

**Town of Norwood
School Committee Meeting
Remote Meeting
Wednesday, February 8 , 2023**

A remote meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

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: The Chair informed that the Committee needed to approve six sets of minutes this evening.

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

-January 11, 2023 (Executive Session)

-January 25, 2023 (Business Meeting)

-S. C. Planning Workshop - February 2, 2023; which were seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the Middle School Building Project Public Forum - #11 dated January 26, 2023, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee Members were polled and voted in favour 4-0-1 (Chair Mazzola abstained).

Ms. Stewart made a motion to table, for clarification, the minutes of:

-January 25, 2023 (Executive Session), which were seconded by Jr. Giblin.

The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the February 2, 2023 (Executive Session) minutes with the edits that have been made and shared with the whole Committee, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee Members were polled and 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 \$2,980,058.44

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 remote meeting tonight and the public can access the meeting 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 when the meetings are remote, the public can participate in the public forum portion of the meeting by calling 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 registered for Public Forum and the Chair declared Public Forum closed at 7:10 p.m.

Appearances: Scholastic Art Winning Work: NHS Art Teacher, Ms. Laurie McGrory, was here this evening to share the exciting news that some of our AP students have won Silver Key Awards.

Melissa Colella's Scholastic Silver Key winning painting: *People*

William Morrissey's Scholastic Key Winning Painting: *Cow Struggling in a Staircase*

William Morrissey's Scholastic Silver Key Award Winning Drawing: *Sheep Stuck in an Elevator*

The Members had an opportunity to send congratulations to Melissa and William.

School Committee Approval of Proprietary Items for New Middle School: Chase Terrio of Ai3 was here this evening to get School Committee Approval for the proprietary items that have been put together with input from the police, fire, emergency response personnel, and the Facilities Directors. Mr. Terrio informed that this list has been approved by the School Building Committee at their meeting that was held on January 26, 2023.

Dr. Giblin asked for a quick additional phrase on the document adding that it has been approved by the police, fire, etc. Mr. Terrio suggested adding a phrase stating that this list has been approved "as recommended by authority having jurisdiction". Which is the standard wording.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the *Propriety Items List* in the packets marked "final" which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Out of State Field Trip Request: Mr. Kerr, Director of Fine Arts, was here this evening to request an out of State Field Trip for four mixed chorus high school students to participate in the 2023 All Eastern Music Festival and Conference on April 13-16, 2023.

The Superintendent recommends that the Norwood School Committee approve this trip.

Dr. Giblin asked Mr. Kerr to send evidence of insurance for the students.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve pending reviewing the insurance for the students, which was seconded Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda: Dr. Thomson updated on the following: Dr. Thomson began by requesting a moment of silence for Norwood's Middle School student, Tyler Lawrence, who we tragically lost on January 29th. He said that Tyler's absence is deeply felt by his friends and classmates at the Coakley Middle School. Dr. Thomson thanked the Middle School Staff for caring for all the students and to the Norwood Police as therapy dogs were made available. Dr. Thomson said there was an overwhelming response at the Memorial Service last Sunday, adding that he waited in line for an over an hour and a half and never made it into the service. He said on behalf of the School Committee and the School Community, he sends our deepest sympathies to the Lawrence family.

Start Time Update:

- Logistics have bene well-planned
- Staffing challenges continues
- Bus loading from schools has been successful
- Improvement in tardies at the secondary level
- "Grab and Go Lunch" has been successful
- Elementary shift to after school MCAS tutoring and activities

Future Considerations:

- After school activities - CMS;
- Sports Transportation;
 - Driver shortages
- Student achievement;
- Post Covid impact;
- Family Survey late February

School Visits:

- Quick dipstick of progress on District initiatives;
- Culturally Responsive and Sustainable Teaching Practices (CRISP);
- Witnessing initial stages of implementation;
- Share what is generally observed with principal;
- Dr. Thomson intends visits to increase these visits through the spring.

TEC Board Update:

- New Director Hired- Emily Parks
 - July 1st start
- Acting Director Hired
 - Brad Jackson
- Looking to expand Data Privacy Consortium

DESE District Review:

- 5 year cycle;
- Feedback on district practices;
- Data includes:
 - document reviews
 - instructional observations
 - focus groups
 - staff interviews
- Final report will provide feedback on the strengths and challenges of current practices.

Job Openings:

- Special Education Teachers;
- Preschool Teacher;
- School Psychologist;
- 7 Paraprofessionals;
- Long and Short Term Substitutes;
- LTS Reading;
- Extended Day Staff.

Budget: Budget Sub Committee Update: Ms. Stewart said in the packets the Members have the agenda that links the materials from the last Sub Committee Meeting on February 1st and the materials that were put together for BBC (Chapter 70, Medicaid and the 5-year revenue projections from the Town). Ms. Stewart warned, as Dr. Thomson, Ms. Sheridan and the Budget Sub Committee has been transparent all along, the FY24 Budget preparation is really challenging. Dr. Thomson will be putting the information for the next meeting in our packets on Friday. She said that Budget Version "A" originally was going to be included, but we will not be able to get down to a 3.5% increase over FY23 by Friday. She reminded that, from Dr. Thomson's weekly updates, this budget cycle began with requests for 30 new FTE's (which are very much needed). Dr. Thomson was able to get this number down to 19.9 FTE's. As of today, he has it down to 11 FTE's but that's still 10.4% increase over FY23. She said this also includes the 14.9 positions for EL and SPED that this committee has approved since July 1 that were mandated.

Dr. Thomson said we continue to look for reductions, savings and grants, but added that we are in a difficult place.

Ms. Stewart said we will be meeting again as a Sub Committee on the 14th.

Mr. Hiltz shared that many communities are in the same situation as most of the Covid Funds and Grants are starting to wind down and districts have been told to

prepare for a high hike for out of district costs, along with inflation being very high these days.

Ms. Stewart recommended the Committee watch the MASC conference that she attended last week as it was taped. There was a lot of talking that the Chapter 70 money is still unknown, inflation is very high, transportation costs are challenging, etc. She said all ESSER Funds need to be committed to by September 2024, which is something Ms. Sheridan is watching. She said MASC said their Board is advocating for an increase in Circuit Breaker.

Budget Balancing Committee Update: The Chair updated on the Budget Balancing Committee Meeting from this past Monday, saying that there are no numbers yet for Chapter 70, for insurance, Medicaid reimbursement, etc. She said that Dr. Thomson presented the Chapter 70 and the trends from recent years. There was some discussion around possibly having a formula for Chapter 70 money since the money doesn't actually come in until after the budget process. The Chair said there needs to be more conversation around Medicare reimbursement money and more of it coming back to the schools. The Chair added that Meg LaMay gave her 5 year revenue forecast estimates.

Ms. Stewart reminded that FY24 is the last year of the 3.5% pledge for the override. She reminded that we are now 57.4% high needs; 14.6% ELL; 25.3% with Students with Disabilities; and 38.6% low income according to the DESE statistics.

The Chair said the next meeting will be some time around the first week in March.

Section D Fiscal Policies: Ms. Stewart informed that last September, MASC put out their updates on Section D. We reviewed what they put out along with what we have and the edits are in red. All edits have been approved by Dr. Thomson, Ms. Sheridan and Dr. Taylor.

The 2 policies that need to be discussed this evening are DEC and DJE.

Policy DJE - (Procurement Requirements) Ms. Stewart informed the Ms. Sheridan recommends increasing from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to increase from \$50,000 to \$100,000, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Policy DEC - Ms. Stewart asked if we wanted to adopt Policy DEC (Federal Funds Supplement Not Supplant Policy).

After some discussion, Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve Policy DEC as it is in packet this evening, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Since this is a new policy, we will need to post this for public comment for two weeks and then it will come back to the Committee for a second vote at the March 8th School Committee Meeting.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve Section D as it appears in our packet tonight, with exception that DEC has to come back for a vote in March because it's a new policy, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Old Business: Office Hours Update: Dr. Giblin had one visitor who attended the last scheduled Office Hours. It was a staff member who wanted to discuss grant applications. There was some discussion as to whether more Office Hours needed to be scheduled.

Ms. Stewart said we have fulfilled our goal and can add this to an agenda after elections to see if the Committee wants to schedule more going forward.

Review School Committee Member Handbook: Mr. Hiltz reviewed the edits for the School Committee New Member Handbook.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn suggested adding the School District Budget Calendar to the Handbook.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the updated Norwood School Committee New Member Handbook for 2023-2024, with the two links to be added that Ms. Stewart suggested and the School District Budget Calendar that was suggested by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Curriculum Refresh Update and Budget Impact: Dr. Wyeth said the members received a spreadsheet in their packets for the Curriculum review and renewal & textbook/software adoption cycle timeline:

FY24

-PreK - 12 visual arts	\$140,000
K-5 ML	\$80,000
K-% Health/Wellness & PE	\$30,000
Grade 3 History Social Studies	TBD

FY25:

PreK-12 music	\$200,000
6-12 ML	\$70,000
6-12 Health/Wellness & PE	\$30,000
Grade 3 History Social Science	TBD

FY26
ELA

FY27
Math

FY28
STE

FY29
HSS

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Long Term Agenda Review: The Chair reviewed the next couple of School Committee Meetings and asked the Members for their feedback.

Norfolk County Mental Health Task Update: The Chair and Ms. Stewart attended a meeting last week and the information from that meeting was in the members packets.

There was some discussion as to the information on curriculum and services that the Chair and Ms. Stewart bring back to the Committee from these meetings.

Dr. Wyeth said that he needs to take a look at the information and share with the appropriate people, i.e. Ms. Cimeno and Mr. Quigley.

Policy: Ms. Sibbing-Dunn said the Policy Sub Committee will be meeting on Friday and she will share with the Members the survey they have been working on.

New Business: Consent Agenda: None.

School Committee Addenda: Ms. Stewart echoed the sentiments of Dr. Thomson to the Lawrence Family, saying there are no words. She is truly very sorry and very sad. She appreciates the community coming together and appreciates Dr. Thomson and the staff for all they have done for the staff and students at the Middle School.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn said she is thinking of Tyler's mom, classmates and teachers. She said her thoughts are with them all as they work through this senseless tragedy.

Dr. Giblin said her thoughts are also with the Lawrence family and the entire Coakley Middle School community.

Mr. Hiltz echoed the sentiments of his colleagues and sent his thoughts and prayers to the Lawrence family.

Chair Mazzola said it has been a rough time for the Coakley community and the Town of Norwood as the Lawrence family is dealing with such an unbelievable tragedy. She said her thoughts and love are being sent to Tylers friends and family.

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

Mr. Hiltz made a motion for Executive Session at 9:13 p.m.m which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn . The Committee Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

Adjournment: Dr. Giblin made a motion for adjournment at 9:55 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Members were posted and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee