

# The Record

LOCAL NEWS

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THE RECORD

## EDUCATION

### Norwood schools chief taking a final bow in an admiring town

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NORWOOD – Here's the gist of Superintendent Andrew Rose's answering machine message: "Each day is a gift. That's why we call it the present."

Friends and admirers say that this sentiment has characterized Rose's tenure at Norwood public schools for 29 years. At the end of this month, Rose will exit the school's front doors for the final time when he retires.

Mayor James Barsa says Rose will not be easily forgotten. "I estimate that based on 29 years, he touched the lives of over 2,000 children and that's probably a low number," he said. He left his mark on several generations "because sometimes he taught parents and, years later, their children."

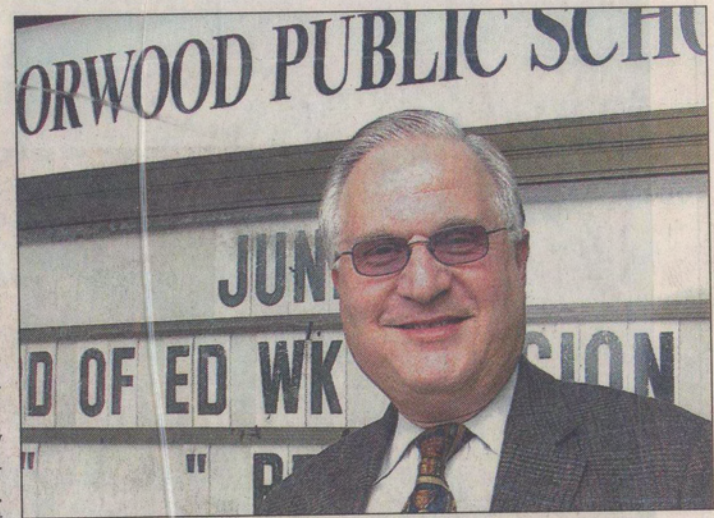
Barsa issued a proclamation in which Norwood named June 25 Dr. Rose Day. "He was instrumental in creating one of the highest-rated schools in the area," he said. Local officials and community

leaders credit Rose with forging stronger ties between the school and community, raising academic scores, helping to pass the budgets, building projects every year, recruiting better teachers and enhancing special education programs.

"He has been a visionary leader," said Betty Johnson, principal of the Norwood Public School. "He has had an excellent rapport with community leaders, boards of education, staff, parents and students. He is admired and respected by his colleagues locally and in the county."

Michael Sprague, president of the Board of Education, credits Rose with his ability to reach out to community groups. Because of that, the schools secured more than \$1 million in donations from local organizations, he said.

Rose, 64, who majored in music in college, worked as a teacher in



DEENA YELLIN/STAFF

Andrew Rose is retiring after 29 years in the Norwood public schools, where he was praised as "a visionary leader."

New York City for 13 years before coming to Norwood. He enjoyed teaching challenging students. "Many of them were in gangs and came from violent homes," he recalled. But they soon became comfortable with the soft-spoken Rose and his classroom, which had a strict set of expectations.

Rose hopes to spend his new-

found free time writing books, playing his clarinet and learning to dance. He also hopes to work in a non-profit organization that helps immigrant parents advocate for their children in schools.

As he prepares to leave a profession to which he's dedicated his entire career, he ponders the role schools play in shaping students' lives.

"When I came to Norwood, the school was focused on teaching basic skills. Now, the state requires higher order thinking skills. Now the test has become the curriculum in New Jersey. But we need more people who can think with ingenuity. I don't believe education is a science that can be measured. You need to develop imagination and creativity," he said.