

NORFOLK BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting –December 9, 2025



MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Virginia Coleman-Prisco, John DeShazo, Donna Rubin,
Walter Godlewski, Jeremy Withnell, Mike Listorti

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Amy Bennett

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Kevin D. Case, Superintendent, Lauren Valentino, Principal

ADMINISTRATION ABSENT:

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 P.M.

Public Comments:

First Selectman Henry Tirrell addressed the Board

Motion by D. Rubin **seconded by** W. Godlewski to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 14, 2025 **Abstaining** J. Withnell, M. Listorti **APPROVED**

Election of Officers:

The meeting was turned over to Superintendent Case who called for nominations of Board Chair. D. Rubin nominated John DeShazo for Board Chair seconded by Virginia Coleman-Prisco

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

The meeting was then turned over to newly elected Board Chair John DeShazo who called for nominations for Vice Chair.

V. Coleman-Prisco nominated herself for Board Vice Chair seconded by D. Rubin **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

Board Chair John DeShazo called for nominations for Board Secretary. J. Withnell nominated Amy Bennett for Secretary seconded by D. Rubin **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

Board of Ed Schedule of Meeting Dates:

After some discussion the decision was made to table the proposed schedule of meeting dates until the January 13, 2026

Correspondence:

Letter from Steve LePage, Superintendent of Schools Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 regarding the Special Education and Expansion Development (SEED) grant issued by the state. Botelle will be receiving \$323 in grant money this year.

Financial Report: Superintendent Case reviewed the October and November 2025 Check Authorization/Bills for Review and the October and November 2025 Monthly Expenditure Report.

Motion by M. Listorti **seconded by** J. Withnell to approve the October and November Monthly Expenditure Report. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

Superintendent Case reported the following to the board:

- Thank you to Janet Byrne and to Jay Whitaker for their service to the Board of Education. They both served from 2021-2025. Congratulations to John DeShazo and Donna Rubin on their re-election and to Michael Listorti and Jeremy Withnell on their election to the Board.

- I had the pleasure of attending the new firehouse groundbreaking ceremony this past Saturday afternoon. There was a great turnout from the Norfolk Community.
- Our Veterans Day Ceremony was held ON November 11th - 25 veterans were in attendance and a wonderful luncheon was hosted by the PTO. Thank you to Mary Pat Lasko for her behind-the-scenes work, Kathy Dravis, Music Teacher, Sarah Ward, Upper Intermediate Teacher, and our students for their performances. We also thank the
- EMS Volunteers who helped transport the veterans in and out of the building. Thank you to John DeShazo for his assistance with the music and to Amy Bennett for assisting with the PTO luncheon. The Program for this morning's ceremony is in your folder.
- Approximately 35 members of the community attended the "Meet and Greet" on October 18th hosted by Tony Kiser and Lisa Atkin. As a follow-up, I've received a few volunteers for our upcoming Mission and Vision Review Committee that will begin meeting after the first of the year. Thank you to Ginger, Amy, and John for attending and offering their support! The proposed dates for the Mission and Vision Review Committee Meetings are: **February 25th**; **March 25th**; and **April 22nd**. All meetings will be held from 7-9 PM at a location TBD.
- As a component of our Regional Districtwide focus on Math, Learning Walks were held at NWR 7 last Thursday afternoon. Teacher and administrator representatives from the four feeder schools had the opportunity to observe several middle school and high school math classes where we observed student-centered classrooms focused on collaboration and problem-solving.
- Workers from Creative Recreation continued repair work on the big slide. The next step is to install the steps leading up the hill, mulch the area and have an engineer give approval for use
- I am currently in discussion with State Officials regarding the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) for the Board of Education Budget. Due to our '25-'26 Budget being less \$103,000 than the '24-'25 Budget, the State is asking for additional information. Our '25-'26 Budget was less due to a decreased in Special Education costs. A meeting with the State Officials is in the process of being scheduled.
- We are currently working on the 2026-2027 Budget Proposal to be presented to you In January.

Principal Valentino reported the following to the board:

Professional Learning

- On 11/4 staff learned more about the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy through the ReadConn training. We are more than halfway through the 1st of 3 modules. Teachers also revised 2 writing rubrics they will use for instruction and the evaluation of student learning.

Teaching and Learning

- Nearly 100% of families attended Parent Teacher Conferences.
- Intermediate students celebrated their Magic Treehouse narrative writing with an Authors' Tea.
- Teachers and I met to discuss their professional goals for the year. Their goals are aligned with our school goals and are based on student needs and professional interests, like phonemic awareness, narrative writing, and small group math instruction, to name a few.
- The Veterans Day Assembly is an outstanding example of interdisciplinary learning. The assembly features musical performances by all students, the chorus and the band. Students in 5th and 6th grade take a leadership role and write the invitations, emcee the event, recite presentations for a video, interact with the veterans and their guests.

Community Connections

- A Yale School of Music brass quintet played for students on 11/18.
- Mr. Gary Scheft started a Chess Club at school on Wednesdays during lunch and recess. Student interest is high and we are grateful that Mr. Scheft wants to share his love of the game with our students. Some are learning the game for the first time while others are becoming more strategic by playing with their friends.
- Mountain Day was wonderful. Learning Buddies hiked together and at the top of Dennis Hill, students had refreshments, played and learned more about Unity Day.

- The Spooktacular was well attended. Thank you to the PTO for organizing this tradition. Students dressed up, played games, had treats and socialized with friends.

Upcoming Events-

- 12/12 Restorative Practices training
- 12/12 CCMC PJ Day
- 12/15 Impact Teams - Cycle 1 SRBI Check Ins

Chair Report: None

Committee Reports:

Safety and Security

- Slide Update
- Elevator Repair
- Invasive Plants Update
- Drills

Affiliation Reports:

Approval of Repair to Elevator:

The forty-year-old power unit in the only elevator at Botelle School has failed. The cost to replace the power unit is \$58,827.00. We are required by law to have a functioning elevator since our school building has three levels. If you were to approve the repair, \$45,518 could be used from the Board of Education's non-lapsing account with the remaining \$13,309 to be expended from this year's operating budget. We would work to reallocate funds, if possible, to cover this cost.

Motion by: J. Withnell **seconded by** M. Listorti to approve the repair of the elevator and to use the non-lapsing account funds of \$45,518. The board will expend up to \$58,837 to replace the power unit and to use \$13,309 in this current year's budget if available. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

First Reading – 2026-2027 Calendar

Motion by V. Coleman-Prisco **seconded by** M. Listorti to approve the proposed 2026-2027 calendar as a first reading **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

Board Goals:

Superintendent Case briefly discussed the Board Goals.

Consideration of Change of Teacher Professional Development Day:

Superintendent Case requested your consideration to move the Teacher Professional Development Day scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2026 to Tuesday, February 17, 2026. This would allow teachers to continue the Professional Development Training in Reading at a more valuable time in the school year. Students at Northwestern and in the Regional # 7 feeder schools have February 17th off as part of President's Day weekend. If this change were to be approved, Botelle Students would not attend school on February 17th and would attend school on June 9th.

Motion by V. Coleman-Prisco seconded by J. Withnell to approve changing the Teacher Professional Development Day from June 9, 2026 to February 17, 2026
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

First Reading – Policies

- 1312.3 – Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy
- 1312.4 – Library Collection Development and Maintenance Policy
- 1312.5 – Library Display and Program Policy

Motion by J. Withnell seconded by M. Listorti to accept policies 1312.3, 1312.4, and 1312.5 as a First Reading
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

New Business:

Superintendent Case asked Board Members if they had any new business to discuss.

Motion by V. Coleman-Prisco seconded by J. Withnell to adjourn the meeting @ 7:15
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Meeting adjourned @ 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Lippincott

Kathy Lippincott,
Recording Secretary

THESE ARE NOT APPROVED MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING.