

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

MEETING NOTES

TO: ALL STAFF MEMBERS
FROM: Patricia H. Ansay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
DATE: January 26, 2007

Date of School Committee Meeting: Monday, January 8, 2007

Location: Library, Norton Middle School

Attending:

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

Call to Order:

Chairperson Gradie called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. and wished a "Happy New Year" to one and all.

Review and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting:

A motion was made by Mr. Golota, seconded by Mr. O'Neil, to approve the Regular and Executive Session Minutes of the prior meeting held on December 18, 2006. On a 4-0 vote, the committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes. Mr. O'Reilly abstained from the vote due to his absence at this meeting.

Budget Presentations:

All five principals and Ms. Joan Goggin, Director of Pupil Support Services, were present to provide a brief overview of major increases and decreases in their FY '08 budgets, as well as staffing requests, both new and restored. Mrs. Berdos and Mrs. Wiegel were also in attendance to provide any information that might be requested.

Discussion of SBA Statement of Interest:

Mr. O'Neil then explained that he and Dr. Ansay have been preparing a "Statement of Interest" for a construction/renovation project for Norton High School. Once completed, this statement will be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Dr. Ansay explained that so far work has been done to project enrollments and to address each of the deficiencies. Mr. O'Reilly asked what communication has taken place with the Finance Committee. Mr. O'Neil said the committee is aware of our intentions and is awaiting our packet. Mr. O'Neil and Dr. Ansay had attended a Finance Committee meeting to explain. Mr. O'Neil also explained that there is currently no rush to complete this packet. He said we are well ahead of schedule.

Mr. O'Neil emphasized that the intention is to make sure the packet is done right so that every deficiency at the high school is documented. He explained that overcrowding and accreditation concerns are very evident. According to Mr. O'Neil, Norton High School was built to accommodate 700 students, and this year we have 720. He said we expect to have 900 students enrolled there in two years. Mr. O'Neil emphasized that we are at the point now where we need to plan ahead. He said the labs are outdated and the general gym space is lacking. Custodial closet space is also lacking, according to Mr. O'Neil, and classrooms are small. He said there are a lot of issues to document. Mr. O'Neil said he plans to present this packet to the committee at the end of the month. In summary, he said Norton High School is well below the square footage standard of what is needed for the amount of students we have.

Project Early Preschool Proposed Tuition Increase:

The committee then reviewed the results of a Pre-kindergarten Survey of local school districts' tuition. Dr. Ansay pointed out that Norton's tuition for Project Early is the lowest in the area. She said we've been aware for some time that the rate we charge is the lowest in the area. The average rate in the area is somewhere in the average of \$140 to \$145 per month for a three day per week program, as opposed to Norton's current rate of \$110 per month for a three day per week. She said it appears it's time to make a change.

Mrs. Werner concurred, saying she thinks it is an issue that needs to be addressed. She mentioned that Norton's Project Early lottery should be scheduled sooner than January. According to Mrs. Werner, if you wait to have a lottery in January, you need to keep your prices competitive so that people don't pull them from enrollment in the other local nursery schools, just because the price is cheaper. She explained that Project Early started in Foxboro years ago when there was no integrated preschool. She said we now have six half day programs, because there has been such an increase in the number of special education children. Mr. O'Neil concurred, saying we do not want parents choosing to send their children to Project Early only because it is cheaper.

On a motion by Mr. O'Reilly, seconded by Mr. O'Neil, the committee unanimously voted to increase Norton's Project Early tuition to \$140 per month for a three day per week program for regular education students.

Update on Capital Expenditures:

The committee then reviewed an up-to-date balance sheet for the Capital Projects-School Renovations Account for Norton High School, the L.G. Nourse Elementary School and the H. A. Yelle Elementary School. Mr. O'Reilly commented that the bleachers at the high school gymnasium look spectacular. Dr. Ansay concurred and said she believes the parents realize we are making an effort. She added that she believes the students appreciate these efforts.

Adoption of Special Town Meeting Article - MS Repairs:

The committee then discussed a Special Town Meeting Article for design services and contract administration for repairs to the middle school. Dr. Ansay explained that she has also been working closely with Mr. James Purcell, Town Manager, to obtain a second exit for the middle school. She said the middle school did not come with “as built” plans, but she has managed to obtain “as designed” plans. Mr. O’Reilly asked how much this Article is going to cost the school department. Dr. Ansay said that the adoption of the Special Town Meeting Article may cost us up to \$50,000. However, this cost includes the design services, and contract administration. This means that the contractor would stay on site throughout the repair process and assist us in accepting the work at completion. On a motion by Mr. O’Reilly, seconded by Mr. Golota, the committee unanimously voted to approve the adoption of the Special Town Meeting Article.

Norton Youth Baseball/Softball Agreement:

Dr. Ansay presented a proposed agreement with Norton Youth Baseball/Softball which parallels the one the committee approved for Norton Youth Soccer. She explained that she is comfortable with the agreement proposed. Mr. O’Neil added that he believes the agreement is well written. He mentioned that Norton Youth Baseball/Softball is willing to maintain the fields with irrigation, fertilizer, and slice seeding. He said it will be very good for the school department to make such an agreement. He also mentioned that the agreement will allow the school department to save funds on maintenance of these fields. On a motion by Mr. O’Neil, seconded by Mr. Golota, the committee unanimously voted to approve the agreement with Norton Youth Baseball/Softball.

Personnel:**Retirements:**

- a. Mr. Alan Berk, NMS Social Studies Teacher, will retire effective March 30, 2007, after 5 1/2 years in the Norton Public Schools.
- b. Mrs. J. Louise Magaldi, JCS Art Teacher, will retire at the end of the school year, after 40 years of service to the children of Norton.
- c. Mr. Leonard Rebello, LGN Learning Disabilities Teacher, will retire at the end of the school year, after 33 years of service to Norton students.

Resignation:

Mrs. Melissa O’Brien, NHS Science Teacher, will not return from maternity leave and has resigned.

Leave of Absence:

Mrs. Michelle Axon, NMS Grade 8 Mathematics Teacher, maternity leave of absence effective January 26, 2007.

Appointment:

Miss Katie Ann Tessitore, LGN Part-time Educational Assistant, effective January 2, 2007.

Vice Chairman O'Neil recommended that the committee send letters of appreciation to Mrs. Magaldi and Mr. Rebello for their long years of service. The committee unanimously agreed

Adjourn:

The committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Monday, January 29, 2007, 6:30 P.M., Library, Norton Middle School.

Enjoy the season!



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