



NORTHSHORE  
EDUCATION  
CONSORTIUM

**Board of Directors Minutes  
April 07, 2021**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Danvers:	Dr. Dana
	Gloucester:	Mr. Lummis
	Hamilton Wenham:	Ms. Banios
	Ipswich:	Dr. Blake
	Lynn:	Dr. Tutwiler
	Lynnfield:	Ms. Vogel
	Manchester-Essex	Ms. Beaudoin
	Marblehead:	Dr. John Buckley
	Masconomet:	Dr. Harvey
	North Reading:	Dr. Daly
	Pentucket:	Dr. Bartholomew
	Rockport:	Mr. Liebow
	Salem:	Dr. Zrike
	Swampscott:	Ms. Angelakis
Triton:	Mr. Forget	
Tri-Town:	Dr. Morrison	
<b>NEC:</b>	F. Rosenberg	G. Bergevin
	Ms. Mahoney	K. Mahoney, NEC Treasurer
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Beverly:	Dr. Charochak
	Nahant:	Dr. Pierantozzi
	Peabody:	Dr. Vadala
	Reading:	Dr. Doherty

- I. **Call to Order:** Dr. Morrison called the meeting to order at 8:03 and stated that the Open Meeting of the NEC Board of Directors was being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth related to the outbreak of the COVID19 Virus. Dr. Morrison asked that Kathy Mahoney conduct a roll call to record attendance as well as to vote on the Consent Agenda. Roll call was done with 12 members present.
- II. **Remarks from the Public - none**
- III. **Roll Call Attendance and Approval of Consent Agenda**  
**MOTION:** A motion was made by Dr. Morrison to accept the consent agenda. Roll call was done with 12 members to approve March 03, 2021 BOD Minutes, April 2021 Appointments as presented.  
**VOTE:** The motion was moved unanimously

Ms. Banios, Dr. Tutwiler, Dr. Buckley and Dr. Harvey joined the meeting after this vote.

- IV. Executive Director's Report:** Ms. Rosenberg gave a brief report covering information about COVID cases and the plan for resuming full time schedules in all schools. She informed the board that DESE had approved the waiver for all grades to expand schedules on April 26. She updated the board on planning for end of the year, graduations, and ESY. In addition, Ms. Rosenberg highlighted the ongoing mental health and wraparound supports that NEC can provide to member districts, and discussed several options for offsetting costs. She suggested that districts consider using some of their ESSERS money to contract for these services. In addition, Ms. Rosenberg gave an update on the Anchor Point Housing Development construction which is scheduled to begin on Sohler Road this spring adjacent to NEC property.

Ms. Rosenberg prefaced the second reading of NEC Budget, thanking the Finance Committee and the Board for their support in helping NEC get back to a balanced budget so quickly. She reminded board members that once the board approves the budget, the final version and approved tuition rates will be sent to members to share with school committee by the end of April.

Ms. Rosenberg's full report is attached.

- V. Finance Report: Brian Forget, Glenn Bergevin, Kevin Mahoney**

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Mahoney reviewed the February 2021 Treasurer's Report (attached). He stated that cash flow has improved and is closer to "normal" and tuition income is on target. He pointed out how the collection from insurance is reflected. He stated that the new system with electronic warrants is working well. There were no questions.

**Second Reading of Proposed Budget and approval of Tuition Rates for FY22: Glenn Bergevin**

Mr. Bergevin reviewed the attached materials detailing projected census, highlights of the proposed budget and budget details for FY 2022. He also provided a breakdown of the impact of tuition increases on each district.

**FY 2022 Budget Overview:** The NEC budget is driven by student enrollment and the high level of specialized staffing necessary to meet the complex educational needs of our students. In creating the budget, management has prioritized maintaining the goals of strategic plan, while returning to "normal" operations and recovering from the ongoing stresses of the COVID19 pandemic. We are assuming that in FY2022, our calendar and schedule will return to full-time pre-pandemic norms, and that programs that experienced depressed enrollment will return to pre-pandemic levels. We assume that program related expenses that were decreased or eliminated during the pandemic (i.e. field trips, vocational programming, lunch expenses, travel and conference expenses, substitute coverage) will gradually return to a pre-pandemic level.

**History:** In February 2020, the Board approved a preliminary budget calling for a 5% tuition increase for the Kevin O'Grady School to correct historic issues with this program's budget, and a 2% increase for all other programs. In June 2020, the Board voted to hold tuition flat and not implement these increases, given the many uncertainties we were facing at the height of the pandemic. This decision will result in the need to transfer approximately 1.3 million dollars from our cumulative surplus in order to balance the FY2021 budget. This decision also requires us to propose a tuition increase that is higher than the usual 2-3% for FY2022, in order to prevent an ongoing need to utilize surplus funds.

**Major Changes from March 3, 2021 Board Meeting and First Budget Draft:**

In March, administration proposed a budget with a 5% tuition increase, resulting in a second year of utilizing cumulative surplus. After Board discussion, we made several changes. All of these are detailed in attached documents. The most significant are:

- An increase in the Kevin O'Grady rate from 5 % to 7%, adding \$220,000 to revenue.
- A decrease of \$328,000 in Medical Insurance based on updated information from our broker.

NEC receives no direct ESSERs funding. The only public funding we have received related to COVID is \$15,888 from the Special Education Program Improvement Grant and \$27,000 from the recent Coronavirus Prevention Fund per pupil allocation. We did not ask districts for any additional support during FY20 or FY21, but relied on philanthropic support and utilization of cumulative surplus funds. Administration is proposing that the Board consider a one-time COVID assessment of \$5,000 per district, which would yield \$100,000, bringing the budget to positive \$50,000. This would be used to fund ongoing COVID-related expenses, such as custodial staff, PPE, and sanitizing supplies

Dr. Zrike left the meeting at 8:26 am due to meeting within his district

Discussion: Dr. Blake stated his support for the one-time assessment, noting that as long as it was properly documented districts could use ESSERs funds. Dr. Morrison was in agreement. Several other members indicated agreement. Board had no additional questions on one-time assessment.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Dr. Blake and seconded by Mr. Forget for a one-time COVID assessment of \$5,000 per district, which would yield \$100,000, bringing the budget to positive \$50,000. Roll Call was done with 15 members present.

**Vote:** The motion was moved unanimously.

Ms. Rosenberg asked the Board if there were additional questions regarding the budget, and reminded the Board of their fiduciary responsibilities. There were no questions. Ms. Rosenberg stated that administration feels confident that Mr. Forget and members of the Finance committee had done their due diligence on behalf of the board.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Forget and seconded by Ms. Angelakis to vote and approve the revised 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the budget and tuition rates for FY2022. Roll call was taken. All were in favor with 15 members voting.

**VOTE:** The motion was moved unanimously

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Forget and seconded by Dr. Dana to accept the February 2021 Treasurer's Report and to approve the February/March warrants as presented. Roll call was taken with 15 members voting.

**VOTE:** The motion was moved unanimously

Ms. Rosenberg thanked the board once again for all of their support. She stated that this budget approval will help us get back on track for next year and puts us back in a strong place to do the work we need to do.

- VI. **New Business-** Ms. Rosenberg reminded the board that there is one more scheduled meeting for the end of May and that she would discuss with Dr. Morrison the process for approving NEC goals and conducting her evaluation. There was no other new business.

**VII. Adjournment:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Dr. Harvey and seconded by Dr. Daly to adjourn from the meeting at 8:47 am. Roll call was done with 15 members present.

**VOTE:** The motion was moved unanimously.

*Kathy Mahoney*

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Kathy Mahoney, Administrative Assistant to Executive Director

*Francine Rosenberg*

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Francine Rosenberg, NEC Executive Director

## **Executive Director Report April 2021**

### **COVID and "Reopening" Updates:**

Since our March meeting we have had only three positive cases...one student and two staff members.

We applied for a waiver so that all of our programs, including those with elementary grades, could resume full time schedules together on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The waiver was approved, and we have proceeded with planning. Some schools will maintain a slightly shorter school day, although we have assured that all will meet time on learning requirements. This will help with the ongoing challenges of providing for staff breaks and lunch coverage.

While we are having some difficulty filling open positions, for the most part we are in good shape with our plans. Only about 20 students remain fully remote.

We have also begun planning for end-of-year events, graduation ceremonies, and ESY in keeping with the most recent guidance.

### **Regional Activity and Mental Health Supports:**

We have begun to speak with several districts about ongoing mental health consultation and wraparound services through our Connections Program. I have also been part of a working group with MOEC and Rachelle Engler-Bennett at DESE exploring how DESE can fund this type of work as part of pandemic recovery.

### **Other:**

Construction on the Anchor Point Housing Development, adjacent to our 112 Sohler property, is scheduled to begin this spring. In the long term, this should be positive for the community, but in the short term may pose some challenges for us. Monique and I had a very positive preliminary meeting with their project manager to make sure that we understood their plans and that they understood our unique needs and concerns about safety, traffic, dust, etc.

I have begun to work on a plan for Strategic Planning, encouraging my team to think beyond this year of crisis. We continue to focus on three "big buckets" for this work: Ongoing quality improvement in our existing specialized programs, ongoing attention to issues related to financial stability and infrastructure, and continuing to provide regional services and supports as needed. Our internal work on equity and diversity is continuing, as is our work on social emotional learning. I have recently created a "Curriculum and Instruction Think Tank" pulling together some of the teacher-leaders in our various programs to talk about how we can assess our needs and set appropriate goals to assure that our academic and vocational curriculum and pedagogy remain current and effectively incorporate our use of data on student outcomes.

