

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Norton, Massachusetts

MEETING NOTES

TO: ALL STAFF MEMBERS
FROM: Patricia H. Ansay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
DATE: September 25, 2007

Date of School Committee Meeting: September 10, 2007

Location: Library, Norton High School

Attending:

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

Call to Order:

Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m., and led those in attendance in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings:

Mr. O'Neil pointed out a correction that needs to be made to the Minutes of the prior meeting held on June 18, 2007 at Norton Middle School. Mr. O'Neil pointed out that the User Fee figures need to be corrected.

Mrs. Werner made a motion to approve the Minutes of the July 9, 2007 meeting as submitted, and to approve the Minutes of the June 18, 2007 meeting as amended. Mrs. McManus seconded the motion. On a 4-0 vote the committee unanimously voted to approve these Minutes.

Moment of Silence:

Chairman O'Neil then asked all in attendance to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of the recent tragedy that occurred in the town of Norton.

Opening of School Report- Principal Raymond Dewar:

Mr. Dewar, Principal of Norton High School, presented the opening of school report for the high school. Mr. Dewar introduced the new staff and their area of teaching. Miss Emily Carmichael, Student Representative to the School Committee, then presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Student Council.

Mr. Dewar reported that the new school year started pretty well, but mentioned that the entire Norton High School community was rocked by the Cann family shooting. He pointed out that Ms. Joan Goggin, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, arranged to have a counselor speak to the high school faculty. He said this was very helpful.

Mr. Dewar also reported that this is the first year they were able to start the new block schedule arrangement at the high school. He commended the students and the faculty on making it a great new start to the school year.

Mr. Dewar also commented on the School to Career program and reported that the program is up and running. He said the high school is very pleased with the program. In addition, he pointed out that the athletic teams at the high school are doing very well and have been very competitive. A discussion ensued between Mr. Mackie and Mr. Dewar about the number of freshmen enrolled at the high school this year and the number of freshmen enrolled at the high school last year. Mr. Mackie commended Norton High School, and pointed out that Norton parents are faced with choosing between the high school in town and nearby private high schools as well as nearby vocational/technical high schools. Mr. Mackie said he believes a lot of parents are thinking more seriously about Norton High School now.

Mr. Dewar concurred, and said he is working hard to raise awareness of the high school, so that people will be able to see what a talented faculty and student body we have. Mr. Dewar explained that he tries to talk to the students about college and the importance of high expectations right from the beginning of their high school career. He said he aims to make it clear to the kids that high school is what they need, and that it's good for them. Mr. Dewar also described the summer MCAS program which was offered to students for six weeks, and was funded by a state grant. He commended this program for helping students who are considered to be "at risk" of failing the MCAS test, and said if we had more summer enrichment programs such as this we'd be a lot better off.

Mr. O'Neil welcomed all of the new teachers and wished them a good experience and a good career. He also commended Mr. Dewar for his initiatives and said he should be proud for giving every high school kid a reason to come to school everyday. In addition, Mr. O'Neil thanked Roche Bros. Supermarket for once again donating the funds to produce the Norton High School Student Handbook, which cost approximately \$3,000 to produce. Mr. Dewar pointed out that Roche Bros. is also responsible for the beautiful new sign at the front entrance of the high school.

Opening of School Report- Superintendent of Schools:

Dr. Ansay then presented the opening of school report for the district. As of Wednesday, September 5, 2007, she reported there are a total of 3020 students in preschool through Grade 12. At the close of school in June there were 3026 students according to Dr. Ansay. In addition, she said there are 40 children in out-of-district placements, as well as 14 children who are being home schooled. There are 176 students at the Foxborough Charter School this year. There are 365 students at the L.G. Nourse School, 485 at the H.A. Yelle School, 646 at the J. C. Solmonese School, 789 at Norton Middle School, and 735 at Norton High School. She said these enrollment figures are very tentative and will be revised on Monday morning.

Dr. Ansay said she welcomed children at all schools on their first day. She said transportation on the first day ran approximately one-half hour late. She said this typically occurs the first week of school. A break in a gas line, Kindergarten Orientation, and a minor accident caused bus delays.

Dr. Ansay then described the events of Tuesday, September 4th, the first day back for all staff. She said the school district welcomed 27 new teachers and professional staff, a new L.G. Nourse School Principal, a new Co-Director of Curriculum & Instruction, K-12, and several new educational assistants. At this event, recognition was also given to 4 staff members, one with 40 years of service, one with 35 years of service, one with 30 years of service, and one with 25 years of service. She said the administration also took advantage of this time when all employees were in attendance to update the staff on the School Resource Officer Program, Universal Precautions for School Settings, Child Abuse Reporting Requirements, Sexual Harassment Policy/Procedures, Student Confidentiality, Due Process and Civil Rights.

Extended School Year Program for Special Education Students- Ms. Joan Goggin:

Ms. Joan Goggin, Director of Pupil Support Services, was in attendance to give a brief overview of the extended school year program for special education students. She said this is a very cost effective program which has been established to help prevent student regression over the summer. She said overall there was a very high satisfaction rate with the program. She said the staff did a good job communicating with the parents. She also mentioned that next year they will aim at getting out into the community more. This year, the staff took the students for a picnic at the zoo at Capron Park in Attleboro, and this visit was very well received by the staff and students.

Discussion of Joint Board Budget Planning Committee Meeting:

The committee then reviewed a summary of the first meeting of the "Joint Board Budget Planning Committee".

Vote to Accept Donated Furniture:

Dr. Ansay then discussed the donated office furniture recently given to the Norton Schools by Bentley College. She explained that the donation was coordinated by Mrs. Janice Powers, Administrative Assistant in the Special Education Office. She explained that Mrs. Powers was able to arrange for the donation because she used to work at Bentley College. Dr. Ansay said she is very appreciative of her efforts and very grateful to Bentley College for their generosity.

On a motion by Mrs. Werner, seconded by Mrs. McManus, the committee unanimously voted to accept this donation of office furniture from Bentley College. Mr. O'Neil asked the committee to send a thank you note to both Mrs. Powers and Bentley College.

Vote to Appoint Mr. Golota and Mr. O'Neil to Business Manager

Interview/Screening Panel:

Dr. Ansay then explained that an official vote is needed to appoint Mr. Golota and Mr. O'Neil to the interview/screening panel for the business manager. Interviews for the four finalists are scheduled for Monday, September 17th at a posted School Committee meeting in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

On a motion by Mrs. McManus, seconded by Mrs. Werner, the committee unanimously voted to appoint Mr. Golota and Mr. O'Neil to the interview/screening panel for the business manager.

Personnel:

Retirements:

- a. Mrs. Paula Kimball, JCS LPN/Educational Assistant, effective September 8, 2007
- b. Mrs. Diane Mitchell, NHS Cafeteria Assistant, effective June, 2007
- c. Mrs. Regina Lacaillade, JCS Cafeteria Assistant, effective June, 2007

Leave of Absence:

Mrs. Kristina Berry, LGN Adjustment Counselor/SPED Chairperson, January 11 – April 28, 2008

Resignations:

- a. Mrs. Linda Donovan, NMS Special Needs Teacher, effective September 14, 2007
- b. Mrs. Deborah Pompei, JCS Nurse, effective June, 2007
- c. Mr. Darnell Andrews, NMS SPED Educational Assistant, effective June, 2007
- d. Mrs. Maria Herrera, HAY SPED Educational Assistant, effective June, 2007
- e. Ms. Heather Sargent, NHS Technology Assistant, effective June, 2007
- f. Mrs. Maria Denekamp, NHS Cafeteria Assistant, effective June, 2007

Appointments:

- a. Ms. Katie Kavanaugh, JCS Kindergarten Teacher, effective September 4, 2007
- b. Mrs. Patricia Higgins, JCS SPED Educational Assistant (.5), effective September 4, 2007
- c. Mrs. Pamela O'Donnell, JCS SPED Educational Assistant, effective September 4, 2007
- d. NMS Supplementary Positions for 2007-2008

Other Business:

a. Energy Conservation Figures:

Mr. O'Neil commended the school district's energy conservation program, and pointed out that if we had not had this program, the energy figure in the budget would have been 18% higher.

b. L.G. Nourse School Early Childhood Accreditation:

Dr. Ansay pointed out that the L.G. Nourse School had been pursuing the Early Childhood Accreditation. She said she just received word that LGN has been officially awarded the accreditation. She mentioned that she wanted to publicly thank all of the staff who worked for countless hours on this accreditation. She commended them, saying they did a fine job.

c. Thank you letter to Mr. Paul Doherty:

Dr. Ansay also recommended sending a letter of thanks to Mr. Paul Doherty for all of his invaluable assistance with the repair work to Norton Middle School.

d. Cann Family:

Dr. Ansay said she witnessed the entire community coming together after the tragedy that happened to the Cann family. She said we have great students and great staff and great schools, but we also have a great community too.

e. Security Cameras in Schools:

According to Dr. Ansay, the Security Camera Policy should come before the School Committee sometime in October. Mr. O'Neil also pointed out that the Site Councils at the schools will be taking up this issue. Mrs. McManus asked Dr. Ansay for clarification about cameras in the classrooms. Dr. Ansay said it is her understanding that they are placed in the hallways, not in any locations where privacy is assumed. She said the cameras are not located in restrooms, classrooms or offices. Dr. Ansay suggested that School Resource Officer Jacob Dennett could be invited to attend the Site Council meeting at Norton High School when this issue is discussed.

Adjourn:

On a motion by Mr. Mackie, seconded by Mrs. McManus, on a 4-0 vote, the committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:34 p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Monday, September 24, 2007, 6:30 P.M., L.G. Nourse 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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