a digital world

Units of Study

Unit 1: Observations and Patterns
How do we make sense of the world around us?

Unit 2: Systems
How does the structure of a system relate to its function?

Unit 3: Power and Influence
How does power create influence and how are we influenced by power?

Unit 4: Disease
How, and why, have infectious disease outbreaks through history impacted groups of people differently?

Unit 5: Revolutions
How have revolutionary ideas changed society?

Creative Thinkers And Problem Solvers
Responsible And Resilient Individuals
Empowered Learners

Our 9IP Projects

All Subjects: Farming Project (creating a website for a sustainable farm at NHS)

History and Math: Castle Design using quadratic functions

All Subjects: Disease + Equity (creating a documentary film on an infectious disease and its impact on different groups)

History and English: combined research paper on a historical revolutionary figure

Communicators And Collaborators
Socially And Culturally Responsive Contributors

The Farming Project
(part of Unit 2: SYSTEMS)

Central question: How can we create a sustainable farm at Needham High School?

- What crops should we grow and how much do we need of each to maximize sustainability? (Math and Science)
- What innovations and factors will allow those crops to flourish? (History and Science)
- How do we justify our choices and explain our plan for sustainability? (English)

Final Product = each group creates a website for its farm

Farming Project as it relates to PONG

Project Components

1) Volunteering at Natick Community Farm
2) Researching history, ecology, and nutritional value of individual crops
3) Combining research to plan a sustainable farm at NHS
4) Creating a mathematical model for the cost of running the farm or a graph of crop distribution
5) Designing a website for their farm

PONG Skills

1) Socially And Culturally Responsive Contributors
Address local and global issues through civic and community engagement
2) Responsible And Resilient Individuals
Take responsibility for actions; Adapt to change.
3) Communicators And Collaborators
Listen effectively; Articulate ideas using a variety of communication strategies and skills; Interact with others respectfully and productively; Contribute to teamwork
4) Creative Thinkers And Problem Solvers
Raise questions driven by curiosity; Analyze relevant information; Express creativity; Design and innovate solutions
5) Empowered Learners Discover and integrate content from multiple disciplines; Engage in self-directed learning; Use technology to support learning and navigate a digital world

Farming Project Exemplars

Rosemary Farm (by Lila, Harrison, Sylvie, Noah)

GrowEco Farm (by Jack, Adham, Iggy, Gabe)

A FEW MORE PONG EXEMPLARS

ENGLISH

- YA Literature: Diverse Voices *(Embedding PONG competencies in new course design)*
- AI-Luminating Persepolis Assignment *(Exploring sociocultural facets of a core text & leveraging - and reflecting on - technology/digital literacy with responsibility)*
- What Does it Mean to be _____ in Needham? *(Assignment that empowers students to explore and digitally present the stories of underrepresented groups in Needham)*

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Student Led Civics Engagement Project *(Culturally & Socially Responsive - Civic Advocacy by Grade 11 students)*
- Disproving The Single Story of Africa *(Culturally & Socially Responsive - Grade 9 student's demonstrate critical thinkng through an examination of the historical narrative of Medieval African History)*

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **Action Item**

Approval of ACCEPT Education Collaborative By-Laws - Revised

Background Information:

- Established in 1974, ACCEPT Education Collaborative offers a wide range of programs and services whose focus is to minimize the impact of student disabilities or weakness and maximize student outcomes including achievement, independence and participation in the community.

- Needham Public Schools is among 17 Massachusetts school districts that participate in the Collaborative.

- The ACCEPT Education Collaborative By-Laws were presented at the March 19, 2024 School Committee meeting.

- This Agreement replaces the original Agreement dated September 1, 1976, as most recently amended on May 19, 2015, entered into by and between the School Committees and charter school boards and will be effective on July 1, 2024 after the approval of the member districts and the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education as indicated on the signatory page.

ACCEPT Education Collaborative

Articles of Agreement

Amended Pursuant to *MGL c 40, § 4E*

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ACCEPT Education Collaborative Agreement
Pursuant to *MGL c 40, § 4E*

PREAMBLE/ AUTHORIZATION

This document constitutes the Collaborative Agreement of the ACCEPT Educational Collaborative (hereinafter ACCEPT or the Collaborative), established pursuant to the provisions of MGL Chapter 40, Section 4E of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and acts or amendments thereof as they may from time to time be enacted by the legislature, and 603 CMR 50.00.

This Agreement replaces the original Agreement dated September 1, 1976, as most recently amended on May 19, 2015, entered into by and between the School Committees and charter school boards which are listed in Section I (hereinafter, the "member districts") and will be effective on July 1, 2024 after the approval of the member districts and the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education as indicated on the signatory page.

SECTION I: MEMBERSHIP

All member districts will appoint their superintendents or charter school board member as their appointed representatives. The membership of the ACCEPT Education Collaborative, as of the effective date of this Agreement, includes the School Committees from the following school districts, as indicated by the Chairs of the School Committees:

- Ashland
- Dover
- Dover-Sherborn
- Framingham
- Franklin
- Holliston
- Hopkinton
- South Middlesex Regional Vocational (Joseph P. Keefe Technical)
- Medfield
- Medway
- Millis
- Natick
- Needham
- Sudbury
- Sherborn
- Wellesley
- Westborough

SECTION II: MISSION, OBJECTIVES, FOCUS, AND PURPOSES

Mission, Purpose and Focus
Since its formation in 1974, ACCEPT Education Collaborative has established trusted partnerships to promote excellence and innovation in educational practice. The mission and purpose of ACCEPT is to leverage the collective power and resources of member school districts to provide excellent, cost-effective regional programs and services to unlock the potential of students, their families, educators and

communities. ACCEPT currently offers a wide range of programs and services whose focus is to minimize the impact of student disabilities or weakness and maximize student outcomes including achievement, independence and participation in the community.

To carry out the mission and purpose of the Collaborative, ACCEPT, acting through its Board of Directors, (hereinafter the Board or Collaborative Board) may contract with corporations, individuals, associations, agencies, and/or any other entities in order to obtain and provide services for a member district. In addition, the Collaborative, with the approval of the Board, will continue to increase and expand its level of service in general and special education, occupational-vocational education, professional development and training, home based and consultative services, research and development of innovative programs, and in any such area determined to be a need of member districts if such new programs are in alignment with ACCEPT's mission, vision and core values.

Objectives of ACCEPT Education Collaborative are to:

- Deliver efficient, cost-effective and high quality programs and services that minimize the impact of student disabilities and maximize student outcomes including achievement, independence and participation in the community
- Develop and implement programs and an array of services that increase educational opportunities for students, families, educators and districts when it is determined that such programs and services can most effectively, efficiently and economically be provided on a Collaborative basis and complement, strengthen and meet the evolving needs of the member districts
- Expand program options in alignment with the mission and purpose of the Collaborative to help districts maximize cost-efficiency and program effectiveness through a Collaborative effort
- Provide safe, reliable and efficient transportation services for students with disabilities
- Offer quality professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers, administrators, and related service providers, focused on closing the achievement gap, preventing unnecessary referrals to special education and personalizing learning for students

SECTION III: PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

ACCEPT will offer cost-effective programs and services deemed appropriate by the Board that complement and supplement the educational programs and services of the member districts. ACCEPT currently provides the following services and programs:

I. Special education programs, particularly for low incidence populations
2. Special education transportation
3. Home-based parent training
4. Behavioral and educational consultation and assessment services
5. Professional development
6. Support of initiatives from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
7. Grant writing and implementation on behalf of school districts
8. Exploration and pursuit of grants and other funding to support identified needs of the member districts
9. Education technology
10. Medicaid reimbursement services

The programs/services listed above are not all-inclusive; the Board, acting at the request of the Executive Director and/or member districts, may consider and approve other programs and services to be provided

by the Collaborative so long as such programs/services are in the best interest of the member districts and are not inconsistent with this agreement and MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.00, et seq., as amended from time to time.

SECTION IV: GOVERNANCE

Each member district executing this Collaborative Agreement shall annually appoint the superintendent of schools or charter school board member to serve as its representative (hereinafter referred to as appointed representatives) on the ACCEPT Education Collaborative Board. The Board shall provide overall management and supervision of ACCEPT. No employee, including the Executive Director, Treasurer, and Business Manager, of the Collaborative may serve on the Board. All appointed representatives and employees shall be public employees subject to MGL c 268A, which requires compliance with the conflict-of-interest law.

It is the function and responsibility of the Board to formulate policy for ACCEPT and to oversee the operation of ACCEPT to the end that the educational needs of students enrolled in its programs are met in an effective and economical way, and that the needs of the member districts for efficient, joint programs and services are addressed.

Each appointed representative shall be entitled to one vote. A quorum for conducting business shall consist of a simple majority of the appointed representatives. A quorum is not needed to close the meeting. In order to pass any motion, a majority vote of the appointed representatives present shall be required, except that a vote to terminate the Collaborative shall require a 2/3 vote of the Board and be approved in accordance with Section XII of this Agreement. The Executive Director, or designee, will act as executive secretary to the Board. The Executive Director shall attend all Board meetings, but shall not be entitled to a vote.

The Board shall hold at least six (6) meetings each fiscal year. The schedule for the meetings will be determined by the Board Chairperson in collaboration with the Executive Director at the last meeting of the year in preparation for the new fiscal year. The Executive Director may call special meetings for special purposes with consent of the Board Chairperson or by the Board Chairperson him/herself. Meetings will be posted in accordance with MGL c 30A §§ 18-25.

At the last Board Meeting of the year, the Board will elect a Chairperson and vice-Chairperson by a majority vote of the appointed representatives present. The Chairperson, by vote of the Board, may appoint such subcommittees or advisory or operating committees of the Board as will facilitate the work of the Board.

Each appointed representative shall be responsible for providing the following information to the representative's member district in accordance with the provisions of MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.00, et seq.

- Quarterly information and updates to the member district, at an open meeting, on the programs and services provided by the Collaborative
- A copy of the Collaborative Agreement and any amendments
- A copy of the annual budget and tuition rate
- A copy of the annual report and financial audit
- Notification of applications for real estate mortgages
- A copy of any capital plan approved by the Board
- Any additional information as may be requested by a vote of the member district or required in MGL c 40 § 4E, 603 CMR 50.00, et seq. and any amendments thereto

SECTION V: CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Each appointed representative shall be entitled to a vote, which cannot be delegated to any other individual. No appointed representative shall delegate his/her powers or send a representative in his/her place as a voting appointed representative and no member district shall delegate the rights, responsibilities, or duties of its appointed representative to any other individual, unless the member district is replacing the appointed representative with that individual.

2. Each appointed representative is expected to attend each Board meeting. If a representative has missed one half of the meetings within a fiscal year, the Board Chair or Vice Chair will meet with the representative to discuss the representative's attendance and determine a plan for attending Board meetings regularly.

   A representative who misses two-thirds of the Board's meetings in a fiscal year will have a letter sent from the Chair or Vice Chair to the School Committee which appointed the representative detailing the lack of attendance, the need for active and regular participation in the business of the Board, and a notice that the representative's participation in the Board will become inactive. An inactive representative will not count toward a quorum and will not have voting rights on the Board but will continue to have other rights and obligations of membership. The Chair, in consultation with the representative, Vice Chair and Executive Director, will determine when an inactive member can resume regular participation on the Board.

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3. Each appointed representative must complete the training required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department), as outlined in MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.05. Should an appointed representative fail to complete the required training within the timelines set in law and regulations, their member district shall not have voting rights on the Board, but shall continue to have all other rights and obligations of membership. The member district shall become an active member and voting rights shall be reinstated once the appointed representative completes the training.
4. No appointed representative shall be eligible to serve in the positions of Executive Director, Treasurer, Business Manager or a person with responsibilities similar to those of a town accountant, or on the Board of Directors as an officer or employee of any related for-profit or non- profit organization. No employee of the Collaborative may serve on the Board of ACCEPT (603 CMR 50.06 (2) (c)).
5. No appointed representative shall receive an additional salary or stipend for his/her service as a Board member.
6. Each member district will pay a yearly membership fee established by the Board in accordance with Section VII.

SECTION VI: POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD

The Board shall have all the powers and duties conferred and imposed upon educational Collaborative boards by law and conferred and imposed upon it by this Agreement and such other additional powers and duties as are specified in MGL c 40, §4E, 603 CMR 50.00 and any amendments thereof, or as may be specified in any other applicable general or special law. The Board is responsible for providing fiduciary and organizational oversight and accountability over the operation of the educational Collaborative including but not limited to what follows:

The Board shall:

- Be vested with the authority to enter into agreements with member and non-member districts or other Collaboratives to establish mutually beneficial programs and services or pricing arrangements.
- Ensure adherence to this Agreement and progress toward achieving the purpose and objectives set forth in the Agreement; determine the appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of any borrowing, loans or mortgages,

consistent with Section VII C; approve all expenditures, including contracts, borrowing, and the purchase and sale of real estate; and ensure an annual report and independent financial audit for the previous fiscal year be completed annually and upon approval of the Board be submitted to the Commissioner the State Auditor and Chair of each member district no later than January 1 of each year.

- Ensure the audit report is completed annually and made available on the Collaborative's website and provided upon request.
- Ensure that the Collaborative makes the annual report available on the Collaborative's website and that the Collaborative must provide a printed hard copy of the most recent annual report to members of the public upon request.
- Establish policies to support the operation of ACCEPT, and shall, from time to time, review the policies for their effectiveness and appropriateness.
- Develop/ amend policies on personnel, students, finance and internal controls, and health and nursing.
- Determine the amount of cumulative surplus revenue that may be held by ACCEPT at the end of a fiscal year consistent with the requirements of law and Section VII E of this Agreement; how and under what conditions surplus funds may be returned to member districts or credited to support Collaborative programs and services offered to member districts.
- Appoint the Executive Director, Business Manager, and Treasurer and ensure there is segregation of duties among the Executive Director, Business Manager, and Treasurer. The Board will evaluate the Executive Director and Treasurer annually.
    - **The Executive Director** shall serve under the general direction of the Board and have the day to day responsibility for all activities of the Collaborative, and shall be responsible for development and implementation and oversight of all of its programs. The Executive Director is responsible for recruitment, retention, supervision and discipline of personnel, with the exception of the Treasurer, and shall be responsible for implementing Board policies and procedures consistent with the policies of the Board. In addition, the Executive Director shall have the authority granted by MGL c 40, §4E and any amendments thereto. The Executive Director shall maintain a website in accordance with MGL c 40 § 4E that shall include the list of appointed representatives serving on the Collaborative Board, copies of the approved Board meeting minutes, a copy of the Collaborative Agreement and any amendments, a copy of the annual report and annual independent audit, and key contact information for the key educational Collaborative staff members. The Executive Director will give public notice of the date, time, location, and agenda items of all Board meetings in accordance with the MGL c 30A, §§ 18-25 pertaining to the open meetings of state governmental bodies. Detailed, accurate records of every meeting will be kept in accordance with the law pertaining to the open meetings and made available on the Collaborative website.
    - **The Business Manager** shall be subject to MGL c 41, Sec 52 and have the powers and responsibilities, similar to those of a town accountant and consistent with 603 CMR 50.00 and the Board approved job description. The Business Manager may not be the Treasurer of the Collaborative. The Board shall ensure an annual evaluation of such employee's performance and effectiveness.
    - **The Treasurer,** appointed by the Board, need not necessarily be a Treasurer of a member town, or regional school district. The Treasurer is authorized, subject to the direction of the Board, to receive and disburse all monies of the ACCEPT fund without further appropriation. At the discretion of the Board, the Treasurer may make appropriate investments of ACCEPT's funds when such funds are not immediately necessary for operations, consistent with MGL c 44, § 55B. The Treasurer is also responsible for other tasks as determined by the Board and as stipulated in the Board approved job description, consistent with 603 CMR 50.00. No Collaborative employee or appointed representative to the Board may be the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall report directly to the Board. The Treasurer must give bond annually for the faithful performance of duties as Collaborative Treasurer in a form approved by the department of revenue and in a sum not less than the amount established by the Department as shall be fixed by the Board. The Collaborative Board of Directors shall annually evaluate the treasurer's performance and effectiveness.

- Oversee the operation of the Collaborative to the end that the educational needs of students enrolled in Collaborative programs, as well as the goals of any cooperative program of the Collaborative, are met in an effective and economical way.
- Employ teachers, at least one registered nurse and other professional personnel, and shall enter into contracts for the services of persons who are necessary for the operation of ACCEPT programs and services.
- Ensure that the Collaborative shall annually prepare financial statements, including a statement of net assets (government-wide); statement of activities (government-wide); governmental funds balance sheet; governmental funds statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance; general fund statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance, budget and actual; statement of fiduciary net assets; statement of changes in fiduciary fund net assets; and capital plan identifying current capital obligations or future planned capital projects.
- The Collaborative, acting through its Board of Directors, may subject to chapter 30B, enter into contracts for the purchase of supplies, materials and services and for the purchase or leasing of land, buildings, and equipment as considered necessary by the Board of Directors and which the Board has found to be cost-effective and in the best interests of ACCEPT, the member districts and consistent with Section VII C of this Agreement (Subject to MGL c 30B).
- Create, amend, and repeal all by-laws, policies, and rules for the management and operation of ACCEPT. The Board has all other powers and duties consistent with MGL c 40 §4E.
- Borrow money for any purpose consistent with the terms of this Agreement, including, but not limited to, to meet ongoing payroll obligations, to finance the purchase and/or lease of any real or personal property, including equipment, land, and/or a building(s) (including portables), and/or to finance any renovation, reconstruction and/or construction of any real property.

No employee of the Collaborative may serve on the Board or shall be eligible to serve concurrently in the positions of Executive Director, Treasurer, or Business Manager or person with responsibilities similar to those of a town accountant.

SECTION VII: FINANCE

A. Financial Terms

1. Membership fees shall be assessed to each member district on July 1 of each year. Membership fees are to be used to offset the cost for administration and overhead. Each member district shall be charged membership dues based on a flat rate that offsets some of the administrative and overhead costs of the Collaborative determined annually by the Board as part of the budget process. Capital costs will be included in program fees and tuitions.

2. The remaining administrative costs of the Collaborative will be distributed across all programs operated by the Collaborative through an administration allocation expense proportionate to the operating budget for each program. The proportional share of administrative costs will be added to the operating budget of each program operated by the Collaborative.

3. The Board will set the fees, tuitions, and rates to be charged to districts for all Collaborative services annually based on the cost of providing the program or service. These include tuitions for specialized programs for students, hourly rates for therapy, evaluative, consultative, and the like services, and overhead calculations. Fees, tuitions, and rates will be calculated through the annual budgeting process for each program, including the administrative cost allocation noted in 2 above, with projections based on past usage.

4. Districts will be charged per unit of usage, e.g. per student enrolled, per hour of service delivery, per mile per student on transportation route, per participant enrolled in courses or workshops, or per district for multi-district initiatives. Each type of service may require a different schedule of billing, e.g. 3-4 times per year

for program tuitions, per use for courses/PD, monthly for transportation, etc. Non-member districts will be charged a 20% surcharge on all services to help offset the cost of Collaborative operations.

5. The Board may enter into Agreements with member and non-member districts or other Collaboratives to establish mutually beneficial pricing arrangements.
6. The Collaborative Board may apply, by an appropriate majority vote, for state, federal, corporate, or foundation grants, and may enter into contracts to obtain the funds necessary to carry out the purpose for which the Collaborative was established; and, the Board may accept gifts, grants, or contributions from governmental and private sources, whether in cash or in kind.
7. The Board may enter into contracts to obtain the funds necessary to carry out the purpose for which the Collaborative was established.
8. The Collaborative is subject to MGL c 30B for the procurement of goods and services. Procurement awards require Board approval.

B. Collaborative Fund

The Board shall establish and manage a fund to be known as the *ACCEPT Educational Collaborative Fund* (herein, "the ACCEPT fund"). The ACCEPT fund shall be the depository of all monies paid by the member districts and non-member districts and all grants, gifts, or contracts from the federal government, state government, charitable foundations, private corporations, or any other source; all such monies shall be paid directly to the Collaborative and deposited in the fund.

C. Borrowing

At public meetings of the Board, the Board may authorize the borrowing of funds or enter into short- or long-term agreements or mortgages to acquire or improve real property and/or equipment to support Collaborative operations. The Board shall investigate options related to borrowing, loans, and mortgages in order to determine that the terms are the most favorable available at the time of the application. Through a majority vote, the Board will determine that the terms related to borrowing, loans, or mortgages are cost-effective and are the most favorable available at the time of the application; and shall determine, through a majority vote, that the borrowing, loans, and mortgages are necessary to carry out the purposes for which the Collaborative is established, in the best interest of the Collaborative and its member districts and consistent with the terms of the Collaborative Agreement.

In the event that such borrowing, loan or mortgage is for the acquisition or improvement of real property the Board shall provide notice to each member district within 30 calendar days of applying for real estate mortgages; and discuss its intent to apply for a real estate mortgage at a public meeting of the Board prior to the meeting of the Collaborative Board at which the final vote is taken; see 603 CMR 50.07(8).

D. Capital Reserve Fund

ACCEPT may create a capital reserve fund to support costs associated with the acquisition, maintenance, and/or improvement of fixed assets, including real property, pursuant to a capital plan. Funds in a capital reserve fund may be used only for the project or purpose for which the account was established. The establishment of a capital reserve shall be subject to the approval of two-thirds of the member districts.

The request for approval must state the reason for the reserve and a limit on the balance that may be held in the reserve. Deposits into the capital reserve shall be proposed and approved through the budget process.

In the event that the purpose for which the capital reserve was created requires modification, the Collaborative Board shall revise its capital plan and provide notice to all member districts. If the member district does not vote to disapprove the revised capital plan within a 45-day period, that member district shall be deemed to have approved the revised capital plan. Two-thirds (2/3) approval of the member districts is required to revise the capital plan.

E. Surplus Funds

Unexpended general funds, as defined in 603 CMR 50.00, at the end of the fiscal year plus any previous year's surplus funds, as determined through the financial statements, will be considered cumulative surplus. The determination of cumulative surplus shall not include funds deposited in a capital reserve as provided for in 603 CMR 50.07(10), funds deposited in trust in accordance with MGL c 32B, § 20, and any amounts prepaid for tuition or services in accordance with MGL c 40, § 4E.

The Board will retain no more than 25 percent in cumulative surplus, in accordance with 603 CMR 50.03(5)(b) 10. On an annual basis, after the Board has discussed the audit results of the previous fiscal year, the Board shall approve, by majority vote, the final dollar amount of the cumulative surplus. The Board shall determine whether such final dollar amount of surplus funds is within the established 25 percent limit, and whether the funds will be retained by the Collaborative or whether all or some portion will be refunded to the member districts or credited to support programs and services offered to member districts by the Collaborative.

In the event an amount is to be refunded to the member districts, each member district share will be apportioned in accordance with the percentage of usage in the program/service area that generated the surplus for the previous fiscal year, as determined by the annual financial audit.

F. Annual Budget Preparation and Assessment of Costs

The Board shall annually determine the Collaborative budget consistent with the timelines, terms, and requirements in MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.00.The Board shall identify the programs or services to be offered by Collaborative in the upcoming fiscal year and the corresponding costs. In the fall of each year, the Executive Director will consult with staff, look at trends and examine the prior year profit and loss statements to formulate and project expenses for the next fiscal year to run each program. The budget assumptions are based on the mission and core values of the Collaborative. The proposed budget shall contain all planned financial activity for all programs offered by the Collaborative for the upcoming fiscal year classified into line item categories.

The line item projections include but are not limited to needed staff, supplies, rent, materials and equipment to run the program. Fees for service are determined by computing the expenses vs. the projected participation in each program for the next fiscal year. Forecasting of students that will be enrolled in special education and transportation programs in the next fiscal year is based on past history and ongoing discussions with key constituent leaders from member districts.

The projected budget and fee structure is presented to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, a subset of the appointed representatives, for feedback and review prior to presentation to the full Board. The Board shall hold a public meeting on the proposed budget prior to its adoption and shall adopt the final budget by an affirmative majority vote at a subsequent meeting no earlier than ten (10) working days after the Board meeting at which the Collaborative budget was first proposed but no later than May 30 of the preceding fiscal year. The Treasurer shall certify and transmit the budget and the tuition rates, membership dues and fees-for-service for the upcoming fiscal year to each member district not later than June 30 of the preceding fiscal year Adoption of the budget shall require a majority vote of the appointed representatives to the Board.

G. Budget Amendments

The Collaborative Board must approve all budget amendments including but not limited to those that decrease the budget and move those funds across line items. Any amendment to the budget that results in an increase in the tuition rates, membership dues or fees for services shall adhere to the following procedures:

a. All appointed representatives shall, within ten (IO) working days of the public meeting at which the amendment was first proposed, report to their member districts the content of the proposed

amendment

b. The Board at a second public meeting of the Board next following the Board meeting at which the amendment was first proposed shall vote on all amendments; adoption shall require a majority vote

c. The Treasurer shall certify and transmit the amended tuition rates, membership dues and fees for services to each member district not later than ten (10) working days following the affirmative vote of the Board

H. Payment Terms

ACCEPT shall submit invoices to member and non-member districts for program tuitions on a quarterly basis. Fees for services to member and non-member districts will be billed on a monthly basis. Membership fees will be invoiced quarterly and paid within thirty (30) days of receipt of the ACCEPT invoice. Districts will pay for programs and services within thirty (30) days of receipt of ACCEPT's invoice.

I. Financial Accounting System

The Collaborative shall adopt and maintain a financial accounting system, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as prescribed by the governmental accounting standards board and any supplemental requirements prescribed jointly by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education and the commissioner of revenue, in consultation with the state auditor. At a minimum, the financial accounting system shall delineate: administration and overhead; rental of real property; program costs; capital expenditures, including fixed assets, real property or the improvement of real property; debt payments; deposits into a capital reserve; and all additional disclosures required in 50.08(2).

SECTION VIII: PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

Any member district, any appointed representative, or the Executive Director, may initiate a proposal for amendment of this Agreement. The proposed amendment shall be presented in writing to the Executive Director of the Board no less than ten (10) days prior to a meeting of the Board at which it shall first be read. The proposed amendment shall be read a second time at the regular meeting next subsequent to its first majority reading, at which time it may be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board. If approved by the Board, the proposed amendment shall then be submitted to member districts. If approved by a simple majority of member districts the proposed amendment shall be submitted for approval to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; following approval the proposed amendment shall become effective.

SECTION IX: PROCEDURE FOR ADMITTING NEW MEMBER DISTRICTS

A new School Committee or Charter School Board may be added to ACCEPT consistent with approval of the Board and subsequent to amendment of the ACCEPT Collaborative Agreement, consistent with the provisions of Section VIII, MGL c 40, § 4E, and 603 CMR 50.03 and Department guidelines, to reflect such membership. The applicant School Committee or Charter School Board shall apply in writing for admission to ACCEPT no later than December 31 of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the applicant School Committee or Charter School Board seeks membership. A School Committee or Charter School Board may be admitted to the Collaborative as of July 1st provided that all required approvals, including that of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, are obtained by the preceding April 30th prior to the fiscal year in which the new member School Committee or Charter School Board is to be admitted to the Collaborative. If the process for amendment of the ACCEPT Agreement has not been finalized by April 30th, the new member district may appoint a non-voting representative to the ACCEPT Board for the subsequent fiscal year. During the first year of membership, a newly admitted district will pay a 10% surcharge for all programs and services. During the second year of membership, the surcharge will be reduced to 5%; in the following years, member district rates will apply.

SECTION X: PROCEDURE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBER DISTRICT

Any member district may withdraw from ACCEPT at the end of any fiscal year, provided that all necessary approvals have been obtained consistent with 603 CMR 50.00 et seq. subject to the following terms:

A. At least 180 days prior to the end of the current fiscal year, the withdrawing member district shall provide written notice to every other member district that is party to this Agreement as well as to the Executive Director of the Collaborative and the Collaborative Board of intent to withdraw.

B. Written notification of a member district's intent to withdraw from the Collaborative at the end of a fiscal year shall include the following:

   1. Notification addressed to the Chair of the Board and the Executive Director that the member district has voted to withdraw from the Collaborative with the effective date of withdrawal; and

   2. A copy of the minutes from the School Committee meeting in which the member district voted to withdraw from the Collaborative.

C. Within thirty (30) days of notification of a member district's intent to withdraw from the Collaborative, an amendment shall be prepared to reflect changes in the Agreement caused as a result of the change in membership of the Collaborative.

D. Upon a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board, the Collaborative Agreement will be amended to withdraw the exiting member district. The Collaborative Agreement shall be amended consistent with Section VIII of this Agreement. The withdrawal is not in effect until and unless the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the withdrawal by April 30th of the fiscal year in which the withdrawal is to occur.

E. Upon withdrawal from the Collaborative, a former member district shall not be entitled to any assets or a portion of any assets of the ACCEPT Collaborative, including any surplus funds that may have been carried over from prior years and any capital reserve fund that may have been established by the Board.

F. Any member district who has voluntarily withdrawn from the Collaborative will continue to be liable to the Collaborative for its share of any debts, claims, demands, or judgment incurred, including obligations for post-employment benefits incurred during the district's membership in the Collaborative, against the Collaborative based on the member district's average per pupil enrollment in the Collaborative, in any Collaborative service, over the prior ten (10) fiscal years.

G. A withdrawing member district will be charged a one-time exit fee, equal in amount to the annual membership fee established by the Board. This fee will be due prior to the end of the fiscal year that would mark the withdrawing district's final year as a member of the Collaborative.

H. Following the final audit of that fiscal year's financial records, the withdrawing district will be reimbursed any funds that remain on balance at the Collaborative as a result of prepayments to the Collaborative by the member district for tuition or services under MGL c 40, § 4E.

I. The withdrawal of any member district(s) at any time shall not affect the status of the Collaborative Agreement and the same shall remain in full force and effect until amended and approved by a 2/3 majority of the Board and subsequently approved by the majority of the member districts and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Board.

J. Any School Committee or Charter School Board who has voluntarily withdrawn from the Collaborative may re-apply for admission to the Collaborative in accordance with Article IX of this Agreement.

SECTION XI: PROCEDURE FOR TERMINATION OF A MEMBER SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Board may vote to initiate the termination of the membership of any member district by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting membership of the Board. The only reasons for such action shall be:

I. The non-payment of certain obligations such as the non-payment of fees or assessments owed to the Collaborative; or

2. Any other action that would seriously jeopardize the financial stability of the Collaborative

Procedure for such termination:

I. The Executive Director of the Collaborative, with the authorization of the chairperson of the Board, must provide written notice to the member district of the facts on which any possible termination action may be based. This notice must give the member district thirty (30) days to correct the situation.

2. The member district may work with the Executive Director and the Board Chair to develop a plan to address the situation.

3. If the member district does not correct the situation within thirty (30) days, then the Board shall schedule the vote to terminate that district's membership at the next Board meeting, which is scheduled sixty (60) days after the expiration of the thirty (30) day period referenced in Paragraph 1.

4. The Executive Director shall provide written notice to the chairperson of the member district's school committee and to the superintendent of that member school district of the date and time for the meeting at which the Board will consider initiation of termination of that member district's participation in the Collaborative. The notice will include a copy of the proposed amendment to this Agreement reflecting the termination of the member district. Such written notice shall be sent by certified mail or by overnight mail, both of which require acknowledgement of receipt of the written notice. In the written notice, the Board shall invite the member district to present any and all reasons why the Board should not terminate membership.

5. Whether or not the member district appears at the Board meeting at which the initiation of termination of membership is to be discussed, the Board shall vote on the motion to initiate the termination the member district's participation in the Collaborative and on the amendment to the Agreement reflecting such termination. In order to initiate the termination of the membership, the Board must vote by two-thirds majority to do so and an amendment shall be prepared in accordance with Section VIII and submitted to the member districts and to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for approval. . Termination of the member district shall not be effective until the Collaborative has fully complied with Article VIII of this Agreement, the member districts have approved the amendment and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the amendment to the Agreement.

6. The effective date of a member district's termination from the Collaborative shall take effect on the next July I provided that the procedure outlined in paragraphs 1-5 has been completed by April 30.

7. Upon termination from the Collaborative, a former member district shall not be entitled to any assets or a portion of any assets of the ACCEPT Collaborative, including any surplus funds that may have been carried over from prior years and any capital reserve fund that may have been established by the Board.

8. Any member district of which membership has been terminated will continue to be liable to the Collaborative for its share of any debts, claims, demands, or judgment incurred, including obligations for post-employment benefits incurred during the district's membership in the Collaborative, against the Collaborative based on the member district's

average per pupil enrollment in the Collaborative, in any Collaborative service, over the prior ten (10) fiscal years.

SECTION XII: TERMINATION OF THE COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

The Executive Director, any appointed representative of the Board, or a member district may propose the termination of the Collaborative by submitting such a proposal in writing to the Chairperson of the Board and, by giving notice to all other member districts and the Executive Director at least twelve (12) months before the end of the current fiscal year.

Within thirty (30) days of a request that the Board initiate termination proceedings, the Board shall discuss the request to terminate the Collaborative and determine next steps. The Collaborative may only be terminated at the end of any fiscal year (June 30) by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Board, subject to compliance with this section of this Agreement and compliance with the closing guidelines of the Department.

Should the Board vote to initiate termination proceedings, notice must be provided to all member districts within ten (10) working days of such vote. Any Board vote to terminate the Collaborative must be confirmed by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the member districts. Following the affirmative votes to terminate this Collaborative Agreement, the Executive Director shall inform the member and non-member districts who are served by the Collaborative and the Department in writing 180 days prior to the effective date of any termination along with the information required to be submitted to the Department pursuant to 603 CMR 50.11.

Prior to ACCEPT's termination, the ACCEPT Board shall arrange for a final fiscal audit of ACCEPT Collaborative. Such audit will be completed within ninety (90) days of the date of termination of ACCEPT. A copy of such audit report shall be sent to each member district and to the Department. Such audit must be completed before any assets (or liabilities) are disbursed.

By January 31 of the fiscal year in which the termination shall occur, the ACCEPT Board will:

1. Determine the appropriate disposition of the ACCEPT Collaborative funds, equipment and supplies
2. Determine the fair market value of all assets for the Collaborative, including, but not limited to, real estate, capital property, equipment and supplies owned by the Collaborative;
3. Determine the process for the appropriate disposition of federal/state funds.
4. Identify the member district responsible for maintaining all fiscal, employee and program records.
5. Identify the member and non-member district(s) responsible for maintaining student records.
6. Determine the means of meeting all liabilities (debts and obligations) of the Collaborative, including obligations for post-employment benefits. All liabilities must be met before any monies are distributed to member districts.
7. Ensure the appropriate disposition of all assets of the Collaborative, including any unencumbered funds held by the Collaborative, and any capital property and real estate owned by the Collaborative. Unless the Board determines otherwise, all assets shall be sold and the monies shall be distributed to the member districts based on the member district's average per pupil enrollment in the Collaborative, in any Collaborative service, over the prior ten (10) fiscal years, ensuring fairness and equity for all members.
8. Determine the plans for member districts to address the needs of students that were being addressed by the Collaborative.

No part of the net earnings of the Collaborative shall inure to the benefit of any appointed representative, Executive Director, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Collaborative by a private individual who is not a member, director or

officer of the Collaborative), and no appointed representative or officer shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the assets upon dissolution of the Collaborative.

Following the affirmative vote of the member districts to terminate the Collaborative Agreement the Board shall notify the Department of the official termination date of the Collaborative, and shall submit the documentation required by 603 CMR 50.11 to the Department.

If the Collaborative receives a notice of intent to revoke approval of its Agreement, it shall immediately begin planning for termination of the Collaborative by providing notice to member districts and non-member districts and by following the procedures of 603 CMR 50.11.

SECTION XIII: INDEMNIFICATION

Neither the Executive Director nor any member of the Board shall be liable to the Collaborative or to any member district hereof for any act or omission of the Executive Director or any member of the Board or be held personally liable in connection with the affairs of the Collaborative except only liability arising out of his own willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of duty to the Collaborative or its member districts.

Neither the Executive Director nor any member of the Board shall be personally liable for any debt, claim, demand, judgment, decree, liability or obligation of any kind of, against, or with respect to the Collaborative or arising out of any action taken or omitted for or on behalf of the Collaborative and the Collaborative shall be solely liable therefore and resort shall be had exclusively to the Collaborative property for the payment or performance thereof and each member of the Board and any Executive Director shall be entitled to full indemnity and full reimbursement out of Collaborative property, including, without limitation, fees and disbursements of counsel, if, contrary to the provisions hereof, such Board member or Executive Director shall be held personally liable. Any person dealing with the Collaborative shall be informed of the indemnification contained herein and, where the Board deems it appropriate, documents or instruments executed by or by authority of the Board shall contain reference hereto.

The Executive Director and his/her legal representatives and each Board member and his/her legal representatives shall be indemnified by the Collaborative against all liabilities and expenses, exclusive of amounts paid to the Collaborative, including judgments, fines, penalties, amounts paid in settlement and counsel fees, incurred in reasonable settlement of any action, suit or proceeding to which such member of the Board or Executive Officer or his/its legal representatives may be made a party or otherwise involved by reason of his/its capacity as member of the Board or Executive Officer, except only liabilities and expenses arising out of his/its own willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of duty to the Collaborative as final adjudged in such action or, in the event of settlement or termination of such action without final adjudication, as determined by independent counsel for the Collaborative. Said right of indemnification shall be in addition to any other rights to which such member of the Board or Executive Officer may be entitled as a matter of law or which may be lawfully granted to him/it.

The costs of such liabilities or expenses which are not borne by the ACCEPT's insurance carriers shall be apportioned among, assessed to and paid by the member districts that were members of ACCEPT at the time of the occurrences giving rise to the liability or expenses, whether or not any such member district has thereafter withdrawn from ACCEPT, in accordance with the provisions concerning the apportionment, assessment and payment of operating costs applicable at the time of the occurrences giving rise to the liability or expense.

SECTION XIV: COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 501(c)(3) STATUS

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the ACCEPT Education Collaborative, while a public entity, is organized exclusively for educational purposes, as specified in Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by any entity exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

No substantial part of the activities of the Collaborative shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Collaborative shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

SECTIONXIV: NON-DISCRIMINATION

The ACCEPT Education Collaborative does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation and ensures that all students have equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges and courses of study. The Board's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business.

The ACCEPT Education Collaborative is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

This Agreement shall take effect on July 1, 2024, and subsequent to the of approval of the member school districts and by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, as previously outlined in this Agreement and shall continue indefinitely. This Agreement has been approved by duly authorized votes at public meetings held by the individual School Committees and Charter School Boards whose Chairpersons have signed below.

Date of first reading: **12/13/2023**

Date of second reading: **3/6/2024**

Date approved by Collaborative Board of Directors: _____

Dates approved by member School Committees/Charter School Boards:

Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Ashland	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Dover	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Dover/Sherborn Regional School District	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Framingham	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Franklin	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Holliston	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Hopkinton	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Medfield	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Medway	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Millis	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Natick	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Needham	Date of Vote

Chairperson, School Committee of South Middlesex Regional	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Sudbury	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Sherborn	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Wellesley	Date of Vote
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Westborough	Date of Vote

Approved on behalf of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by:

Commissioner	Effective Date

Needham School Committee

April 2, 2024

Agenda Item: **School Committee Comments**

Background Information:

- Members of the School Committee will have an opportunity to report on events, information, and matters of interest not on the agenda.

Members of the School Committee available for comment:

Andrea Longo Carter, Chair
Elizabeth Lee, Vice-Chair
Connie Barr
Michael Greis
Michael O'Brien
Alisa Skatrud
Matthew Spengler
Lea Gruen, Student Representative