

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

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NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING

***Date of School Committee Meeting:*** Thursday, March 18, 2021

***Location:*** Remote Participation

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

***Call to Order:*** Chairperson Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being video recorded.

***Vote to Approve Minute Meetings:***

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Approve Minutes of March 4, 2021 Open Meeting with amendment

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

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

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Approve Minutes of March 11, 2021 Open Meeting

SECOND: by Mr. Sheedy

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Deniz Savas-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes Kathleen Stern-abstain 4-0-1 motion carries

***Warrants:***

Mrs. Cohen reported that she reviewed and approved the following warrants, to be entered into public record:

School Expense Warrants:

- March 4, 2021 \$464,517.30

***Student Representatives Update:***

Zoe Duran and Malia Savas shared the results from a survey sent by the administration at the High School to the students about how they felt about returning full time to school. They shared a Powerpoint presentation which included the students' comments, excitement, concerns and things to consider about returning to school full time.

The Committee expressed how they appreciate this format and listening to the students' feedback. Having data presented this way does help make decisions. The Committee thanked the representatives for their efforts.

Dr. Baeta requested another survey after April vacation to evaluate what the situation and concerns that may be after they have returned full time. He would like to include the elementary grades. Mrs. O'Neill and Mr. Cerce will work with the student representatives to prepare a survey utilizing the Panorama survey. This program will be able to address language suitable for all grade levels.

***Review and Vote to Approve Update to SRO Memorandum of Understanding:***

Chief Brian Clark first thanked the football team for their support and remembrance of Norton Police Officer Sergeant Desfosses by wearing stickers on their helmets.

Chief Clark discussed the changes and main points of the MOU. He addressed that some issues relate more to the inner cities. Dr. Baeta also addressed his concern about the same issue. Dr. Baeta and other superintendents are pushing to have more flexibility in the model language depending on the community.

The Committee thanked Chief Clark for taking the time to share this information and for his input. All are in agreement that the police and schools have a fantastic collaborative relationship. They also thanked the SRO's for doing a fantastic job in the schools. The officers not only work with students, they work with families. Mr. Savas asked Chief Clark if he supported how it was written and Chief Clark responded that he supported it.

MOTION: by Mrs. Cohen to Approve Memorandum of Understanding Regarding School Resource Officers

SECOND: by Mr. Savas

ROLL CALL VOTE: Kathleen Stern-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Sheri Cohen-yes; Deniz Savas-technical difficulty; Carolyn Gallagher-yes 4-0-0 motion carries/will reconsider

***Vote to appoint Superintendent to Board of Directors of READS Collaborative:***

As required, all READS Board members need to be appointed annually to the Collaborative Board of Directors by the School Committee. Dr. Joseph Baeta read the following statement to be entered into the Minutes:

"Pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 4E, as amended by Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012, members of the Board of Directors at READS Collaborative are to be appointed annually.

Joseph Baeta is appointed to serve as the Norton Public Schools Representative on the Board of Directors of READS Collaborative, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 4E as amended by Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012 for the 2021-2022 school year."

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy to appoint Dr. Joseph Baeta, Superintendent, to serve as the Norton Public Schools Representative on the Board of Directors of READS Collaborative

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

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



***Vote to appoint Superintendent to Board of Directors of Bi-County (BICO) Collaborative:***

As required, all BICO Board members need to be appointed annually to the Collaborative Board of Directors by the School Committee. Dr. Joseph Baeta read the following statement to be entered into the Minutes:

“Pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 4E, as amended by Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012, members of the Board of Directors at BICO Collaborative are to be appointed annually.

Joseph Baeta is appointed to serve as the Norton Public Schools Representative on the Board of Directors of BICO Collaborative, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 4E as amended by Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012 for the 2021-2022 school year.”

MOTION: by Mr. Sheedy to appoint Dr. Joseph Baeta, Superintendent, to serve as the Norton Public Schools Representative on the Board of Directors of BICO Collaborative

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

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

At this time, Mr. Savas addressed the issue of his technical difficulty during the roll call vote of the SRO Memorandum of Understanding. The motion carried so the Committee agreed not to call a second vote.

***Vote to Approve Contract Memorandum of Agreement with Custodian/Grounds Union for 2021-2022:***

Dr. Baeta read the MOA for a one-year addition to the current contract. He thanked Mr. Wells, Mr. Lizotte and the union representatives for taking the time and negotiating. The Committee and Dr. Baeta thanked the custodial staff and everyone involved for doing a tremendous job especially during COVID.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Ratify and Support the Allowance of the Superintendent to sign on the behalf of the School Committee

SECOND: Mrs. Cohen

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

Dr. Baeta signed the MOA on behalf of the School Committee.

***Review and Vote on 2021-2022 School Calendar:***

Mrs. O'Neill reviewed the changes to the proposed school calendar. Thursday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> was changed to an early release day for students and staff. The observance of Juneteenth (Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>) was added on Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, which then extends the five extra added days for snow to Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Gallagher clarified if there were snow days, Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup> is a holiday so it will not be considered as an added snow day.

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar

SECOND: Mrs. Cohen

ROLL CALL VOTE: Sheri Cohen-yes; Dan Sheedy-yes; Deniz Savas-yes; Carolyn Gallagher-yes; Kathleen Stern-technical difficulty 4-0-0 motion carries.

***Update on In-Person Reopening of Schools:***

Dr. Baeta reviewed the schedule of reopening of schools:

- Monday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> is a Staff Professional Development – No School
- Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> full return for pre-K thru grade 5
- Monday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, full return for grades 6-8
- Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, full return for grades 9-12

Dr. Baeta thanked everyone for all the background work it took to get ready. Everyone's role is important. He expressed to everyone that we are in a good place. Each of the schools are preparing their own opening day and it will be an exciting few months. He and administration will be at the schools to support staff and their openings.

Dr. Baeta discussed issues regarding safety and protocol, bus passes, free lunch is available, taking advantage of fee reductions by completing the Free & Reduced application, continue to check the Dashboard and all social media for updates, and we are a one-to-one district. He also thanked Champions for their support and mentioned some of their personnel will be available and assisting in our classrooms.

Dr. Baeta also informed everyone that he will be releasing information via emails weekly on Fridays at 6:00 p.m., with the week's outlook and any core data that needs to be shared. Emails will also be sent on Sundays at 6:00 p.m., if needed, to advise of any submissions over the weekend that need to be addressed.

Mrs. Gallagher thanked every member of NPS on behalf of the School Committee for all their support and participation to make this happen. She commented Norton has proven itself again to be a leader. We need to continue to have patience and support for our students.

***Other Business:***

- Dr. Baeta mentioned the next two scheduled meetings for April 1<sup>st</sup> and April 15<sup>th</sup>, may not be needed. We will leave them posted and cancel at a later time. Mr. Savas requested that an updated calendar list of the School Committee meetings for the remainder of the year be resent.
- Dr. Baeta informed the Committee that the American Rescue Plan through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER) will release \$1.8 billion to Massachusetts, of which \$1.6 billion must go directly to schools. No more than 10% of the funds can stay at the state level. The funds we receive can be utilized for learning loss (20%), SEL and academic, i.e., summer school, extended school year. The remaining 80% can be used towards vocational-technical education, IDEA, special education, etc. He did not have the specific figures for NPS at this time. It is based on the Title 1 formula from our student population. The funds need to be expended through 2023 but anticipates an extension.

- Dr. Baeta, Sheri Cohen, the Building Committee, and the Town Manager will be holding ZOOM meetings to discuss current projects on March 23rd, 30<sup>th</sup> and April 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.
- Mr. Savas acknowledged Marty Geoghegan, Principal of HAY, for being nominated Alumni Walker of the Year for all his efforts and support of the Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk. An article was published in the Sun Chronicle about how he raised over \$37,000 during his years of support. Mr. Geoghegan was thanked for this great accomplishment.

***Executive Session for the Purpose of Discussions on Non-Union and Union Contracts:***

Dr. Baeta recommended postponing executive session. All were in agreement.

***Motion to Adjourn:***

MOTION: by Mr. Savas to Adjourn Meeting

SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen

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


The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

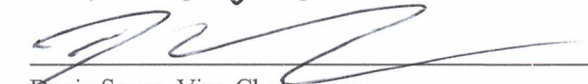
***Next Meeting Date:*** Tentative, April 1, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.


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


- Updates to Memoranda of Understanding as required by the acts of the 2020 Police Reform – Appendix B
- Memorandum of Agreement with Custodian/Grounds Union for 2021-2022
- Norton School Calendar 2021-2022, Revised 3/18/2021

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

  
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Carolyn Gallagher, Chairperson

  
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Deniz Savas, Vice-Chairperson

  
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Sheri Cohen

  
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Daniel Sheedy

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Kathleen Stern

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