

First in a series on  
**The State of the Norton Schools**  
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As the school leader, it is my responsibility to periodically update the public related to the condition of our schools.

As publicized last spring, the following positions and programs have been lost to children due to inadequate funding of the school budget.

Classroom positions:

- Two grade 1 teachers
- Two grade 2 teachers
- One grade 3 teacher
- One grade 4 teacher
- One grade 5 teacher
- Two grade 7 teachers
- One Art teacher at the high school
- One English teacher at the high school
- One PE/Health teacher
- One technology education teacher at the high school
- Two elementary ‘specials’ (Art, music, PE/Health, computers)
- One kindergarten teacher

Total: 16

Other positions:

- Vice principal position at Solmonese
- Four librarians at the elementary and middle school levels
- One speech therapist
- One guidance director

Programs eliminated:

- All libraries at elementary and middle schools
- “Projects Quest and Challenge” for talented/gifted students

Miscellaneous unfunded needs:

- Technology purchases
- Textbook purchases (some offset from bus fee revenues)
- Audiovisual purchases
- Achievement testing
- Professional development (some offset from grant revenues)
- Some high school accreditation initiatives

Efforts to decrease costs and/or increase revenues:

- Increased grant submission (we even have students participating)
- Working with building maintenance vendors to reduce hours and critically examine repair alternatives
- Non-replacement of vacant position Director of Facilities
- Assessing charges to ‘for-profit’ company providing before/after school day care
- Provision of services in-district (ABA therapy)

Please make no mistake, we are still operating without these individuals. The result has been class sizes of up to 30 students in grade 7, over 30 in high school physical education/health classes, and 29 students in grades 2 and 3. Parts 2 and 3 of this series will detail how teaching today has changed, and why class sizes of this magnitude and length are detrimental to our students.

Rest assured, despite the significant challenges that the Norton School District is being confronted with, we have a talented, hard-working staff that is doing its best for your children.