Attendees
Emily Prenner, Christine Dutt, Karen Hite, Angie Abend, Maureen Oates, Caroline Wilson, Jenn Martin, Liz Hiser, Sally Brickell, Will Adams, Patrick Song, Jas Rai, Crista Martinez Padua, Nicky Chapman, Jen Abbott, Adam Howes, Cristal Balis, Kristine Munroe, Lisa DePalma, Betsy Blagdon, Sarah Buckley, Suzanne DeMeo, Tamara Bond, Lindsay Pike, Andrea Steenstrup, Lisa Schwartzberg

Introductions

Vote to approve Minutes
Cristal Balis moved to approve the minutes from the PTOC December 2, 2017 meeting. Betsy Blagdon seconded. Motion passed.

Equity Policy & Guidelines Update
Emily, Christine & Jen Abbott

Christine discussed the Equity Committee, charged with developing new district **equity guidelines** after SC approved a revised **equity policy**. Members include Kathy Shields (School Committee member), Mary Eich (Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning which also supervises the IT department), Jen Abbott (PTOC Board Equity Rep); Emily Prenner and Christine Dutt (PTOC Equity Committee Reps) and other NPS staff as needed.

Policy development was driven by the SC (see attached revised Equity Policy, approved by SC in November 2017). Guidelines will ultimately be approved by the SC, with input but not approval by PTOC. Goal = SC vote @ June 17, 2018 meeting. Equity Committee will also take up implementation and enforcement of the guidelines.

Jen Abbott clarified that the idea of separating the policy and the guidelines is a new one – previously they had been combined. The policy is general and the guidelines will fill in the details. Also new: equity policy will include middle and high schools. PTOC lead by Jen is almost finished with data collection on budget and equity spending from each school, which will be shared with the Equity Committee and PTOC to inform the development of the guidelines.

Q: What is the new SC Policy?
3 paragraphs, high-level; was sent to PTOC members via email and also available on the School Committee's website here (search in Section K) and attached to these minutes.

Q: What will the district's role be in monitoring/policing new policy?
There will be an enforcement and implementation procedure that will live with the SC.

Q: Will guidelines take into account the materials, physical plant and supplies in the new school buildings? Will there be an allowance for schools lower down on the capital improvement list?
The Equity Committee is aware of this issue and will consider it.

Q: Will the middle & high schools be subject to technology equity?
Yes. Mary will explain in her presentation (see below).

Information Technology in the Newton Public Schools
Mary Eich, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning

NPS IT department serves same function as it would in any large organization: Communication; Info processing, analysis, reporting; Data storage. School district IT dep't differs, however, in that it encompasses and is under the supervision of the office of **Teaching & Learning** in order to integrate them all.

2017-18 Major Projects:
- Support of teachers and students using 17,000+ devices (ongoing)
- Maintaining equipment & apps (ongoing)
- Infrastructure/capacity upgrades
  - Capacity upgrades motivated by MCAS Online.
- MCAS Online - rolling implementation; Goal = all grades take it online by 2019
- One Student:One Device pilot in high schools
- SIS conversion to Aspen

What are tech **standards**?

Elementary level:
Classroom: Teacher MacBook Air, 5 student devices, doc camera, LCD projector.
School: Library 23+ devices, 4-6 (3-4 is reality) carts of 25 Chromebooks or MacBook Airs, 3-4 printers.
Biggest point of difference among elementary schools is carts (newer schools do have 6 carts).

Middle schools: Teacher: laptop. Classroom: LCD projector & doc camera. Team: 2 carts x 28 Chromebooks, MacAirs. School: 1 cart x 28 for world language, 1 lab w 25 devices, library w 20+ devices.

High schools: North built w/ standards in place; South is equipped, has more labs. Specialized equipment for Career & Tech Ed, Art, Music. Pilot of 1 Student:1 Device using Chromebooks & MacBook Airs. 25 students @ each high school in pilot are issued a Chromebook or a MacBook Air and will switch devices halfway through the year. Used in Bedford 5-6 years ago. Working with PTOs.

Equity Policy & Equity Guidelines – working on it in the Equity Committee with involvement of PTOs via PTOC; meantime previous guidelines are in effect.

Q: What is system for tech support?
Staff/faculty: Write ticket, centrally administered, send expert, aim for 24-hour support.

Q: If class size >25, can get more student laptops?
Yes.

Q: 2 courses of coding, programming @ high schools. Are there other tech courses?
Hour of Coding. Soon math teachers visiting EDC to see where coding could be embedded in math program. Re: existing coding electives, can add sections in the high schools if demand. Can take 3 years of coding @ high school level currently. Students also want to take other electives (e.g, ceramics) so offerings are balanced.

Q: How are kids being prepared for the MCAS transition to all online?
Parents are asking how to prepare kids who haven't taken them online before. PARCC was learning opportunity. Keyboarding Without Tears curriculum in elementary school will also help (kids are used to touch screens).

Q: A survey of tech assets in elementary schools was sent in February to Principals. Will the resulting inventory be shared w PTOs to help plan fundraising?
Yes – letter to each principal will include what PTOs can purchase in coming year.

Q: At a recent parent coffee, the superintendent mentioned that the district is looking at the over-use of tech by kids. True?
HS teachers report that personal tech is huge distraction. District also made a conscious decision not to have 1student:1device at the elementary level. Current discussions are what is the purpose of going 1:1 in high schools. Emily reminded the group about the MS, HS initiative re: smartphone usage and effect on teens that came out of the superintendent's forum in December on Living in a Smartphone World. Follow up was Toby Roemer, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Ed, convened this task force to think about next steps, expand education around this issue.

Q: What happens if a PTO doesn't have the funds to buy the equipment on the list that will come back to the principals (per the above)?
Principal can report back to IT Director that PTOs can't fund. The building-based IT support specialists are also excellent advocates.

Q: Roll out of Aspen (new Student Info System) to parents: What will the support be?
Aspen will be much easier to use than Skyward. The IT team is working on it (webcasts, etc...). Elementary parents will get 2nd term report card via Aspen.

Q: Are there coding and technology classes in the middle schools?
Issue is **time** – how to fit coding in? What do we let go of?

Final comments from Mary: Important to her to have a two-way process, communicate via Equity Committee – but this won't be end of our collaboration.

Superintendent's and Mayor's Remarks/Q and A
Dr. David Fleishman and Mayor Ruthanne Fuller

David Fleishman provided an update on key areas of district work this spring:

- Budget process for 2018-19 school year is beginning.

- Facilities planning: renovated & expanded Cabot will be online in 18 months so the administration is considering the next group of school buildings to be improved. Communicating with the Mass School Building Administration (MSBA) to determine possible State funding contributions.

- Courageous Conversations about Race - bring families into the work being done in the schools, where faculty are being trained in the Courageous Conversations model.   Community Event on 3/24/18 @ NNHS. Courageous Conversations trainers will work w families. Modeled on the Responsive Home workshops. Talking w kids about race should begin in elementary school.

- Superintendent addressed the mailer sent to postal addresses in Newton advertising a rally at the Ed Center to draw attention to "anti-Western, anti-Christian, anti-Israel curriculum materials" in NPS. This is a re-surfacing of 5/6-year-old issue by a group not based in Newton about the same materials in high school curriculum that were reviewed and determined not to contain bias. Advice given to NPS, don't give the group attention, no counter-protests. Most important: teachers need to feel safe to teach materials that encourage critical thinking. If there is ever a concern about curriculum, parents can bring question(s) to teacher, dep't head (for the high schools) or the principal.

Q: Will a move in the high schools' start time have an impact in this coming year's (2018-19) budget?
No - if applicable it would be reflected in the 2019-20 budget, not this year's.

Mayor Fuller reviewed her first 5 weeks in office, expressed enthusiasm for her job, spoke about collaboration between City Hall and the school department and noted the importance of PTOs in supporting the schools and teachers.

Q: What is the status of MSBA funding for and progress on the Lincoln-Eliot renovation?
Both the Mayor and superintendent commented on this response. MSBA funds 15 projects/year across the State. Until current projects in one municipality are done, it's a long shot that others would receive MSBA approval for partial reimbursement of costs; even then, competition is stiff—lots of old school buildings in Massachusetts. Still, Newton submits proposal(s) every year. There is also funding for smaller projects available, so Newton is submitting for boiler replacement for Day & Bigelow. Mayor Fuller noted that Jack

McCarthy (Exec Dir) came to Newton City Hall, was very clear we have to wait for Cabot to finish. Meantime, the City is fixing what needs to be fixed (e.g., L-E heat goes off a repair is made; upcoming remediation of HVAC & new windows for L-E) and then will figure out what can we afford, how to prioritize and how to fund.

In addition to issues re: condition of buildings there are also enrollment questions. Current NPS enrollment projections don't include any buildings/developments not permitted yet – but City Hall is aware and making sure the planning is thoughtful for any students who **might** arrive.

Superintendent also noted that the district has convened a group to look at Student Assignment (redistricting) as a result of Cabot coming online; potentially affected households have received a letter from NPS.

Attachments: Mary Eich presentation (separate pdf), Newton School Committee Equity Policy (below).

File: KCDE
November 2017

EQUITY POLICY

Economic disparity can lead to inequality in educational opportunities and experiences. The District will ensure that student educational experiences are equitable and not influenced by family income. District resources, which include instructional materials, programming and staffing must be allocated equitably by the School Committee and Superintendent considering such factors as the number of classrooms in the school, the number of students in the school, and student/family needs.

Similarly, the District will endeavor to provide all students with equitable enrichment opportunities and experiences, such as performances and lectures by outside organizations, student performances, field trips, etc. To address inequity in educational or enrichment opportunities, the Superintendent or designee will develop guidelines to ensure that parent/guardian organizations' spending is equitable from school to school over time. The guidelines will specify categories of items and activities in which outside organizations may provide resources and funding, categories of items and activities in which outside organization assistance is limited, and categories of items and activities in which outside resources or funding is prohibited.

An Equity Committee will be established and comprised of representatives from parent/guardian organizations, the Superintendent or designee and the School Committee in accordance with the guidelines. The Equity Committee will meet to periodically review the guidelines as well as monitor and ensure compliance with this policy.

CROSS REFS: KCD, GIFTS AND DONATIONS
              KBE, RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS