

**Town of Norwood
School Committee Meeting
Hybrid
Wednesday, February 15, 2023**

A hybrid meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, February 15, 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, Mr. David Hiltz and Ms. Kate Sibbing-Dunn

Committee Member Excused: Dr. Joan Giblin

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

- January 25, 2023 (Executive Session);
- February 8, 2023 (Business Meeting);
- February 8, 2023 (Executive Session); and
- February 8, 2023 (Meeting with the Student Advisory Board).

This motion was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Correspondence: None.

Warrants: None.

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.

There was no one registered in advance or at the meeting for Public Forum and the Chair declared Public Forum closed at 7:10 p.m.

Appearances: Capital Outlay: Transportation: (moved up in agenda) Mr. Bishop was in attendance this evening to share the Transportation Capital Outlay Report.

Mr. Al Bishop was in attendance this evening to request two (2) additional mini buses to be added to the Capital Request: (1) one handicapped accessible and (1) one that is a standard bus, The request is due to one of our buses being in an accident and also the fact that there is no spare bus. Mr. Bishop also informed that we have 3 wheelchair vans that have been on order for over three months and 6 mini vans on order. He said we are in a bit of a supply chain predicament here.

-24 Passenger Handicapped Accessible (Wheelchair)	\$114,000
-29 Passenger - Standard Configuration	<u>\$ 97,000</u>
	\$212,000 Total Cost

Ms. Stewart made a motion to support the request of one handicapped accessible van and one standard bus and to forward this to Capital Outlay, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Capital Outlay: IT: (moved up in agenda) Mr. Kidd was in attendance this evening to share the Technology Capital Outlay Report. He said that our infrastructure is the backbone of our district. He said that they need to replace two network switches at the Coakley Middle School. He said that the new Middle School is only two years away and we will be able to take those new switches and put them in two of our Elementary Schools when the new Middle School opens up. The other request is for a refresh of the computer labs at the High School for the Robotics and CAD Programs.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve \$44,000 for the Network Switch Replacements at the Middle School and the \$73,000 for the High School computer lab refresh for a total of \$127,000 and to send this request to the Capital Outlay Committee, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Student Advisory Council - District-Wide Student Report: Ms. Keira O'Donnell was here this evening to share the first District-Wide Student Report.

She began by saying that the Advisory Members met with district principals over the past few weeks to gather information for the update. Each level contains the following sections: *Academic Highlights, Activities, and, where applicable, Questions & Considerations.*

The meeting with the School Committee remotely, last week, provided more guidance for the Q & C section.

Kevin Roach '26 - High School
Sophia Touma '25 - CMS
Kaylie Delamere '24 - CMS
John Cavanaugh '23 - Elementary Schools
Keira O'Donnell - '23 - Elementary Schools and Liaison

MASR Update: "An Act Relative to Student Representative Voting Rights" recently introduced to MA State House & Senate, may affect future Norwood student representatives if passed".

The following are the academic highlights at the Elementary, Middle School and High School levels:

Academic Highlights - Elementary Schools

- Clubs: Home work Club at most of the schools (multi-grade level homework support, academic games)
- High ELL percentage (Balch): focus on immersion and keeping students in class instead of pulling them for additional ELL work
 - *Overall focus on small group instruction this year (Cleveland)
- Addition of WIN Black (Oldham): helpful for students who miss school and need individualised help catching up
- TROT to Success (Oldham): strategy for students to adjust to the social environment of a classroom after COVID w/ positive language and signals
- Social Emotional Learning Assembly (Prescott): encouragement of active listening, being a good member of the community, Open Circle
 - *New S.E.L. program in process of getting approved for next year
 - *Teachers being professionally developed for a new science program next year (3rd-5th graders)
- Family STEM Night (Prescott): coordinated by teachers, night where parents and students can come in and learn about science and math in a hands-on way.

Academic Highlights - Coakley Middle School:

- College Planning: 8th graders creating Naviance accounts & course selection with their counselors.
- Myth Masters: speakers coming to talk about Greece & Greek mythology with 6th graders, aligns with social studies curriculum.
- Academic Acceleration: program over February break for students looking for intensive, yet fun ELA work.
- Continued use of Mustang Block.
- December Geography Bee
- Instructional Rounds: recently made by administration to see what can be improved in the classroom.

Academic Highlights - Norwood High School:

- Course Selection: grade 9-11 starting the process:
 - Program of Studies, February course requests, counselor meetings
 - New Classes: AP Pre-Calc, AP Lang, AP World Expanded

- Work-based learning: Participation likely to double next year in multiple career pathways; use of period 7, credit for internships & work
- National Honor Society: application letters sent out, selection process beginning, induction in March
- Credit Recovery Program: over February break

School Health Council Annual Report: Mr. Ryan Quigley was here this evening to update regarding the School Health Council. He reminded that “the School Health Council’s work should help the district to establish annual goals and make periodic recommendations that are shared with the Superintendent. The School Health Council should consist of individuals from the School System and the Community, and shall include students, parents, teachers, administrators, food service professionals, health professionals, faith-based members, and interested members from the community.”

Mr. Quigley informed that over the course of 3 1/2 years the council has met quarterly. Some of the regular attendees are:

- Ms. Teresa Stewart, School Committee;
- Ms. Donna Twohig, School Nurse;
- Mr. Paul Nimblett, M. S. Wellness Teachers;
- Ms. Aimee Worcester, Elementary Wellness Teacher;
- Mr. Eli Norris, Food Services Director;
- Ms. Shayla Shields, District Dietician;
- Impact Norwood Representatives;
- Ms. Kate Sibbing-Dunn, additional School Committee Representative;
- Dr. Dave Thomson, Superintendent;
- Dr. Charisse Taylor, Director of Strategic Initiatives

The Council’s primary focus was to update wellness policy, but the Council’s work and meetings were abruptly cut short during the COVID pandemic. Despite the challenges, the Council continued to move forward and check in with each other. In the fall of 2021, the Council began working with the the Massachusetts School Wellness Coaching Program sponsored through DESE. The group has identified the creation of staff wellness opportunities as the primary focus for this school year. He informed that Norwood High School will be running its 3rd Annual Mental Health Professional Development Workshop Series after the February break.

Mr. Quigley said this year, an opportunity to analyse and use data has emerged. The Data is from MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) -2021 Survey. The survey that monitors trends in adolescent health and risk behaviours.

- *Key areas include substance use, bullying, mental health, and protective factors.
- *606 CMS Students (84%) participated in the 2021 MWAHS.
- *746 Norwood High School student s(76%) participated in the 2021 MWAHS.
- *Data on the challenges facing youth will enable schools and communities to understand, prioritize, and take action

Mr. Quigley read some of the data for the Committee and thanked the District Leadership for continuing to find ways to support our students' ever-changing needs. Based on the survey data, the students clearly need additional support in the areas of substance abuse, bullying, mental health and school connectiveness.

Mr. Quigley extended an invitation to the School Committee Members who may be interested in joining the conversation to come to the next meeting on April 27th at 3:30 in the High School Library.

Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Dr. Wyeth suggested that Mr. Quigley, Dr. Taylor and himself sit down to review the data, to figure out who to share the data with and to find some targets where the stats need to come down. They can work together to develop a plan of action.

Elementary Music Ensemble Stipend/MOU with the Union: Mr. Kerr was in attendance this evening to bring forth an MOU from the Union regarding the After-School Honor Performance Groups for the 2022-2023 School Year (will pilot a Festival Format).

Honors Chorus- \$1608
Honors Orchestra - \$1137
Honors Band - \$1608
Honors Band Assistant Director - 1137

The Chair reminded that there are no new positions, these positions are just being organized in a different format.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the MOU with the following additional language which should be added to the MOU and then forwarded to the leadership.

"We are reallocating the stipends that are currently listed in the Unit A Contract on page 34 under Elementary Fine Arts and Music Ensemble for this new format this year." The motion was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda: Dr. Thomson updated on the following: Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents' Award: Dr. Thomson welcomed Charlotte Mathews to this evening's meeting and read a summary about Charlotte and her accomplishments, including that she's an AP Scholar with Distinction, earned the AP US History Award, the Chemistry Award, the Renesselear Medal and the Harvard Book Award. Dr. Thomson said it was his distinct pleasure to introduce Ms. Mathews as the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents' Award Winners.

Assistant Superintendent Search:

- Deep Pool - 52 Applicants
- 17 with Curriculum and Central Office Experience
- Interviews begin after vacation
- Staff Meetings - 3/6
- Final Interview with Executive Team and Superintendent 3/20
- Appointment by end of March

DESE District Review:

- Every Five Years
- Interviews
- Document Review
- Classroom Observations
- Focus Groups with families 2/16
- Will receive report and recommendations for district improvement

Still I Rise:

Black History Month: Still I Rise on Saturday 2/18 from 2-5 p.m.

Swatting

Prevalent in the Area

We have a current School Emergency Operations Plan in place and is up to date

Job Openings:

- Special Education Teachers
- Preschool Teacher
- School Psychologist
- 7 Paraprofessionals
- Long and Short Term Subs
- 2 School Adjustment Counselor
- Extended Day Staff

Budget: Budget Sub Committee Update: Ms. Stewart the majority of what was discussed at the last Budget Sub Committee Meeting, Ms. Sheridan will be discussing in detail this evening. Ms. Stewart reminded that we are having a Budget Workshop on Monday, February 27th at 6:00 p.m. The Budget Sub Committee will be meeting again on February 28th.

Budget Transfers for School Committee Approval:

- (1) Ms. Cimeno \$5,000 for Special Education (furniture)
- (2) Teleph. Admin. Line \$34,632.40 for various to cover some overages
- (3) From Hire-Downs to cover SC approved positions - \$853,013

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

Quarterly Budget Transfer Reports (approved by Superintendent): The following budget transfers, in the total amount of \$42,418 have been approved by the Superintendent:

Principal Michael Baulier	\$6,500 -to cover the cost of budget shortages
Principal Bryan Riley	\$2,600 - to cover the cost of additional resources
Principal Margo Fraczek	\$4,000- to cover the cost of additional pallets of paper
Jen Orlinski & Dr. Galligan	\$500 - to cover the cost of lapel pins for AP Capstone Program for graduation
Dr. Wyeth	\$3,000 - for mystery science kits (k-2)
Dr. Wyeth	\$14,000 - ELA / Math Tutoring
High School	\$1,334 (HS) - to cover shortages
Athletic Account	\$7,194
Principal Bryan Riley -	\$2,789 - to cover cost of new supplies for classrooms
Principal Hugh Galligan	\$500 - to cover additional outside PD costs

Budget to Date/ Quarterly Report: Ms. Sheridan and Samantha Stone presented the FY23 Budget to Date/ Quarterly Report. Ms. Sheridan reminded that we started out the year with \$52,801,033.

-Expenditures are in the amount of:	\$23,040,538
-Encumbrances:	\$29,409,003
-Available Balance:	\$351,493

Ms. Sheridan informed that we have applied \$1,835,075 from Circuit Breaker against the out-of-district tuition since the last quarterly report. She is recommending holding on to as much of the remaining Circuit Breaker money as we can for new.

The balance is the Special Education Stabilization Fund to date is \$850,000.

Areas she's watching closely are Special Education and Transportation. Ms. Sheridan reminded that we are still waiting on some new vans and have had to rely on some outside contractors to transport some of our students.

- 207 sped students being transported right now;
- 12 homeless students (10 are being transported by outside contractors).

Ms. Sheridan reviewed the FY23 Budget to Date by Major Categories.

Ms. Sheridan reviewed how she is estimating next year's Circuit Breaker amount to be \$3,680,999 based on current student population at 75%. This would increase Circuit Breaker by \$839,912 over last year if estimates are correct.

FY24 Budget Version A Presentation: Ms. Sheridan presented the FY24 Budget Version A this evening.

Norwood Public Schools - FY24 Preliminary Budget \$58,303,647

FY23 Budget: \$52,801,033

FY24 Budget: \$58,303,647

\$ Change: \$5,502,614

% Change: 10.42 %

The override pledge portion of increase:	\$1,848,036	3.5%
Amount unable to absorb in Budget staying with override pledge:	\$3,654,578	6.92%

Dr. Thomson informed that we have a new Governor and we are not getting her draft budget until the first day of March. He said with 81% being payroll and 19% being everything else,

When we get the final numbers from the State, we will begin the painful process of cutting. He said we are looking at \$3,000,000.

Ms. Stewart said that we have School Committee Meetings scheduled for March 8th and 22nd and she suggested that we may need a meeting added for March 15th.

Ms. Sheridan then shared an analysis of the Budget:

- District Leadership & Administration - 2.76%
- Instructional Services - 76%
- Other School Services - 9.41%
- Operation & Maintenance of Plant - 1.28%
- Benefits & Fixed Charges - .16%
- Community Services - .01%
- Programs with Other School Districts - 9.47%

Budget by Category	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	Difference	% of Total Budget
General Education	\$33,474,841	\$35,490,748	\$2,015,907	61%
Special Education	\$17,578,552	\$20,676,674	\$3,098,122	35%
English Learners	\$ 1,747,640	\$ 2,136,225	\$ 388,585	4%

Payroll by Category	FY23 Budget	FY24 Budget	Difference	% of Total Budget
General Education	\$30,112,055	\$31,610,612	\$1,498,557	67%
Special Education	\$12,535,198	\$13,749,684	\$1,214,486	29%
English Learners	\$ 1,658,572	\$ 2,057,542	\$ 388,585	4%

Ms. Sheridan then reviewed the Budget Drivers.

-Contractual Obligations	\$1,803,451	3.42 % of Budget Increase
-3.5% Increase - Override Pledge	<u>\$1,848,036</u>	
-Amount Remaining for additional needs of the District if staying with 3.5% increase	\$ 44,585	.08%

Ms. Sheridan then reviewed Budget Challenges.

-Special Education Transportation and Out of District Tuition	\$1,843,391	3.49%
-Subtotal	<u>\$1,803,451</u>	3.42%
-New Subtotal	\$4,491,842	6.91%
-SC approved positions to cover the	\$ 587,327	1.11%

Mandated Service needs of EL and Special Ed Students		
-Add in Transportation and Out of District Tuition	\$1,843,391	3.49%
-Add in Contractual Obligations of the District	<u>\$1,803,451</u>	3.42%
-New Subtotal	\$4,234,169	8.02%

Ms. Sheridan then reviewed Staffing and the Override Pledge .

Special Education:

-Special Ed Teachers	3.0 FTE
-Adjustment Counselor	0.2 FTE
	Total: 3.2 FTE (3 benefitted)

English Learners:

-EL Teachers	2.0 FTE
-EL Coordinator (prev. Grant funded)	0.5 FTE
	Total: 2.5 FTE (2 benefitted)

-Gen. Ed. - Other Needs:

-Preschool Administration	1.0 FTE
-Elementary Student Support Specialist	1.0 FTE
-Interventionists (prev. Grant funded)	2.0 FTE
-Nurse LMPA (prev. Grant funded)	1.0 FTE
	Total: 5.0 FTE (5 benefitted)

Ms. Sheridan reviewed the additional staffing needs that we are unable to fund in the General Fund - \$1,142,206 (22 FTE's). She informed that out of the original 32 new staff requests, only 10 are left in the budget.

Ms. Sheridan also reviewed:

- Revolving Funds
- Circuit Breaker
- Medicaid
- Grants
- Chapter 70 Aid Historical Comparison
(Norwood's Chapter 70 Aid jumped 36.83% with an increase of \$3,414,809 mostly due to change in Norwood's population profile. FY24 is still unknown).

Dr. Thomson said that we should be getting the State Aid numbers in early March and then we will begin having some painful conversations about cuts.

Ms. Stewart reminded that we have School Committee Meetings scheduled for March 8th and March 22nd. We are scheduled to go to the Finance Commission on March 23rd to defend our budget requests. Then we have our Budget Hearing on March 29th. She reminded that every March, we have had to add another meeting. She suggested everyone start thinking about a possible meeting on March 15th.

Capital Outlay Update: Chair Mazzola updated with regards to the Capital Outlay meeting of last Thursday, which was a fairly quick meeting. Worked on planning future meetings. She added that the Capital Outlay Committee is meeting more

regularly now and they talked about scheduling future meetings, field trip type meetings to go and look at upcoming projects and the Capital Improvement Policy and by-laws.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 7th and they will further the discussions and hear the capital outlay proposals from Mr. Bishop and Mr. Kidd.

Old Business: PD Update: Dr. Wyeth updated on last full-day PD day with Highlander on February 2nd. He said the day went very well.

The High School continued their Highlander work and their CRSP Practice Strategy Response Training and sustaining student cultural and linguistic expressions in academic assignments and during conversations with them.

In the Middle School the focus was on how school wide writing could be used as a tool for embracing CRISP in the curriculum in the school.

In the elementary level, they also worked on the Highlander and focused on applying the learning challenge and rope strategies for productive struggle in content learning using an ELA program.

Dr. Wyeth said that there is a half day on March 8th. The elementary schools will be having parent conferences and the High School and Middle School will be doing school-based work led by the principals.

The last half day will be a transition planning day for specialists for common planning time/work.

Dr. Wyeth ended by saying the PD Committee is working hard to plan some good professional development for next year to have in place before the new Assistant Superintendent begins.

Policy: Policy Sub Committee Update: Chair Mazzola/ Ms. Sibbing-Dunn updated that they are currently working on a Long Term Agenda for the Policy Committee. Ms. Sibbing-Dunn said at the last meeting they mainly talked about the next steps for the PTO Survey which they will send out after break.

She said the Policy Sub Committee will recommend a plan to reach out to the Community for input for the naming of the Middle School.

There was some discussion as to when the naming of the new Middle School should be added to the agenda. Mr. Hiltz asked that, in order to not lose speed on this, we should try to have the process done and the school named by June.

Dr. Thomson said he would like to finish the budget process before beginning the naming process.

New Business: School Calendar: Dr. Wyeth said that the Committee has in their packets the FY24 School Calendar. He said we are using a new format and added that it is color-coded. He thanked Priscilla Reardon and Sherry Sullivan for finding this new template. Convocation will be on September 5th and the first day of School for the kids will be the 6th. The first full PD will be on September 18th. The next full PD will be on November 7th and then again on January 2nd, which we have done for the last couple of years.

Ms. Stewart did express some concern regarding the School Calendar around a full day PD so soon in September because of the impact on families. She was also concerned because if there are no snow days and with a day off for Juneteenth, the last day of school will be a half-day on a Monday.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the FY23-24 School Calendar, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Consent Agenda: Acceptance of One (1) Donation:

-Ohio Pyle Prints Rebate- \$13.70 - Norwood High School

Ms. Stewart made a motion to accept this donation/rebate, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee Members voted unanimously in favor 4-0.

School Committee Addenda: Ms. Stewart encouraged the Community to stay engaged and informed about the budget process.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn had none.

Mr. Hiltz reminded that there were only two more wake ups until February break!

The Chair thanked Ms. Sheridan for all her hard work, adding that we really do appreciate her.

Executive Session: Chair Mazzola informed that there would be an Executive Session for legal matters.

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

Adjournment: Ms. Stewart made a motion for adjournment at 10:40 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted:
Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee

