

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of School Committee Meeting: Monday, November 17, 2008

Location: J. C. Solmonese Elementary School Library

Attending: Committee Members: Chairman Thomas Golota, Vice Chairman Andrew Mackie, Mrs. Elizabeth McManus, and Mrs. Margaret Werner. Mr. Kevin O'Neil was absent. Superintendent Patricia Ansay and Student Representative Emily Carmichael were also present.

Call to Order: Chairman Golota called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Review and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting:

Mr. Mackie made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McManus, to accept the minutes of the November 3, 2008 meeting, both regular and executive sessions. The vote was 4-0.

Opening of School Report – Principal Mary E. R. Brown:

Chairman Golota turned the meeting over to J. C. Solmonese School Principal Mrs. Mary E. R. Brown for the opening of school reports. Mrs. Brown began by pointing out that this is the 31st opening for JCS and that it was a wonderful opening. Enrollment is down somewhat from last year. Improvements were made over the summer such as installing floor tiles to replace carpeting in the cafeteria and library. Many parents and teachers volunteered their time to help move books and bookcases in the library, which was a great help. A former student, who is an Eagle Scout, repainted the playground map. Transportation has been delayed at times due to construction on West Main Street. Mrs. Brown stated there are currently 230 volunteers at the school. She also listed the reductions, staff changes, and new programs for this year. Open houses at the school were very well attended.

Mrs. Brown introduced the members of the JCS Site Council and Solmonese Parent Organization. Representatives of the PTO listed the many activities planned for this year such as the Pizza Supper, Pancake Breakfast, Science Fair, and Spring Fair. They will continue to provide support for field trips and classroom supplies. A strong group of volunteers are able to keep the JCS library open as a lending library. Mrs. Brown was pleased that JCS opened this year with four full-time Kindergarten classes, and that half-day Kindergarten classes are still available for those who want to attend them.

Chairman Golota thanked Mrs. Brown and all of the Solmonese parents and staff who were in attendance.

Norton High School Scholar Awards:

Chairman Golota congratulated the seventeen Norton High School students who have earned AP Scholar Awards in recognition of their achievement on the AP Exams. Seniors Kelly Allen, Michelle Le, Rosemary Le and Timothy Mollins were named AP Scholars in recognition of their outstanding achievement on the AP Exam last spring. As juniors, all four qualified for the award by completing three or more AP Exams with grades of 3 or higher.

The following members of the Class of 2008 also received this award: Allison Dutcher, Brian Finney, Timothy Foley, Danielle Iagatta, Julia Jurgilewicz, Courtney Mello, and Taylor Murphy.

Class of 2008 members Brett Hinchliffe and Amanda Sargent were named as Scholars with Honor, earning an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken and grades of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

Class of 2008 members Eryn Dion, Emily Eckart, Julianne McCready and Carolyn Ohlson were named Scholars with Distinction by earning an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken and grades of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

Through 37 different college-level courses and exams, AP provides motivated and academically prepared students with the opportunity to earn college credit or advanced placement and stand out in the college admission process.

Energy Education Cost Avoidance Program Savings:

Since December of 2005, Energy Education reports a cost avoidance sum of \$489,943 at all or our schools. This figure is derived by factoring in weather, etc. to estimate what would have been spent. Dr. Ansay stated that this cost avoidance has allowed Norton Schools to budget lower amounts for these energy lines and transfer funds to other important areas.

FY '10 Possible Budget Reductions:

A review of possible budget reductions was discussed. This included athletics, transportation, middle and high school clubs and activities, possible closing of L. G. Nourse School, staff reduction, elimination of programs, and increased class size due to staff reductions.

Dr. Ansay was asked to provide numbers to be discussed at upcoming meetings. She stated that the process will begin with a level-funded budget. Four of the School Department's bargaining units have settled contracts and have agreed to pay a larger percentage of employee health insurance contributions, which will be a savings for the town.

Update on Norton High School Science Lab Refurbishing:

Dr. Ansay updated the Committee on the progress to improve the science labs. At this point several rooms have been painted, electrical drops and outlets have been installed, and

new shelving, cabinet doors, and display cabinets are being constructed by the high school wood shop students. New tables and equipment have been purchased. New floor tiles will be installed, as well as additional sinks and backsplashes. Gas will be removed from tables in two rooms. The cost will be approximately \$23,000, which is covered by the facility rental fund. Dr. Ansay pointed out that Mr. Clarence Rich has donated the supplies he is installing.

Norton – A Heart Safe Community – CPR Project:

On November 13th, half of the Norton High School students were trained in CPR, and the other half will receive their training in the spring. Mr. Craig Andrade, Associate Dean for Wellness & Health at Wheaton College, along with nine Wheaton student interns and Norton Fire and Paramedic personnel, facilitated the training. Assistance from the American Heart Association was there as well. The students were given kits that included a CPR practice DVD, Individual CPR Learning Manikin, and booklet to take home and refresh their skills from time to time or possibly train family members. Norton could have 2000 community members proficient in CPR by springtime. Incoming freshmen will receive the training next fall, keeping all high school students trained at any one time. Any donations to purchase additional kits will be gratefully accepted by Wheaton.

Dr. Ansay thanked Wheaton College for including the School Department in the CPR project.

John & Abigail Adams Scholars:

Chairman Golota announced the names of 43 students who were awarded the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. This scholarship offers free tuition at any Massachusetts State College, University, or Community College. The award is based on a combination of MCAS scores in the top 25% of their graduating class and scores at the Advanced and Proficiency levels in ELA and mathematics. The tuition waivers remain in effect for eight consecutive semesters or four years. Recipients must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher throughout the time of the waiver. The scholarship does not cover the cost of the fees. The student recipients are:

Michael Ahern, Kelly Allen, Emerson Almeida, Axel Anderson, Jacklyn Boudreau, Meagan Bramwell, Cindy Brooks, Kameron Campbell, Catrina Cranshaw, Brian Desmond, Alec Dorsey, Shannon Doyle, Calley Fisk, Richard Travers, Parisa Foadian, Valerie Glassman, Matthew Guido, Sam Hayes, Kayla Hindle, Brenden Howarth, Kristina Keating, Michelle Le, Rosemary Le, Marissa Marvel, Caroline McNeil, Timothy Mollins, Kelley Morris, Kristen Morris, Jacklene Mustafa, Nicole Nelson, Gilbert O’Neil, Cameron Parker, Ravi Patel, Brianna Rainville, Casey Remick, Richard Robichaud, James Rocha, Andrew Rockwell, Benjamin Sargent, Douglas Schlehuder, Hillary Schwartz, Kori Sweeney, and Dominic Switzer.

Inmates’ Presentation at Norton High School:

This agenda item was not discussed.

Personnel:

Mr. Mackie announced the following personnel changes:

Leave of Absence: Andrea Fogg, L. G. Nourse Preschool, effective April 3, 2009

Appointment: Randy Candage, Crossing Guard, effective November 7, 2008

Resignation: Kristen Howard, JCS Nurse, effective November 17, 2008

Other:

Dr. Ansay congratulated the Varsity Boys' Soccer team and the Varsity Football team on their successes and also the Cross Country Team and Coach Kent Taylor for receiving the MIAA State Division 4 Sportsmanship Award for outstanding conduct and sportsmanship during this fall season. She also congratulated Andrew Swiderski for his accomplishment at the Division 4 State Cross Country Meet.

Dr. Ansay also informed the Committee that she has submitted the MSBA Application, and that she recently attended the Tri-Town Task Force Meeting.

Lastly, Dr. Ansay reported that the NPS Administrators' Association had just ratified their contract earlier in the day. Mr. Mackie made a motion to ratify the Norton Administrators' Association contract for three years, seconded by Mrs. McManus. The vote was 4-0. All units have ratified with the exception of the teachers' unit.

Adjournment:

Mrs. Werner made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. McManus. The vote was 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Monday, December 8, 2008, 6:30 P.M. at Norton Middle School.

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