

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Special Meeting – July 8, 2020

.A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, July 8, 2020, at 1:00 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

Present and participating remotely were:

- Jeanne Downs, Chair
- Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
- Nate Buffum (arrived at 1:30 p.m.)
- Kim Reichelt
- Kathie Steinberg
- Chris Ryan (Non-voting member-elect)

The following administrators arrived to the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Also participating remotely:

- Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

- Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

- Leisha Simon, Director of Technology & Accountability
- Julia Junghanns, Director of Board of Health
- Dr. Arnold Soslow, Board of Health
- Dr. John Schuler, Board of Health
- Susan Green, Board of Health
- Ruth Mori, R.N.
- Louise Miller, Town Administrator
- Ben Keefe, Public Buildings Director
- Anne-Louise Klaus, SEPAC Co-chair

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 1:02 p.m. The meeting was recorded by WayCAM and was conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and according to the revised open meeting law that allows remote participation. A roll call was taken:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Nate Buffum	absent	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	
Chris Ryan	X	

1. Discussion of Superintendent Search Process:

Jeanne called school districts similar to Wayland for reference checks regarding the search firms being considered to conduct the superintendent search. Jeanne reviewed the information she received regarding MASC, NESDEC, Collins Center, Hazard, Young & Attea, and Future Management Systems. A discussion ensued about the firms and the comparisons with a Committee preference for Future Management Systems.

The School Committee will invite Lyle Kirkman of Future Management Systems to its meeting on July 15. Jeanne will ask Mr. Kirkman to send a contract prior to the meeting. Funding for the superintendent search was also discussed. Jeanne will look into the funds available.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Special Meeting – July 8, 2020

2. **Consent Agenda: (taken out of order)**

- Approval of Minutes: June 17, 2020
- Approval of Chris DiBona as School Committee Appointee to Wayland Housing Partnership and Notification to Board of Selectmen Accordingly

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Consent Agenda. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

3. **Administrative/Procedural Matters: (taken out of order)**

- Discussion of Topics for July 13th Training:
Kathie explained the proposed topics for the July 13th training, such as the existing structure, the role of the Committee, oversight, and communication, as well as a recommended training format. In addition, the role of the School Committee during the COVID-19 pandemic including the challenges were recommended. A discussion ensued in terms of the role and parameters of the facilitator of the training and the Committee’s expectations during the session. This discussion will be resumed later in the meeting.

Nate Buffum, Arthur, Parry, Susan, Richard arrived to the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Nate Buffum submitted his resignation last week as a member of the School Committee so that Chris Ryan, member-elect, could become a voting member. Nate joined the meeting to make a public statement to the members of the School Committee, administrators, teachers, district staff, and the community about his experience and take-aways while serving on the Committee during the past three years.

Arthur expressed his appreciation to Nate for his service on the School Committee and all that he is contributed to the district. On behalf of the School Committee, Jeanne also thanked Nate for his unique perspective as an educator and his dedication and effort.

Nate left the meeting at 1:42 p.m.

4. **Comments & Written Statements from the Public:**

Alexia Obar, 18 Dean Road, the parent of a rising senior asked for the School Committee’s support in assisting the new senior class to prepare for applying to colleges and what it will look like in this new world. Families lack guidance and there is a huge need to help these kids, given college applications are due in October. She suggested that a checklist or a timeline, as well as online office hours, would be helpful in this regard.

5. **Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve SEPAC Gift Fund Account:**

SEPAC Co-Chair Anne-Louise Klaus asked the School Committee to approve the creation of a SEPAC gift fund account comprised of funds that are raised by SEPAC. These funds will help with events for all parents and the Wayland community, as well as providing staff training and/or website costs.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the establishment of a SEPAC gift fund account. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Meeting – July 8, 2020

6. **Discuss COVID-19 Response:**

- Discussion of State Guidance and Proposed Fall 2020 Plan for District, including Teaching & Learning and Operational Aspects and Discussion with Board of Health:

Susan Green called the Board of Health meeting to order at 1:50 p.m.

Arthur, Parry, and Susan reviewed the proposed models to reopen the schools in the fall, as well as the guiding principles and the time line in place that began in late May with the establishment of two working groups – Teaching & Learning and Operations. The Commissioner of Education asked districts to prepare for three models – All-In, Hybrid, and Remote – and to aim for a minimum of 3 feet of distance to 6 feet of distance.

The academic implications, such as school structure, curriculum coverage, and the level of necessary parental support were presented for all three models. In terms of the all remote model, the level of asynchronous learning opportunities is high, while providing regular high-quality synchronous instruction is challenging. Some students can excel while this model presents problems for struggling students and those lacking consistent adult support. The amount of elementary curriculum covered can range between 50-75% and would be higher in the secondary grades since these students can work more independently. However, accessibility and mastery can differ based on the level of parental support.

The hybrid model is a combination of in-school learning and remote learning. There would be a weekly rotation of 50% of students allowing for smaller class sizes of about 10-12 students. During the remote week, there would be limited opportunity for synchronous instruction and more independent work would be emphasized. It is possible that some courses could be all-live or all-remote, and curriculum coverage would depend on the subject area and the ages of students and would range anywhere from 50-80%. The challenges facing families and staff would be childcare during the remote week, as well as the challenges for struggling students. Finally, moving from a hybrid model to an all-in model would be structurally challenging.

An all-in person model in each school would appear very differently from the norm. There would be social distancing and mask wearing. The safety protocols could reduce the amount of instructional time, such as the arrival and dismissal times and the time to get from class to class in the high and middle schools. In most subject areas, the curriculum coverage could be 85+% with some exceptions. The goal is to move forward with student learning, but there have been curriculum gaps in some subjects that have surfaced as a result of remote learning last spring. There would be minimal child-care challenges with this model, but there could be limitations in regard to before- and after-school care. Cohort models are easier at the elementary level, somewhat easier in middle school, but more difficult at the high school. Struggling students would benefit from this model in terms of support. Arthur added that elementary students will eat lunch in a common area while socially distancing 6 feet.

In terms of special education students which is guided by law, Richard commented that the district is positioned from a resources perspective to deliver instruction on all three proposed models. DESE is working on the comprehensive special education guidance for the 2021 school year, and it's possible that the final version of this guidance will be available tomorrow. DESE has recommended the importance of providing full-time in-person instruction to students with disabilities, particularly those with high needs and pre-school students, if either the hybrid or remote model is implemented in school districts. Richard reviewed the three proposed models and the implications and challenges to deliver services for special education students, adding that in-person is the preferred model while all remote is the most challenging.

Susan reviewed the health and safety protocols, the planning for students and staff to socially distance in the school buildings, the necessary updates to the buildings' operational systems, and the projected costs to meet the state-mandated requirements to reopen. She explained that the district will use CDC standards for day and night cleanliness and sanitation, audit each room to determine room configurations for social distancing, repurpose rooms and modify spaces, create outdoor instructional spaces, plan arrivals, dismissals and transition protocols and pathways, establish staffed isolation rooms and assign COVID-19 coordinators, and purchase State and DOH approved PPE and cleaning supplies.

In terms of operations and facilities, the district will hire an engineer/HVAC specialist to assess and verify air ventilations systems in every instructional and office space that are operating at building code. Repairs and air ventilation units will be modified as necessary, and air filters will be upgraded to a minimum of MERV 11. Finally, custodial staff will be adjusted to ensure that CDC cleaning protocols are being followed. Susan reviewed the estimated costs for each model: 100% all-in return is \$1,022,055 and a hybrid 50% return is \$864,905. Also reviewed were the possible resources to help with these mandated requirements, such as the Federal Coronavirus Relief Fund which is allotted to the Town of Wayland and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund) grant which

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Meeting – July 8, 2020

is allotted to the Wayland Public Schools. A third program for relief funding could be available to the Wayland Public Schools through DESE for an additional allotment of \$225 per pupil or \$607,000. More details will be forthcoming by DESE. Finally, Arthur added that based on the health and safety protocols recommended by the Commissioner of Education, the district can comply and bring students back to school in the “all-in” model and recommends doing so.

The School Committee posed the following questions:

- To what extent can the ventilation improvements be considered capital or operating expenditures? Are there capital projects and/or funding that were not included in the FY21 budget due to COVID that could offset the ventilation improvements? A discussion in this regard ensued and how the available funds will be used to prepare the buildings to reopen.
- What is the difference between 3 feet vs. 6 feet of distance? Based on research and data, Dr. Arnold Soslow recommended that the district should strive for as close to 6 feet as possible. Other members of the BOH commented in this regard, adding that information changes quickly in several areas and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has not weighed in on social distancing. Dr. John Schuler commented on the level of health risks of children based on studies and information available.
- Does the BOH have an opinion of balancing the medical health issues around COVID and the mental health curriculum loss issues as a result of spring remote learning and moving forward into the fall? Dr. Soslow commented that it is always the goal to mitigate the risks diagnostically and procedurally as much as possible and transparency is very important. Dr. Schuler noted that based on data and the low risks to kids, it is more important to have them back in school; however, everything should be done reasonably and feasibly to protect everyone while keeping limitations in mind.

A discussion ensued regarding a contingency plan if the supply chain is exhausted and the possibility of a staggered schedule for elementary schools and the middle school and high school. Susan Bottan reported on the status of PPE supplies, Parry commented on the implications of moving from one model to another (hybrid to all-in or all-in to hybrid), and Arthur noted that the district is ready to go all remote if necessary. Board of Health member Susan Green’s opinion is to try to get kids back in school in the beginning, keeping other plans in place if the COVID situation changes; she elaborated.

Susan Bottan addressed the full year costs of \$1M for reopening school, adding that some projected costs are for a full year and some are for a partial year (6 months). Susan described the transportation plan, according to Mass. General Laws, for those who live more than two miles from school, including for those families, based on need, who have registered and live less than two miles. All Boston students will be transported to and from Wayland, but an additional three busses will be needed from the current bus fleet. If extra busses are needed, the cost is \$106,000 per bus. Only 24 students can be on a bus at one time each in a seat. Students will wear masks and the bus driver will monitor this.

Arthur described the procedures taken to assess every room in terms of 3 feet vs. 6 feet of distance according to the guidance. Ben added that when measuring from edge of chair to edge of chair, the distance is actually 4.5 feet between students. Susan addressed the utilization of spaces in the buildings that can be repurposed, particularly during lunch, music and art. A discussion ensued in this regard, including the importance of air coming in from the outside in buildings and on busses and the ability to place students in cohorts at elementary and secondary levels. Arthur confirmed that students will be in areas that will allow for 6 feet of distance while eating lunch. Kathie asked the BOH to provide some information in terms of lessons learned from the Wayland businesses that have had staggered openings that could inform the schools reopening.

Jeanne asked about the BOH’s process in terms of approving a reopening plan for the schools by the School Committee. It was recommended that once a decision has been reached, there should be a daily or weekly checklist prepared that meets all CDC standards and requirements for the BOH to review. Julia Junghanns recommended a school self-attestation regarding a chosen plan. Julia Junghanns and Ruth Mori will be the BOH contacts for the school department. A discussion ensued about the process if a student or adult tests positive for the virus, including a contingency remote learning plan for students. With respect to teachers/adults, there are OSHA COVID obligations with respect to protocols and safety which must be signed off by the Town.

The BOH left the meeting at 3:47 p.m.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Special Meeting – July 8, 2020

- Discussion of Feedback Process:
Surveys will be sent out to staff and families that will include questions regarding each model. Parents will be asked to note their preference in terms of sending their children to school or if they will keep their children at home. Parry commented on communications with staff in this regard, but they have not reached out to Parry since the last survey. However, he anticipates staff concerns if school reopens. Arthur noted the timeline of the three or four question qualitative survey. A discussion ensued about the importance of clear messaging regarding social distancing given the conflicting opinions of the research.
- Next Steps:
There will be several listening sessions for staff and families going forward. Two School Committee members will be in each session per the Open Meeting Law. A discussion ensued about the members' role in the listening sessions, including the structure of the listening sessions and the School Committee's involvement in terms of welcoming participants at the beginning of each session. Each session will be recorded and posted online. More sessions will follow after the School Committee's vote targeting different levels and special education students.

7. Financial Matters:

- Review of and Possible Vote to Approve Chromebook Lease:
Leisha Simon reviewed the Chromebook lease, which is a refresh of the lease, for students in Grades 4 to 8. Three quotes were secured for the lease and hardware, and the bid was awarded to HP. Funding for this lease has been in the budget and is due at the end of August. Upon School Committee approval, it will be necessary to get the imminent approval of the Town Administrator.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Chromebook lease. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Arthur left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

8. Administrative/Procedural Matters:

- Discussion of Topics for July 13th Training:
This discussion will be postponed to July 10. Kim suggested that the training is postponed until members can participate in one format – remotely or in person. A discussion ensued in terms of the impending issues around COVID-19 that should be addressed sooner rather than later.
- Discussion of Possible Community Outreach Opportunities:
This agenda item was passed over.

9. Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:

None.

10. Executive Session:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to enter Executive Session at 4:36 p.m. for the purposes of a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; and b) approving the following Executive Session Minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 22: June 17, 2020. The School Committee will not come back into open session, but will adjourn in Executive Session. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Meeting – July 8, 2020

Kathie Steinberg X

The School Committee will be joined by Parry Graham, Assistant Superintendent, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will adjourn in Executive Session and will not reconvene in open session.

Chris Ryan left the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

11 . Adjournment from Executive Session:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 5:00 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Memo re: FY21 Chromebook Lease
3. Quote re: Chromebook Lease – HubTech2
4. Quote re: Chromebook Lease – HPFS
5. Chromebooks BID Compare List FY21
6. Minutes of June 17, 2020
7. Executive Session Motion