

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

MEETING MINUTES

Date of School Committee Meeting: February 11, 2008

Location: Library, Norton Middle School

Attending: Committee Members: Chairman Kevin O'Neil, Vice-Chairman Thomas Golota, Mr. Andrew Mackie, Mrs. Beth McManus, Mrs. Margaret Werner and Student Representative Emily Carmichael.

Call to Order:

Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Review and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings:

On a motion by Mrs. McManus, seconded by Mr. Golota, the committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the prior meeting held on January 28, 2008 at Norton Middle School.

Textbook Adoption – Mrs. Heather Albritton:

Business Academic Coordinator Heather Albritton was in attendance to share with the committee the new textbook that is necessary for two new courses at the high school. She explained that the new *Glencoe Marketing Series: Hospitality & Tourism* focuses on various marketing aspects of the hospitality and tourism industry. According to Mrs. Albritton, these textbooks have been developed to meet state standards and objectives, and have also been developed for secondary students taking Marketing II courses. She said the texts are designed as stand-alone, semester-length texts, and function as supplemental texts for Marketing I courses that may use *Marketing Essentials*.

On a motion by Mrs. Werner, seconded by Mr. Mackie, the committee unanimously approved the textbook adoption proposed by Mrs. Albritton.

DECA Students:

Dr. Ansay explained that Norton High School students had their best year yet at the DECA District I Competition held on Cape Cod. The students earned 21 medallions and 17 scored in the top ten overall. Fifteen students qualified for the state competition. She said we should be proud of all of them. Fifty-eight students participated in the competitions, and she said they all behaved like mature young men and women. She said students showed a very serious attitude regarding the test in the competition and prepared appropriately. According to Dr. Ansay, the judges stated that the Norton High School students looked very professional and were wonderful young people.

Several DECA students were present tonight to discuss their DECA experience. They thanked Mrs. Albritton, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Curly for being extremely helpful. Mr. O'Neil thanked Mrs. Albritton for all of her efforts.

Town Joint Budget Committee Meeting Report:

Mrs. Werner and Mrs. McManus reported on the Town Joint Budget Committee meeting which was held on February 6th. Dr. Ansay presented the School Department Survey responses at this meeting. Mrs. Werner said she brought up the issue that Norton is celebrating its 300th Anniversary. She believes that it is time to focus on Norton and ask people why they live in Norton and why they stay in Norton.

Approval of the FY '09 School Operating Budget:

Dr. Ansay explained that the FY '09 School Operating Budget is a level-service budget. She said the dollar difference in this budget from this year's is a \$607,204 increase, or a 2.65% increase. According to Dr. Ansay, she has spoken with Town Manager James Purcell, and he believes we will all be fortunate to receive a level-funded budget. Dr. Ansay reminded the committee that if they approve this budget, with the \$607,204 increase, that figure can always be amended downwards if necessary as we go through the next several months of the budget process.

On a motion by Mr. Mackie, seconded by Mr. Golota, the committee unanimously voted to approve the FY '09 School Operating Budget presented by Dr. Ansay, and send it to the Finance Committee.

Report of Study on School Grade Configuration:

Dr. Ansay explained that this task was extremely difficult to accomplish given the limited time frame. She said this type of study, if done in a comprehensive manner, typically requires a year to a year and a half of study. She summarized educational research as it relates to academics and social/emotional behaviors, and also made limited financial remarks. Mr. O'Neil introduced Mr. Paul Doherty, a member of the Norton community who volunteered his time to research School Grade Configuration for the school department during the past two weeks. Mr. Doherty emphasized his belief that Norton must start a professional study soon. He said nothing has improved since 2002, and it is important to hire a professional to conduct the study. Mr. O'Neil explained that the school department has no money to hire a professional. He thanked Mr. Doherty for volunteering to research the issue. Dr. Ansay concurred and thanked all of the many volunteers who helped out during the past two weeks. Mr. O'Neil emphasized that all of this research has proven there is really no worry right now in terms of school grade configuration. He said the research shows there is no need to close a school in Norton at the present time.

Vote to Approve Additional Full-Day Kindergarten Classes:

Dr. Ansay announced that the Norton Public Schools have been nominated for another full-day Kindergarten preparation grant for this spring. She said that's a total of \$45,000 to prepare three additional full-day Kindergarten classrooms for operation in the fall of 2008. She reminded the committee that last year they approved the creation of three full-day classes. She said this would bring the number up to six with a remaining four to five half day sessions, depending on our numbers. She urged the committee to approve this creation, saying that it serves many needs. She also explained that this vote is timely due to the fact that Kindergarten registration and applications for full-day Kindergarten slots will be occurring on April 4th.

On a motion by Mr. Mackie, seconded by Mrs. McManus, the committee unanimously voted to approve three additional full-day Kindergarten classes for operation in the fall of 2008.

Vote to Approve Town Meeting Articles:

- a. Early Childhood Program Revolving Fund reauthorization: revised amount, \$64,400, from \$75,000 approved at last meeting.
- b. Full-Day Kindergarten Program Revolving Fund reauthorization: revised amount, \$177,545, from \$330,000 approved at last meeting.

Dr. Ansay explained that at the last meeting, committee members approved three articles for Town Meeting. She said she is requesting that the committee re-vote to approve two of these Articles. According to Dr. Ansay, the dollar amounts associated with the Early Childhood Revolving Account and the Full-Day Kindergarten Revolving Account needed to be adjusted. She explained that there were several reasons for this. One was the levy limit figure for FY '09, which was just received. The total for both of these revolving accounts cannot exceed 1% of the levy limit which happens to be \$241,945. She said that in order to insure that we are in compliance with the law, she has adjusted these figures and submitted them to Town Hall.

PERSONNEL:

Retirement:

Mr. Roger Gefis, SPED Bus Driver, effective March 7, 2008, after 15 years of service.

OTHER:

Dr. Ansay complimented the Norton High School Wrestling team on their outstanding season. She announced that they won the Tri-Valley League Championship and qualified for the states. Mr. O'Neil complimented Coach Patrick Coleman, saying he is just phenomenal.

Mrs. Lynn Wiegel, Director of Technology, announced that the Norton Public Schools has received a large donation of computers from a company in Taunton, MA. She said the donated computers are PC's, and will be used to phase out the Mac computers in the school department. Mr. O'Neil thanked Mrs. Wiegel for all of her hard work and creativity.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Mackie, seconded by Mrs. McManus, the committee unanimously voted to adjourn to at 8:06 pm.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Monday, February 25, 2008, 6:30 P.M., Norton Middle School.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia H. Ansay, Ed.D.
Secretary pro tem
