

MINUTES OF THE OUTREACH MEETING OF THE NORWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

October 21, 2024

The Norwell School Committee met in the Meeting Room at Norwell Public Library on Monday, October 21, 2024. Chair Christina Kane called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were Vice Chair Kristin McEachern, Ms. Kane, Clerk Patrick Reed, Lisa DiFrisco and Superintendent Matthew Keegan. The meeting went into Executive Session at approximately 6:32 p.m., and returned to Open Session at 7:03 p.m.

Chair Kane and Superintendent Keegan welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Principal Marc Bender. The *Recognizing Excellence* segment is scheduled each fall so that several Norwell High School seniors who have earned awards may include these prestigious awards with their college applications. This year's recipients, along with their parents, were invited to this meeting to receive their awards and to be recognized publicly for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions. Mr. Bender introduced this year's recipient of the M.A.S.S. Certificate of Academic Excellence award – Olga Spasic. Mr. Bender provided a synopsis of Olga's high school career and accomplishments. Mr. Bender followed this by presenting students with various well-deserved awards including the MSSAA Principal's award to Meredith Cassidy; College Board National Hispanic Recognition award to Emma Corbett; NESDEC awards to Lylia Chase and Ryan Daly; NMSQT Commended Student awards were presented to Molly Bloomfield, Julian Davis, Samuel Liu, Luca Moretti-Fulli and the DAR Good Citizen award to Holly Panttila. Mr. Bender read each award recipient's achievements prepared by his/her school counselor. Mr. Bender and Committee members congratulated the students, their families, and faculty for their role in the students' accomplishments.

Using PowerPoint, Norwell High School 9th and 10th grade students offered an overview of the 9th grade Seminar class, sharing insights into the course and the key topics covered. Joining Ashley Chritchley, the student speakers included Hadley Amon, Sophia DiFrisco, John Fitzsimmons, Jacob Forcier, Eleanor Randlett, and Lucy Webber.

The Norwell High School PTO co-presidents for this year are Jana McCarthy and Susan Panttila. Ms. McCarthy updated the Committee on their activities and fundraising, including various ways the PTO has supported NHS and the teacher grant awards. The PTO will work on re-energizing the program. Ms. McCarthy thanked the Beautification Committee for the landscaping in the front of NHS.

Members of Norwell Arts were in attendance, and Ms. Jill Donovan updated the Committee that when the name was changed in 2022, Norwell Arts went from 0 to 15 committee members, and they are more vision focused. Ms. Donovan noted the various contributions that support the growth of the arts and music programs, and passed out a Playbill to the School Committee. Ms. Donovan displayed the poster for the upcoming play production *Guys & Dolls* with performances scheduled for November 7, 8 and 9.

Norwell High School Boosters President Kristin Poulin updated the Committee on the Boosters' plans and accomplishments for 2024-2025. The Boosters' mission is to promote and support the athletic program, and provide funds to the High School's Athletic Director for the budget. Ms. Poulin thanked Treasurer Janet Lee who continues to help raise and manage funds for the Boosters.

Principal Bender introduced School Council senior student representative Clara Coughlin. Ms. Coughlin discussed the Council's activities and reported on progress related to school improvement goals. The list of Council members and meeting dates was included in agenda packets.

Student Government Representative Holly Panttila noted the successful *Norwell Cares Day* and the new flex time schedule. Upcoming events include the Fourth Wall Players' *Guys and Dolls* play on November 7, 8 and 9, Spirit Week, Homecoming events and jazz concert. The outreach portion of the meeting ended at approximately 7:50 p.m.

Mr. Reed moved to approve the minutes of the Executive and Regular sessions of the Norwell School Committee meeting on September 16, 2024, accounts payable warrants #12, 13, 15 and refund warrants #12 and 13 signed by Ms. Kristin McEachern, and the out-of-state trip request to Charlestown, RI on October 23, 2024, as proposed. The motion was seconded by Ms. DiFrisco and was approved unanimously: DiFrisco, Aye, Kane, Aye, McEachern, Aye, and Reed, Aye.

Mr. Keegan presented a PowerPoint outlining the *2024-2025 October 1 Enrollment and Class Size Report*. The *2024-2025 School Census*, overall, is very similar to last year although there was an increase of 20 students in K-12. This year 89.54% of the Norwell resident students attend NPS. Last year 88.89% of Norwell resident students attended NPS. Overall, the total number of students attending private school over the last four years is as follows: 193 in 2022, 201 in 2023, 189 in 2024, and 179 this year. The NESDEC enrollment report will be presented at the November School Committee meeting.

The second school census sheet shows the specific private schools attended by Norwell residents by grade. There are 16 home-schooled students. The student movement tracker for 2024 tracks students that are moving in and out of the district as well as movement to and from private schools and is based upon October 1st enrollment. Overall, 35 students moved into the district and 16 moved out. The 4 reports noted were include in agenda packets.

The Class of 2024 Update, Graduating Class Profile and SAT Summary Reports were included in agenda packets. 95% of the class participated in the SAT test. The Graduation Profile Class of 2024 included college acceptances and college attended categories. The Graduating Class Profile 1996-2024 allows comparison of SAT scores, National Honor Society membership, graduation plans, and college acceptance since 1996.

A PowerPoint AP Report was presented by Principal Mark Bender. The High School AP program performed extremely well in 2024. A total of 443 tests were taken with 234 test takers (as compared to 252 test takers in 2023) with 87.61% of scores receiving a 3 or higher. The only other three years where the High School was above 80% were 2016, 2017, and 2023. Discussion ensued regarding US vs. European history classes being offered.

Director of Teaching, Learning & Technology Diane Provenzano presented a PowerPoint which was included in agenda packets on the 2024 MCAS Scores. Ms. Provenzano shared with the Committee that the full accountability process has been completed along with school percentiles. Ms. Provenzano provided an overview of MCAS results for grades 3-8 and grade 10 with comparisons to the state and benchmark districts. Overall, scores have followed state trends and continue to approach 2019 scores. Detailed information can be found on the DESE website. Ms. Kristin Poulin, 10 Stanley Road, asked a question regarding the impact on ELA results which was answered by Ms. Provenzano.

Mr. Keegan and the Director of Finance, Operations & Technology Warren MacCallum reported on the bus transportation report that was included in the agenda packet. Cole and Vinal Schools each continue to utilize 8 buses. The High School routes have gone very well this year with all buses consistently arriving before 7:45 a.m. All other schools are reporting on-time buses after a couple of early-year changes. The NPS Busing Practices and Service Standards are being followed as closely as possible, and at this time, every student bus request has been honored. Late runs are being investigated for the possibility of splitting the runs.

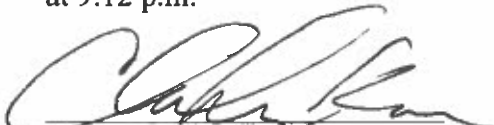
Mr. Keegan updated the Committee on the strategic plan process. Survey results consisted of 1,811 responses from students, staff and community organizations. Steering Committee members are being finalized and the first meeting will be held on November 4 at Norwell High School.

Ms. McEachern attended the October 9 district-wide PTO meeting, and stated the PTO members are energized and enthusiastic to start the year. Ms. McEachern stated that the recent Flannel Fest fundraiser was a great idea where all the PTOs came together for the event.

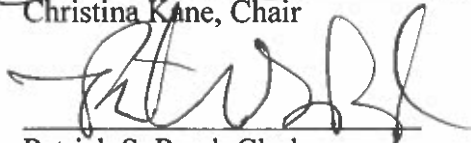
Mr. Keegan updated the Committee with correspondence that was included in agenda packets including the FY'26 Budget Development Process Timeline; MIIA passes; correspondence regarding school safety; Custodians' Memorandum of Agreement; acknowledgement of retirement letter; 2024 MA General Laws book; and school newsletters since the September 18 meeting.

Congress of Councils will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Sparrell Building PD Center on October 22, 2024. The next regular meeting will be on November 18, 2024 followed by a December 16, 2024 Outreach Meeting - Cole School Presentations, both at the Norwell Public Library. The Norwell High School Athletic Hall Fame will be held on October 26, 2024 commencing at 5:00 p.m. at the Clipper Community Complex followed by a dinner at the Cushing Center. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee is scheduled to meet on November 4, 2024 at Norwell High School at 4:30 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Ms. DiFrisco moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m.


Christina Kane, Chair

November 18, 2024


Patrick S. Reed, Clerk

November 18, 2024