

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Meeting – August 26, 2020

A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, August 26, 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 (arrived at 1:20 p.m.)
Kim Reichelt
Chris Ryan
Kathie Steinberg

Also participating remotely:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Anne Flaherty, WHS Class of 2016
Larissa Sehringer, WHS Class of 2016
Tony Laing, METCO Director
Caroline Han, Equity & Diversity Coordinator
Betsy Gavron, WMS Principal
Heath Rollins, Athletic Director
Leisha Simon, Director of Technology & Accountability

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 1:03 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	absent	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

1. Comments and Written Statements from the Public:

Jeff Sklar, 18 Brooks Road, made some suggestions regarding meetings, such as providing a direct link to all meeting videos on the School Committee webpage and providing a list of upcoming meetings. He referred to a WHS School Council meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 27, and noted that there is an open meeting law complaint about these meetings because they have not been posted with the Town Clerk. Mr. Sklar commented that the 1993 Education Reform Act requires that these meetings are posted and open to the public to give the public an opportunity to express their views. He suggested that the School Committee attend this school council meeting and provide an update to the public.

Jeanne read a public comment from Lori and Bill Caddoo in which they expressed their support of both athletics and extracurricular activities for the students during this school year. They are essential to the mental health of many students and provide some sense of normalcy and in-person social opportunities. The Caddoos added that so many students rely on athletics and extracurricular activities as a foundation during the college admissions process.

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Erin Hines, a rising WHS senior, called in to the meeting to encourage the School Committee to vote to approve the return of sports, particularly for seniors and their college application process.

Jeanne read a public comment from Paul and Gretchen Dresens in which they asked for the School Committee's vote to allow athletics and extracurricular activities this fall even during a modified season. The Dresens asked about coaching stipends and the possibility of Middle School sports starting at the same time as High School sports. They added that the students need these activities, not only for physical benefits but also for their mental health and wellbeing.

Alexia Obar, 18 Dean Road, expressed her concern that there is no detailed reopening plan for the High School and the lack of communication about the possibility of seniors meeting with guidance counselors in person to discuss the college application process. She added that the information coming from the Guidance Department does not match the goals of WHS and there is a lack of clarity. Ms. Obar referred to the School Council process, including nominations for parents to serve on the Board. *Jeanne responded that Allyson Mizoguchi presented the detailed plan for WHS at the last School Committee meeting and is scheduled to be sent to families by August 31.*

Ellen Grieco arrived at 1:20 p.m.

2. Administrative/Procedural Matters:

- Update on Superintendent Search:

Jeanne informed the School Committee that it has a meeting with Future Management Systems on Friday, August 28, at 9:00 a.m.

- Discussion and Possible Vote to Update Integrated Pest Management Program with Mosquito Spray Products:

The School Committee reviewed Policy EBAB (Pest Management) referring to the district's integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds. Triple EEE was found in Massachusetts recently, and the sprays used to spray mosquitos are not included in the policy. The Town would like to spray the perimeter of the High School in preparation for Town Meeting using the sprays they used last year, and this would require a School Committee vote to incorporate these sprays into the integrated pest management procedures to avoid approval each year. Jeanne provided options for the vote. A discussion ensued regarding the types of chemicals used.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the one-time application of the pesticide at the High School as detailed today in preparation for the Annual Town Meeting and in accordance with Policy EBAB. 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	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

3. Consent Agenda:

- Approval of Minutes: July 22, 2020

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) 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	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

4. Discussion of Black Lives Matter Petition:

Wayland High School Class of 2016 alumni, Anne Flaherty and Larissa Sehringer, came before the School Committee and presented a petition of over 700 signatures regarding anti-racism and white privilege education in the K-12 schools. Many of the petitioners contributed to this effort. Their goal is to address this issue holistically and share some ideas of why change is needed and how to move forward, as education determines how we think, how we understand the world,

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and how we use empathy and address biases. Ms. Flaherty and Ms. Sehringer shared some of the difficult experiences of BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) students and families in the Wayland schools and in the community. Several suggestions were offered as a way to begin the work needed to make a difference in this regard. They include providing textbooks as part of a required curriculum by Black, Latinx, Asian, and Native American authors, as well as a careful evaluation of all textbooks used in all departments in terms of visual representation of people. These books should include, not only racism and struggles but also the everyday lives and contributions of the authors. Celebrations are recommended for Black History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, National Hispanic Heritage Month, and National Native American Heritage Month in a more holistic way, and BIPOC students should not be required nor singled out to plan these celebrations but rather as a collaborative effort among all students. In addition, the district must establish serious consequences or repercussions for micro-aggressions and racial slurs and work with the offender so he/she understands the impact of his/her actions to avoid this type of behavior moving forward. The override process must change for high school and middle school students, whereby students are automatically enrolled in A/P and Honors classes using the GPA as a good metric of a student's potential and intelligence. The students, however, will have the flexibility to opt out of A/P and Honors classes. They suggest that Wayland hires BIPOC teachers to teach a race class and require ongoing anti-racism training for teachers, coaches, guidance counselors and all other faculty. Finally, it is important to hire more teachers of color in all departments and that they feel supported and welcomed.

Larissa and Anne acknowledged that Wayland is moving toward these recommendations, but stressed that the process could move faster. A discussion ensued in this regard. Kim recommended incorporating the LGBTQ community into this process and questioned if an automatic enrollment into A/P and Honors classes, even with an opt-out option, was the best approach. Larissa noted that she has consulted with a state legislator, and there is an effort to pursue the adoption of a bill in the legislature for every public school district to include anti-racism education in its curriculum.

METCO Director Tony Laing agrees with the recommendation to expand month-long affinity celebrations for all races and ethnicities in a more holistic way. He suggested ways in which to embed issues of cultural diversity and inclusion in Wayland, such as using food to celebrate and acknowledge different cultures. Tony commented on the importance of hiring BIPOC teachers, adding that it is equally valuable to achieve collaboration with co-teaching as well as making new teachers and staff of color feel comfortable and welcomed.

Arthur confirmed that the district is focused on more students of color in advanced classes, adding that this process starts at a young age. Diversity and Equity Coordinator Caroline Han is working on more advanced staff professional development over the next year and has formed a parent group that will support and advocate for our efforts. Finally, there has been a big focus on hiring staff of color noting that there is more work to be done.

5. COVID-19 Response:

- Discussion with Middle School about Fall Reopening Plans:
WMS principal Betsy Gavron presented the reopening plan that focuses on safety, limiting cohorts, and diving into a deep academic engagement while meeting all students' needs in an equitable manner. The middle school model contains three big academic pieces each day in the "AAXBB" structure and will remain constant whether in remote or the hybrid mode. Betsy described the cohort process and the scheduling process for students. The ten days of planning time for teachers will allow them to plan and acquire technology training, as the Middle School is transitioning from Google Meets with students to ZOOM. The tech specialists have developed play lists for teachers, and departments will work with the tech tools related to their lesson designs. In addition, special educators will focus on social emotional learning in collaboration with McLean Hospital. The equity and diversity coordinator Caroline Han provided a list of professional development options for staff as well as live meetings with her. PFLAG will also work with staff in developing practices to create a welcoming and inviting environment for all students. Finally, the staff wants to develop an even stronger connection with students and families, and TAG teachers will assist the classroom teachers and house leaders and act as another point of outreach. Meet and greets and supply distribution will be arranged by cohorts on the outside of the building. An informational night will include topics regarding standards based grading, schedules, and students' expectations around being successful this year.

Betsy addressed the possible opportunities and those challenges given the current environment that are in front of her, the role of the teachers in the hybrid model, both in-person and remotely. Betsy confirmed that the outdoor tents will be used for other activities and services.

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- Discussion of Athletics for 2020-2021 and Possible Vote to Approve Extracurricular Activities for 2020-2021 School Year:

Athletic Director Heath Rollins presented to the School Committee about the status of the sports programs. Guidance came from the Mass. Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), the Mass. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and Mass. Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). Some sports, such as football, cheerleading, wrestling, ice hockey, basketball, and boys' lacrosse, are high risk and cannot be modified to meet safety standards. Those identifiable "Red" towns cannot participate in sports programs. Low risks sports are golf, tennis, group exercise, cross country, and individual crew. Heath identified the four different levels of participation and described the modifications necessary. The MIAA created a "floating season" schedule that begins with fall sports from September 18 to November 20, winter sports from November 30 to February 21, and spring sports from April 26 to July 3. The floating season for fall sports will take place from February 22 to April 25 that includes football, volleyball and possibly cheerleading.

Heath provided a proposed WHS fall sports that includes Level 1 unstructured activities and Level 2 practices could move to Level 3 whereby there are games for sports such as soccer, field hockey, crew, cross country, and golf. Moving forward in the Dual County League, there will be a limited game schedule on Wednesdays and Saturdays with cohorts in place with five different schools.

Heath addressed whether there was flexibility in playing Level 1 and 2 spring sports in the fall and the mental health benefits and social engagement for the students. During registration, 425 students signed up, and middle school sports may start at the beginning of the hybrid model. Kim warned the community regarding using caution when engaging with others, particularly student parties, while we are in the midst of a pandemic. Sports will not be possible if Wayland becomes a "red" town. Heath confirmed that he and the coaches will draft a code of conduct agreement, and it will include some training and rules in this regard. Coaches will be paid accordingly depending on their levels of engagement. The seasons are shorter, traveling is limited, and flexibility is important because the guidance could change.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to authorize Wayland High School and Wayland Middle School to conduct athletics this fall under the guidance as recommended by Heath. 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	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

The School Committee will discuss extra-curricular activities at the September 2 meeting.

- Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Full Day Kindergarten Fee Structure for 2020-2021 School Year:
The School Committee reviewed the fees for full day kindergarten and the impact on the revenue funds. This year, School Committee voted a fee of \$2,700 for the FDK program. Susan provided the projected registrations, the projected revenue, the projected expenses and the net fund balance, which is all based on the approved fee of \$2,700. Currently, the registration of 150 students at the three elementary schools will have three sections of full day kindergarten. The total revenue is projected at \$405,000. Susan reviewed the four categories of projected expenses, for the three elementary schools, which includes teacher salaries, TA salaries, custodial salaries, and benefits and OPEB for a total of \$489,300. There is a shortfall of \$84,300, given that the program was budgeted for 198 students. If the tuition was reduced to \$2,000 for the 150 registered students, the net shortfall would be \$189,300. To break even with a zero balance at the end of the year, the tuition would have to be increased to \$3,200 per pupil.

A discussion ensued about the program and the options presented. Susan noted that teachers, TA's and custodians work .65 FTE's in the regular program; thus the fee payers are expected to pay an additional .35 FTE's to cover benefits and OPEB costs. If the tuition cost is reduced, the operating budget could pick up this expense. Kathy commented that there are only 45 districts in the State that charge for a full day program. She advocated again for the operating budget to cover this program. This would cost the district about \$500,000. Susan added that it is important to identify how benefits costs are allocated to the fee based programs for the purposes of having

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uniformity between the town's contributions and the schools' contributions to their fee based programs; Susan described the differences. The funds will not be available on September 12 to pay for the benefits; however, the town's Finance Director requested a transfer about a week ago. The funds are usually transferred at the end of May. The Children's Way and Full Day Kindergarten are expected to pay for the benefits, but Susan will need more information from the Finance Director.

A discussion ensued regarding the deficit in the budget. The numbers are still evolving due to hiring, salary exchange, transportation costs, and grant funds. Chris suggested changing the payment schedule, which is currently a two-payment schedule. This discussion will continue at the next meeting.

- Discussion of Formation of Curriculum Progress Committee:
The School Committee discussed a process to form this committee, a start date, and its charge. Ellen, Chris and Parry will collaborate regarding a presentation at next week's meeting. Teachers have provided input in this regard.
- Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Testing Resolution:
Kim informed the School Committee that other district School Committee are passing a testing resolution and provided an example from Lincoln-Sudbury High School. She added that receiving data from the State about transmission in the schools is a key element to this resolution and is not included in the resolution. A discussion ensued about the possibility of a adopting a resolution in Wayland. Kim and Kathie will look into how the resolution can be changed in a more beneficial manner.
- Review of Upcoming Communications and Listening Sessions:
None.
- Updates: Ventilation, Testing, Health and Safety:
Arthur received updated regarding bids, the work schedule and the timeline for ventilation work at The Children's Way and Claypit Hill School. Information will be updated on a regular basis for the other buildings, and this discussion will be a standing agenda item.

The Board of Health is developing a set of metrics to reopen schools.

- Next Steps:
This agenda item was covered in previous discussions.

6. Policy Matters:

- EBCFA – Face Coverings
Kim provided an updated policy in which changes detailed the types of masks allowed.
- Pandemic Policy Updates:
Policy EBC – supplemental, provided by MASC, includes many things to be included in existing policies given the current situation affecting public education. Kim reviewed those items in the policy in which the pandemic could affect, such as local graduation requirements, mask use, and student privacy. A discussion ensued about the effective time of the policy once it is not needed.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve mask policy as discussed today. 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	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Policy EBCFA will be put out for public comment.

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7. **Financial Matters:**

- Discussion and Review of COVID Related Finances:

After reviewing the capital projects, Susan reported that there are some projects for which more information is needed. However, the project estimated at \$40,000 to replace the existing sound system in the high school auditorium can be removed from the list. Drama teacher Aidan O’Hare applied for and received a grant from the Wayland Public Schools Foundation. Through this process, it was discovered that a component of the existing system could be replaced thus solving the issue with the sound system. By withdrawing the CIP for the sound system, the funds can help pay for some of the ventilation issues. 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	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to withdraw the CIP for the sound system at Wayland High School.

A week earlier, Susan presented about \$.5M of unanticipated expenses and loss of revenue. At the end of FY20, action was taken, with the School Committee’s support, to prepay an additional \$100,000 of SPED tuition and left in the revolving fund for the Curcuit Breaker an additional \$200,000. This leaves an availability of about \$300,000 to help mitigate any unanticipated expenses due to COVID. In addition, there are two new grants of about \$250,000 for municipalities with the possibility of more grants forthcoming.

Finally, Susan reported that the Town received one bus bid and the Town Manager will reject it given the amount of the bid. Another bid will be put forth.

- Preparation for Annual Town Meeting – FY21 Budget:
 Jeanne noted that there will be a usual budget presentation at Town Meeting at the High School.
- Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Elementary Computer Maintenance Fee:
 Leisha Simon informed the School Committee that the elementary computers are being prepared for redistribution in the fall, and it necessary to have a laptop care and maintenance fee, which is modeled after the fee for the middle school devices. The fee adds content web filtering to the device for at home use and it covers repairs that a warranty does not cover. Families will receive an agreement. Because students did not take home elementary devices in the past, there was no prior fee. Leisha added that the inventory for devices is delayed and the new devices could come in as late as January.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the elementary school computer maintenance fee as described. 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	

Chris Ryan did not vote as he did not fill out a Conflict of Interest form.

Leisha described the process in terms of accessing a new domain for the district. The old domain will be kept open for a year, if necessary.

8. **Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

Special Education: Richard commented that parents received a final letter about the plans moving forward. Teachers will address several milestones during the ten-day planning, and the DESE COVID-19 special education learning template will be given to all parents by September 10 detailing either in-person, remote, or WRAP services for their children.

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Kim commented that she will attend the WHS School Council meeting.

9. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 4:27 p.m. The School Committee will pass over the WESA discussion and for the purposes of 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 approving the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: July 22, 2020.

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

The School Committee will adjourn in Executive Session and will not reconvene in open 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	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

10. **Adjournment from Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 5:20 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	absent	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Public Comments
3. BASE Models
4. BASE Tuition Analysis
5. COVID Unanticipated Expenses
6. Summary of COVID-19 Relief Funding
7. School Reopening Fall 2020 – Facilities Update
8. Policy EBCFA – Face Masks
9. Minutes of July 20, 2020
10. Future Management Systems Search Contract

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