

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

**MEETING NOTES**

TO: ALL STAFF MEMBERS  
FROM: Patricia H. Ansay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
DATE: October 23, 2007

**Date of School Committee Meeting:** Monday, October 1, 2007

**Location:** Library, Norton Middle School

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

**Call to Order:**

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

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

On a motion by Mrs. Werner, seconded by Mr. Golota, the committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the prior meeting held on September 24, 2007 at the L.G. Nourse Elementary School.

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

Mr. Roger Parent, principal of Norton Middle School, presented his opening of school report. He introduced the following new staff members: Ms. Kim Spence, Grade 6, Ms. Kristine Kornely, Grade 7, Mrs. Del Hall, Grade 7, Ms. Amanda Klegraeffe, Grade 8, Ms. Taimi Paadre, Structured Resource Room, and Mrs. Susan Kiley, Technology Integration Specialist. Mr. Parent also announced that two veteran teachers retired this year: Mrs. Natalie MacDonald, Grade 7, and Mr. Charles Brown, Technology Integration Specialist. He further announced that Ms. Christine Paone has returned from a one year sabbatical in Hawaii. Mr. O'Neil welcomed all new middle school staff.

According to Mr. Parent, enrollment figures for the middle school were as follows as of September 19, 2007: 253 students in Grade 6, 251 students in Grade 7, 283 students in Grade 8, and 5 SPOKE students, for a total of 792 students. This figure is 18 students (2%) less than the total at the end of school last year. Mr. Parent mentioned that this is the second year that enrollment has decreased since he began as principal of the middle school.

Mr. Parent then spoke about activities to date at the middle school including New Teacher Orientation, the Grade 6 Welcome “*Hot Dog Social*”, Welcome Assemblies for each grade and “*Meet the Teachers Night*”. Also, Mr. Christopher Rappold from Personal Best Karate addressed the staff on the topic of bullying, a Poet in Residence is coming on October 2, 2007, and a cultural exchange is planned with Wheaton College. He mentioned that the Parent Board met in September and the SITE Council will meet later this month. According to Mr. Parent, intramurals and clubs have started. He also announced that teachers have taken summer courses as professional development, and Student Council elections will take place. Additional activities for the year will be planned by the Student Council.

Mr. Parent described the International Fiesta which is in the planning stages. This year the theme will be “Egypt”. Above all, Mr. Parent is hoping to foster a deeper sense of school pride this year, and hopes the many exciting activities will help generate a sense of “family” at the middle school.

Mrs. McManus asked about security cameras in classrooms. Mr. Parent said security cameras are not placed in classrooms, bathrooms, locker rooms or any other private location. He emphasized that the privacy of the staff and students at the middle school is not being invaded by security cameras.

Mr. Michael O'Rourke, assistant principal, then gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Characteristics of High Performing Middle Schools”. He explained that the purpose of the presentation is to organize ourselves and our philosophy. He thanked the entire faculty and staff at the middle school, and noted that the administration is very proud of their staff. Mrs. Werner said we should all be very proud of the middle school. Mr. Parent concurred and said the middle school is a great place to be. He said we have good people here.

### **English Language Arts Pilot Programs:**

In January, 2007, the English Language Arts Textbook Committee was formed for the purpose of selecting a new K-5 ELA program for Norton students. Mrs. Amy Berdos and Mrs. Sharon Roberts, Co-Directors for Curriculum and Instruction, K-12, were present to provide the committee with the rationale for investigating new materials, and to answer any questions the committee might have. Mrs. Roberts gave a presentation on the new ELA programs which are being piloted in the schools this year.

Mr. O'Neil commended Mrs. Roberts and said her presentation was very good and very well thought out. He mentioned that a new ELA program is one of the top priorities for the school district for next year. Mr. O'Neil asked if all five principals would send out an “Alert Now” message to inform parents about any upcoming parent presentations.

**Adequate Yearly Progress:**

Dr. Ansay explained that Adequate Yearly Progress information was released by the Department of Education on Tuesday, September 25, 2007. The Yelle School, despite having made AYP in 2007, remains on the “Improvement” status for one additional year. Likewise, the middle school, despite having attained AYP in 2007, remains on the category “Corrective Action” for one additional year. The L.G. Nourse School failed to make AYP in math for subgroups, and the total population for the first time in 2007. Dr. Ansay explained that several factors may have contributed to this outcome including large class sizes, teacher inconsistency and three pilot programs on-going.

The high school and middle school’s Performance Ratings for English Language Arts are “Very High”. The middle school’s Improvement Rating for Math is “Above Target”. The Yelle School’s Performance Rating for English Language Arts is “High” and its Improvement Rating is “Above Target”. Dr. Ansay said the school department is very pleased with the progress, but realizes there is still room for improvement.

**Policy – Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA):**

Dr. Ansay explained that in 2002, school districts were recommended to adopt a policy covering the requirements in this law. This includes providing annual notice of this policy to parents. She said the proposed policy, as written, covers the requirements in the “Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment”.

Mr. Golota suggested that the policy be amended to provide for more explicit clarification. On a motion by Mr. Golota, seconded by Mrs. Werner, the committee unanimously voted to approve the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment with the amendment suggested by Mr. Golota.

**PERSONNEL:**

There are no personnel changes.

**Adjournment to Executive Session:**

On a motion by Mrs. Werner, seconded by Mr. Golota, on a roll call vote, the committee unanimously voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:22 pm.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:**

**Monday, October 22, 2007, 6:30 P.M., H. A. Yelle Elementary 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.*

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