

**Town of Norwood  
School Committee Meeting  
School Committee Room @ Savage Educational Center  
Hybrid  
Wednesday, September 27, 2023**

A hybrid meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. (The public can access the meetings in person at the Savage Educational Center or live via NCM on cable, as they will be 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 (remote), Dr. Joan Giblin, Mr. David Hiltz and Ms. Kate Sibbing-Dunn

**Administrators Present:** Dr. Dave Thomson, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Charisse Taylor, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Strategy; Dr. J. J. Munoz, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum;

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

-September 13, 2023 - Executive Session; and

-September 20, 2023 - Executive Session

This motion was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the following minutes:

-September 13, 2023 - Business Meeting;

-September 20, 2023 - Business Meeting

This motion was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Warrants:** Chair Mazzola informed that she has signed warrants on behalf of the School Committee. Chair Mazzola then shared the warrant report.

Payroll Warrants:	\$1,915,196.25
Accounts Payable:	\$ 841,159.47
	\$ 22,135.07
	\$ 9,729.50
	\$ 11,302.68
	\$ 401,151.35
	\$ 1,145.61
	<u>\$ 54,756.27</u>
<b>Approved for:</b>	<b>\$3,256,576.15</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 hybrid meetings and the public can 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>.

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 7:07 p.m.

**Appearances:** Back to School 2023 Health Update: Ms. Driscoll was here this evening to give a health update. She shared that no guidance on COVID has come from there Department of Public Health or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. She has reviewed:

- What we were doing in the spring;
- What the American Academy of Pediatrics is recommending;
- She reached out to people that she knows at the Mass. Department of Public Health;
- She talked to Stacy Lane at the Norwood Department of Public Health

This is what we came up with as our best practice:

- While the pandemic is officially over, COVID, much like the flue, remains a public health concern. It is recommended that the very young and older people receive a booster.
- Contact tracing and COVID testing is no longer recommended or required in the school setting. The school nurse will continue to monitor absences and work with the Norwood Board of Health to identify any concerning trends.
- Individuals diagnosed with COVID should quarantine for 5 days and wear a mask in a public setting for an additional 5 days. No quarantine is required for those exposed to an infected individual as long as they are asymptomatic.

Ms. Driscoll reminded to continue good health habits learned during the pandemic.

Ms. Driscoll then shared that there were many programs in place before the pandemic hit. When COVID hit, these programs stopped. She shared that this fall,

we now have a partnership with Dr. Graham Stetson from Modern Eyes here in Norwood (for vision referrals and glasses for students). A dental clinic is now back up and running. Dr. Victor Nyakundi is closing his office on Fridays to help screen our students. She is hoping that we can have another Flu and Covid vaccine clinic during early October.

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

Budget Transfer for Approval: (The transfer we talked about on September 13th)

- For \$82,854 from psychologists salary line to contracted services line.
- Moving \$41,427 from the Willett and \$41,427 from the Coakley Middle School into the Special Ed Medical Contracted Service Line for a total of \$82,854.

Dr. Giblin made a motion to approve this budget transfer in the amount of \$82,494 (the amount on the sheet the Members received) for a school psychologist, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

Dr. Thomson then updated that:

- Erin Grogan will start as Extended Day Director on Monday;
- Dr. Thomson wished Deb Holzendorf well in her retirement and thanked her for her 20 years of service to the Norwood Public Schools;

Communications:

- Alignment by school, classroom, newsletters and individual communication;
- Weekly Community Flyers - Tuesday afternoons;

MCAS - we received the results and are starting to dig deep into the results. We should be ready for a presentation in November

-This week and next week the School Open houses will be happening.

- Dr. Munoz shared some of the things that have gone on with academics.
  - High School Instructional Rounds;
  - PD day 9/18 - *Character Strong* (Kindergarten did *Second Step*).  
HS and MS had training on trauma
  - Assessment and Strategic Instruction -
  - Next PD day is Tuesday, October 17th.

Job Openings:

- Paraprofessionals;
- Assistant Transpiration Director; and
- Extended Day Staff

**Budget:** Budget Sub Committee Update and Budget Balancing Committee Update: Ms. Stewart updated that they met with BBC on September 20th and then met as a sub committee on September 21st. In the packets this evening, the Members should have the minutes from the meeting on the 21st as well as the meeting that was held on the 14th. There is also material in the packets from Budget Balancing that we received from Mr. Mazzucco. He had put together some 5-year predictions as well as some information on Capital Outlay. They will be meeting again on Oct 5th and Oct. 19th and will be going to finance commission on Oct 19th. Have scheduled BBC for Oct 18th and November 6th.

Chair Mazzola said it was hard to get everyone together over the summer. She added that the new Chair of the BBC will be Matt Lane. The plan is to dive deeper into the 5 year projection and plan.

**Old Business:** Long-Term Agenda Review: Chair Mazzola said there are still some things that need to be populated. She said MCAS will be added to the Long Term Agenda. She asked the Members if there were any other items at this time that should be added for November.

There was some discussion that the October 11th Budget items will be moved to the October 25th.

Ms. Stewart asked for Dr. Thomson's quarterly goal check-in for a meeting in October. She reminded that in the beginning of 2024, we will have the 2-year goal cycle. We had agreed that by the end of January we will have Dr. Thomson's self-assessment. By the end of January we will also need to decide who on the School Committee will work on writing up the evaluation. We need to set a date for February for when our individual evaluations are due. On March 6th we will have the composite document completed. Ms. Stewart said that no later than March 20th we will have the Superintendent's evaluation process completed.

Ms. Stewart asked for an update on the Wellness Curriculum and what's going on with that cycle we approved in the spring. She wants to know how does the recent update from the State on the framework come into play with that curriculum cycle. (Before December). Dr. Thomson said that process has not started yet.

School Health Council Update: Ms. Stewart said they met about two weeks ago and she reminded that Mr. Brian Quigley is the Chair. She updated that the following people were In attendance: Heath Begg (student rep), Bob Blood (IMPACT Norwood), Conor Brosnan (IMPACT Norwood), Teresa Stewart (SC), Kate Tigie (Norwood Public Library) and Ryan Quigley.

Member received a copy of the minutes in their packets this evening as well as a copy of the presentation that Heather Begg put together. (Heather gave that presentation to the High School staff already on *How To Build Trust and Relationships with Teachers*. She will be giving the same presentation to the Middle School staff on October 10th.)

At the last School Health Council Meeting they worked on continuing to plan the work and she feels that we are beginning to build more capacity within the community and the Library and Impact Norwood are committed to working with our Health Council. She said there has been a lot of discussion around getting more programming into the Middle School.

Ms. Stewart reminded that every two years we administer the MetroWest Survey so that will be administered in October for 6-12th graders.

Ms. Stewart said we need to do more work getting messaging out about the School Health Council and getting more parents involved. Hopefully with the help of Dr. Taylor we can get some messaging out to the Community.

Ms. Stewart updated that the next meeting will be on November 14th at 3:30 in NHS library.

Middle School Naming: The Chair reminded that we had a public forum last night with many Community Members in attendance. The final three names were:

- Dr. Philip O. Coakley Middle School
- Norwood Middle School
- Robert Fitzpatrick Middle School

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn thanked everyone for coming out last night. She thanked everyone for being involved and using their voices, She said in addition to all the important work the School Committee does, this process is under the School Committee purview and it was a process She reminded that there are great things going on in the Schools and we need our residents to be involved and pay attention to what's going on in the Schools.

Dr. Giblin made a motion to keep the name as is, Dr. Philip O. Coakley Middle School, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

Dr. Giblin thanked everyone for coming out and for the great dialogue. She knows people are frustrated that it seemed to take forever,, but we are doing our best to be the conduits to the community.

Ms. Stewart said that although the majority of the people who spoke on

behalf of the Coakley Middle School, there were people who reached out and spoke in favor of other names and she did not want to overlook them.

The Chair said there were some very nice comments in favor of honoring Bob Fitzpatrick.

Regarding the motion on the table, the Chair polled the Members and they voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Legislative Advocacy: Ms. Stewart asked the Committee if legislative advocacy is something we want to continue working on.

Ms. Stewart said there are plans with the Federal Government to reduce Title 1 Funding by 80%. If the Committee is in agreement, we can add this to the Oct.11th meeting for more discussion.

The Members agreed to continue with this work. The Chair said the more people interested in writing letters the better.

Norfolk County Sheriff's Office Youth Substance Use and Mental Health Task Force: Chair Mazzola said the speaker did not come to the last meeting and so they had some breakout sessions around social/emotional issues. She said it was good to hear that we are not the only towns dealing with these issues, and that other towns are seeing the same things.

She said the next meeting will be on October 23rd and the speaker will talk about the status of grandparents raising grandchildren.

**Policy: Policy Sub Committee Update:** Ms.Sibbing-Dunn said the sub committee starting digging into process and protocol questions about how we will handle regular updates from MASC.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn said one of the items they need to report back on is the PTO Guidelines and donation forms (KSD). She said they are just about ready with this item.

Jaime Smith will update the binders with the most recently approved policies as soon as the policies are updated. Ms. Stewart said the one in the Superintendent's Office needs to be replaced right away as that's the one the public can come in to review.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, the October 3rd at 11:00 a.m.

**New Business: Superintendent Search Process:** Ms. Stewart updated that Dr. Giblin, Ms. Sibbing-Dunn and she attended a webinar with MASC on this topic on September 8th. The Members have the slides from this webinar in their packets. She

said we will be bringing in MASC as a consultant with this process and we have a workshop set up with MASC on October 5th. This will go on the School Committee agenda for October 11th. We will need 1-2 School Committee members to volunteer to lead the Superintendent search process. There are some decisions around community engagement, forums and surveys and how we will create a Search Committee.

SAC Advisor Job Description: Dr. Thomson said in the packets is the job description for the SAC Advisor position. He said we are looking for the Committee to approve this so we can get this position posted.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the SAC Advisor Job Description, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

**Consent Agenda: Acceptance of (1) One Donation:**

-Bay State Textiles - August Rebate - \$774.30

Mr. Hiltz made a motion to accept this donation/rebate, which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

**School Committee Addenda:** Ms. Stewart reflected on some of the comments we have recently received. In the process there were some statements that made her think that the public does not understand the responsibilities of the School Committee. She said the naming of the Middle School (and any school buildings) is under the School Committee purview. She said at some point she would love for us to have some kind of education to share with the community on what we do and what is under the scope of our authority. She then asked that even if the School Committee has to make some hard decisions, she hopes that the Community still supports the schools and the staff and the budget.

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn had none.

Dr. Giblin had none.

Mr. Hiltz had none.

The Chair thanked those who came out to the public forum last night. She said it made her happy that people came out as that means people are paying attention.

**Executive Session:** Chair Mazzola informed that there would be an Executive Session for a Contract Strategy Session.

Mr. Hiltz made a motion for Executive Session at 8:14 p.m. which was seconded by Ms. Sibbing-Dunn. The Committee Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Hiltz made a motion for adjournment at 10:20 p.m., which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Members were polled and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk  
Norwood School Committee