

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING

***Date of School Committee Meeting:*** Monday, June 9, 2014

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

***Attending:*** Committee Members: Chairperson Deniz Savas, Vice-Chairperson Mr. Phillip Lynch, Mrs. Valerie Desmond, Mr. Andrew Mackie, and Mrs. Marge Werner. 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, Tyler McNeill, Amanda Gilpin and Daniel Gao.

***Call to Order:*** Chairman Savas called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M.

***Pledge of Allegiance:***

***Approval of Meeting Minutes:***

MOTION: by Mr. Mackie to approve the minutes of April 16, April 30, May 12, June 2, 2014 Open Meetings, and April 28, 2014 Executive Session Meeting.

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

***Student Representatives Update:***

The students listed some recent activities at the high school:

- Elections for honor societies officers is on-going
- Graduation Night, June 5<sup>th</sup>
- Class of 2016 car wash fundraiser totaled \$700
- Orange Leaf fundraiser to be held
- Senior Class harbor cruise planned for September
- STEM Expo held at Wheaton College for 800 students

Representatives Steven Howitt and Jay Barrows were in attendance to present a citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives to Tanya Benoit for her role in the planning, development, and execution of the first STEM Expo at Wheaton College.

***Awarding of NEED Grants – Mrs. Gretchen Stalters:***

Gretchen Stalters, Angel Doyle, and Beth Blakeley gave a brief history of Norton Embracing Educational Development, Inc. (NEED). They thanked Mrs. Ruby-Torres, Mrs. Newman, Mrs. Greer, and Mrs. Lewicki for their help and support with the Square One Art Project fundraiser which amounted to \$4,500. This year the grants totaled \$7,206.17 as follows:

- \$552 awarded to Sarah Alves and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers at JCS to purchase eight document cameras.
- \$3,500 awarded to NMS teachers Juli Dalzell, Jayme Hamann, and Chris Cummings to purchase 5 iPads
- \$1,777.40 awarded to NHS/NMS Music Teacher Nicholas Krafka to purchase 20 Fender guitars for music classes and a guitar club
- \$1,376.77 awarded to JCS Kindergarten Teacher Shannon Taylor to purchase 3 iPads with 3 Big Grips

Each year NEED has given additional monies to all school art departments and the business department at NHS for their help with fundraising projects throughout the school year.

Other members of NEED include Rachel O'Neill, Donna Ross, Sheila Mackie, and Pam Anderson.

***READS Presentation – Dr. Theresa Craig and Ms. Evelyn Rankin:***

During the next school year, Norton schools will host several classes for deaf and hard-of-hearing students through the READS Collaborative. Dr. Craig, Executive Director, thanked Norton for welcoming the program to its schools. She said Norton students will definitely benefit from their presence. Ms. Evelyn Rankin said the students in this program are excited to begin. There are 45 students in the program.

***Recognition of NHS Student School Committee Representatives:***

Dr. Baeta thanked Cassidy McDonald and Tyler McNeill for their participation in the meetings and presented them with a citation and small token of appreciation.

***FY '14 Utility Usage Discussion – Mr. Barry Nectow:***

Mr. Nectow had been carefully monitoring the District's utility expenditures since late winter to determine the cause of the steep rise in cost. His conclusion was that the increase was caused by three factors:

1. Bringing the high school fully on-line for both gas and electric
2. An increase in unit cost for both gas and electric
3. An increase in usage of both gas and electric due to an unusually cold and long winter

The increase from FY '13 to FY '14 is \$178,000 (35%). Since July, 2013, utility costs have increased rapidly, a result of the unit cost charged by the utility companies. More cost-saving measures are being explored and the District is working with the Town to find a supplier with lower rates.

***Report on District-Wide Fees – Mr. Barry Nectow:***

Mr. Nectow reviewed the FY '15 fee schedule and pointed out the changes to parking, transportation, and early childhood tuition. Mrs. Werner questioned the tutoring fee of \$29 per hour, and Dr. Baeta said that is a negotiated item in the Norton Teachers' Association contract.

**Chapter 222 Discussion and Vote:**

Dr. Baeta gave a brief review of Chapter 222 in regard to any student expelled or suspended for more than 10 days (cumulative). That student must be given an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress through the school-wide education service plan, and must be given the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work “as needed to make academic progress” during the period of suspension. The Committee is required to take a vote on the acceptance of Section 37H3/4. Dr. Baeta reviewed ways to get the process started but will not jeopardize the safety of the buildings. After discussion, the Committee went to a vote.

MOTION: by Mrs. Werner to accept Chapter 222, Section 37H3/4, and make the appropriate revision in the school handbooks.

SECOND: by Mrs. Desmond

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

**MCAS/PARCC Discussion and Vote:**

Members of the Leadership Team reported on the pilot *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career* (PARCC) testing recently completed. School districts need to vote on what they will utilize for the next generation assessment. In 2015, the MCAS will be discontinued, but it is not certain what will take its place. It is possible that another test could be introduced. The PARCC assessment has been piloted across the state to see how well it is accepted. Norton administered the test to several classes. It is the consensus that the District does not have the tools, technology, or manpower to successfully implement this form of testing. School Committee members discussed this item at length. Dr. Baeta wished to go on the record as being in favor of staying with MCAS.

MOTION: by Mrs. Werner to accept Dr. Baeta’s recommendation to continue with MCAS.

SECOND: by Mr. Mackie

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

**First Reading Background Check/CORI Policy:**

Dr. Baeta informed the Committee that a policy is needed regarding the newly mandated background check/fingerprinting requirement. *It shall be the policy of the Norton Public Schools to obtain all available Federal and State background information through both SAFIS (Statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services) and CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) as allowed by law, of all employees and prospective employees of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation (including taxi cab drivers) to children. Any fees associated with such background checks shall be the responsibility of the individual. This policy may also apply to other individuals such as chaperones, volunteers, subcontractors, fellow school committee members, student teachers, and practicum students, in addition to the required CORI, if they have direct and unmonitored contact with children.* The Committee discussed the cost to the individuals and if it could be covered by some other stipend. Fingerprinting is provided by a professional service, not the local police department.

This is the first reading of the policy and therefore no vote is taken.

***Superintendent Evaluation:***

Dr. Baeta explained the process to complete the End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report. Each Committee member will complete the evaluation form and submit it to the chairperson, who will then complete a composite evaluation to be voted in September. Dr. Baeta will forward blank forms to members.

***Personnel:***

Retirement: Marie Flynn, LGN Administrative Secretary, after 37 years with the District

***Other:***

Dr. Baeta thanked Barry Nectow for his service to the District over the last three years. He will be leaving Norton on June 30<sup>th</sup> to take a new position. He was a very important part of the administrative team and will be missed.

Barry wished to thank the School Committee, administrators, town officials, teachers, students, and families for all the help and friendships during his time in Norton.

***Adjourn:***

MOTION: by Mrs. Desmond to adjourn

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5-0 in favor motion carries

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 P.M.

***Next Meeting Date:*** Monday, September 15, 2014 – Location TBD

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

- Superintendent's Evaluation
- Utilities Memo
- Background Checks Policy Draft
- Chapter 222 Letter
- Fee Schedule
- MCAS/PARCC Letter from MASC
- MCAS/PARCC PowerPoint

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

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Deniz Savas, Chairperson

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Phillip Lynch, Vice Chairperson

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Valerie Desmond

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Andrew Mackie

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Margaret Werner