



NORTON POLICE WELCOME BACK OUR STUDENTS FROM VACATION WITH HIGH 5 MONDAY!

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

February 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Office of the Superintendent

by Dr. Joseph Baeta, Superintendent of Schools

As we enter the final stages of the budget process and make recommendations we have prioritized the following:

1. *Social Emotional and Behavioral Learning*
2. *Teaching and Learning*
3. *Special Education; and*
4. *Instructional Technology*

All four of these areas are focused on the individual student. The increase in mental health and behavior issues or what we call social emotional and behavioral learning has increased significantly within your schools. From students in our Little Lancers PreSchool to students in their senior year at Norton High School, we see it daily. At the

earlier ages it is grounded in an increase in behavioral issues. At the middle and high school levels, we see student anxiety and depression at the highest level I have observed in my 26 years in the field. We are recommending an increase in staffing, programming and supports. Specifics to be published in the coming weeks.

Teaching and learning is always our focus. This year we will focus on how to improve on interventions with attention to our Title I program and how we provide interventions to students. This will be a PreK-5 focus area. From class size to equity our priority will be focused on the needs of individual students.

-continued on page 2-

Business Office	Page 2
Buildings and Grounds	Page 3
Office of Teaching & Learning	Page 3
Student Services Office	Page 4
Technology Department	Page 4



-continued from page 1-

Special education can only improve if we improve general education. This begins with every classroom teacher recognizing the needs of students and every administrator supporting “in the box” and “outside the box” ideas. However, I would suggest that within the box we must think differently about everything from methodology to actual resources being used.

Lastly, we have and will continue to focus on instructional technology support. Our students are being provided the actual tools. The next step is providing more supports for each student with attention to the use of technology as a tool to improve instructional practice. We must do this using a balanced approach.

All of these priorities require parental/guardian input and support. The days of schools doing it themselves have come and gone. We either work to address our common goals and needs or we become a district that will struggle. Now the fun begins.

Norton High School and Norton Middle School students were recently recognized at a School Committee meeting for their achievements in music.



Business Office

by Lincoln Lynch, School Business Manager

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Budget

The Superintendent’s Recommended Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) budget went to a School Committee vote on February 26th. After a productive Saturday budget meeting on February 3rd and a discussion at the February 8th meeting, priorities for next school year and a tentative budget request were established. A public forum was conducted on the same night as the February 26th School Committee meeting. The forum was open to public comment. The School Committee voted to put forth a school department budget of \$30,181,994.

Transportation

Bus registration and fee information for next school year will be provided to all families by the end of March. Registrations and payments will be due much earlier if your child plans to take the bus next year. A main reason for this is so bus passes can be printed and distributed in a timely manner. All registrations will be **ONLINE ONLY** to avoid duplicate registrations. Tentative due date for registration and payment is the end of July. If registration is completed after the final due date, your child will be put on a waitlist for the bus until September so please register early! There will be a significant amount of reminders sent out to families so please be on the lookout.

Food Service

I ask you to please take a moment, if you haven’t recently, to take a look at your child’s school lunch account balance. You can do so by logging into your MySchoolBucks account here:

<https://www.myschoolbucks.com/ver2/login/getmain?requestAction=home>

If you do not have an account, you can call the Food Services Department for your child’s balance at 508-285-0150.

Buildings and Grounds

by Wade Lizotte, Director of Facilities

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With February in the rearview mirror now, we start to look forward to March and the promise of Spring. During the much needed February break, the custodians continued to clean and do small repairs to their buildings. Every single classroom district wide was disinfected with our newly purchased electrostatic sprayers. I can promise you that our team is doing everything possible to keep our schools safe and clean.

During the past vacation period we also added several new cameras to all five schools. We have been working diligently behind the scenes, whether it's installing new cameras, new classroom doors and locks or just being in constant communication with our local Fire Department and Police Department. We are doing everything in our power to assure our staff and students' safety.

School facility management directly affects teaching and learning, student and staff health, day-to-day building operations, and the long-term fiscal health of the entire education organization. Our facilities are the public's view of the quality of our educational system and our ability to be good stewards for the taxpayer. We work extremely hard here and take this task seriously.

Office of Teaching and Learning

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

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Kindergarten registration is open and registration packets are available to print on the [NPS website](#). Children who will be five years old on or before August 31, 2018, are eligible to enter Kindergarten in the fall of 2018.

Completed registration packets should be returned to the Superintendent's office located at 64 West Main Street and are **due by March 9, 2018 in order to secure an appointment for our spring screening dates.**

Parents and guardians are invited to join us for a Kindergarten Open House on Thursday, March 8th, 2018, at your child's school from 6:00 to 7:00 pm. The building principals will be available to answer your questions about our kindergarten program and offer you a tour of the school.

Student Services

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Districtwide Social Emotional Learning Advisory Committee

On Thursday, February 1, 2018 we held a full day kick off meeting for the District Wide Social Emotional Advisory Committee. This committee has representatives from all of our schools, parents, school committee and administration. This Committee will be working to review data related to our students' social emotional development, curriculum and practices that are happening in our schools. The information collected from this review and discussions will be utilized to develop a plan for balancing the social emotional needs of our students while they are in the educational setting.

Students Connecting with the Community

Mrs. Mary Bennett, Speech Language Pathologist and Mrs. Susan Bergstrom, Occupational Therapist have partnered together at the H.A. Yelle School to help students connect to the community. Some of our students are working on their letter writing, language and fine motor skills by writing letters to penpals at the Norton Senior Center. It's so great to see these connections being made!

Little Lancers

On Wednesday, January 31 the Little Lancers Preschool held an Open House at JCS for Prospective Families. Mrs. Kefor, Early Childhood Coordinator along with some of our teachers and therapists provided an overview of the program and provided tours of the classrooms, cafeteria and playground. Thank you to all those that attended. We look forward to serving your children.

Extended School Year Services

For those families who have children with IEPs that call for Extended School Year Services, the ESY Program will be held from the week of July 10-August 9, Tuesday - Thursday from 8-12. The location is TBD.

Technology Department

by Karen Winsper, Director of Instructional Technology

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The Lancer Film Festival is a new initiative of the Norton Public Schools that aims to celebrate original media created by students and staff. Teachers are encouraged to include options for students to create films and videos when assigning curriculum projects throughout the school year. Students may then choose to submit their original media creations for recognition at the Lancer Film Festival. Staff are also encouraged to create original films and videos that

engage and inspire others. The inaugural event will be held on June 5, 2018 and we are looking for community representatives to assist with judging entries and volunteering on the day of the event.

We would love for you to sign up to volunteer today!

<https://goo.gl/G78oXK>

