

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of School Committee Meeting: Monday, March 2, 2015

Location: Norton Middle School Library

Attending: Committee Members: Chairman Deniz Savas, Vice-Chairman Phillip Lynch, Mr. Andrew Mackie, Mrs. Valerie Desmond, and Mrs. Marge Werner. Also present: Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, School Business Manager Lincoln Lynch, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jennifer O'Neill, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Jeanne Sullivan, Director of Technology Karen Winsper, and Student Representatives Amanda Galpin and Daniel Gao.

At 6:30 PM the Chairman opened the Public Hearing.

Public Hearing and Vote on School Choice Program for 2015-2016 School Year:

This year there are 11 school choice students and 80 seats available. The district is due to receive \$67,000 for tuition and fees. Dr. Baeta recommended that the same amount of seats be available in 2015-2016 as follows: Grades 4, 5, 9, 10 = 5 seats each; Grades 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 = 10 seats each.

Dr. Baeta discussed including Kindergarten in the School Choice option. Currently full-day Kindergarten is available by lottery and the tuition starts at \$3000 on a sliding scale. This year 13 students did not get in and had to be in the half-day program. Extending School Choice to Kindergarten could benefit the district with additional funds and perhaps reduced class sizes. The Committee reviewed projected enrollments and the possibility of late enrollments past the March 16th deadline. The district is required to notify the DESE of the result of the vote by June 1st. Dr. Baeta said that the Committee did not have to decide on the Kindergarten option at this time. At the next meeting on March 16th there will be more information on registration figures.

MOTION: by Mr. Lynch to approve School Choice for 2015-2016 as follows: Grades 4, 5, 9, 10 = 5 seats each; Grades 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 = 10 seats each.

SECOND: by Mr. Mackie

VOTE: 5 yes motion carries

MOTION: by Mr. Mackie to close the Public Hearing on School Choice

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5 yes motion carries

MOTION: by Mr. Lynch to enter the regular session of the meeting at 6:54 PM

SECOND: by Mr. Mackie

VOTE: 5 yes motion carries

Pledge of Allegiance:

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Chairman Savas wished to amend the minutes of the February 23rd open meeting. The vote to accept the minutes of the January 26, 2015 meeting should be 2-yes, 2-abstain.

MOTION: by Mr. Mackie to approve the minutes of February 23, 2015 open meeting as amended

SECOND: by Mrs. Desmond

VOTE: 4 yes 1 abstain motion carries

Student Representatives Update:

The students reviewed recent activities at Norton High School since early January.

- Updates on sports teams
- Information on the Step Up program
- Student Representatives invited to the Best Buddies prom
- Upcoming MACS Convention in Hyannis
- French and English Honor Societies activities in the elementary grades
- Fundraising events

2015-2016 Kindergarten Registration – Mrs. Jennifer O’Neill:

The registration period opened on February 23rd and closes March 16th. Parents can obtain registration packets on-line, at the Superintendent’s office, JCS and LGN, and should return packets to the school their child will attend. To date, eight packets have been returned to each school and all are interested in the full-day option. Financial information and lottery information is also included. Updated information will be discussed at the March 16th meeting.

Discussion and Vote of New Courses at NHS for 2015-2016 School Year – Mrs. Megan Lafayette:

Principal Lafayette presented her recommendation for two new courses to be added at NHS for the next school year.

TV/Video II – Level 2: This is a business based course designed to expose students to the equipment and processes that are part of TV/video production. It is a half-year, 2.5 credit course for Grades 10-12. Students must have completed Level 1. Participants in this course can serve internships with Norton Cable TV. The prior course has been running for five years.

Media and Society – Level 2: This is an English based course designed to help students become skilled in media literacy. Students will learn to be more critical thinkers and discuss the drawbacks of living in a culture that is media-driven. The course is offered to Grades 9-12 and is 2.5 credits.

MOTION: by Mr. Mackie to approve TV/Video II-Level 2 and Media & Society-Level 2

SECOND: by Mr. Lynch

VOTE: 5 - yes motion carries

Domestic Violence Leave Policy First Reading – Dr. Joseph Baeta:

The Committee reviewed the draft copy of the new mandatory policy for employees. The policy provides up to 15 days leave in a 12 month period. There are very specific stipulations and all paid leave must be exhausted first. The time off would be an unpaid leave. Any requests would start at the building principal and then sent to the Superintendent. The Committee discussed the phrase “advanced notice” and suggested changes. Final reading of the policy will be at the next meeting.

Update on FY '16 Budget Timeline – Mr. Lincoln Lynch and Dr. Joseph Baeta:

The meeting with the Finance Committee is scheduled for March 11th at 7:15 PM. All members have the budget packet. Dr. Baeta discussed how he would present to the Finance Committee. Mr. Mackie felt the Superintendent and Chair should coordinate the process.

Superintendent’s Report – Dr. Joseph Baeta:

Dr. Baeta commended Facilities Director Wade Lizotte and Highway Superintendent Keith Silver for coordinating efforts for the schools and town during the bad weather.

Dr. Baeta is compiling a report on Guidance and Special Services. He will present a draft to the Committee at the next meeting.

Dr. Baeta discussed the status of the current school calendar. Currently the last day is June 25th. If there were one more cancellation he would like to add Friday, June 26th. If a second day is cancelled he recommends adding Good Friday as a make-up day. No vote is required but he will inform parents what may happen.

Personnel:

Retirement: Mrs. Wendy Azevedo, Paraprofessional at JCS for 27 years, effective February 23, 2015.

Other:

Boys basketball semi-final game on Wednesday against Norwell and then hopefully on to the finals.

Lincoln Lynch requested permission to submit a letter to the Town Account authorizing him to process payment on bills that have been incorrectly entered on the cover page, if the difference in the amount is less than \$100. This will expedite the payment process.

MOTION: by Mr. Lynch to authorize the school business manager to send a letter to the Town Accountant authorizing him to process payment of bills if the incorrect amount on the cover page is less than \$100.

SECOND: by Mr. Mackie

VOTE: 5 - yes motion carries

Adjourn:

The chairman announced that the meeting would adjourn, not to return to open session, for the purpose of entering executive session to discuss contract negotiations. Roll call vote: Mrs. Werner-yes; Mr. Mackie-yes; Mrs. Desmond-yes; Mr. Lynch-yes, Mr. Savas-yes.

The open session adjourned at 7:46 PM.

Next Meeting Date: Monday, March 16, 2015

Documents and Other Exhibits used at Meeting:

- NHS Proposed Courses
- Domestic Violence Draft Policy

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

Deniz Savas, Chairperson

Phillip Lynch, Vice Chairperson

Valerie Desmond

Andrew Mackie

Margaret Werner