

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

**MEETING NOTES**

TO: ALL STAFF MEMBERS  
FROM: Patricia H. Ansay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
DATE: October 25, 2006

**Date of School Committee Meeting:** Monday, October 16, 2006

**Location:** Library, Norton Middle School

**Attending:**

**Committee Members:** Chairperson Donna Gradie, Vice-Chairman Kevin O'Neil, Mrs. Margaret Werner. Mr. Jonathan O'Reilly and Mr. Thomas Golota were absent.

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Gradie called the meeting to order at 6:37p.m.

**Review and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting:**

A motion was made by Mr. O'Neil seconded by Mrs. Werner, to approve the Minutes of the prior meeting held on September 25, 2006.

**Opening of School Report- Norton Middle School:**

Mr. Roger Parent, Principal of Norton Middle School, introduced two representatives from the Parent Advisory Board to report on the fundraisers they are conducting this year. A "Yankee Candle" drive is currently being held school wide. They are also planning a Book Fair. With these funds they supplement field trips and fund dances for the students. This year the Parent Advisory Board hopes to fund even more social events for the students and their families. Mr. Parent stated that he is very supportive of an expanded role for the Parent Advisory Board. He mentioned the success of the speaker who was hired last year to present to parents.

Mr. Parent reported that the opening of school went well. He said the bus issues were non-existent this year. Mr. Parent then introduced the new staff at the middle school, stating we are very fortunate to have them. According to Mr. Parent, several internal changes have also been made at the middle school. Mr. Parent commended his staff and said he is looking forward to a good year.

In terms of enrollment, Mr. Parent reported that the middle school has seen a 3% drop in enrollment since June of 2006. Mr. Parent commended the recent "Hot Dog Social". He said this event was a great way to welcome sixth graders to the building. Mr. Parent also announced that a few new Advisors have taken over in clubs and activities. He said the staff continues to pursue opportunities for Professional Development, and praised the

addition of the Academic Coordinators at the middle school. According to Mr. Parent, Dr. Ronald Crutcher, President of Wheaton College, spoke at Norton Middle School last week. Mr. Parent said that they are working to expand their relationship with Wheaton through tutoring. He said there have been conversations about getting international students from Wheaton to come over and visit classrooms at the middle school.

Mr. Parent explained that they are working to improve the transition between 8th and 9th grade. He said that an improved transition between these two grade levels will help us to compete, and will also help us to put the high school's best foot forward. He also announced that the middle school now has a School Resource Officer, Jacob Dennett, from the Norton Police Department. Also, the guidance counselors are looking forward to collaborating with "New Hope" of Attleboro, MA.

Next, Mr. Michael O'Rourke, Assistant Principal of Norton Middle School, gave a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. O'Rourke said that the middle school is very fortunate to have very dedicated and caring teachers. Mr. O'Rourke's presentation was well received by the Superintendent and the committee.

A parent, Mr. Robert Holmes, asked Mr. Parent what kinds of skills are needed by the special education students in order to pass the MCAS. Mr. Parent responded that it really depends on the student.

### **MCAS Results Slide Presentation:**

Dr. Ansay announced that the MCAS results slide presentation is ready but will not be presented tonight. She said we have just learned that we will be unable to share this information with the public until Wednesday, October 18, 2006.

### **Norton Community School Contract:**

Superintendent Ansay presented a proposal for a new contract with the Norton Community School. She mentioned that the contract has gone through about four drafts. The Norton YMCA has their responsibilities listed in this contract. She said the school department provides the facility, and the YMCA provides the instructors and the students. Dr. Ansay said we have added a liability clause, and a facility use request. The YMCA has a wide variety of programs. She said our association with the Norton Community School has been good. The town does not have a recreation program anymore. Therefore, she said she thinks the Norton Community School provides a valuable service to the community. The YMCA does cover their own expense for custodial services.

Mrs. Danielle Sicard spoke on behalf of the Norton YMCA. She explained that the Norton Community School offers approximately fifteen to twenty five programs per session. She said they have a wide range of offerings. Mr. Duane German, Executive Director of the Attleboro YMCA, also appeared before the committee to answer questions. Mr. German

explained that the Norton Community School is important to the people in the community. He said the YMCA tries to utilize community members to teach the courses, and covers all of its own direct costs. He feels the partnership between the school department and the YMCA has been strong. Mr. German said that the YMCA would certainly like to see the Norton Community School continue. Mr. O'Neil suggested that classroom assignments should be based on enrollment in an effort to conserve energy. He said the YMCA should request small size classrooms for small size classes, in order to save on lighting costs and heat costs. Mrs. Sicard concurred, stating that the lines of communication have been opened up now between the school department and the YMCA.

On a motion by Mr. O'Neil, seconded by Mrs. Werner, the committee unanimously voted to accept the new contract with the Norton Community School.

#### **Yelle School Pilot After-School Clubs & Activities Program:**

Chairperson Gradie introduced Mrs. Danielle Sicard of the Norton YMCA who described the "After-School Clubs and Activity Program" that will soon be piloted by the Henri A. Yelle School. She said they have been talking with the Superintendent and Mrs. Lisa Farrell, Principal of the Henri A. Yelle School. Superintendent Ansay mentioned that it is taking a little longer than expected to initiate this program. She said they will come back before the committee once they have something tangible.

#### **Policies:**

##### ***a. Drug Searches - Use of Canines:***

Superintendent Ansay presented a proposal for a new policy on the use of canine police dogs for drug searches at Norton High School. She said that at the last School Committee meeting, there was a request that we create a policy to use canine police dogs to search for drugs at Norton High School. She explained that these searches will be unannounced and will be treated similar to the breathalyzers used at the proms last spring. Dr. Ansay said that we hope the dogs don't come up with anything, but if they do, it will be dealt with in an appropriate manner. She said we will try to maintain confidentiality as long as we can. Dr. Ansay also pointed out that the law enforcement members cannot do the searches themselves. She said the school department personnel will conduct the searches and the searches will be random.

On a motion by Mr. O'Neil, seconded by Mrs. Werner, the committee unanimously voted to accept the new policy on "Drug Searches – Use of Canines".

***b. Questionnaires & Surveys:***

Next, Dr. Ansay presented a proposal for a new policy on questionnaires and surveys. Mr. O'Neil asked if the Site Councils or Parent Advisory Boards should view the proposal first before it is approved. He also suggested adding the following language to the new policy:

*“If the survey can be considered sensitive in nature, or if it concerns a community issue, then it could be presented to the School Committee for approval.”*

Superintendent Ansay remarked that the policy will be retyped and presented again at the next committee meeting.

**Personnel:**

Retirement:

Miss Donna Archibald, JCS Physical Education/Health Teacher, effective March 2, 2007 after thirty-three years of service to the Norton Public Schools.

Leave of Absence:

Mrs. Allison Clarke, NHS French Teacher, maternity leave of absence effective March, 2007.

Resignations:

Mr. Adam Vareika, NMS School Adjustment Counselor, effective October 25, 2006.

Mrs. Dorothy Lee Desmarais-Moitoso, SPED Administrative Secretary, effective October 13, 2006.

Miss Amanda Costa, NHS Educational Assistant, effective October 9, 2006.

Mrs. Denise Rosbicki, NHS Structured Room Educational Assistant, effective October 20, 2006.

Mr. Michael O'Neil, NHS Boys' Assistant Basketball Coach.

Appointments:

Mrs. Marguerite Fox, LGN Project Early Educational Assistant

Ms. Amanda Klegraefe, NHS SPED Educational Assistant

Ms. Heather Caswell, NMS Drama Club Advisor

Ms. Kimberly Spence, NMS Student Council Advisor

Mr. Jack Howley, NMS Yearbook Advisor

Mr. Ronnie Goldstein, Intramurals Coach

Mr. Thomas Simms, Girls' Varsity Basketball Coach

**Other Business:**

Superintendent Ansay reported that this morning she had a meeting to go over safety issues with all administrators and the local police and fire department chiefs.

**Adjourn:**

On a roll call vote, the committee unanimously voted to enter Executive Session at 7:50 pm.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:**

**Monday, October 30, 2006, 6:30 P.M., H. A. Yelle School**



*These Meeting Notes are intended to keep the school district and the community informed in a timely fashion following a meeting of the Norton School Committee. They have not been officially approved by the committee.*

*The Norton Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion or sexual orientation*