

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

RECEIVED
NORTON TOWN CLERK

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

2018 OCT 29 A 11: 45

Date of School Committee Meeting: Thursday, October 11, 2018

Location: J.C. Solmonese Elementary School Library

Present: Committee Members: Chairman Sheri Cohen, Vice-Chairman Kathleen Stern, Mrs. Carolyn Gallagher, Mr. Deniz Savas, Mr. Dan Sheedy. ***Also present:*** Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer O'Neill, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Jeanne Sullivan, School Business Manager Matthew Wells, Technology Director Karen Winsper, Student Representatives Cooper Smith and Caroline Daly.

Call to Order: Chairman Cohen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being video recorded by Norton Cable Access for public record.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Vote to Approve Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: by Chairman Cohen to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2018 Open Meeting and Executive Session Meeting

SECOND: by Mr. Savas

VOTE: 5 yes Motion Carries

Student Representative Update: Cooper Smith and Caroline Daly

L.G. Nourse

- Parent Teacher Connection fundraiser called The Boosterthon Fun Run and the goal is to raise \$15,000 to support and supply enrichment for the students will be held on October 18, 2018

Henri A. Yelle

- Book Bingo Night was held October 10, 2018 and every child received a coupon for a free book
- The Parent Organization will host their Trunk or Treat evening on October 26, 2018

Norton Middle School

- Girls Soccer
- Drone Club held their first meeting
- Student Council collaborated with Wheaton College and the basketball team is tutoring students in anti-bullying initiatives
- Officer Robichaud of the Norton Police Department started the 2nd year of Project Alert Anti-drug and Alcohol Program with 7th graders

High School

- Updated Sports
- Unified Basketball has first game tonight against Seekonk
- Cory's Cause was an informational, emotional and impactful presentation about someone who had gone through a heroine and opioid addiction and talked to the students
- New Clubs: Female Empowerment; E Sports; Board Game; Book Club
- College Fair was held last Thursday, October 4, 2018
- PSATs were taken by sophomores and juniors yesterday, October 10, 2018
- Semi-formal at the Mansfield Holiday Inn will be November 16, 2018

Chairman Cohen requested a schedule for the Unified Basketball Program.

Dr. Baeta thanked Chief Clark and Sergeant Dennett for the dedication and support to coordinate Cory's Cause along with Wheaton College.

Opening of School Report J.C. Solmonese – Mrs. Riitta Bolton

Mrs. Bolton reported it was a smooth beginning school year. Some activity over the summer that occurred was the addition of preschool classes, which required moving some 1st grades, the summer program, and the TPC used our facilities. The custodians did an awesome job getting everything ready for the school year. Teachers worked on curriculum for the addition of two full-day pre-kindergarten classrooms with the addition of a fourth lunch.

New Staff: Paige Coffey- SPED Teacher Grades 1-3; Jeremy Place – Music Teacher; Kristie Dietz-Math specialist sharing days at JCS

Seven (7), half-time paraprofessionals: Briana Blye; Rachel Chirichiello; Katherine D'Onofrio; Jennifer Fritz; Elizabeth Froio; Meghan O'Donnell; Rebecca Volpe

Enrollment: TOTAL student enrollment 505; Total Staff 81 and DHH 13

Curriculum:

- Lucy Calkins Writing Program
- Computer Based Program – Reflex Math
- Bass Assessment for Reading
- Mrs. Kefor received grant for piloting a pre-K screening tool
- Social and Emotional Kindergarten screening
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Support

SPO Daniela Bouley, Secretary

- Fall festival was successful
- Boosterthon will be held this Spring
- New board and parents
- Great community and great support

Recognition of Eagle Scout Ryan Carroll, Troop 12:

Ryan Carroll, a 10th Grader at NHS, was recognized for completing his Boy Scouts Eagle project. Ryan built a buddy bench at LGN and attached signs that were donated by Signs Design to the pre-existing benches at HAY and JCS. He also completed a tranquility garden at HAY. His idea was inspired by Adam Morrison, 6th grader at NMS. Dr. Baeta complimented Ryan on his connection with another student and how this shows inclusion in our district.

Dr. Baeta presented him, along with his family, with the Citizenship Award. The School Committee thanked him for this project and how it will help kids now and in the future.

Resolution in Support of Full Funding for our Public Schools – Mrs. Shannon Taylor, NTA President

Mrs. Taylor, with Eric Bauer the MA Teachers Association Field Representative for Norton in attendance, are asking to support a joint resolution between the NTA and the School Committee regarding increasing state funding for education and to fund our future. Dr. Baeta emphasized the importance that this is about bringing money back to address issues that our important to the district at no cost to residents. Chairman Cohen thanked Mrs. Taylor and everyone in the group for going after this and informing our community.

Dr. Baeta read into record:

WHEREAS, free public schools available to all students without exception are foundational to our democracy and are required by the state constitution; and

WHEREAS, all of our students, no matter where they live, deserve high-quality public schools that teach the whole child and provide them with a rich school experience that addresses their academic, social and emotional needs;

WHEREAS, the state's foundation budget formula, which determines state aid to each district, has been woefully out of date for years, thereby underfunding our districts by more than \$1 billion a year for essential education services; and

WHEREAS, an updated foundation budget formula would bring the Norton Public Schools up to \$600,000 in additional state aid each year, allowing this district to move closer to providing all students with the education to which they are entitled as residents of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature failed to pass any foundation budget legislation in the last session, leaving districts, educators and students without the funds necessary to support the schools our students deserve in every district in the state;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Norton School Committee urges the Legislature to approve and fully fund a new foundation budget formula by May 1, 2019.

Vote for the Norton School Committee to Support the Resolution of Full Funding as written:

MOTION: by Mr. Savas

SECOND: by Mrs. Stern

VOTE: 5 yes Motion Carries

Dr. Baeta will follow up with a letter to elected official of the Norton School Committee's support.

District Audits – Mr. Matthew Wells:

Two non-annual audits occurring:

- Food Service: The 3-year National School Lunch Program Administrative Review will occur this year. No date has been set yet.
- Circuit Breaker: The State has chosen the District for a Circuit Breaker audit this year. The audit is scheduled for November 13, 2018.

Plumbing Bid – Mr. Matthew Wells:

The bidder awarded in the spring plumbing bid has not been able to perform to the contract standards and the contract has been cancelled. Rebidding for a new contractor is underway with a revised bid document and that is due on October 25, 2018. Chairman Cohen questioned if there is now a wait for the work at LGN and Mr. Wells explained there is no plumber on hand but we are doing some of the work amongst several different plumbers so as not give unfair advantage to anybody and we are collecting quotes for this work.

Ballot Question 3 – Dr. Baeta

Dr. Baeta addressed his involvement with the Gay and Straight Alliance and the concern of safety to the students. Dr. Baeta has started light dinners with the GSA students at the middle school where they come together to talk about these issues.

Lisa Daly, School Adjustment Counselor and the Gender and Sexuality Alliance Advisor, introduced staff who showed their support and passed out awareness stickers and pride bracelets. Three students: Malia Savas, Grade 8; Makayla Flynn, Grade 6; and Mathew Foley, Grade 6 read statements they each prepared to show their support for Vote Yes on Questions 3. Ms. Daly read an emotional letter from an 8th grade student who could not be present who is a transgender individual and the importance and meaning of the support for a Yes Vote.

Chairman Cohen commented she is incredibly proud of each of them. It takes great courage to stand up for yourselves and others. Dr. Baeta addressed that our diversity has been with gay and transgender youth. It is all about the safety of our children and the students should feel we stand behind them. The School Committee discussed there may be repercussions that might occur because it is not typical for a school committee to support a Ballot Question.

A YES VOTE would keep in place the current law, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity in places of public accommodation.

A NO VOTE would repeal this provision of public accommodation law.

Vote for the Norton School Committee to Support a YES Vote on Ballot Questions 3:

MOTION: by Chairman Cohen

SECOND: by Mrs. Stern

VOTE: 5 yes Motion Carries

Dr. Baeta mentioned we may be formally one of the first School Committees in the Commonwealth of Mass to actually vote on this question. Thank you.

MCAS Results Overview – Mrs. Jennifer O’Neill

Mrs. O’Neill provided the Committee with a power point presentation of the District MCAS.

Mrs. O’Neill explained we are working under two assessments. Grades 3-8 are taking the Next Generation MCAS Assessment, where the high school and grades 5 and 8 Science are still working under the Legacy Umbrella MCAS Assessment. In 2019 the administration will move all tests and all grade levels into this Next Generation format. The spring of 2019 administration will be online for all students at all grade levels.

This year is the very first year of a new accountability system for the state and our schools. It looked at student achievement and student growth, but for the first time performance of English Language learning students and chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism is defined at 10% or more of missing school days, 18 days. Going through our data we found that the absenteeism is one of our biggest challenges at all five of our schools. We are looking at that as a leadership team. At the high school level, we are now looking at advanced coursework and high school completion.

School Committee discussed the effects of MCAS testing with the curriculum and final exams. The Student Representatives expressed their opinions and experiences with MCAS and final exams. It was requested that these items be placed on a future agenda.

New committees formed and all are welcomed to participate:

- Homework Committee
- School Start Times
- Grading Committee

Panorama SEL Survey Administration – Mrs. Jennifer O’Neill

Mrs. O’Neill shared the parent letter for the individual SEL survey that will be administered to students in grades 3-12 beginning November 1st. Parents will have the opportunity to opt their child out of this survey. The five major areas this survey will focus on is: grit, growth mind set, self-management, social awareness and self-efficacy. The reason this survey is brought to the committee is because we are going to request individual student data around these SEL competencies. This information will be shared info with classroom teachers and families.

Chairman Cohen presented staff with contact information for a speaker Joshua Masse who talks about areas of social emotional and grit. Maybe he can present for professional develop.

Other Business:

- Warrants: Mrs. Stern reported that she reviewed and approved the following warrant, to be entered into the public record: September 20, 2018 \$665,061.08
- Chairman Cohen publicly thanked the Finance Committee and Board of Selectman for approving the warrants for the Fall Town Meeting Monday, October 15, 2018 at 7:00 pm and encourage everyone to attend.
- Chairman Cohen also asked Dr. Baeta if he could discuss with High School administration the cell phone policy.
- Matthew Wells took the lead from Chairman Cohen and printed Senior Citizen Access Passes to allow Norton residents only, 65 years of age or older to attend athletic events and community events within our schools at no charge. They will be distributed at the senior citizens building or stop by the high school or Superintendent's office to pick up a pass. The Foxboro Sports Center will honor these passes at home, varsity hockey games.
- The bid process is now available online on our web page under the business section, starting with the plumbing bid. Awards will be posted. All collective bargaining contracts are posted online under human resources.
- Personnel: Linda Almeida, Administrative Assistant – retiring on 10/19/18
Jean Karcis – Administrative Assistant - resigning 10/26/18
Dr. Baeta thanked both employees for their years of service and wish them well.
- Dr. Baeta first wanted to publicly thank the Superintendent of the Water Sewer Department Mr. Marshall for forwarding him directly the latest results of lead and copper testing at entrance ways coming into the buildings. These can be reviewed at the Water Department or Superintendent's Office.
- We also did an air quality indoor airborne mold test at JCS because of the issues of the sweating of the walls and floors and these came results came back within limits.
- Independent private schools for special education tuition increase chart. Dr. Baeta would like to request more information due to some significant increases.
- Reminder the next meeting will be on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.
- Follow-up with the Wheaton Community Council to update contact information from Denis Savas to Sheri Cohen.
- Mr. Savas asked if H&L Bloom has called us back yet and they have not.
- Reminder Annual Fall Town Meeting on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 7:00 pm. at the high school.

Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:

- National School Lunch Program Administration Review Memo dated September 14, 2018
- DESE letter dated September 28, 2018 for the Circuit Breaker audit
- MCAS power point presentation
- SEL survey letter to families

Motion to Adjourn:

- MOTION: by Chairman Sheri Cohen
- SECOND: by Denis Savas
- VOTE: 5 yes Motion Carries

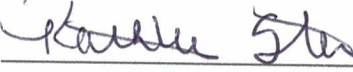
The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm

Next Meeting Dates: Thursday, October 25, 2018 at Norton High School Library, 6:30 p.m.

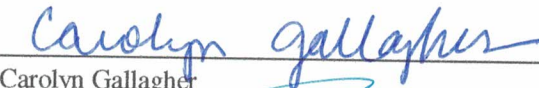
Respectfully Submitted,
Joseph F. Baeta, Ed.D.
Secretary Pro Tem



Sheri Cohen, Chairman



Kathleen Stern, Vice-Chairman



Carolyn Gallagher



Deniz Savas



Dan Sheedy

dmk