

**Town of Norwood  
School Committee Meeting  
School Committee Room @ Savage Educational Center  
Hybrid  
Wednesday, May 17, 2023**

A hybrid meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, May 17, 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 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 (remote) and Dr. Charisse Taylor, Director of Strategic Initiatives

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

- May 3, 2023 (Business Meeting Minutes); and
- May 3, 2023 (Executive Session Minutes).

This motion was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee voted in favor 4-0-1 (Ms. 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.

**5/8/23**

Payroll Warrants:	\$1,896,572.97
Accounts Payable:	\$ 19,340.78
	\$ 18,172.28
	\$. 84,851.20
	\$ 709,811.17
	\$. 53,571.68
	\$. 31,981.10
	\$. 43,346.80
	<u>\$. 39,734.65</u>

**Total Expenditure:** **\$2,897,382.63**

**5/17/23**

Payroll Warrants:	\$ 1,781,415.34
Accounts Payable:	\$. 106,578.26
	\$. 12,043.49
	\$. 12,373.14
	\$. 5,028.25
	\$ 79,351.57

	\$.	1,418.07
	\$	5,052.02
	\$	<u>43,736.61</u>
<b>Total Expenditure:</b>		<b>\$2,046,996.75</b>

**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 (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 registered in advance or at the meeting for Public Forum and the Chair declared Public Forum closed at 7:12 p.m.

**Appearances:** High School Handbook and School Improvement Plan: Dr. Hugh Galligan, Principal of Norwood High School, was here this evening with Assistant Principal Cindy Derrane and Athletic Director, John Longley to reviewed the Norwood High School Handbook for 2023-2024, which had no substantial changes. The areas worked on were:

- Updates to outdated policies;
- Alignment with the NPS Policy Handbook;
- Alternative discipline to reflect the updated laws;
- Addendum to the NHS Athletic Handbook.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the Norwood High School Handbook, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart . The Committee Members voted in favor 5-0.

Dr. Hugh Galligan then reviewed School Improvements, including growth scores, accountability rating (56th percentile) and the dropout rate (0%). He said to see growth in those three areas show that things going in a positive direction.

Dr. Galligan and Ms. Derrane then reviewed Norwood High School’s areas of priority for 2023-2024:

- Culturally Responsive and Trauma Informed Practices;
- Portrait of a Norwood Student;
- Career Preparation Expansion;
  - (looking into a new pathway that could be offered in two years
    - Renewable and Green Energy).
- Offering First Year Students Additional Supports. (A group of 15 Staff will meet every three weeks to work on a one-year plan that has four phases.)

Dr. Thomson thanked Dr. Galligan and Ms. Derrane and the High School staff for the work they have done supporting the students at NHS and their efforts to engage students (career pathways and exploration). Dr. Thomson is very proud of the work they have done.

There was some questions and conversation around the budgetary needs to enhance programs at the High School. There was also some discussion regarding the RISE Program. Ms. Derrane explained they became intrigued by this program at other schools. She said the RISE Program offers students the opportunity to look inward, reflect, and make right a situation when there's been a violation. The students also have the opportunity to go back to the RISE staff member to work on skills and "reset" as needed. Ms. Derrane said the schools that use this program are having a lot of success in with keeping kids in school and building trust with students. They are hoping to expand this program.

Ms. Stewart said this program is best-practice and reminded that 37H changed in November and this is what the unfunded mandate of 37H 3/4 looks like.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the Norwood High School, Improvement Plan, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn . The Committee Members voted in favor 5-0.

Oldham School Improvement Plan: Mr. Steve Olsen, Principal of Oldham Elementary School, was here (remotely) this evening to share some of the past year's goals and successes and then reviewed the Oldham Elementary School Improvement Plan areas of priority of 2023- 2024.

- Seen change in population, which is evidenced in most recent data;
- MCAS scores only have had a slight decrease;
- TROT to Success;
- Also started a RISE Program this. year.
- Fully implement Reading data protocol;

Priority Areas:

- Create a positive, welcoming, cohesive and enthusiastic school community;
- Utilize data to continuously analyse student growth in order to develop appropriate intervention plans for students.

-Strength SEL instruction in all tiers while utilizing the MTSS process.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the Oldham Elementary School Improvement Plan for 2023-2024, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee Members voted in favor 5-0.

Callahan School Improvement Plan: Dr. Scarlett Grandt, Principal of the Callahan Elementary School, was here this evening to share some of the past year's goals and successes and then reviewed the Callahan Elementary School Improvement Plan areas of priority of 2023-2024.

Priority Areas:

- High quality instruction;
- Effective student support system;
- Inclusive and culturally responsive practices;
- Positive School culture.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the Callahan Elementary School Improvement Plan for 2023-2024, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee Members voted in favor 5-0.

Willett ECC School Improvement Plan: Dr. Michael Baulier , Principal of the Willett Early Childhood Center, was here this evening to share some of the past year's goals and successes and then reviewed the Willett Early Childhood Center School Improvement Plan areas of priority of 2023-2024. Dr. Baulier sent a big thanks to his School Council and said they deserve a lot of credit for the School Improvement Plan.

Priority Areas:

- Facilitate equitable literacy so that all students, especially those who have been historically underserved, fully realize their potential and become readers and creators of powerful texts.
- Leverage the diversity and expertise of our community and of equity and inclusion scholarship to promote inclusive, culturally responsive, and antiracist classroom for all students.
- Implement intentional and proactive social emotional learning lessons and supports to teach prosocial strategies and skills that promote the wellbeing of all students.
- Promote inclusive family engagement through proactive efforts, critical dialogues, open feedback, and affirming relationships so that all students and families experience a positive introduction to Norwood Public Schools.

The Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Ms. Stewart asked Dr. Baulier, regarding the income preschoolers and kindergarteners who were 1 & 2 years old during the pandemic, and who have fundamentally been changed by the pandemic, what he needed above and beyond this great plan to support the families and schools.

Dr. Baulier said that there are different teams that work together to help students that are struggling. He said before coming here, he was in a Safety Training Meeting with 8 other staff members who are becoming certified and will make up another team with common approaches and strategies to de-escalate situations and the following minutes after the situations. Dr. Baulier is concerned that this is a whole generation who is not all right following the pandemic. He said we need more sustainable structures in place to help this generation going forward.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the Willett Early Childhood Center School Improvement Plan for 2023-2024, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee Members voted in favor 5-0.

LMPA School Improvement Plan: Dr. Ed Quigley, Interim Principal of the Little Mustangs Preschool, was here this evening to share some of the past year's goals and successes and then reviewed the Little Mustangs Preschool Improvement Plan areas of priority of 2023-2024. Dr. Quigley said that the LMPA School Improvement Plan is unusual because LMPA is still part of the Willett Kindergarten/Preschool Combination. He said it is important because of the direction the LMPA is going in that there is an improvement plan in place that is targeted for the preschool. Over the last several years the improvement plan has been combined and was more heavily directed towards the kindergarten. Dr. Quigley said at this point, there is no desegregated date for the LMPA. Many of the categories we can not get from the state.

Dr. Quigley said due to the wisdom of the Superintendent and the School Committee, LMPA added a 9th teacher to the school. There are now 14 session at LMPA (an integrated preschool which exists to service the needs of children who were on IEP's starting at age three). The peers learn to be empathetic and understanding, and the students with challenges get to see how other students behave and handle things in other ways than they might.

Some of the highlights Dr. Quigley talked about was:

- District Determined Measures (created by the LMPA Staff which evaluates students three times a year to determine progress;
- Phonemic Aware Program was introduced the end of last year and the children love it;
- Handwriting Without Tears* as a pre-writing strategy (deals with a lot of O.T issues students have at that ages);
- Social/Emotional strategies are woven into everything at the LMPA;

- In-house positive behavior program; and
- Highlander Training for Staff- Inclusive and Culturally Responsible Curriculum (students should see themselves in everything that we are doing).

Priority Areas:

- Create/develop a unique identity for the LMPA while maintaining a close partnership with the Willett
- Nurture and sustain an existing school culture that is inclusive and addresses social emotional learning by strengthening relationships and incorporating programs and supports that allow all student, staff and families to feel engaged, secure and valued.
- Provide LMPA educators with multiple, meaningful and targeted professional learning opportunities that focuses on improving cultural competence, supporting social emotional learning, and increasing student achievement in early literacy and numeracy skills.

Dr. Quigley said it is important that the LMPA is fully staffed and that would include an Adjustment Counselor.

Dr. Quigley said it is a one year SIP put together with help from Dr. Baulier, the staff and himself. Dr. Quigley said he wants this to be a starting point for the new Principal.

There was some discussion as to whether there has been a commitment made to separate the Willett and the LMPA at this point. Dr. Giblin said it is not clear in the strategic direction and she will not be voting in favor of the Improvement Plan due to that reason.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the Little Mustangs Preschool Improvement Plan for 2023-2024, as part of the Early Childhood Improvement Plan, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin for discussion.

Ms. Stewart shared some history of the LMPA:

- Fall of 2017 there was a Feasibility Study said there were three problem areas, the Cleveland, the Coakley and the Willett; (the kindergarten and preschool were in one building with one principal.)
- There was a vote in the Fall of 2017 to move the preschool out of the Willett so that the Willett had more space and the preschool program could grow.
- During the February 2018 break, Paul Riccardi and his team did an amazing job of moving the preschool to the Savage. When they moved, there was always the discussion that eventually we are going to need a second principal.

Chair Mazzola clarified that, as stated by Dr. Quigley, DESE would recognize this as one Improvement Plan (Willett and LMPA), but the LMPA plan would be attached and specific to the preschool.

Regarding the motion on the table, the Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Dr. Giblin voted against).

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

Update:

Family Workshop (Second of Three)

-Tuesday 5/23

-Social/Emotional Learning in the Home

-Parent Square reminder/ Ling to be sent soon

NHS Graduation

-Class Day - Friday 6/2 @ 1:15 p.m.

-Graduation - Sunday 6/4 @ 1:00 p.m.

School Improvement Plans - One Year Updates: Prescott, Balch, Cleveland, CMS:

Dr. Thomson shared that the Achievement Scores comparing pre-covid to this past year (the first semi-normal year) is only a 5-10 point differential. That is lower than the universal norm of 15-20 points. Gross scores are all in the normal range across the district. Tiered support with interventionists is making a difference. There has been significant progress in implementing Culturally Responsive Practices. Each school has been working with that and has resident experts running staff meetings and supporting others. We have expanded the use of professional learning communities in our schools and for the first time we are working on professional learning communities between schools (specifically the Balch and the Prescott). Social Emotional Learning in the district will take a big step forward when we start implementing the *Character Strong Program* next year.

Middle School will continue to enhance and work on the inclusion model for Special Education and use more intervention groups for their students. Dr. Thomson thanked the staff at the Middle School for their efforts in these areas.

Dr. Thomson will be sending out a district communication in June looking to find out how parents prefer to be communicated with.

Job Openings: Opening for the next year are posted:

-School psychologist;

-Special Education;

-Paraprofessionals;

-Substitutes;

-Extended Day Staff Summer and Fall - 2023;

-Summer Program Staff.

**Budget: Shared Cost Allocation Agreement with the Town:** Ms. Sheridan reminded that each year we need to review the Cost Allocation Agreement to see if there are any changes that need to be made. The agreement is then signed by the School Committee and the Town and sent to the Department of Education for approval. Ms. Sheridan reviewed the changes that were made. This agreement would start July 1, 2023 and it doesn't have an end date. The only time it would change is if we agree to make any new changes.

Ms. Stewart said the edited version of the Cost Allocation Agreement that Ms. Sheridan made today did not make it into the packets as there was one other change. Ms. Stewart reviewed the one other change for the Committee (FICCA and Medicare are based on actual costs) and asked that the updated version be sent out to everyone.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

**Rental Fees and Rental Policy:** Ms. Sheridan has reviewed and collaborated with Mr. Riccardi and said there are minimal changes with the fees. She said we added a 2.5% increase to a majority of the fees, with the exception of the salary charges, which are supposed to be paid the average of the actuals.

Ms. Stewart said the Budget Sub Committee has reviewed this agreement and needs to review it every year.

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

**Budget Sub Committee Update:** Ms. Stewart updated that the Sub Committee recently met and discussed besides the items Ms. Sheridan has already gone over, the Sub Committee discussed extraordinary relief money that has come in in the amount of \$578,386. Ms. Stewart reminded that we just approved removing \$150,000 out of the Special Education Reserve Fund, adding that Ms. Sheridan was going to possibly ask for another \$150,000. Ms. Stewart said that now with the extraordinary relief money that just came in, we want to utilize this and keep the other money in the Special Education Reserve Fund if possible.

Ms. Stewart sent the Members a document last week streamlining the regular budget work along with:

- FY25 and beyond;
- Work of the Budget Balancing Committee;
- Middle School analysis (and Elementary Study);
- Analysis around special education;
- Union negotiations;
- Strategic Planning;
- Collaboration with our Town Counterparts, and much more



Capital Outlay: Chair Mazzola said the last Capital Outlay Meeting was April 24th. She said they want to meet consistently throughout the year. She said they took field trips to the Hawes pool (a 70 year old pool) and then they looked at a bridge on Washington Street, adding that they both tie into the Middle School Project. They also went to the DPW to look at some of the trucks that they would like to replace then they went back to Town Hall to talk about some funds that were allotted for the Civic Center lobby but that went to the men's locker room. Another meeting has been scheduled and the Chair will put it in the School Committee Calendar.

**Policy:** Policy Sub Committee Update: Ms. Sibbing-Dunn informed the the Policy Sub Committee last met on May 11th. She updated that she created a starter template for the PTO survey for Dr. Thomson and Dr. Taylor to use. It is for condensed information to give to PTO's and principals at the beginning of the year. Dr. Thomson will meet with principals to get input to refine the template again. We will keep you all filled in on that process. She anticipates that a finalized version will be ready to go for next school year. Ms. Sibbing-Dunn will reach out to the PTO's with an update.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn will be meeting Ms. Stewart and the SAC at Norwood High School. The goal for the Policy Sub Committee is to formalize this as a new adoption.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn talked about the long-term agenda and a priorities document draft, which should align with the Budget Sub Committee, which is a work in progress.

The Sub Committee will look into the Memorial Policy and will reach out to Dorothy at MASC to get advice as the CMS will be putting in a memorial bench in honor of a student who passed away this year.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn said that regarding goals, she would like to back up her proposal from a couple of months ago and look at engagement as an added goal with all our committees.

Legislative Advocacy: Ms. Stewart updated that we did get a response from Representative Rogers regarding our advocacy letter we sent around funding. He got the letter a little too late to do some of the advocacy we asked him to do, but he is willing to talk about some of the other aspects and sent an invitation to meet with him. Ms. Stewart is willing to meet with him. Ms. Sibbing-Dunn and Dr. Giblin would like to potentially meet as well.

**Old Business:** Long Term Agenda Review: Ms. Stewart made a motion for someone to start a 2023-2024 Long Term Agenda which will be shared out with the rest of the Committee.

Mr. Hiltz made an amendment that Chair Mazzola start the LTA which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Elementary Sub Committee Update: Mr. Hiltz updated that they met on Tuesday and approved minutes from March. He informed that Town Meeting passed the warrant article so we have the money to conduct the study. Regarding the Pillars Document, Mr. Hiltz said he started putting it together and Ms. Sibbing-Dunn, Dr. Thomson and Dr. Taylor had an opportunity to review it and offer feedback. Dr. Thomson and Dr. Taylor will take it to the Elementary Principals tomorrow. Mr. Hiltz hopes they review the document and provide more feedback. He reminded that the goal of the Pillars Document is that this will be something we can hand to the consultant group with an RFP. Mr. Hiltz then updated that the Committee talked about next steps for the RFP and a longer timeline in terms of what the work will look like. He hopes to have a draft ready to go in early September.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, June 15th at 10:30 a.m.

There was discussion around the timeline of the work. Ms. Stewart felt that getting the results of the consultant in January will be putting things behind schedule.

SC Goals for May 2023-March 2024: Dr. Giblin made a motion that a Sub Committee be created to work on this item, taking all the input we have had from the Committee and bring back a draft to the whole Committee. Dr. Giblin volunteered to Chair this Sub Committee. Ms. Stewart offered to also be on this Sub Committee. This motion was seconded by Ms. Stewart.

There was some discussion regarding bringing this back to the full committee on June 21st.

Regarding the motion on the table, the Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Mr. Hiltz opposed).

Sheriff's Task Force Update: Ms. Stewart informed that she and Chair Mazzola could not attend as it was on the same night as Town Meeting.

Ms. Stewart reminded the Dr. Wyeth said that he can take the information they received from these meetings and share the out to staff. There is a presentation on marijuana edibles that she would like shared with Dr. Fraczek, Dr. Galligan and Mr. Quigley.

Monday, June 12th is the next Task Force Meeting.

**Policy:** Policy Sub Committee Update: and Legislative Advocacy: (moved up in agenda)

**New Business:** Unit A Start-Times MOU Addendum: Ms. Stewart reminded that there are two stipulations around flex time and extended day that we have agreed to extend to the next school year in the addendum to the original agreement.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn made a motion to approve the Unit A Start-Time MOU Addendum, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Approval of Job Descriptions: Dr. Thomson said there are four new job description that needed to be voted on.

-SPED (Behavioral Intervention Specialist):

-LMPA (Principal):

-English Learner Education Director (PreK-12):

-Assistant Superintendent of Operations - Strategy:

Dr. Giblin made a motion to approve the ELL Director position, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the Assistant Superintendent of Operations & Strategy, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to table the SPED Behavioral Intervention Specialist due to the concerns she has shared with Dr. Thomson. Dr. Giblin seconded the motion for discussion.

Ms. Stewart asked Dr. Thomson to share her concerns with the Admin. Team. She feels this plan does not align with the RISE Program.

Dr. Thomson informed that the job description was put together by the Admin Team and Lori Cimeno. He added that by tabling this, it will delay the search by a few weeks.

Regarding the motion on the table, the motion failed 1-4 (Ms. Stewart voted in favor).

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the Behavioral Intervention Specialist, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Ms. Stewart voted against).

Dr. Giblin made a motion to table the vote on the LMPA Principal job description as she supports having a separate person running the LMPA but does not support the separation of schools that the job description is leaning towards.

There was much discussion around this topic.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the LMPA Principal position, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee voted against this motion 2-3 (Ms. Stewart, Dr. Giblin and Chair Mazzola voted against).

Approve PD Plan for 2023-2024 School Year: Dr. Wyeth said what was in the packets has been updated and he said the PD Committee is still working out some of the plans. There will be SEL programs in September. There will be 10 hours of trauma informed training for staff. We are also fitting in some mental health first aid training which will happen outside of our regular PD time and there is a workable plan in place to work with the first 100 people. This roll out will take a couple of years. Lori Cimeno will be implementing Safety Care Crisis Prevention Training and has 3 trainers to work with SPED Staff.

Ms. Stewart talked about the Health Department Grant, saying that it's not our grant, and we have to collaborate with them. She said if the whole PD planning is not done and if we haven't confirmed the PD plan with the person who is writing the grant then she's not sure why we are voting on this tonight.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn made a motion to postpone this item for further information, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

**Consent Agenda: Acceptance of (2) Donations:**

- Ohio Pyle Rebate - \$26.93 - High School
- Bay State Textiles - April Rebate - \$712.20

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:** Ms. Stewart had none.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn sent thanks to all the teachers.

Dr. Giblin sent her thanks and appreciation to all our teachers.

Ms. 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 10:49 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

**Adjournment:** Ms. Stewart made a motion for adjournment at 11:57 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were posted and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk  
Norwood School Committee

