

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

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NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of Meeting: Thursday, August 6, 2020

Location: Remote Participation

Present: Committee Members: Chairperson Carolyn Gallagher, Vice-Chairperson Deniz Savas, Mrs. Sheri Cohen, Mrs. Kathleen Stern, and Mr. Dan Sheedy. **Also present:** Superintendent of Schools Joseph F. Baeta, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer O'Neill, School Business Administrator Matthew Wells, Director of Facilities Wade Lizotte, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Vincent Cerce and Coordinator of Special Education Cassandra Russo

Call to Order: Chairperson Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. and turned the meeting over to Dr. Baeta.

Discussion and Vote on the Model for Teaching and Learning for September 2020:

Dr. Baeta noted the following points:

- We have been in a crisis situation since March 2020
- Moving ahead anything we do will be better than what was previously done
- Plans were created by 40+ summer volunteers
- We tried to be transparent and communitive
- Our priorities are around trying to create some normalcy based on safety for students and staff
- We tried to provide as much information as possible to the School Committee
- Pros and cons for each model can be debated in general
- We received very educated input and information from the Norton

Dr. Baeta read a letter from a parent (not naming parent or student) whose child just finished the NPS special education Extended School Year Program. She praised the program and felt it was very safe for all involved.

Dr. Baeta stated to the Committee that the best model to consider is the hybrid model. The model is not the easiest to implicate considering the 6 foot component. Students have been away from teachers for six months and need the interaction, with safety being the top priority.

Dr. Baeta noted the Norton may have been one of the only districts that placed some of the decision-making tasks on our school nurses. He indicated that we will exceed the minimum requirements as required by DESE.

Decisions on athletics will be made next week.

Dr. Baeta said that administration is committed to being fluid and moving from A to B, if needed.

The call today with the DESE Commissioner's office yielded the following: Reports originally due to DESE on August 10th are now due on August 14th; and any decisions made by districts will be supported by the Commissioner's office.

Each member of the School Committee addressed the audience noting that they had done their homework and due diligence to arrive at educated decisions. Several comments were made regarding how well the School Committee works together amongst themselves, as well as with current NPS administration. It was also noted that the reality is that school committees across the state were put in a poor position and that it was a matter of choosing the least bad option.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to rescind first motion and motion to accept recommendation on Hybrid model with formal review and vote to continue or not to continue after review of six weeks of data.
SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Carolyn Gallagher – Yes; Sheri Cohen – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

Discussion and Vote on the Updated 2020-2021 School Calendar:

Dr. Baeta discussed that he would like the Committee to approve the revised School Calendar for the purpose of informing families and staff members of the new start and end dates. Teachers would report for 10 PD days beginning on August 31st, prior to the Wednesday, September 16th first day of school. The two remaining contractual teacher PD days would be floating and scheduled at a later date.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to Approve school calendar with teachers starting on August 30th and students on September 16th
SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

A question from the audience was answered and clarified that the 6 week review regarding the hybrid model is from the time the students return to school, not the teacher.

Dr. Baeta discussed the following:

- A survey would go out to families tomorrow requesting a response regarding choosing hybrid or remote, and transportation.
- An email would be going out to staff from Liz Simone in HR regarding leaves and medical situations.
- An attempt will be made to provide parental information regarding transportation and cohort days.
- Conversations have been taking place with Champions and off-site organizations regarding options to support families and staff

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Adjourn

SECOND: by Mrs. Stern

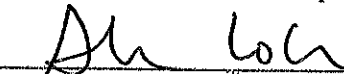
ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen – Yes; Deniz Savas – Yes; Kathleen Stern – Yes; Dan Sheedy – Yes; Carolyn Gallagher – Yes 5 – 0 Motion Carries

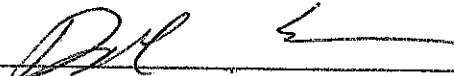
The meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.


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


Carolyn Gallagher, Chairperson

Deniz Savas, Vice-Chairperson


Sheri Cohen


Daniel Sheedy


Kathleen Stern

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