

**Town of Norwood  
School Committee Meeting  
School Committee Room @ Savage Educational Center  
Hybrid  
Wednesday, October 11, 2023**

A hybrid meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, October 11, 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 are 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 (remote - arrived at 7:10 p.m.), Mr. David Hiltz and Ms. Kate Sibbing-Dunn (remote)

**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:** Mr. Hiltz made a motion to approve the following minutes:  
-September 26, 2023 - Middle School Naming Public Forum;  
-September 27, 2023 - Business Meeting  
-September 13, 2023 - Executive Session  
-September 20, 2023 - Executive Session  
-September 27, 2023 - Executive Session

This motion was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Members were polled and voted in favor 4-0. (Dr. Giblin was not present yet).

**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 \$2,824,331.22.

**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 7:07 p.m.

**Appearances: Update on Special Education Staffing (moved up in the agenda):**

Ms. Lori Cimeno, Director of Student Services, was here this evening to update on changes in the status of the contracted paraprofessionals. She reminded that at the School Committee Meeting of September 13, 2023, the School Committee approved 6 paraprofessional positions. She updated that one did not pass the on-boarding and she got notification today that a second person did not pass during on-boarding. She said they are moving forward with 4 contracted paraprofessional positions. She said they continue to have it posted on School Spring and Indeed and they will be having a job fair on the 17th at the Farmers' Market to continue to try to recruit staff. She informed that:

- One is a 1:1 at the Willett;
- Two are at the Oldham (PACS);
- And one is at the CMS in the TASC Program

Ms. Cimeno then shared the exciting news that our LEAD Program has won the *2023 Best Buddies Massachusetts Partner of the Year Award*. She said this award and speaks to the work that Rob Ladue is doing in that program. She said she will keep the Committee posted on the activities that go along with this award.

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

**Updates:**

**Special Populations** - Dr. Thomson updated on the ELL population; Students with disabilities population; and economically disadvantaged population increases as of October, 2023. He said we get an official designation of numbers from DESE in January/February. He shared the numbers which all continue to increase. (Over 1/3 of the students in our district are considered economically disadvantaged.)

**Student Behavior:**

**\*Elementary Schools**

- Piloted several programs last year
- Behavioral Interventionist (ele)
- Behavior Tutors (pilot)

**\*Secondary**

- Revamped restorative justice programming

**\*Implementing new districtwide SEL Program (Character Strong and Second Step in Kindergarten).**

\*PD in Trauma-Informed Instruction

- Message to Families regarding the violence in Israel
  - Very Concerned regarding the war and the images being seen coming out of Israel
  - Dr. Thomson suggested parents look at the Messages to Families that was sent out. This information was also shared with staff
    - Ask parents to monitor what the children are watching;
    - Reaffirm safety with the children;
    - Make time to talk with them about their concerns;
    - Normalize their feelings;
    - Maintain a normal routine;
    - Limit exposure to media (social media) where they may see this;
    - Monitor their emotional state and try to know signs of severe trauma.

If parents see any of signs of concern, Dr. Thomson said it is important that families call the schools to let them know and perhaps get the student some help.

Job Fair - Norwood Farmers Market - Tuesday 10/17 2-5 p.m.

- Assistant Transportation Director
- BCBA
- Paraprofessionals
- Van Drivers
- Extended Day Staff

**Budget:** Budget Sub Committee Update: Ms. Stewart updated that the Budget Sub Committee last met on October 5th. She updated on some of the things the Sub Committee is continuing to work on, including:

- DESE Review;
- Para Update;
- Reviewed Objective 1 to Strategic Plan (Dr. Taylor will review this evening);
- Worked on FY25 Budget Calendar
- Checked in on HR Consolidation Memo from 2021;
- Continue to check on MS Staffing;
- Dr. Fraczek will be coming to the full School Committee on November 15th with a update.

The Sub Committee will meet with BBC on October 18th; will reconvene as a Sub Committee on October 19th; and the Sub Committee will go to the Finance Commission on October 19th.

Update on Special Education Staffing: (moved to Appearances)

Capital Outlay Update Chair Mazzola updated that Capital Outlay voted to endorse the Capital Plan for FY24. The projects that were voted to be moved forward included the Savage parking lot (with Free Cash as the funding source). She said

they will re-convene to endorse the Five-Year Plan. The Capital Plan still needs to be approved by the Finance Commission.

FY25 Budget Timeline: Dr. Thomson began by sharing the good news that 6 out of 11 Pacificas and 3 wheelchair vans have been delivered and are awaiting plates and markings. He said he hopes they will be on-line soon.

He then shared the FY25 Timeline:

9/27	School Committee Meeting - Review Budget Timeline
11/29	Admin. Meeting Review - FY25 Process
12/05	Budget Training Sessions for Staff - Train Staff on Budget Request Forms, Timeline, Questions & Answers Session
12/06 (4-6 p.m.)	Budget Workshop - all invited -deeper dive into Building a Budget with discussions on various topics including roles & responsibilities, Finance law, Funding Sources, Indirect Expenses, Override Pledge, Chapter 70 Aide, Net School Spending, etc.
12/07	Budget Forms to Staff
12/21	Principals will be reviewing that in their buildings
1/3	Review Enrollment/Staffing
Ongoing	Gather info for budget lines/obligations/expenditures history
1/11	Budgets due from Principals / Directors
1/12	Superintendent / Director of Finance - individual meetings with Principals / Directors to review Budget Requests
1/20-2/09	Director of Finance compiles preliminary Budget
2/14	School Committee (Budget Version A presented to SC)
2/28	School Committee Budget Workshop (Review Budget and question & answer session for SC Members)
March-April	Budget Balancing Committee
3/6	School Committee - Budget Updates and Revisions
3/20	School Committee- Budget Updates and Revision
TBD	Finance Committee Meeting
3/27	Budget Public Hearing & School Committee Meeting
4/16	Budget to Printers

Ms. Stewart said that Ms. Bodenhofer is the Chair of the Finance Commission and they would like the Committee come early, possibly March 7th to get a Pulse on where we are. She also said that the idea has been thrown out to the Finance Commission is that our Budget Public Hearing Meeting (3/27) will also possibly be a joint meeting with the Finance Commission. After the presentation and Budget Hearing, she is hoping that the Finance Commission will then vote to approve the budget.

Ms. Stewart said that the December 6th Budget Workshop is for the School Committee and Admin Team. She said we are also planning on inviting the FinCom. We will need to be sure we have a quorum for that workshop.

Then, similar to the Budget Workshop we had last year in February, Ms. Stewart said we are proposing planning another Workshop for February 28th, which we will need to confirm that date as well.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve the FY25 Timeline, with the additional dates just discussed/added, March 7th and March 27th with FinCom, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

Budget Transfers for Approval: Dr. Thomson said we need to move \$2,446 from Inst. Equip - Presc. To Inst. Equip - Repair @ Prescott.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve this transfer, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0

**Old Business: Superintendent Search Process:** Ms. Stewart said she, Dr. Giblin and Ms. Sibbing-Dunn attended a webinar with MASC at the beginning of September and then last week the full School Committee had a similar with MASC and Glen Koocher, who started walking us through the process. Tonight we need to appoint two School Committee Member to be on the Search Committee. We then need to start discussing the composition of the Committee. Also, this evening, we need to start our review of the job description so we can work on revising that and getting it to our attorney and posted by the end of the month.

Chair Mazzola said that we need to now appoint two School Committee Members who will be leading the effort for the search. She, as Chair, would like to appoint Ms. Kate Sibbing-Dunn and Mr. David Hiltz as Co-Chairs of that Search Committee.

Mr. Hiltz updated on the suggested composite of the Search Committee:

- 2 SC Members
- 2 Reps from Town Side
- NPS Staff and Admin.
  - Unit A
  - Elementary Principal
  - Central Office
- 4 parents/guardians: (There would be an application process for these positions)
  - SEPAC;
  - PreK-4
  - 5-8
  - 9-12

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn said they will be creating a new NPA email that parents and NPS staff will be able to send in their letters of interest along with their reasons why they are interested in serving on this Committee.

There was some discussion around the number of people serving on the Committee. Ms. Stewart said that MASC suggesting having between 9-13 Committee Members. She suggesting having two Unit A Members so they can represent Elementary and Secondary.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to amend the draft to include more specific information on who the NPA staff Members are (5 Members) and to include 2 Unit A Members, which was seconded by Dr. Giblin. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

There was some discussion about the timeline. Mr. Hiltz explained that the draft time-line was brought to the Committee this evening for feedback and then they will be moving forward.

Ms. Stewart informed that the Search Committee is a Sub Committee. Jim Hardy of MASC should be at every meeting and every meeting should be posted.

Dr. Giblin said that the application deadline should be a rolling deadline. She also had concerns that around Thanksgiving everyone's availability is limited.

Chair Mazzola said she would like to appoint:

Ms. Myev Bodenhofer - Chair of Finance Committee

Mr. Paul Riccardi - Facilities Director

She has spoken with both of these people and they will be willing to serve on this committee.

Job Description for Superintendent of Schools (last updated in 2017) - The Chair asked the Members for feedback on the job description for the Superintendent of Schools.

There was much discussion and the Members shared their thoughts and recommendations.

Mr. Hiltz said he would make the recommended edits and send to Ms. Sibbing-Dunn for review before sending to Attorney Murray.

Finalizing Objective 1 on the Strategic Plan: Dr. Taylor asked the Committee to vote on the content of Objective 1. She read the updated Objective 1 and summary for the Committee.

**Objective 1:**

**Strategic Initiative:** 1.3 and 1.5 Enhance the alignment of School-Town resources, including financial systems, facilities, and human resources, to strategically advance objectives and initiatives while optimising staffing to maximize the educational experience for both students and faculty.

**Strategic Summary:** This initiative aims to enhance alignment between the town and school financial and human resource processes. It will assess the use of the MUNIS financial package for efficiency improvements in budgeting, billing and benefits. Additionally, it will review the consolidation of Town/School Human Resources and Facilities, exploring potential changes and staffing needs at NPS. This includes integrating School District personnel into the Town's HR study on compensation and classification of positions. Lastly, it will analyse NPS staffing in preparation for a five-year budget and the opening of a new Middle School.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to approve Objective 1, which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

**Legislative Advocacy:** Ms. Stewart updated that, since the last meeting, she has been trying to get in touch with Representative Rogers to find out his opinion on some items. She has not reached him but will keep trying to get in touch and find out what the most up-to-date information is on the Supplemental Budget.

On October 3, Ms. Stewart and Jody Smith met as Unit A does want to continue to work with the Committee on advocacy. She is looking into some things through MTA and Ms. Stewart is looking into things through MASC. There was a webinar on the MASC Resolutions last week and she put the Resolutions in the packet for this evening.

Regarding Title I, it looks like it's on pause right now, but not sure if and when it will come back up. Dr. Thomson gave a quick overview of Title I, saying that we have a good amount of economically disadvantaged students but we are basically down to two schools at this point. They are looking to roll back all of Title 1 funds.

**Policy: Policy Sub Committee Update:** Ms. Sibbing-Dunn updated that they went through some procedure conversations that they will bring to the October 25th meeting. The PTO template (KSD) has been pushed back while they wait for feedback from the PTO's. Handbooks will be pushed back to October 25th meeting.

Chair Mazzola said Ms. Sibbing-Dunn will be reviewing the MASC updates that came out in September and the Chair will review those that came out before September. These will be on the October 25th agenda. The Chair said there is some discussion as to creating a google sheet to have a quick way to see when policies were reviewed and updated.

Staff Handbooks: This item will be moved to the October 25th School Committee Meeting.

Policy Template for School/PTO Projects: This item will be moved to the October 25th School Committee Meeting.

**New Business:** Student Advisory Council Update: Ms. Stewart updated that there is a meeting set with the SAC tomorrow morning during their WIN Block. She said the Members received the agenda in their packets. She said the SAC Members will bring back their goals for the year. They also will need to vote on their Chair. We are supposed to meet every other month that school is in session.

**Consent Agenda:** None.

**School Committee Addenda:** Dr. Giblin had none but said to hold your kids tight given the state of the world right now,

Ms. Sibbing-Dunn had none.

Ms. Stewart had none.

Mr. 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 9:01 p.m. which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee Members were polled and voted in favor 5-0.

**Adjournment:** Ms. Stewart made a motion for adjournment at 9:44 p.m., which was seconded by Mr. Hiltz. The Members were posted and voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk  
Norwood School Committee