

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING

***Date of School Committee Meeting:*** Monday, March 31, 2014

***Location:*** Norton Middle School Library

***Attending:*** Committee Members: Chairperson Deniz Savas, Vice-Chairperson Mrs. Marge Werner, Mrs. Valerie Desmond, Mr. Phillip Lynch and Mr. Andrew Mackie. Also present: Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, Director of Operations and Finance Barry Nectow, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Jeanne Sullivan, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jennifer O'Neill, and Student Representatives Cassidy McDonald and Tyler McNeill.

***Call to Order:*** Chairman Savas called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

***Pledge of Allegiance:***

***Approval of Meeting Minutes:***

MOTION: by Mr. Mackie to approve the minutes of March 17, 2014 open session

SECOND: by Mrs. Desmond

VOTE: 4-0 in favor, 1 abstain motion carries

***Transfers:***

This transfer is the beginning of year-end planning by repositioning budget funds to budget lines with additional requirements through the remaining fiscal year. Mr. Nectow said the primary need is for utilities, which are rapidly rising. A full presentation on utilities will take place at a future meeting.

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|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| Transfer from: | Regular Salary | \$58,974.18 |
|                | SPED Salary    | \$14,867.41 |

|              |              |             |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Transfer to: | Food Service | \$ 3,500.00 |
|              | Utilities    | \$70,341.59 |

MOTION: by Mr. Lynch to approve the transfers as recommended

SECOND: by Mr. Mackie

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

***Destination Imagination Presentation – Mrs. Sheila Mackie and Students:***

Mrs. Mackie explained that Destination Imagination is a creative problem-solving program that has existed in Norton since 2004. Two high school teams and two HAY teams attended a regional tournament at Whitman-Hanson High School on March 15th. All four teams placed and two moved on to the state tournament on March 29<sup>th</sup> at Worcester Polytech. The high school team “Super Sidekicks” placed first at the state tournament at WPI and will travel to Tennessee to compete in the Globals. They also received the prestigious DaVinci Award for creativity.

The team manager is Betty Saccocia, and team members are Nancy Holmes, Casey Holmes, and Olivia Saccocia. The team presented a short skit that related to their project to create a club at NHS dedicated to kids with special needs.

Dr. Baeta presented all the team members with certificates of recognition for their accomplishments and thanked the team managers for their service.

***PARCC Presentation – Mrs. Jennifer O’Neill:***

Mrs. O’Neill presented the important curriculum shifts of the most recent Massachusetts State Frameworks based on the Common Core State Standards. The new ELA/Literacy and Math Curriculum Frameworks, comprised primarily of the *Common Core State Standard*, were written explicitly to define the knowledge and skills that students must master to be college and career ready by the end of high school. The Partnership of Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) is the next generation assessment. Unlike the MCAS, PARCC has definite time limits. Norton was one of 18 states, plus Washington DC and US Virgin Islands to pilot the assessment. In Norton, two third grade and two sixth grade classes will take the test. This is basically “testing the test”. No student, district, or school results will be reported. MCAS will remain a graduation requirement until 2018. In late fall of 2015, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote on acceptance of the assessment. Challenges in Norton are the current infrastructure, instructional technology skills for students, and appropriate training.

Several parents in the audience expressed concern regarding the PARCC field test and asked if there was a choice to “opt-out”. Dr. Baeta said he was instructed that there was not, but no one can force their child to take the test. He intends to consult with legal counsel for a legal opinion and will further communicate with the Committee and families on any further information.

***Student Representatives Update:***

Tyler and Cassidy reported that the honor societies have helped with the classes that tour Norton historical sites. The also sponsored Pi Day, where students solve problems to earn a piece of pie for math appreciation month. Spring sports are underway, and another Senior/Senior Prom is being held for the senior citizens in town. Many students served as tour guides at the high school dedication.

***Discussion and Vote on User Fees:***

Mr. Nectow recommended the proposed fee reduction for student parking from \$100 per space per student per year to an administrative fee of \$5. The balance in the revolving account is \$91,000. This amount should cover any repairs to the lot and sidewalks for the next several years. The money is designated to only be used for the parking lot maintenance. Mr. Lynch felt that the amount should be a little higher so the balance would not be depleted too soon. Mr. Nectow asked if the Committee would like to see more options and Dr. Baeta will provide some additional figures.

Mr. Nectow also proposed changing the bus fee policy as follows:

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| If the fee is paid in full by June 1, the fee will be reduced by \$25.00 (10%) to | \$225.00 |
| If the fee is paid in full by August 1, the fee will be                           | \$250.00 |

Payments received between August 2 and the first day of school will be increased by \$25.00 (10%) to \$275.00.

No student will be allowed on the bus until the fee is paid in full, unless prior approval is granted by the Superintendent's office.

Mr. Nectow believes reducing the payment to \$225.00 may allow the district to collect more payments in full and increase ridership. In past years several families have not paid the fee until well into the school year, or not at all. Hopefully the reduction in fees will be offset by increased ridership as well as reduced delinquency.

Additional fee analysis will be presented to the Committee by mid-April.

Mr. Mackie questioned the payment schedule for the bus fee, being as early as June 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Nectow answered that planning needs to be done ahead of time, such as bus routes.

After some discussion, the vote was taken.

MOTION: by Mrs. Werner to approve the bus fee changes as recommended by Mr. Nectow

SECOND: by Mrs. Desmond

VOTE: 4 in favor, 1 opposed motion carries

***Vote to Approve New READS Collaborative Agreement:***

Dr. Baeta informed the Committee that a vote is required to accept the new READS Collaborative Agreement. The collaborative is financially strong and well-run. Norton is a non-voting member but Dr. Baeta attends the meetings. The collaborative is growing, and Acushnet, Bristol-Plymouth, Somerset-Berkeley, and Norton will be added as members. A vote is required to accept the agreement and authorize the chairman to sign.

MOTION: by Mrs. Werner to accept the agree and authorize the chairman to sign

SECOND: by Mr. Mackie

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

***Vote to Withdraw Full-Day Kindergarten Town Meeting Article:***

The Committee previously submitted the Full-Day Kindergarten Article as a placeholder. Dr. Baeta requested that the Committee vote to withdraw the article since it is now included in the operating budget.

MOTION: by Mr. Mackie to withdraw the Full-Day Article from the Town Meeting Warrant

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

***First Reading of Section A Policy Manual Revisions:***

A School Committee subcommittee has reviewed Section A policies. Dr. Baeta has recommended some minor changes taken from recommendations by the Massachusetts

Association of School Committees (MASC). The full Committee will look over the changes and report back to Dr. Baeta.

***Personnel:***

**NHS:** Kayla Sweed was hired as a Special Education teacher for the STEP Program

**NMS:** Jennifer Hebner was hired as a long-term substitute in the Structured Resource Room for the remainder of the year

***Other:***

Dr. Baeta announced that NMS Principal Michael O'Rourke will retire at the end of September, 2014. A search committee will be formed. The position will be posted immediately and close on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Screening and interviews will be held May 1-8. Recommendations (3) will be due to Dr. Baeta on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Superintendent 1:1 interviews and final reference checks will be by May 19<sup>th</sup> followed by interviews with the Leadership Team and school site visits on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Announcement of the new NMS principal will be by May 28<sup>th</sup>.

The Selection Committee membership will consist of:

Director of Curriculum – Chairperson

Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Classroom Teachers (2)

Guidance/Counselor (1)

Special Education Teacher (2)

Parent Representative (1)

Paraprofessional (1)

Administrative Assistant (1)

School Committee Member (1)

Mrs. Werner expressed interest to serve on the Committee.

MOTION: by Mr. Mackie to appoint Mrs. Werner to the selection committee

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

Dr. Baeta and several teachers will visit Southern Connecticut University for a conference on assistive technology, as well as Burlington Public Schools. The district is finalizing a one-year technology plan.

***Adjourn:***

MOTION: by Mrs. Werner

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

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

- User Fees Memo
- PARCC PowerPoint
- Policy Manual Section A
- Selection Committee Timeline

***NEXT MEETING DATES:*** April 3, 2014 - Board of Selectmen, Town Hall  
April 14, 2014 – Regular Meeting, NMS Library

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

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Deniz Savas, Chairperson

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Marge Werner, Vice Chairperson

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Valerie Desmond

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Phillip Lynch

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Andrew Mackie