



**NORTHSHORE
EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 04, 2026**

Present:	Beverly:	Dr. Cushing
	Danvers:	Mr. Bauer
	Gloucester:	Mr. Lummis
	Hamilton Wenham:	Mr. Tracy
	Ipswich:	Dr. Blake
	Manchester Essex:	Ms. Beaudoin
	Masconomet:	Dr. Harvey
	North Reading:	Dr. Daly
	Peabody:	Dr. Vadala
	Pentucket:	Dr. Bartholomew
	Reading:	Dr. Milaschewski
	Rockport:	Dr. Branco
	Swampscott:	Mr. Calichman
	Tri- Town:	Dr. Morrison
	Triton:	Mr. Forget
NEC:	F. Rosenberg	L. Fleming
	K. Mahoney	KF. Mahoney
	B. Carrapichano,	NEC/AFT president
	B. Nelson	E. Aldrich
	R.Cameron	M.Krol
Guests:	Ms. Herrick-Stella	Director of Finance Swampscott Public Schools
Absent:	Lynn:	Ms. Cohen
	Lynnfield:	Mr. Geary
	Marblehead:	Mr. Robidoux
	Nahant:	Mr. Liebow
	Salem:	Dr. Zrike

- 1. Call to Order:** Dr. Harvey called the meeting to order at 8:12 a.m.
- 2. Approval of Consent Agenda**
MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Tracy and seconded by Dr. Bartholomew to approve the Consent Agenda, which included February 04 Board Meeting Minutes, Feb 25 Finance Committee minutes, March 2026 appointments, and warrants.
VOTE: The motion was moved unanimously

3. Executive Director's Report: Ms. Rosenberg presented her report. She gave an overview of several programmatic highlights, and a high level overview of the budget and transportation issues. There were no questions from board members.

4. Finance Report: Mr. Fleming and Mr. Mahoney

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Mahoney presented the January Treasurer's Report. Cash flow and revenue collections were reviewed. February is typically the lowest collection month of the school year, and while cash flow remains a concern, the line of credit is available if needed. An additional \$100,000 payment was made toward the \$1 million line of credit, reducing the balance to \$500,000. The goal is to continue making monthly payments, although this month may be challenging depending on the timing of receipts.

Mr. Mahoney reviewed account balances with approximately \$1.7 million at the end of January and \$2.4 million cash on hand at the end of February. Revenue collections are currently at 57%, slightly higher than this time last year, with approximately \$3.8 million collected to date.

Mr. Mahoney discussed expected cash flow for March and April and noted that the line of credit continues to support short-term cash flow needs. Mr. Mahoney noted that ideally the organization should maintain at least two months of payroll in reserve, closer to \$5–6 million, and that the consortium is currently below that level.

There were no further questions

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Tracy and seconded by Mr. Forget to approve the January 2026 Treasurers Report.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation of FY27 Budget: Mr. Fleming presented the FY27 Budget for review. He noted that the organization continues to recover from the HVAC project and is experiencing atypical enrollment fluctuations. He stressed the need to build cash reserves as noted in the Treasurer's report. The proposed budget reflects a potential \$3.8 million increase. Mr. Fleming reviewed changes in both revenue and expense compared to FY26. He discussed several cost reduction measures, including a reduction of 8–10 positions, decreased professional services expenses, and decreased transportation costs. He also discussed potential program redesigns based on changing district needs.

Mr. Fleming explained that the budget is based on a 9.4% overall tuition increase, but that could be accomplished in one of two ways. Option A would be a 9.4% increase for all programs. Option B would be have differential increases for different programs, and would be more accurate and net the same 9.4% overall increase. This option would be an 8% increase at KOG and Soar/Embark, 12% increase at NSAU, NSAL, TVA (therapeutic schools), 5% increase for 1:1, 10% increase for RHS and 12% for special education RHS. Mr. Fleming recommended Option B and stated that the Finance Committee recommended bringing both options to the full Board for consideration. Ms. Rosenberg noted that the figures presented are prior to Circuit Breaker reimbursement.

Dr. Branco commented on the discussion regarding the optics of the tuition increase, noting it remains modest compared to private placements.

Mr. Fleming presented a comparison of NEC tuition rates to five private day schools, noting potential savings of approximately \$2.5 million for medical placements and \$6.2 million for therapeutic placements.

Mr. Fleming also discussed the transportation contract, including increased administrative costs, most notably in accounts receivable, and recommended an increase in the administrative overhead charge, and a change in billing procedures.

MOTION: A motion was made by Dr. Morrison and seconded by Mr. Forget to approve the Proposed FY27 Budget (First Reading).

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Tuition Rate Options: The Board engaged in discussion regarding the two tuition rate structure options. Several members noted that while Option A was easier to explain, and was attractive in that it kept the increase under 10%, Option B was more accurate and a better long-term approach.

MOTION: A motion was made by Dr. Morrison and seconded by Mr. Bauer to approve the proposed FY27 tuition rates using Option B.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation of Long Range Vision for Regional Transportation Hub: Mr. Cameron discussed concerns with the current transportation system, including cost, as well as risk and liability.

Mr. Cameron reviewed transportation operations from this year under the new contract, noting that once staffing was secured, routes were consolidated, and transportation schedules were arranged, service quality improved, though districts are not yet seeing the hoped for cost savings.

Mr. Cameron discussed the potential development of a technology-based system that would allow districts to view transportation information in real time and described a long-term vision for a centralized regional transportation hub. He suggested piloting elements of the system during the ESY summer program, including an attendance and routing application.

The Board viewed a demonstration of the 7D Connect platform, which could function as a centralized transportation hub.

Mr. Fleming noted that the system could potentially be expanded beyond the eight member districts to support a broader regional model.

Board members discussed whether the platform could function as a service developed and owned by NEC, potentially allowing the collaborative to share the system with other districts in the future. Dr. Cushing noted that trademark considerations may need to be addressed if the platform expands.

Mr. Bauer thanked Mr. Cameron for his work.

Dr. Lummis asked how the proposal would address current transportation needs.

Ms. Rosenberg stated that the primary benefits would likely be realized beginning next school year, with improved route planning and efficiency.

Ms. Beaudoin expressed interest in seeing cost savings for districts, while noting that districts should continue evaluating vendor options.

Dr. Vadala emphasized the importance of identifying efficiencies within the system, while Dr. Branco reiterated that student safety must remain the top priority.

Ms. Rosenberg suggested that additional member districts could be invited to participate next year, noting that the initiative may represent the beginning of a regional transportation hub.

Mr. Fleming recommended an increase in the overhead fee from 1.5% to 3.0% as well as a change in the billing procedure. He stated that he would verify that it is acceptable to pre-bill for transportation services.

MOTION: A motion was made by Dr. Branco and seconded by Dr. Morrison to approve an increase in the overhead rate from 1.5% to 3%.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote, Dr. Vadala asked whether a separate vote would be needed to allow new member districts to participate. He suggested that the Board should also establish member and non-member participation rates, noting that it would be beneficial to address this sooner rather than later. There was agreement that this did not require a vote.

- 5. Policy Committee** - Ms. Rosenberg reported that our food service coordinator had convened the wellness committee and recommended updates to the Wellness Policy. She noted that the Policy Committee reviewed minor edits, and that all policies require two board votes before final approval

MOTION: Dr. Morrison made a motion and was seconded by Dr. Bartholomew to approve the updated NEC Wellness Policy (First Reading).

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

6. Other Business and Updates

Recovery High School Update: Ms. Rosenberg briefly discussed the rebranding of RHS, noting that the program will soon be known as Northshore Phoenix High School. She also reported that the RHS RFP has been posted, and the Cummings property has expressed interest. Once the bid process closes and a site is selected, the next phase of work will begin.

School Year Calendar : Ms. Rosenberg discussed the Juneteenth holiday and its impact on the school calendar, particularly in years when the holiday falls on a Saturday, which may coincide with the last day of school if no snow days are used. Members noted that, depending on

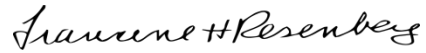
contractual language, school may be held on that day if the contract does not require the holiday to be observed when it falls on a weekend.

7. **MOTION:** A motion was made by Mr. Tracy and seconded by Dr. Morrison to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 am.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.



Kathy Mahoney, Administrative Assistant to Executive Director



Francine Rosenberg, NEC Executive Director