

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

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NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING

***Date of School Committee Meeting:*** Thursday, March 10, 2022

***Location:*** Norton Middle School Library and Remote Participation

***Present:*** Committee Members: Chairperson Mr. Deniz Savas, Mrs. Sheri Cohen, Mrs. Carolyn Gallagher ***Also present:*** Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta ***Absent:*** Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer O'Neill, and Director of Pupil Personnel Services Vincent Cerce ***Present remotely:*** Vice-Chairperson Mr. Dan Sheedy, School Committee Member Mrs. Kathleen Stern, School Business Manager Matthew Wells, Director of Facilities Wade Lizotte, Technology Director Karen Winsper, Coordinator of Special Education Casey Russo, and Student Representatives Zoe Duran and Malia Savas

***Call to Order:*** Chairperson Savas called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

***Pledge of Allegiance***

***Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice Program for 2022-2023 School Year***

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to Open the Public Hearing on the School Choice Program

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

Dr. Baeta presented the Committee with enrollment data from fiscal years 2015 – 2022. He discussed how the current climate of school competition, need for revenue, and the opportunity to provide 21st century learning opportunities for all students clearly allows for us to have a School Choice program for the 2022-2023 school year with a closing date of September 1, 2022. A vote and notification to DESE must be completed by June 1st of each year. He noted that a minimum of \$3.85M of revenue has been generated by School Choice. Looking at enrollment projections for the 2022-2023 school, it is recommended that applications be accepted for Kindergarten – Grade 10, with no cap.

The Committee commented that without these funds we would be in extreme dire straits. The Committee also thanked the entire NPS staff for the district we have created.

Questions and Answers: No Comments

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to Close the Public Hearing on the School Choice Program

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to Approve the School Choice Program for the 2022-2023 School Year with open enrollment for Grades K-10

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Public Hearing and Vote on FY 2023 School Budget***

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to Open the Public Hearing on the FY 2023 School Budget

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

In accordance with the Town Charter, the Notice of Public Hearing has been published in the Sun Chronicle. Dr. Baeta presented a power point regarding budget priorities and recommendations for the FY 2023 Budget of \$33,831,510.00, a 4.84% increase.

Question and Answers: No Comment

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to Close the Public Hearing on the FY 2023 School Budget

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to Approve the FY 2023 School Budget as recommended

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

At this time, Chairperson Deniz Savas announced that the meeting is being recorded and asked that if anybody else is recording to please let the Committee know.

***Vote to approve Minutes of February 10, 2022 Open Meetings***

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to approve Minutes of February 10, 2022 Open Meeting

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Warrants Information***

Mrs. Cohen reported that the following School Expense Warrants and School Payroll Warrants were reviewed and approved and are to be entered into public record:

School Expense Warrants:

- February 16, 2022 \$ 469,952.35
- March 2, 2022 \$ 354,628.78

**School Payroll Warrants:**

- February 10, 2022    \$1,056,949.06
- February 24, 2022    \$1,107,210.13

***Student Representative Updates***

**LGN**

- The LGN celebrated Read Across America the first week of March. Students from NHS volunteered to read to different classrooms. They celebrated Spirit Days such as: Hat Day; Crazy Sock Day; and Wear a Shirt You Can Read Day.
- Kindergarteners are learning to read. They have been learning about measurement in Math with words "height, length and weight." First Graders are reading like Crazy! They are working on nonfiction teaching books. The Second grade is thrilled to announce that the students will be performing outdoors for the Memorial Day Concert this year. The children have finished their nonfiction writing and are now writing poetry. In math, they are regrouping and will begin to learn about time and money. Third grade students are learning about biographies and creating awesome posters about someone they have researched. They are also in the planning stages for the annual Trip Around Town.

**JCS**

- JCS is beginning "House" meetings in the newly decorated "Under the Sea" cafeteria. In order to promote more connections among students of different grade levels and to form tighter bonds in the school, JCS is broken up into 5 houses with one class each from PK -3 grade. In these groups, students will do various activities to get to know each other better and be able to have a stronger voice in the goings on of the school.
- Students wanted everyone to know that on Read Across America Day, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, JCS students read 62,041 words as a collective team and they are very proud of their accomplishment.

**HAY**

- During the past week, more students are coming to school without masks which enables us to see their smiling faces.
- Starting Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, we released the restriction on students being able to sit outside their homeroom with their friends. Students were so excited.
- Students participated in an online STEM activity on Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, with Jay Mankita from Playful Engineers. We would like to thank the Norton Cultural Council and our PTO for funding this activity.

**NHS**

- Mr. NHS was a great success for the Class of 2022.
- The girls' basketball team lost a heartbreaker in the "Sweet 16" round of the state tournament to Watertown on Tuesday.
- The boys' basketball team will play an "Elite 8" game in the state tournament against Old Rochester at 2PM on Saturday at Wheaton.
- Indoor track had a great season with 4 runners qualifying for nationals.
- Cheerleading won sectionals and will compete at states on Sunday at Worcester State College
- The Wrestling Team was TVL champs and placed 2nd at the division three sectional meet.

- The Swimming Team - Most successful year in memory and 4th in the TVL
- The Gymnastics Team - Undefeated in the TVL and TVL Champs

***Vote to Approve New Playground at L.G. Nourse Elementary School***

Members of the LGN PTC presented diagrams and discussed plans for a new playground structure at the LGN. The timeframe for Phase 1 of this project would be completed over the summer while taking advantage of discounted rates. Dr. Baeta has reached out to the Solar Panel Project Committee to discuss the donation for re-vamping of the playground discussed at the original deal of the solar panel project. These funds would allow Phase 2 and 3 to move along quicker.

Ms. Cassandra Russo commented about the structure needing to be ADA compliant. The Committee thanked the PTC for all their fundraising and efforts for this project.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to Approve the New Playground at the LGN Elementary School

SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes;  
Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Review and Vote on 2022-2023 School Calendar***

Dr. Baeta presented the Committee with the second review of the school calendar for 2022-2023. Changes from previously discussed version included adding back a full day of school on November 8th (state election day) and then updating the number of school days in November and the dates of the last 5 days for weather related closings. Mid-year and final exams at NHS will be discussed at the June meeting based on a full year's information as provided by the NHS administration.

Staff Welcome Back Day will be August 30th and Staff Professional Development will be August 31<sup>st</sup>. First day of school for Grades 1-12 will be September 6<sup>th</sup>, Kindergarten will be September 7<sup>th</sup> and Little Lancers will be September 8<sup>th</sup>.

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to Approve the 2022-2023 School Calendar as presented

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes;  
Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Reads Collaborative Capital Improvement Plan and Capital Reserve Fund Presentation and Vote***

Dr. Baeta discussed that we belong to two programs, BICO and READS where our Norton students attend. A video from READS was provided to the Committee regarding its Capital Plan and Capital Reserve account. Member districts must approve the Capital Reserve account. The Committee needs to approve the READS Capital Reserve Fund Limit of \$4,000,000 for the following reasons: 1) Maintenance and improvement of READS' properties and leased properties; 2) Provide funding for payment of the lease for READS Academy Public Day School location during periods of time when enrollment is below expectations; and 3) Prepare to purchase the location of the Academy Public Day School to eliminate the expense of a lease beyond 10 years.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to Approve READS Capital Reserve Account as provided in the packets  
SECOND: by Mrs. Gallagher  
ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes;  
Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Review and Vote on NMS and NHS Health Surveys***

Dr. Baeta presented to the Committee draft surveys as presented by the NPS Wellness Committee and aligned to the state health survey. The surveys will be available on our website for parents to review.

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to Approve the NMS and NHS Health Surveys  
SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen  
ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes;  
Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Review and Vote on Town Meeting Articles***

Mr. Wells presented to the Committee three articles for the Spring FY 22 Town Meeting.

1. School supplemental of \$395,00 for unanticipated education mandates. This may be subject to change.
2. HAY sewer project connection at approximately \$512,000.00
3. COVID-19 Emergency Sick Leave Supplemental Appropriation estimated at \$12-15K.  
Mr. Wells clarified that the funds claimed by NPS through the state are at the discretion of each town. If the school department does not receive the claimed funds, the funds go into the town general fund and not returned to the state.

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to Approve the Articles as provided in the packet  
SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen  
ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes;  
Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Vote to Appoint School Committee Member as a Secondary Signer for Expense and Payroll Warrants***

Currently, Mrs. Sheri Cohen is the authorized signer of warrants for the District and Mrs. Kathleen Stern is secondary. At this time, we would like to appoint Mr. Dan Sheedy as the new secondary signer in Mrs. Stern's place.

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to Appoint Mr. Sheedy as Secondary Signer of Warrants  
SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen  
ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes;  
Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

***Other Business:***

- Dr. Baeta held a meeting with student advisory committee on March 8<sup>th</sup>
- Bids for the Athletic Complex are underway and open on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 p.m.
- Bids for Before and After School Program are in
- Dr. Baeta will be acting Principal at the HAY from March 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>
- The Committee would like to start rotating meetings at the schools. An updated schedule will be provided.
- It Takes A Community basketball game will be held on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>

***Motion to Adjourn***

MOTION: by Mrs. Gallagher to adjourn

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes 5-0 motion carries

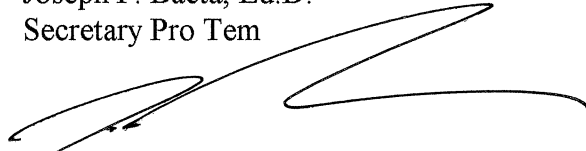
The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

***Next Meeting Date:*** Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at the LGN at 6:00 p.m.

***Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:***

- School Choice Enrollment 2015 – 2022
- 2022 - 2023 School Calendar
- NMS and NHS Health Surveys
- Three Articles for the FY22 Spring Town Meeting

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



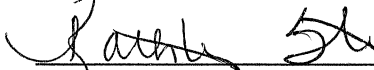
Deniz Savas, Chairperson



Daniel Sheedy, Vice-Chairperson



Sheri Cohen



Kathleen Stern

Carolyn Gallagher

dmk