

**Town of Norwood
School Committee Meeting
Hybrid
Wednesday, January 11, 2023**

A hybrid meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. (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>).

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

Administrators Present: Dr. Dave Thomson, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Alec Wyeth, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment; Ms. Karin Sheridan, Director of Finance and Operations and Dr. Charisse Taylor, Director of Strategic Initiatives

Minutes: Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the following minutes with the requested edits:

- December 21, 2022 (Business Meeting); and
- December 21, 2022 (Executive Session)

(The Business Meeting edits included:

- Under Warrants and Public Comment, it should be indicated that Mr. Hiltz chaired the meeting and not Chair Mazzola as she was excused from the meeting. Also, at the end of the minutes in the Addendum section, the date Ms. Stewart asked the Members to get the self-evaluations back was January 2nd, not 10th.)

This motion was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee voted in favor 4-0-1 (Chair Mazzola abstained).

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 \$2,513,426.23.

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 forum portion of the meeting. (1) In person at the meeting (sign up in advance at the Superintendent's Office by noon the day of the meeting to pre-register, or sign in at the meeting; and (2) Call the Superintendent's Office at 781-762-6804 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 had registered in advance or at the meeting for Public Forum and the Chair declared Public Forum closed at 7:16 p.m.

Appearances: None.

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

PTO Fundraising Proposals (vote): The Cleveland PTO is requesting to be able to fundraise for an outdoor sensory area for the students. The Committee needs to approve this request to fundraise.

There was some discussion as to how these yearly donations would be accepted.

Dr. Thomson said the PTO will fundraise for 3-4 years and he expects that at the end of each year, the PTO will make small donations towards the sensory area.

Dr. Giblin made a motion to delegate authority to accept donations to Dr. Thomson for this project only.

Ms. Stewart clarified that the Cleveland PTO cannot expend the money until the donation has been accepted by the School Committee. She said if we give approval for the fundraising, they can fundraise all year. They PTO can donate the money to the School Committee at any point for the School Committee to accept. The Business Office will put the money into the appropriate fund and will be earmarked for the particular project.

Ms. Sheridan explained that at this point they are looking for approval to fundraise. She said the Cleveland PTO can hold onto the money as long as they want, but when they give the donation for a sensory area at the Cleveland, it will be used for a sensory area at the Cleveland.

The Chair made a friendly amendment to the motion on the table for Dr. Thomson to give regular updates to the School Committee as donations come in.

Mr. Hiltz seconded the motion for purposes of discussion. After more discussion, Dr. Giblin retracted her motion.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve this fundraiser, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

William James College Interface Report: Dr. Thomson updated on the Interface referral service for mental health that Norwood has been working with. Dr. Thomson updated that we have had 47 cases worked on through interface. The average cost for each case was \$250 for a total (town-wide) cost of \$11,500.00. There were 9 repeat callers and the primary use was for individual therapy and then for medication/prescriptions. Dr. Thomson said this is being used by all age groups and is a great service to the Town.

Ms. Stewart said the adults that are accessing the program are 45.7% of those using the service.

2023 MOU for Vacation and Summer Learning Pay Rate (vote): Dr. Wyeth thanked the curriculum coordinators for all their work in writing the grant, along with Dr. Taylor. He said we have secured the grant in the amount of \$95,400.80 and the purpose is to primarily fund the Math February Vacation Acceleration Academy. Dr. Wyeth said once the MOU is approved, we will post for these grant positions as soon as possible and the principals will start identifying students to participate in the program.

Dr. Wyeth said we will provide a similar opportunity with ELA in grades K-2 and will use the ESSER Grant to support that.

Dr. Wyeth said it's a robust program and he can not wait to get it going.

There will also be a program at the Coakley Middle School and the High School.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the MOU, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Little Mustangs Preschool Academy - Conference date: Dr. Thomson updated that the LMPA is requesting to shift their conferences from January 25th until February 8th as they have recently had an influx of new 3 year old students. Moving the date will allow more time to prepare for conferences and also to align better with progress reports.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn made a motion to approve the date change for LMPA conferences, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Budget Process: Dr. Thomson updated on the Budget process saying the budgets from the schools and departments were due today. He said there was a meeting this

afternoon to review staffing to be sure that they did not miss anyone. He added it has been a non-stop hiring process this year.

Dr. Thomson said that he plans on spending a majority of his time next week reviewing spreadsheets for the budget before the final draft budget is put together.

Dr. Thomson added that it is expected that by the end of this year, we will see a 30% increase in our low income students from the year before. (This information was received from the Title I Conference this week). He said this is another demographic change that will impact our budget.

Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Thomson said it is with a heavy heart that he has to announce that Dr. Wyeth will retire at the end of June after a long and wonderful career. Dr. Thomson said that a timeline will be created for the search to try to replace Dr. Wyeth. Dr. Thomson will say more about Dr. Wyeth towards the end of the year.

Job Openings: Dr. Thomson said they are still looking for SPED teachers, a School Psychologist, 7 Paraprofessionals, and long and short-term Substitutes. Dr. Thomson sent a special thanks to the college students who are helping out with subbing while home on break. Finally, Dr. Thomson said we are looking for a LTS for reading as we have a reading specialist who has been called for Grand Jury.

Budget: Budget Sub Committee Meeting: Ms. Stewart updated on the Budget Sub Committee of January 6th, saying that they spent a good deal of time at this meeting preparing for the Budget Balancing Committee Meeting; reviewing the 30B information that Ms. Sheridan will discuss tonight; looking over the MOU for the Acceleration Academy pay; reviewing a letter to the Governor Elect from the Presidents of MASC, MASS and the MTA advocating that the Student Opportunities Act take into consideration the inflation that we are all experiencing. She said it is helpful and important that these other organizations are advocating as well. Ms. Stewart said they continued looking into the FY24 Budget preparations, adding that Dr. Thomson just updated on that information. The Budget Sub Committee will continue working on that. Ms. Sheridan is still working on the Fee Analysis and will bring that back to the full School Committee on February 15th. Ms. Stewart said the HR study is on-going and Ms. Sheridan will be looking at the Extended Day salaries after she finishes the budgets.

Ms. Sheridan updated on Chapter 30B procurement laws: Ms. Sheridan said that previously, schools had to go out to bid for anything over \$50,000 and that has been changed to \$100,000. She said schools can still opt to go out to bid for anything over \$50,000, but aren't required to. She added that we can now purchase items in advance, which we were not able to do previously. She added that this will help when the secretaries get ready to leave for Summer break.

Regarding McKinney Vento reimbursement, the District now has the ability to set up a revolving account similar to what the Circuit Breaker account is like where we will have two years to spend the funds (can only be used for McKinney Vento transportation). She will work with the Town to go about setting up the account.

Ms. Stewart added that the Budget Sub Committee also looked at the Elementary Study Committee's request for a placeholder in Budget FY24 for a consultant to look at the Elementary configuration. Dr. Thomson is recommending that the Sub Committee put a placeholder in the FY24 Budget for \$60,000 for that purpose.

The Chair updated on the BBC, saying that they met on Monday and she was voted in as the BBC Chair. The Committee is made up of two Members of the School Committee, two Members of the Finance Commission and two Member of the Board of Selectmen. The Chair, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Slater, Mrs. Bodenhofer, Mr. Plasko and Mr. Lane will all serve on this Committee. Dr. Thomson, Mr. Mazzucco and Ms. LaMay were also in attendance. She said that they had a chance to air out their grievances and to work on a broad overview of inflationary costs, etc. She said it went well and she feels that everyone understands the challenges ahead. She said there are funds in the Stabilization Fund, Special Education Stabilization Fund, etc. that have not been used and could help this year.

The Chair informed that the next Budget Balancing Committee Meeting will be on January 23rd.

Grant Update and Acceptance (vote). Ms. Sheridan said she hopes this is the first of many votes to approve grants. There are 20 grants listed from July 1st until January 6, 2023 in the amount of \$2,819,961.

- Title One (Improving basic programs)
- Title 2A (Teacher quality)
- Title 3 (English Language)
- Title 4 (Student Support Grant)
- IDBA (SPED Grant)
- Early Childhood 262 Grant
- Expanded Learning Time Grant
- CFCE Grant
- Civics Teaching and Learning Grant
- Early Literacy Grant
- Community Care for Kids (Extended Day)
- Mask Reimbursement (one time funding for masks purchased in FY22)
- VHS Learning Grant
- Back to School - Out of School Time Quality Enhancement Grant
- Innovative Pathways Grant
- Math Acceleration Grant
- Supporting SEL Behavioral and Mental Health and Wellness Great
- Comprehensive School Health Services Grant
- Workforce Grant
- Special Olympics Grant (Unified Sports)

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to accept all the grants, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Monthly Budget Transfers Report Ms. Sheridan updated regarding the transfers that were approved by Dr. Thomson in the amount of \$42,693.00. (The Members received the details in their packets).

Budget Transfers for SC Approval (vote): A vote of approval was needed from the School Committee for the following transfers:

From: Laurie Cimeno for Consulting Services for BCBA Services - \$53,910.00

From: Dr. Alec Wyeth for Professional Development for Mass Cue - \$2,545.00

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve both transfers, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Old Business: PD Update: Dr. Wyeth updated on the January 3rd (full day) Professional Development. The Members received, in their packets, all the options that were available for the Elementary School Staff. Dr. Wyeth thanked Laura Mullen for arranging the array of choices for our staff, adding that they loved it. Dr. Wyeth thanked Ms. Taylor for briefing the principals on *"Data Wise"*.

The nurses, counselors, social workers, etc. had a full day of training on Mental Health/ First Aide at the Savage Educational Center.

Middle School Staff had a half day working on "World Savvy", which coincided with the CRISP work they are doing. He hopes we can continue working with World Savvy.

Dr. Wyeth reminded that the Morning at the High School was the half day make up day from the gas leak. The 6-12 colleagues then worked together on the CRISP work in the afternoon.

There is another half day coming up in February which will be the culmination of the work with Highlander.

Elementary Sub Committee Update. Mr. Hiltz and Ms. Sibbing-Dunn updated on the Elementary Sub Committee Meeting that happened just before the holiday break. He said they are still in the early stages with this committee, but they have continued discussions about a consultant with the Budget Sub Committee and Ms. Sheridan. Four of the elementary principals were in attendance. (Dr. Grandt, Dr. Baulier, Mr. Riley and Ms. Ferreira attended.). He said it was good to hear about the individual and unique challenges at each of the schools. This information will help to guide the conversations.

Ms. Stewart suggested getting the updated version of blueprints from Ai3 that were updated in the spring of 2021 when working on the grade configurations.

Mr. Hiltz informed that Wednesday, February 15th @ 4:30 p.m. will be the next meeting.

Long Term Agenda Review: Chair Mazzola reviewed the Long Term Agenda, and welcomed feedback from the Members. She reminded that the next School Committee Meeting, on January 25th, will be a Traveling School Committee at the Balch in the library. The Committee worked with the Chair to firm up the agendas for the next couple of meetings.

Policy: Policy Sub Committee Update: Dr. Giblin updated on the work the Committee has done regarding the Travel Reimbursement Policy, adding that the Town has a different set of expenses and reimbursements. She informed that we are looking to link to the Federal IRS limits which is what the Town does and to have more consistency with the Town. Ms. Sheridan is looking more into this item and will bring it back to the Sub Committee.

Dr. Giblin said that they reviewed the School Improvement Template again and the only thing on the agenda for January 18th is to look at the Travel Reimbursement Policy again unless anyone has anything else to matter.

School Improvement Template: The Policy Sub Committee has forwarded the draft to the whole Committee this evening for approval. Dr. Giblin said they tried to make it more streamlined to focus on what the School Committee looks at for each different school not the district as a whole. Dr. Giblin said the template is based off the work that Dr. Galligan and Mr. Riley had submitted.

There was some discussion as to why the MCAS results and Professional Development outlines were removed from the templates.

Dr. Giblin said we get reports on those and are trying to keep it more streamlined.

Dr. Giblin moved to table this conversation for School Council review, Mr. Hiltz seconded for discussion.

Ms. Stewart asked to make a friendly amendment to bring it back to the Policy Sub Committee for further review.

Dr. Giblin did not accept the amendment and said School Council recommendation is needed at this point.

Regarding the vote on the table, the Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Ms. Stewart opposed).

The Chair will refer to School Council to see if PD can be removed from the template.

New Business: Future Workshops and Trainings: The Chair informed the we had an MASC Training last night and asked the Committee what they wanted to do next.

The Chair reminded that there is a budget workshop scheduled. The Chair said we could work offline to come up with another training for some time after March (Budget Season). There was some discussion regarding a possible DEI workshop. Ms. Stewart said she would forward some ideas she received from Dana Brown before he left.

Ms. Stewart also reminded the we are trying to come up with a date for a Sub Committee of the Whole Committee to get everyone on the same page with regards to the PTO's and various budget, policy, equity and strategic planning discussions that have been happening around this topic.

Consent Agenda: Acceptance of Three (3) Donations:

- Women's Community Committee - \$400 Gift Card - LEAD Program
- Beverly Bonner - Mechanic and Hand Tools (the Chair read the letter submitted with the donation of this collection);
- Bay State Textiles - End of Year Summary - \$6,550.50

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to accept these donations/rebates, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

School Committee Addenda: Mr. Hiltz had none.

Ms. Stewart had none.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn had none.

Mr. Hiltz had none.

Dr. Giblin 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 9:20 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee Members voted in favor 5-0.

Adjournment: Mr. Hiltz made a motion for adjournment at 10:55 p.m., which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Members voted unanimously in favor 5-0.
Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee