

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of School Committee Meeting: Monday, November 5, 2012

Location: Norton Middle School Library

Attending: Committee Members: Chairman Andrew Mackie, Vice-Chairman Deniz Savas, Mrs. Elizabeth McManus, and Mrs. Marge Werner. Mr. Phillip Lynch was absent. Interim Superintendent of Schools Christopher H. Martes and student representatives Tyler McNeill and Bryce McCarthy were also present.

Call to Order: Chairman Mackie called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Budget Transfers: None

“Month of the Young Adolescent” Proclamation – Mr. Michael O’Rourke:

Governor Deval Patrick issued a Proclamation to recognize October, 2012 as the Month of the Young Adolescent. This proclamation recognizes the good work of middle schools. It is a way to celebrate young people, their parents, and teachers during what are often difficult years. Five students from Norton Middle School were invited to attend the signing at the State House. Mr. O’Rourke read the proclamation for the meeting.

Opening of School Report – Principal Michael O’Rourke:

Mr. O’Rourke began with the enrollment figures as of the first day of school. Grade 6 was 212, Grade 7 was 219, and Grade 8 was 231. Currently there are 662 students. New staff members were introduced, as well as Mrs. Donna Smith of the Norton Middle School Parent Board. Mr. O’Rourke reviewed the middle school vision and mission statements, and stated that he has submitted an application for Spotlight Schools. NMS has been designated as a Level 1 school for its performance on the MCAS. He reviewed the MCAS progress over the last few years and what takes place during the ICE (Intervention-Correction-Enrichment) periods. The collaboration with Wheaton College was discussed. Wheaton student tutors plan to attend a meeting in December. In conclusion, Mr. O’Rourke thanked the students, faculty, and parents.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to approve minutes of the October 15, 2012 Open Meeting and Executive Session.

SECOND: by Mrs. Werner

VOTE: 4-0 Motion carries

Student Council Annual Conference – Ms. Melissa Siegal:

Ms. Siegal requested approval for the student council members to attend the annual conference in Hyannis on March 6-8. Up to 12 students are allowed to attend this overnight conference. A fundraiser was held to pay part of the cost, and students will pay the remainder. Letters of interest from the students were required, as well as permission forms from parents. A nurse and security staff will be present, and the students will have a very structured schedule. School Committee Members were provided with an information packet.

MOTION: by Mrs. McManus to approve the request for NHS students to attend the conference.

SECOND: by Mr. Savas

VOTE: 4-0 Motion carries

H. A. Yelle MCAS Report – Mrs. Lisa Farrell:

Mrs. Farrell proudly announced that the H. A. Yelle School had achieved Level 1 status. In her Powerpoint presentation she reviewed the process that helped to improve overall scores. Grade 5 science has benefited from hands-on lessons, and PLC's (professional learning communities) and co-teaching are strong components. At HAY, an important phrase that permeates every classroom, every day is "You Can Achieve".

FY '14 Budget Calendar – Mr. Barry Nectow:

The process of formulating the FY '14 Budget has started and the first draft will hopefully be presented to the Committee in December or January. Requests from administrators will be received soon. The focus for this budget is staffing, equipment, etc. No guidance has yet been received from the Town. The Committee tentatively selected February 2, 2013 for its Saturday Budget Workshop.

Vote to Approve Nondiscrimination Policy Revisions:

The Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) has recommended that the Nondiscrimination Policy be amended to include "gender identity". After a brief discussion, the Committee moved to vote.

MOTION: by Mrs. Werner to approve the recommended policy revision

SECOND: by Mr. Savas

VOTE: 4-0 Motion carries

Personnel: None

Other:

Chairman Mackie announced that the Committee had ratified the contract with the Norton Teachers' Association. The contract is for three years, beginning September, 2011. He mentioned the following negotiated items.

- Salaries: Year 1 – 0%; Year 2 – 1%; Year 3 – 2%
- Elimination of sick leave buy-back for newly hired professional staff

- Agreement reached with the Association regarding the new teacher evaluation process

Mr. Savas thanked the teachers' negotiation team and said it was a great example of two sides working together for a common cause. Mr. Mackie thanked Mrs. McManus and Mr. Savas for their part in the process. Mrs. McManus said the staff is Norton Public Schools greatest asset.

Dr. Martes suggested that the next meeting at Norton High School on November 19th could include a tour of the renovations.

Adjourn:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to adjourn

SECOND: by Mrs. Werner

VOTE: 4-0 Motion carries

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 P.M.

Documents and Other Exhibits used at Meeting:

- Month of the Young Adolescent Proclamation
- NHS Student Council Conference information packet
- FY '14 Budget Memo
- Proposed amendments to the Nondiscrimination Policy
- Existing Nondiscrimination Policy

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, November 19, 2012 at Norton High School

Respectfully Submitted,
Christopher H. Martes, Ph.D.
Secretary pro tem
