



# NORTHSHORE EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes March 06, 2024

<b>Present:</b>	Beverly:	Dr. Charochak
	Danvers:	Mr. Bauer
	Gloucester:	Mr. Lummis
	Ipswich:	Dr. Blake
	Lynnfield:	Mr. Geary
	Manchester-Essex:	Ms. Beaudoin
	Marblehead:	Dr. McGuinness
	Masconomet:	Dr. Harvey
	North Reading:	Dr. Daly
	Pentucket:	Dr. Bartholomew
	Reading:	Dr. Milaschewski
	Rockport:	Dr. Branco
	Swampscott:	Ms. Angelakis
	Tri-Town:	Dr. Morrison
	Triton:	Mr. Forget
<b>NEC:</b>	F. Rosenberg	L. Fleming
	K. Mahoney	K. Mahoney
	J. Zeigler	AFT local President 4293
	D. Petronzio	AFT local Vice President 4293
<b>Absent:</b>	Hamilton Wenham:	Mr. Tracy
	Lynn:	Dr. Alvarez
	Nahant:	Dr. Pierantozzi
	Peabody:	Dr. Vadala
	Salem:	Dr. Zrike

- I. **Call to Order:** Ms. Angelakis called the meeting to order at 8:02 am and read the following statement: This Open Meeting of the NEC Board of Directors is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Healey's extension of the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025.
- II. **Approval of Minutes and Attendance**  
**MOTION:** A motion was made by Dr. Morrison and seconded Mr. Forget to approve the February 7, 2024 BOD & Exec Session Minutes, Facilities 2.27.24 Minutes, Finance 2.28.24 Minutes, March 2024 Communications. Roll call was done 11 voted present and to approve minutes and board communications.  
**VOTE:** The motion was approved
- III. **Executive Director's Report-** Ms. Rosenberg shared a Northshore Academy student success story. Since our last meeting, we have continued to focus on finance and infrastructure, working with leadership team to work on budget planning for FY25. Filling open positions and staff absenteeism continue to be of great concern. Ms. Rosenberg also shared some of the many positive activities happening within programs. Full report will be included with minutes

Ms. Angelakis noted how much she loves the "happy stories". She stated that it reminds us that our focus should be all about the students.

Mr. Bauer, Dr. Blake, Ms. Beaudoin, Dr. Milaschewski joined the meeting at 8:15

- IV. Treasurers Report** – Mr. Mahoney gave a summary through January 31. Reviewing our cash flow position, he stated that the money market accounts are at 3.3 million. Our goal is to stay at 3 million and we will need to keep a close eye on this during the HVAC project. Mr. Mahoney noted for a period of time we will be below that target and will need to watch our cash flow.  
There were no questions from the board

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Mr. Forget and seconded Mr. Bauer to approve January 2024 Treasurers Report. Roll call was done 15 voted to approve

**VOTE:** The motion was approved

**V. Finance Committee Report-**

Ms. Rosenberg gave some opening remarks to frame the challenges with this year's budget. She explained that even without the major capital project it would have been hard to compare FY25 to previous budgets due to the change in our CFO and Accounting Systems. Ms. Rosenberg stated these changes will make comparisons difficult, but believes that they will lead to more clarity and management accountability. She laid out the key factors in building this budget. This budget was built with a 14% tuition increase for KOG and 8% tuition increases for all other programs as previously discussed. This produces 11% more revenue than the original FY24 budget and will enable us to have a balanced operating budget, meet our debt covenants, and begin to replenish the capital fund.

Mr. Fleming thanked the Finance and Capital planning committees for all of the feedback and support during this process.

Mr. Fleming reviewed how FY25 budget was built through collaboration with leadership team. He spoke about his efforts to find ways to be more efficient and reduce cost. He also addressed the reality we aren't able to cut personnel and still have the capacity to meet district needs. Our vendor contracts were reviewed and analyzed. The Consortium is now utilizing more of the state contracts where applicable. In addition, Mr. Fleming has created well-defined allocation criteria for administrative overhead, technology, transportation, and shared facilities. Once these costs were clearly identified based on the criteria, formulas were developed to assign these costs to the corresponding programs.

Mr. Fleming went over the specific budget lines and associated narrative. (See attached)

He then explained some of the variances related to the major capital project. Payments to contractors will be largely in FY24, some in FY25. Debt service interest is budgeted in FY25, but debt service principal won't impact the budget until FY 26. We have \$500,000 budgeted to meet bank covenant obligations and added a capital outlay line into the budget. FY25's budget does not include an amount in this line; any surplus from FY25 is going towards the HVAC project and debt covenants. FY26 and beyond, we will be adding an amount based on the capital planning committee's recommendations.

Accounting for the HVAC project is complex given the multi fiscal-year nature of both revenue and expense. We are working closely with auditors on best way to document. He explained the project would be managed and tracked in a separate fund code, since we are funding part of the project from the special tuition assessment, this portion will be recorded in the general fund. Mr. Fleming will be working with the auditors at year end to ensure we are in compliance GASB standards.

Ms. Rosenberg reminded the board that our budget gets reviewed twice. Today is the first vote on proposed budget and the opportunity to ask for changes or updates before final approval in April. There were no additional questions from the board

Mr. Forget and Ms. Angelakis expressed their appreciation for the clarity and their support for the changes made by Mr. Fleming. They thanked Mr. Fleming for the level of detail and for all of his hard work.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Mr. Forget and seconded Dr. Morrison to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> vote of the FY25 Budget and Tuition Rates. Roll call was done. 15 voted to approve.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved

Dr. Charochak left the meeting at 8:45 am

**VI. Facilities Committee Report-** Dr. Harvey gave an update on Capital Budget Plan and HVAC Project. HVAC project things are moving along as expected. The committee met and discussed the first draft of the 5-year capital plan and we now have a better idea of what is to come. Dr. Harvey noted this will be an annual process to help keep up with our needs and projects. Dr. Harvey reviewed the discussions on 83 Pine Street and recent capital issues. There are placeholders in the budget for parking lot and roof at that site and we are working to improve communication with the Condo Association. There were no questions from the board.

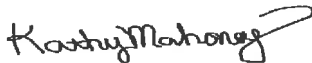
**VII. New Business**

- Regional Transportation Grant update- held for April Board Meeting.
- NEC will be unable to hold in person meetings in the spring due to project timeline. Final two board meetings should stay via Zoom.
- Dates for FY25 BOD meetings (in folder) discuss at April meeting.
- Ms. Angelakis will be in touch with members who have agreed to help with Ms. Rosenberg's contract.
- Dr. Branco asked a question about the timing for invoicing midyear adjustments and requested that this happen in time to qualify for circuit breaker deadline. Mr. Fleming will invoice before the Friday cut off.

**VIII. Adjourn**

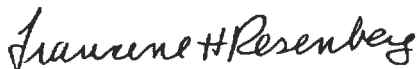
**MOTION:** A motion was made by Mr. Lummis and seconded by Mr. Forget to adjourn from meeting at 8:48 am as presented. Roll call was done 14 voted to adjourn

**VOTE:** The motion was approved



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Kathy Mahoney, Administrative Assistant to Executive Director



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Francine Rosenberg, NEC Executive Director



## **Executive Directors Report**

**March 2024**

### **A Success Story: Former Student Pays it Forward with Animal Science Classes**

*William "Billy" Rae came to Northshore Academy in 2007 as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader who struggled with impulse control and social skills. After two years at NSA, he returned to his district and graduated from High School.*

*As a middle school student at NSA, Billy took great interest in an iguana in his science classroom. In Billy's words, "Animals can be very therapeutic. I consider myself proof of concept. Learning to care for and work with animals helped me build life skills and confidence."*

*After High School, Billy worked for an animal presentation company, but his desire to work with young people who were struggling, lead him to apply for an Instructional Assistant position at NSA last year. Working with one of our science teachers, he has embedded animals into the classroom, and helped to create and teach several elective classes focusing on animal care. He describes his success as follows:*

*"I have seen students like A. who would scream at the sight of a bug learn to appreciate our Hissing Cockroaches and handle them to help reduce her anxiety; N. went from not being able to be in the same room as my Ball Python to holding her for 10 straight minutes after she learned how to respect and appreciate the animal over multiple weeks; C. has asked questions in my animal science class that you would get from college students, and for some reason F. totally switches gears when you hand him a live animal."*

*Most recently, Mr. Rae has successfully embedded public speaking skills in his curriculum and taught several students with autism how to present their favorite animals to a crowd. He took 5 students who struggle tremendously with social dynamics and anxiety to NSA Lower's campus where they each presented 1 of their favorite animals to 2 different groups of students. The amount of confidence that they displayed during the lectures and the pride they experienced afterward would be akin to winning a championship game in any sport. The group now has their eyes on presenting to our families at the Open House this spring and to the students at Recovery High as well as Kevin O'Grady. If all continues to go well, we may reach out to some of our local districts.*

### **Progress Towards Goals**

Since our last meeting, I have continued to focus on finance and infrastructure, meeting with Larry and other members of the Leadership Team to work on budget planning for FY25. Filling open positions and staff absenteeism continue to be of great concern. Nonetheless, positive activities continue in all of our programs.

### **Student Learning and School Climate**

- High school and post-high school students are enthusiastically participating intramural sports. NSAU students will be participating in a basketball tournament later this month and Soar/Embark students are participating in their first unified basketball game.
- Our ASOST "Recovery In Action" program at RHS has been offering after school and vacation week activities which have been well attended. In addition to recreational activities, students

have been volunteering at Haven for Hunger, and attending AA meetings together. The “Think of Michael” foundation, recently gave RHS a generous gift of \$10,000 to further support after school and enrichment activities, understanding the importance of helping teenagers in recovery learn that they can have fun and make friends without using drugs!

- Students at the Kevin O’Grady School participated in a 12-week music residency, made possible by a grant from Arts *for Learning Massachusetts*.
- Our teachers and clinicians are making good use of consultation time with Dot Lucci (focus on differentiated instruction in moderate disabilities programs) and Dr. Jefferson Prince (clinical and psychiatric).
- 100% of students at TVA are currently participating in vocational opportunities either on site (wood shop, print shop, or culinary) or off site.
- RHS students have received a donation of FitBits, which they are using as part of a health and wellness initiative.
- Several RHS students are participating in training through the NAN project to be Peer Mentors. As Peer Mentors they will share their stories with other young people...speaking about their struggles with mental illness, but more importantly the supports and coping strategies that they are currently using on their path to recovery.
- Our elementary school and KOG students celebrated Valentine’s Day and the 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School in February by talking about kindness, and sending adorable miniature rubber duckies to their friends.
- High School students from NSAU, who are learning about animals, visited NSAL to teach the younger students about reptiles.

#### **Finance and Infrastructure**

- HVAC Project and Capital Planning: The project is proceeding on schedule.
- Recruitment and Workforce Development: We are continuing to hold monthly sessions for new employees, and are working on updating our recruitment materials and hiring practices.
- I continue to work closely with my team and with our grantwriter to seek philanthropic support wherever we can, and to take advantage of a variety of state grant opportunities.

#### **Advocacy and Regional Initiatives**

- I continue to be very involved in advocacy efforts through MOEC. We are focusing our energy on raising awareness of, and seeking solutions for, the issues faced by Collaboratives in terms of capital planning and buying/leasing property.
- We continue to provide support to the region through training, PD, grants, and our very popular and well-attended job-alike groups. We will be offering another session of Youth Mental Health First Aid training in March.
- Thanks to the recent DPH “Gun Violence” grant, our Connections Supervisor has met with folks in the Lynn Public Schools to create a plan for supporting a small number of high-risk students through grant-funded outreach supports.
- I am speaking with several board members and special education directors about potential regional initiatives, such as a Cape Ann in-district program at the elementary level.