

**Town of Norwood
School Committee Meeting
School Committee Room @ Savage Educational Center
Hybrid
Wednesday, March 6, 2024**

A hybrid meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. (The public is able to access the meetings in person at the Savage Educational Center or live via NCM on cable, as they are live-streamed. For the cable channel guide and on-line link, please visit: <https://norwoodcommunitymedia.org>).

Committee Members Present: Ms. Anne Marie Mazzola, Chair; Ms. Teresa Stewart, Mr. David Hiltz and Ms. Kate Sibbing-Dunn

Committee Member Excused: Dr. Joan Giblin

Administrators Present: Dr. Dave Thomson, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. J. J. Munoz, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum; Mr. Matt Wells, Interim Director of Finance and Operations

Minutes: Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the following minutes:

-February 14, 2024 (Business Meeting);

-February 14, 2024 (Executive Session)

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn seconded this motion. The Members were polled and voted in favor 3-0-1 (Mr. Hiltz abstained).

The Budget Workshop minutes from February 28, 2024 were not ready for this evening.

Correspondence: None.

Warrants: Chair Mazzola informed that she has signed warrants on behalf of the School Committee. Chair Mazzola then shared the warrant report which totalled \$5,368,793.34.

Public Comment: Chair Mazzola informed that this was the time in the meeting for members of the public to address the School Committee with items that they would like to see on a future agenda. The School Committee has switched to a hybrid meeting and the public can access the meeting in person at the Savage Educational Center or live via NCM on cable, as it is live-streamed. For the cable channel guide and on-line link, please visit: <https://norwoodcommunitymedia.org> .

The Chair reminded that there are now two ways the public can participate in the public comment portion of the meeting. (1) In person at the meeting (pre-register by calling the Superintendent's Office at 781-762-6804 by noon the day of

the meeting, or sign in at the meeting; and (2) Call the Superintendent's Office at by noon on the day of the meeting to register and receive a meeting link that will be accessible for public forum only. No one registered in advance or at the meeting for Public Forum and the Chair declared Public Forum closed at 7:08 p.m.

Appearances: Facilities FY25 Budget and FY24 Year to Date - Mr. Paul Riccardi and Ms. Mary O'Brien were here this evening to give a Facilities update. Mr. Riccardi informed that the Facilities Department is in good shape and has had expenditures of about 53% to date. The Schools are getting about 83% of the work orders, which is consistent and isn't going to change given the amount of buildings and the age of the buildings.

The main things Mr. Riccardi is worried about are:

- Getting to the finish line at the existing Coakley Middle School is a big concern as the HVAC system needed to be replaced 15 years ago;
- There are 4 custodians retiring and 3 of them are Senior Custodians;
- The CMS is closed this summer due to parking lot/utilities work being done. The summer programs will now be at the Willett, Cleveland, Balch and High School. This will impact the ability to get those schools ready for back to school. (This plan will be for the next two summers.)

Ms. O'Brien said we are right on budget at this point, but we are having some elevator issues

Mr. Riccardi said we have gone out for service contracts on elevators and generators. When we took over the Town there were 5 elevator companies being used in Town. We have now gone to one elevator company. We are now getting better preventative maintenance, which will hopefully save some money in the long run. We had three different generator companies and we now have one company we are working with.

Mr. Riccardi added that the HVAC system at the High School is 13 years old and things are starting to be replaced.

The roof study said the roof repair has been completed and so far that program has worked very well in repairing and preventing any leaks.

Mr. Riccardi said for next year's budget we have a 3.09% increase. He said he would like more, but we will make do. There are three other schools that need the LED lights installed: Prescott; Callahan; and Cleveland. He hopes to get done on weekends this fiscal year. The High School classrooms still need to be done.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the FY25 Facilities Budget, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

FY25 Capital Outlay Requests - Technology: Mr. Joe Kidd was here this evening to present the Capital Outlay requests to the School Committee:

- The 3-Year Plan to refresh wireless access points at High School - (e-rate);
- One Switch is up for replacement at the High School (e-rate);
- Teacher desk tops that connect to Boards at the High School; and
- Graphic Arts labs at High School is due to be replaced.

The total Capital Outlay request is \$156,000.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the Capital Outlay Requests for Technology for FY25 in the amount of \$156,000, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

The Members had an opportunity for questions.

Tri-M MOU- Mr. Jeff Kerr was back this evening remotely to ask the Committee for permission to re-allocate funds from the Director of Jazz Combo (\$2,013) to the Tri-M Advisor (which has been done previously).

After some discussion, the Committee realized that they did not have the correct MOU and asked that the correct MOU be sent to the Committee.

- 1) Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the reallocation of the stipend that is in Mr. Kerr's MOU on the Tri-M Music Honor Society, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.
- 2) Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the funds marked for Men's Chorus to be used in conjunction with Director of Stage Band stipend to fund the newly formed Assistant Director and Festival Coordinator positions (Director of Stage Band), which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Old Business: Health Curriculum Refresh Update: (Moved up in Agenda) Dr. Munoz, Mr. Quigley and Ms. Aimee Worcester were here this evening to update the Committee on the status of the Health Curriculum Refresh.

Mr. Quigley said that DESE has approved and released its first comprehensive Health and Physical Education Frameworks since 1999. The Department has looked at several other comprehensive health curriculums, but as a Department and speaking with other colleagues in the field, Mr. Quigley said they are confident in recommending the curriculum: "Health Smart" Comprehensive K-12 Health Curriculum beginning in the Fall of 2024. Mr. Quigley recommended purchasing the digital version of this curriculum instead of the hard copy.

-Aligns with national Healthy Standards;

- Focuses on primary areas of risk for children and adolescents identified by Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC);
- Supports SEL;
- Reflects the characteristics of CDC's Effective health Education Curriculum;
- Over 400 lessons based on research and theory

Mr. Quigley said he attended a professional development today with DESE (deeper dive into the frameworks) and he said it was one of the best PD's he's been to in a very long time. He said there will be more workshops added this spring and Aimee Worcester will be attending one of them. In terms of the frameworks, there are 8 guiding principles which come from the vision of DESE. Mr. Quigley reviewed the guiding principles and shared next steps:

- Continue to unpack & inventory new DESE Frameworks;
- Establish newly aligned Curriculum Scope & Sequence with DESE Frameworks, K-12 (Elem/MS/HS teachers);
- Establish sub-committee to look at MWAHS (MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey Data) data - (the School Health Council has identified this as a priority this year and we should be getting preliminary snapshot reports by the end of this month);
- Finalize curriculum purchase - schedule online training with ETR.

Mr. Quigley has been told that the MWAHS data should be available on a data dashboard in the near future (hopefully in May). It will be much easier to use a filter to get the information we would be looking for.

Mr. Quigley would like to see the sub committee consist not only of teachers, but other stakeholders as well; i.e. students, parents, a School Committee Member or two; a member from the nursing staff; building based administrators and other community members as well as Members of Impact Norwood. Connor Brosnan has a lot of experience with this survey and interpreting the data.

Dr. Munoz reported back that all the schools agreed that they wanted to move forward with the three-year curriculum.

Ms. Stewart shared that in the past, Dr. Wyeth would share a spreadsheet with the different options for the purchase along with the amount. Then the Committee would approve the expenditure of that and then the adoption of the curriculum.

After more discussion, Ms. Stewart asked if we could get the sheet with the financials on it (even at the next meeting).

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the adoption of the *Health Smart Curriculum* for the amount of \$40,000 for the next three years, with the caveat that the Committee receives the spreadsheet of financials which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing- Dunn. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda: Dr. Thomson updated on the following:

-Adams Scholarship - Norwood has 73 students awarded this scholarship
The students will be receiving a letter soon. (Dr. Thomson recommended students put the letter in a safe place so that they do not lose them as they are difficult to replace.)

-Student Services Audit:

- RFP draft is being reviewed;
- Details and sections will be revised;
- Reconvene the working group for review and additional info;
- Draft shared with SC and then FinCom

-SEL Pilot:

- Selected Coaching for Change
- MOU to begin recruiting and training the coaches
- Start first pilot in summer programs
- Continue Pilot in the fall
- Funding Sourced adjustment 3/20 meeting. (Less than initially discussed)

-Elementary Study Update:

- Working group meets regularly with Vendor - APPGeo
- Data has been provided to AppGeo
- Focus group looking at capacity of building and meeting weekly to review initial questions and assumptions
- 3A housing (MBTA) will be part of this work

Budget: Budget Sub Committee and Budget Balancing Committee Update: Chair Mazzola and Ms. Stewart updated that last Wednesday there was a BBC Meeting immediately followed by the Budget workshop. The Members have in their packets the spreadsheet that they got at the BBC Meeting as well as the agenda and draft minutes and the materials they reviewed this past Monday as a Budget Sub Committee. Ms. Stewart informed that it was requested and approved by the majority of the Budget Balancing Committee that we should reduce the FY25 Budget from \$62,326,003 down to \$61,211,003. (\$1.1 million reduction in Operating Budget).

Ms. Stewart reminded that the Operating Budget (general fund) is what goes forward to Town Meeting to be approved and appropriated by Town Meeting. She shared that the way the Budget Balancing Committee got to this is they asked the schools to take what is currently an offset in our FY24 Budget of \$550,000 for Special Education Stabilization Fund. Ms. Stewart said she is hoping we won't need that. If the Extraordinary Relief comes in we can reallocate that \$550,000 to FY25. They are also requesting we reduce our General Fund ask by \$565,000. Mr. Wells will share ideas on how we can do that.

FY25 Budget Version B:

Mr. Wells shared:

FY25 Budget Based on BBC Vote on 2/28/24:

	<u>\$ Total</u>	<u>\$ Increase</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
Superintendent Recommended Budget	\$62,326,003	\$5,641,474	9.95% inc.
Budget Balancing Vote:			
-Apply Spec. Ed. Stabilization Offset	\$550,000		
-Reduction to FY25 Budget	\$565,000		
Total Reduction and Offset	\$1,115,000		
Revised FY25 Budget	\$61,211,003	\$4,526,474	7.99%

FY25 Reduction Options and Recommendation:

-Central Admin	\$165,000	Do not backfill open Asst. Supt. Position reorganize Director of Finance position into Assistant Superintendent
-Hire Down Savings	\$400,000	Maximum salary for open teaching positions set at \$65,000
-Coordinator Reorg.	\$115,000	Reorganisation from 3 to 2: STEM and Humanities
-Do not backfill retirements	\$565,000	Do not fill open retirement positions - 5 to 7 FTE estimated
-Staff Reorg.	\$500,346	Replace 5 Retirements with current staff (Interventionists)
-11 FTE reduction	\$565,000	Reduce 11 FTE - unrelated to retirements
Compensated balances	\$67,400	Separation costs currently in budget, could be reduced if committee agrees to collaborating with town on compensated balances.

FY25 Staffing Updates

Position	Update
-Transportation Director	Increases salary to \$100,000 for existing staff member in line with market
-Assist. Transportation Director	Increase Hiring salary to \$85,000 in line with market
-Transportation Clerk	Increase hourly wage from \$18 to \$25 in line with market
-Assist. Supt. Of Operations and Strat.	Eliminate position, saving of \$165,000
-Director of Finance and Operations	Retitle To Assistant Superintendent of

-Grant Manager	Finance and Operations Eliminate position, saving \$25,000 to \$40,000
Financial Analyst	Retitle to Assistant Business Manager, increase responsibility and role for supervision, add grant manager duties, increase pay to approx. \$96,000 (\$25,000 increase, in line with market, net wash with. Grant manager savings)
CFCE Grant Staff	Increased FTE needed to properly manage the CFCE program. Additional \$40,000 added to budget to support the increased FTE

There was much discussion about the CFCE Grant. Ms. Stewart said that many towns get this grant and it's overseen through the health department of the recreation department.

Ms. Stewart said she is not in disagreement with the grant but is not in agreement with the additional funding of \$40,000 coming out of the school budget.

Chair Mazzola said she thinks that this is appropriate to bring up at FinCom tomorrow night.

Mr. Wells said that the plan for this evening was for the Committee to vote on the reductions and for the approval of the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations so we can begin the hiring process as we are deep into hiring season.

Ms. Stewart said we can not vote on the position until we get a job description.

Ms. Stewart suggested adding compensated absences on the March 20th agenda.

After much discussion, Ms. Sibbing-Dunn made a motion to approve the recommended FY25 Budget cuts:

-Central Admin. - \$165,000

-Hire Downs -\$400,000

For a total of \$565,000, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Old Business: Health Curriculum Refresh Update: (moved up in agenda)

Update on One-Year SIP's ad Strategic Plan: Dr. Munoz reviewed the items that Dr. Munoz and the principals worked on for the One-Year SIP's and Strategic Plan.

Dr. Munoz met with the Admin. Team and talked about bridging District priorities for one year until we write a new Strategic Plan. We talked about what is going on in the District that we can dive into. We ended up talking about Objective 3 and Object 5.

Objective 3 - Innovative Instruction and Personalised Learning;
Keying in on 3.4 - Development, Implement and Inclusive Practices for multilingual learners and special education students;
Objective 5 - Safe and Supportive Schools;
-There are plans for a lot of trauma training this year

Dr. Munoz wanted feedback from the Committee and then he will put the bridging plans in a document. Dr. Munoz also said that he will have more conversations with school leaders to see how we can create much more clear action steps and attainable goals in small chunks throughout the year so he can help them track their progress

Ms. Stewart asked that Objective 1 stay on the plan and she, the Chair and the Budget Sub Committee can work together with Dr. Munoz on it. Ms. Stewart said they had requested an updated on Objectives 3 and it would be good to get that update. She also added that if Objectives 3 and 5 are in the one-year strategic plan, she wants to see it in the budget and the things that the elementary teachers requested (another health teacher and a behaviorist) should be coming forth in a reallocation so she can vote on a strategic plan that is supporting staff.

Chair suggested inviting the Principals to come in to go over the Strategic Plan at the April 10th School Committee Meeting.

Policy: None.

New Business: 2024-2025 School Calendar: Dr. Munoz said, looking at the FY2024-2025 Calendar it was decided to have a couple of options for discussion.

- Draft 1. Staff comes back August 26;
 2 days of PD;
 Students come back Wednesday and Thursday and then have a 4 day weekend and their 3rd day of school would be Sept. 3rd.
 Get out of school early (if no snow days);
- Draft 2. Students start after Labor Day;
 State Primary on Sept . 3rd - principals advised that it is not good to have the first day of school on primary election day;
 Students start on the 4th will push end date to June 17th (snow days could bring us up to Juneteenth)

Dr. Munoz and Dr. Thomson said the principals preferred Draft 1.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 10:02 p.m. for clarification, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were polled and voted in favor 4-0.

Chair welcomed everyone back to open session at 10:08 pm

Chair Mazzola said we are not putting out a survey regarding the calendar, but if the members of the public have strong feelings about these options they should email the School Committee.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to put forth both calendar options and to provide for a two-week period of time for feedback should anyone from the public want to give their thoughts., which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Members were polled and voted in favor 4-0.

Members from the public can email the School Committee with their thoughts.

One of these options will go back on the March 20th SC Agenda for a vote.

MOU With Unit A for SY24-25 Start Date: Chair Mazzola said the members have the language in their packets. This language is currently not in the unit A contract but it is a joint MOU between the School Committee and Unit A that both parties agree that teachers can report to school on August 26th, 2024.

Mr. Hiltz read the MOU into the record.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Members voted in favor 4-0.

Consent Agenda: Acceptance of Seven (7) Donations:

- Women's Community Committee - \$500 Gift Card - Cleveland
- Women's Community Committee - \$400 Gift Card - Willett
- Women's Community Committee - \$500 Gift Card - CMS
- Women's Community Committee - \$500 Gift Card - NHS
- Bay State Textiles - January Rebate - \$738.90
- The Brousaides Charitable Foundation Scholarship \$2,000.00 -NHS
- Prescott PTO - \$330.60 (Teacher stipend for "Fun Friday")

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to accept these donations/rebates, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart . The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 4-0.

School Committee Addenda: Ms. Stewart had none.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn congratulated the girls basketball team on yesterday's win.

Mr. Hiltz had none.

The Chair had none.

Executive Session: Chair Mazzola informed that there would be an Executive Session for contract negotiations.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion for Executive Session at 10:15 p.m. which was seconded by Ms. Stewart . The Committee Members were polled and voted in favor 4-0.

Adjournment: Ms. Stewart made a motion for adjournment at 11:15 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were posted and voted unanimously in favor 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee