

TOWN OF NORWOOD
School Committee Meeting
Savage Educational Center
Wednesday, February 6, 2019

A meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, February 6, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Ms. Myev Bodenhofer, Chair, Mrs. Michele Eysie Mullen, Ms. Teresa Stewart, Ms. Maura Smith and Mr. Dave Catania.

Administrators Present: Dr. Dave Thomson, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Alec Wyeth, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment; and Ms. Ann Marie Ellis, Director of Finance and Operations.

Minutes: Ms. Smith made a motion to table the minutes of January 23, 2019, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Correspondence: Chairwoman Bodenhofer acknowledged receipt of the following correspondence:

Dr. Thomson read a letter from former NHS student (class of 2018) Allie Campbell regarding budget cuts and the possible operational override. Dr. Thomson read the letter out loud.

Warrants: Chairwoman Bodenhofer informed that there were warrants to be signed. She then read the amounts:

Payroll Warrants:	\$	93,311.11
Accounts Payable Warrants:	\$	16,361.08
	\$	30,108.91
	\$	205,408.27
	\$	16,726.26
	\$	22,884.83
Total Expenditures:		\$1,796,723.31

Public Forum: Chairwoman Bodenhofer 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:

Ms. Colleen Reynolds was here this evening on behalf of the Members of the Educational Team from the Willett Early Childhood Center. She said the Willett is the welcome mat for the Norwood Public Schools. She said the Willett represents all aspects of the Norwood Public Schools and reminded that the Willett is open

because the Kindergartens did not fit at the Elementary Schools. She said that the receiving schools will have many disruptions in trying to making room for the kindergartners. Ms. Reynolds encouraged everyone watching this evening's meeting to get out and vote for the override to keep the Norwood Schools a great place to go to schools.

Mrs. Ann Watson, reading specialist at the Willett Early Childhood Center, was here to share her concerns on moving the kindergartners out of the Willett. Mrs. Watson said the amount that will be saved is not justified and she asked the citizens of Norwood to vote for the override.

The Chair said that at this point she would like to move **Reports** up in the agenda. The Committee Members agreed.

Reports: School FTE Analysis: Dr. Thomson reviewed the *Analysis of School Staffing* dated January 28, 2019.

Some of the information included in this report:

-Overall Student population - relatively steady -

Down 56 students (1.5%) since FY10

-Significant changes in population since FY10 -

Special Ed. Students (with IEP's) up by 92 students (15%)

English Language Learners up by 185 students (106%)

-Other interesting stats: (don't have comparable data for FY10)

26 % of our students are economically disadvantaged

3.7% of students have 504 accommodations

-Changes in Administration since FY10

-Increased by 1.8 FTE

-Added Director of Technology

-Added Elementary Math Coordinator to address low test scores

-Changes in teacher staffing since FY10

General Education down by 1.58 FTE's district wide

At High School down by 4.88 FTE's

At Middle School down by 5.20 FTE's

-Special Education up by 7.12 FTE's district wide

Increase of 92 students

-English Language Learner Teachers up by 3.25 FTE's district wide

Increase of 185 students

Ms. Stewart said she is getting a lot of questions regarding occupational therapy and physical therapy services that are provided in the school system. She defined what they both are and explained why some students may need these services.

The Chair said as we talk about Chapter 70 funds, there is a formula that determines what each town gets. It is based on what our enrollment is this in October each year.

Dr. Thomson said there are flaws in the formula that are in the process of being worked out.

Announcements: None.

Appearances: Administrative Structure - Dr. Galligan and Dr. Fraczek were here this evening to speak about the administrative structure.

He began by saying at Norwood High School there is one principal (Dr. Galligan) and one Vice-Principal (Ms. Cindy Derrane). He shared each of their responsibilities and said that they are basically co-leaders of the school.

Dr. Fraczek said at the Coakley there is one Principal and two Assistant Principals. All three administrators are the instructional leaders of the school, the disciplinarians of the school, do evaluations, and handle any day-to-day issues that arise.

Dr. Galligan and Dr. Fraczek shared the importance of the 6-12 Department Chairs. They said the Department Heads still teach classes, but oversee their departments and keep communications going between the middle school and high school .

Dr. Galligan said the Deans are keeping the High School safe. Each grade has their dean all four years. They work with behavior, social/emotional needs, provides a resource for students, they are another branch that can work with the police, courts, and advocate for the student and families. Dr. Galligan reviewed the accountability standards and said without this administrative structure, all the areas of accountability would deteriorate rapidly.

The Committee had an opportunity for questions and comments.

Mrs. Mullen thanked Dr. Galligan and Dr. Fraczek for the wonderful job they are doing and for the hard work of their staff.

Budget: Budget Balancing Committee Update: The Chair updated that in trying to estimate the reimbursement numbers, the Committee went with an estimate of \$12 million. She said they were very surprised to see the Governor's proposal was \$1.1 million more than expected. The Chair shared that she was a little worried that that number may not actually happen, so she spoke with Mr. Bill Buckley of John Roger's office (and who is also a School Committee Member in Walpole). Mr. Buckley said historically the Governor's Proposal may go up but not usually down.

Ms. Steward shared information from a report regarding what the capacity of each elementary school is. If these cuts are made, every school will be way over the capacity.

Dr. Thomson said when talk starts happening about eliminating teachers and closing schools, there are multiple layers of disruption.

At this point in the meeting, Mrs. Mullen made a motion for a 5-minute break, which was seconded by Mr. Catania. The Committee voted in favor 5-0.

Open session resumed at 9:05 p.m.

At this point, the Chair asked if the Committee would like to talk about School cuts or Extracurricular cuts. The Committee decided to start with clubs and activities.

After some discussions, Ms. Smith (with a lot of anger and despair) made a motion to cut **Middle School and High School Clubs and Activities** in the amount of \$44,749.00, which was seconded by Mr. Catania.

The Chair said these are the cuts that will happen if the override does not pass.

With regard to the motion on the table, the Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

The Chair said the next item on the list is **Extracurricular Fine Arts**.

Ms. Smith made a motion to eliminate funding for Extracurricular Fine Arts in the amount of \$125,000, which was seconded by Mr. Catania. The Committee vote in favor 4-1 (Mrs. Mullen opposed).

Once again Ms. Smith shared her despair, as did the other members.

The Chair said the next item on the list is Middle School after school buses.

Mr. Catania made a motion to eliminate funding for Middle School after school buses in the amount of \$27,648, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Ms. Smith opposed).

The Chair said the next on the list was Freshman and J. V. Athletics.

Mr. Catania made a motion to eliminate funding for Freshman and J.V. Athletics, which was seconded by Ms. Smith.

The Committee Members shared their concerns regarding cutting any sports.

With regard to this motion, the Committee voted to eliminate funding for Freshman and JV Athletics 5-0.

Mr. Catania asked how eliminating Varsity would impact student athletes who wanted to play in college.

Mr. Jon Longley, Director of Athletics, said that many students who play sports have a better chance of getting into the colleges of their choice by showing that they participate.

After much discussion, Ms. Stewart made a motion to eliminate Varsity Athletics in the amount of \$354,566, which was seconded by Ms. Smith. The Committee voted in favor 4-1 (Mrs. Mullen opposed).

The Chair began the discussion about the possibility of closing the Willett or the Callahan.

The Committee Members shared their thoughts and became even more emotional at this point in the meeting.

Mr. Catania made a motion to accept the recommendation of the administration to close the Willett Early Childhood Center, which was seconded Ms. Smith.

Ms. Stewart said she is afraid we do not know the ripple effect of this decision. She had major concerns about the caseloads of adjustment counselors and other specialists.

With regard to this motion, the Committee voted in favor 3-2 (Ms. Stewart and Mrs. Mullen opposed).

Mrs. Mullen made a motion to table budget for this evening, which was seconded by Mr. Catania. The Committee voted in favor 3-2 (Ms. Smith and Ms. Stewart opposed).

Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda: None.

Policy: None.

Old Business: Facilities Committee Update: The Chair suggested tabling this item until the next meeting.

New Business: None.

Consent Agenda:

Acceptance of Three Donations:

- Bay State Textiles – Dec. Rebate - \$412.00
- Women’s Community Committee - \$500.00 Gift Card – Cleveland
- Women’s Community Committee - \$500.00 Gift Card – Prescott

Mr. Catania made accept these donations, which was seconded by Mrs. Mullen. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Personnel: None.

School Committee Addenda: Mr. Catania said the votes that were taken this evening were taken under duress. He feels like this Committee is in the driver seat of a car that is heading off a cliff. He is asking the community to help by passing this override to stop this car from going off a cliff with repercussions that cannot be taken back.

Mrs. Mullen said as hard and difficult as this is, your children are safe and we have so many great, caring leaders and teachers.

Ms. Stewart said these cuts go against her morals and she is so afraid that there is so much misinformation going around in this town. She said it is going to be a very long four months. She believes the date of June 3rd is too far away. But she will continue to share accurate information.

Chairwoman Bodenhofer said the information from this evening will be on the school website.

Ms. Smith apologized for her emotions this evening, then said she is not sorry, that she is really mad. She said when students write the kind of letters that we heard this evening, she is mad that it has come to this. She said people need to take action.

The Chair reminded of the dates that nomination papers are due and asked the public to get involved and take action.

Executive Session: None.

Adjournment: Mr. Catania made a motion for adjournment at 10:20 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Mullen. The Committee voted unanimously in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee

