



WINTER SPORTS HAVE BEGUN! GO LANCERS! #NPSPRIDE

The Lancer

Newsletter of the Superintendent's Office of the Norton Public Schools

December 2017

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Teaching the Whole Child

by Dr. Joseph Baeta, Superintendent of Schools

I have been asked by a number of families about how we are dealing with the rise in social emotional and behavioral issues within our schools. I am proud to note how we are reorganizing our entire list of priorities by concentrating on the balance between accountability requirements and teaching the whole child.

You may ask, what is teaching the whole child? This initiative is grounded in the idea that every student within our walls deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. Within our District, we have been able to support this initiative by providing for appropriate support staff in all of our schools. We have also undertaken two key support initiatives. The first is the development and implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) PreK-5. We are currently training staff and will continue to move forward with implementation. The second is our Social Emotional and Behavioral Learning Task Force (SEL). This task force is a PreK-12

committee that will provide key guidelines for classroom instruction and protocols. Further, each school will have a School Culture and Climate Committee. Lastly, these two committees will be supported by a student data and information team who will provide raw and hard data about students. For example, we will have data about students available via appropriate means based on confidentiality. These may include MCAS, AP, PSAT, SAT, Free and Reduced Lunch, School Suspension, Behavior Reports, Report Cards, and Student Surveys, etc. Some of these will require parental approval.

Areas of interest that we will address within these committees include homework, grading, school start times, expectations, student handbooks, and courses of study, etc. These are working committees of professionals who have been educated in how to provide the very best to all children.

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Teaching the Whole Child (continued from page 1)

Our goal will be to continue to move forward but the mission is NOT about scores. The mission is about what I will call "balance." Accountability will not be second to the WHOLE CHILD. However, I believe that a well-rounded approach with every child will make a difference. This must include the following "balance" areas:

1. Academics
2. Social Emotional and Behavioral Learning
3. Civics and Engagement; and
4. Athletics and Activities

Our goal must be to provide each student with not only the supports they need but the challenges that they must be prepared to take on. I learned eleven years ago when I became a father that rushing a child's childhood years may be a communities' and schools' biggest mistake. In the end if we don't do it right the first time we can't just hit restart. Public education must return to its foundation- teaching the WHOLE CHILD. More to come in the next publication.

Wishing ALL a great Holiday Season!

We will keep you posted on a regular basis. Follow me on Twitter for District news. [@NortonSchools](https://twitter.com/NortonSchools)

Happy Holidays

Business Office

by Lincoln Lynch, School Business Manager

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The budget process for next school year began on December 4th as budget guidelines, timelines, and request forms were sent to all principals, academic coordinators, and administrators. This year's process calls for a zero based budget which analyzes each and every budget line to address actual needs and alignment with the District's goals. All communication will be through Google Drive as we move towards a completely paperless budget process. Principals and administrators will have a month to work collectively to submit their budgets by January 4th. Meetings between Dr. Baeta, myself, and each principal and administrator will then take place during the week of January 8th. Requests for the next school year are aligned with the District's goals during these meetings and prioritized based on needs. The first budget presentation to School Committee is scheduled for February 5th with a Saturday budget workshop scheduled at the end of that week on February 10th. The final presentation and vote by School Committee is scheduled for February 26th. From there, a budget that supports all students is finalized and a detailed budget book will be submitted to the Town Manager around the middle of March.



Buildings and Grounds

by Wade Lizotte, Director of Facilities

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The leaves have all been raked and the heat has officially been turned on. We say goodbye to Fall and hello to Winter.

General maintenance was performed on all thirteen of the District boilers. The State inspectors were out and delivered new certificates to both the JCS and LGN. Elevator State inspections have been performed at the High School, Middle School and the JCS and all passed.

We saw an end to our Fall sports programs and now welcome in the Winter sports programs. The crew at Norton High worked incredibly hard to get our gym floor refinished for the basketball/wrestling season by applying two coats of floor finish over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Scoreboards at both the High School and Middle School have been serviced and are ready to go.

Winter equipment was ready for the first snowfall of the year. We went ahead and changed the belts, oil, and shear pins in all of the District's snow blowers. The School District's trucks were serviced and ready to plow all of the School Department's parking areas. The sanders were tested and ready to go. Ice melt was delivered and is ready to spread.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy holiday season. During the vacation break my crews will be in the schools getting our buildings ready to welcome everyone back for the New Year. Happy Holidays!

Office of Teaching and Learning

By Jennifer O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

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Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

Teams of teachers and administrators from the JCS, LGN, and HAY have been engaged in a series of trainings this fall on how to implement Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in our schools. PBIS places an emphasis on school wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Instead of using a piecemeal approach of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings.

Research has shown that the implementation of punishment, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Introducing, modeling, and reinforcing positive social behavior is an important step of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of school wide PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.

Throughout the school year, these teacher teams will be working with all school staff to roll out specific school wide expectations, a system for acknowledging and rewarding positive student behavior and building common language for all students.

Best Book Lists for all Students

With the holiday season approaching and a winter vacation on the horizon, I thought I would provide some resources to families that explore great reads for students of all ages. [Elementary Students](#) [Middle School Students](#) [High School Students](#)

Spring 2018 MCAS Dates

Grade 3 ELA: April 25th & 26th
Grade 3 Math: May 16th & 17th

Grade 4 ELA: April 4th & 5th
Grade 4 Math: May 15th & 16th

Grade 5 ELA: April 25th & 26th
Grade 5 Math: May 9th & 10th
Grade 5 Science: May 22nd & 23rd

Grade 6 ELA: April 11th & 12th
Grade 6 Math: May 2nd & 3rd

Grade 7 ELA: April 9th & 10th
Grade 7 Math: April 30th & May 1st

Grade 8 ELA: April 2nd & 3rd
Grade 8 Math: May 7th & 8th
Grade 8 Science: May 14th

Grade 10 ELA: March 27th-29th
Grade 10 Math: May 23rd & 24th
High School Science: June 6th & 7th

Student Services

by Jeanne Sullivan, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

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SEPAC

The SEPAC met on Monday, November 20 from 6-7:30 in the Pupil Personnel Services Office. There were 4 parents and 3 staff members in attendance. During the meeting we discussed the role of the SEAPC as an advisory council to the Director of Pupil Personnel / School Committee. We also discussed that the SEPAC provides supportive educational programs for families. Topics discussed for upcoming meetings include: Reading your Child's IEP, Navigating Finding the Right Therapist / Doctor, Working Through the Guardianship Process, etc. If you have suggestions or ideas, please let us know. We hope you will consider joining a future meeting.



Program Development: Consultation and Staff Training

This year we are focused on developing a program for students with language based learning disabilities at Norton High School. During the October 29 Early Release Day we kicked off this process with a training for all NHS staff provided by

Adam Hickey of Landmark School. Adam provided excellent background information on how language based learning disabilities can affect students in the classroom and best practices for working with students in the classroom. We will be following this initial training with bi-monthly staff consultation and training. Staff from Norton High School have visited the Language Based Program at East Bridgewater High School to see how that program is being implemented and what curriculum tools are being used. In addition, as part of staff training and transition for students, staff from NHS will be spending time in the Language Based Programs at NMS during the Winter and Spring.

At the elementary level, Dr. Barry Plummer, consulting clinical psychologist, is beginning a rotation of meetings with the staff of the BEST and GRIT Programs. The purpose of these meetings is to focus on student needs, staff training and best practices.

L.U.C.K. - Lancers United for Community Knowledge

On Thursday, November 30th, the District held our first L.U.C.K. event of the year. We had approximately 15 families attend a presentation and group discussion facilitated by Dr. Barry

Plummer, consulting clinical psychologist, on anxiety and social emotional issues in child and adolescent development. During the discussion, Dr. Plummer shared information related to brain development, factors that contribute to anxiety in children, signs to look for and strategies to use if you suspect your child is having difficulty. Thank you to those families who were able to attend. We hope you found the discussion useful.

On January 4th, we will have our next L.U.C.K. event on tips for parents to keep students safe when using the internet by nationally recognized speaker, Katie Greer. It will be held from 6:00-7:30 in the auditorium at Norton High School.

Happy Holidays

I want to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Holiday Season!! I hope that you are able to take some extra time to do the things you enjoy with your families.



Technology Department News

by Karen Winsper, Director of Instructional Technology

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Chromebooks at HAY

The School Committee approved using School Choice funds to expand our 1:1 initiative to grades 4 and 5. Similar to the program already in place at NMS and NHS, HP Chromebooks will be leased for our students at no cost to families. In January, the technology department expects to deploy a cart of Chromebooks to each classroom. Devices will be assigned to students who will use them throughout the day at their teacher's discretion. Different than the devices in grades 6-10, the HAY Chromebooks will remain in school and not go home with the students. Students will still be responsible for the daily care and use of the devices making sure they are properly and securely stored at the end of each day. We look forward to sharing how students enhance their learning by having access to these devices.

NHS Library

Lots of great things are happening at the High School library. Students are enjoying the new additions to their Makerspace! We just added Makey Makeys and Little Bits for students to explore coding and they're delving into virtual reality with the new 360-degree camera and VR goggles. The LEGO wall and origami supplies offer creative outlets for students.

Students in the new IT and Innovation class have been busy helping staff and students with their tech needs. From chromebook repair and maintenance to assisting teachers with integrating FlipGrid into their classrooms, these students are ready to help at a moment's notice. When they're not needed in the help desk capacity, these students are exploring programming with Raspberry Pi and pursuing independent tech projects.

Hour of Code Week

This past week, students across our schools participated in Hour of Code activities during Computer Science Education week. From the Code.org website, "The Hour of Code started as a one-hour introduction to computer science, designed to demystify "code", to show that anybody can learn the basics, and to broaden participation in the field of computer science." We believe that every student should have the opportunity to learn computer science. The following are some of the activities explored in our schools.

Kindergarten students at the LGN worked on coding fuzzes with Kodable.



This activity required students to solve puzzles by thinking logically to move a fuzz along a specific path.



First and second graders

explored the Code and Go Mouse robots by programming them with directional signs. Students at JCS did similar programming with the Beebot robots. Students also programmed the Dash robots to

throw a ball! HAY students worked through coding activities on the

Code.org website that included Moana, Frozen, Minecraft and Star Wars.



At NMS this month, students in STEM participated in multiple Hour of Code

activities. All grades designed animated Google Doodles to represent an event or interest of their choosing. In addition, 6th graders mastered their computational thinking skills by coding motion and light shows using Sphero robots. Grade 7 students explored virtual reality by building a winter holiday scene of their own using CoSpaces Edu and Grade 8 students created original apps that they brought to life on Android tablets.



Norton High School added a new class this year called Introduction to Programming. The course is designed to get students interested in programming while also teaching them to use logical reasoning to solve problems. Students started the semester using block based coding and have now progressed to be able to write their own programs in Javascript. For CS Education week, we switched gears a little bit and the students used their coding skills to create their own applications and interactive games using the Code.org AppLab and GameLab programs which also utilize Javascript. Students also used their phones to program Spheros to be able to navigate the first floor of the high school using their coding skills and quite a bit of trial and error.

