Public Comment Responses Received During the WPS BOE Meeting on 8/13/2020

Below is the pubic record of public comment responses received during the 8/13/2020 BOE Meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - No public comment received. One test response was received.

DISCUSSION

1. **Update from the School Reopening Committee and Recommendation From the Superintendent** - Public comments are posted exactly as received.

April Russell	12 Highland Rd	How is lunch going to work for the Staples students?
Tulika Chandra	14 Windy Hill Road	Thank you for all the hard work in developing the plans for reopening. I would like to know if it's possible for a student to attend only certain classes? Perhaps not attend the whole two days but just one or two classes on the day their cohort is in school.
Sarah Adair	46 Turkey Hill Rd South	Two days a week of in person learning at the high school is just not enough to keep students engaged in the learning process. If teachers and students are wearing masks and ppe as well as social distancing and washing hands and the transmissions rates are as low as they are I don't understand the justification for keeping kids home for five out of the seven days of the week. Your going to have kids struggling to learn with internet issues and distractions at home. How can a student earn credit for pe if they are only at school for two days? Has anyone considered the increase in drug use by teens while their parents are at work? Has anyone considered the fact that students will be gathering together, probably not social distancing, while not in school (even with live streaming)? What about the increase in social isolation, anxiety or depression? With more days at home, teachers will rely on students to send in videos of themselves doing a pe activity, or cooking and most students hate this. A lot of students don't like sending a video of themselves out there into the internet, not knowing what will happen to it and where it will end up. Wouldn't it be better to at least offer more open access to the building in the evening and weekends for teachers and students who prefer

		more in person contact in an environment with fewer students? Since we are in unprecedented times, lets be flexible and increase our ability to offer choices for more engagement. And if there isn't enough time to set up this option before the start of school, maybe offer it as the year progresses?
Sarah Adair	46 Turkey Hill Rd South	That's not true that the senior projects were top notch. There could have been a few that were but many turned in the bare minimum and were so disengaged they didn't care.
Deborah Slocum and Joanne Klouda	dslocum@westportps.org	Will staff have access to Staples High School on Wednesdays, the virtual learning day?
Sue Herrmann	5 Spring Hill Rd	Can you outline how 9th grade orientation will work? Thank you.
Christine Kurpiel	8 Cardinal Lane	What will the average number of students be in a particular classroom? How will safety protocols be enforced in the hallways during class transitions? Will students be eating lunch in the cafeteria or in the classrooms? How will the buses allow distancing? What plans are in place to handle the increased amount of traffic from parents driving their kids? Will there still be a swimming requirement for PE?
Christian Kugel	3 Maple Ln Westport	In-person P.E. during a pandemic sounds like a bad idea. Why is this being included in the plan? I can't imagine a scenario where safety measures are sufficient to prevent transmission of the virus.
Jackie Schiavone	20 Fairfield Ave	I think we need to consider changing the cohort breakout to either Monday/ Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday with Friday as distance learning for all vs a Monday/Tuesday and thursday/Friday schedule. It’s seems to be unfair for students in the second half of the alphabet to have both in classroom days at the end of the week when the students are getting fatigued. If there is an important reason to have Wednesday then I would suggest the cohorts swap schedules either quarter or mid year (after winter break). Thank you.
Shannon Russell	12 Highland Rd	Can you discuss the reason for Middle School choosing M-Th and T-F instead of M-T and Th-F like the highschool? it seems like there is less support for cohorting and separation. It also makes it more difficult for families with students in both.
Bethany Kapadia	20 Maplewood Ave Westport, CT 06880	In the hybrid model it sounds like the plan is to just broadcast whatever the teacher is teaching in the classroom. Will they be interacting with both groups so multitasking all the time giving neither group their full attention? Or if at home kids only get to ask questions at the end of the day won't kids just fall behind once they are confused or lost about something if they can't ask at the time to help make the rest of the lesson make sense? The models proven to work for in person versus online are very different. Just broadcasting what is going on in the clasroom is not at all effective or engaging.

Mark Friedman	14 Saint George place	I want to thank the teachers, administrators and BOE members for their hard work on these critical issues. I am grateful for the tremendous collaborative spirit and the dedication to continuous improvement. The progress of the reopening plan is evident. I did want to ask about mechanical items which may bear on air quality. Are there any anticipated changes to either the physical plant or maintenance procedures which will impact air filtration and quality? Thank you for your attention to this question. Sincerely, Mark Friedman RTM District 3 Representative
Ngassam Ngnoumen	ngnoumenn@yahoo.com	Dear All, thanks for the efforts on reopening. Here are a couple questions for middle school. How will the live classes for Wednesdays run? On average, how many students will be expected to be in class for the hybrid model? Lunch/bathrooms will probably be high risk areas, could you share thoughts on how we will manage these risks? A concern is how teachers will manage engagement with students in classes and also those watching the livestream from home.
Jeff Benner	61 Hillspoint Rd	At BMS, will there be any way for remote-only students to participate in the "orientation" during first four days of school? Wouldn't that be a good time to test out live streaming (in classrooms where it is ready) and work out the kinks before instruction begins? I am concerned they will feel left out from the start of school if there is no way for them to participate in the orientation remotely.
April Russell	12 Highland Rd	Is there any chance of delaying the opening of BMS/CMS in a hybrid model until the CMS building is reopen so they can properly socially distance and limit transitions, avoiding the 9 periods/day model?
Phyllis Wallitt	3 Gilbert Lane	I am listening to the discussion but I just do not understand why a child in the middle school would not attend school in person on the same days of the week as their sibling in the high school. This is a big strain for working parents and working moms in particular. Also a big strain for any teachers that live in Westport that have children. Pick M/T and R/F or M/R and T/F for both schools.
George Nanos	16 Taylor Lane	Can you kindly clarify what the kids enrolled in hybrid are doing when their cohort is at home? Are they watching/participating in class remotely with the other cohort that is in school?
Devin Taylor	9 Woodcock Lane	In his opening comments, Superintendent Scarice mentioned a 4 week period during which the proposed hybrid model will be assessed. What criteria will be used during that 4 week period to determine, at the end of such period, whether to extend the hybrid model or to choose another path, such as full in-person attendance? Thank you.

George Nanos	16 Taylor Lane	Did you consider daily in person instruction with two half days (a morning cohort and and afternoon cohort)? What is the benefit of the current proposals over the this type of schedule?
Harris Falk	Overlook Road	The cameras won't be ready for the beginning of school? That is a major issue. Those cameras and speakers were presented as a major aspect of the distance learning plan. When will the cameras be ready for the schools? How will at home students see the classroom without those cameras? How will distance learning work until those cameras are installed? What is the plan? Now, I'm wondering how the cameras would actually work in the first place. If they are installed, how do students at home see what's on the board? If the board is shared to their screen, how do they see the teacher and class? If they see the teacher and class, how do they see the board in focus? Why do the middle and high schools follow different hybrid schedules for days? Why not have all three schools work on a in school Monday/Tuesday and Thursday/Friday, with online Wednesday schedule? From a sanitary and cleaning standpoint it is better having cohorts split the week instead of every other day. With the proposed middle school plan having thorough cleanings on weekends and Wednesdays, Monday/Thursday students will always have a cleaner school than the Tuesday/Friday students. In the elementary schools, having morning and afternoon cohorts will require two extra bus runs every day How much will the cost of those extra bus runs increase the budget? Will there be savings from the high school and middle schools not requiring bus runs on Wednesday? Thank you. Harris Falk RTM District 2
Joseph Nader	36 Westfair Dr	I have two kids, Kindergarten and 2nd grade. The hybrid model with afternoon school for L-Z for all days in the week does not promote best education model, and is not fair for all students. How will teaching math at 2:30pm going to work when my kids have been awake since 6:30am? This model needs to have alternating AM/PM, where 2 days are AM for one cohort, and 2 other days are for the second cohort.
Jessica newshel	41 park lane	How will you adjust for the effect of Monday holidays on the Monday cohort

Joseph Nader	36 Westfair Dr	Regarding Elementary, has there been consideration to group kids by neighborhoods instead of alphabet, and extend isolation to where kids could hang out after school?
Elizabeth Falk	Overlook Road	How does lunch work for the Middle and High Schools? How many kids without masks will be in the cafeteria at once and will they actually be able to physically distance? Are High Schoolers allowed to eat outside? How will food be prepared for the students? Will everything be prepackaged? How is PE going to work for the HS? Can PE be solely remote in order to prioritize core subjects?
Dorie Hordon	12 Manitou Road	Speaking as a parent- will there be any further consideration to have Wednesdays at SHS be an in person half day, alternating groups every other Wednesday? Will there be discussion about assessments like test taking for opt out students at the high school? And how will all students be assessed in the different levels for the hybrid model and opt out? Thank you
Laurel Syah	12 Cranbury Rd.	Thank you so much to the administration and Board of Education for all of your hard work and careful preparation of these plans. While they are not perfect, they make a lot of sense and have been very thoughtfully prepared. Given the delays in installing live streaming equipment due to the storm, does it make sense to temporarily only provide remote learning for the middle and high schools until October so that curriculum can be delivered at parity and consistently for that period of time? If not, it seems that some students, especially those at home, will be underserved. When will an FAQ be posted online? If parents are going to be asked to decide whether or select hybrid or remote learning for their children within the next few days, it is important to have more detailed information about the comprehensive plans available for our consideration. In that FAQ, can you please circulate a detailed document to the public that addresses how you are maximizing the safety of the physical plant of the buildings, especially ventilation and metrics for measuring the safety of each building? Can you also provide more information on other logistical consideration for high school and middle school? - How passing in the halls with be handled. - How bus seating will work. - How lunch will be served. Thank you so much.

Stacey Delmhorst	Treasurer WEA	Question regarding Wednesday remote learning - all slides mentioned that students would be remote. Will all teachers be remote as well? If not, how can teachers work safely when the office spaces do not always allow for appropriate, in ANY, distancing and there are not enough classrooms to go around? Also, there is no time built in for professional development for our pre-school teachers. Why is there not equity among all the teachers?
Jessica Newshel	41 Park Lane	Is it adequate for elementary school students to only have 10 hours of instruction per week?
Jackie Schiavone	20 fairfield	I appreciate your efforts but this is not parity. The second half of the alpha with not get them same experience in the afternoon and waiting until February will be too late to give these students the foundation they need for a successful year.
Athena McAlenney	26 Bauer Place	“Sending assignments home” for “any symptom” of typical fall or winter colds is not even remotely acceptable for teaching reading at the elementary level. This needs to be very carefully reconsidered. We cannot lose full instructional days at the elementary school for coughs. This pandemic has already and will additionally dramatically negatively affect the literacy development of our youngest learners. We absolutely cannot leave them without continuing live instruction for mild cold symptoms on the backs of three lost months this spring. Why would anyone choose hybrid if their child would have no instruction besides “work sent home” when they have a typical childhood two week cough? Athena McAlenney, Ph.D. in Education, specific specialty in early reading
Tom Lyle	12 Bolton Ln	For the elementary split day schedule. What is the level of cleaning that will happen between the morning and the afternoon?
Parul Patel	parul7@gmail.com	Is there a clearly outlined process for what happens when a child within a class/cohort tests positive for Covid or may have been exposed at the Elementary level. If that requires the entire cohort to remain home and quarantine and they cannot access remote instruction, does that mean that they would all not receive any live instruction for 2 weeks? How long without live instruction for math/literacy will children have to be home if they have minor symptoms (as is normal in winter)?
Tami Benanav	11 Poplar Plain Rd.	In the high school schedule, A - K will be attending school in person Mon. & Tues. Most single day holidays fall on a Monday. Will those students be given additional in person days to make up for the in person days they miss?

Lisa Weand	7th grade BMS teacher	During the staples presentation, Mr. Thomas mentioned that one of the many reasons for the Wednesday distance learning is for alignment with the other districts. I think this is a great idea. Just to clarify, will teachers across middle and high school levels be working from home on Wednesdays as well? For buildings to be thoroughly cleaned, it seems like it would be best if no one was in the building. In addition, as Mr. Scarice said, teachers are the experts who have proven able to work to best serve their students in any setting. Thank you for the clarification.
Anna Rycenga	20 Westfair Drivw	I have several questions: Will the ELs students be able to have snack in school? What kind of precautionary measures will be taken for students who have asthma that need to see the nurse to administer their Rx? How are restroom breaks being addressed and in particular a student who has epilepsy? As I was advised by health services, a student with epilepsy must be accompanied to the restroom.
Ngassam Ngnoumen	ngnoumenn@yahoo.com	A detailed overview of the distance learning option (middle school) is needed and would be helpful, since this meeting focused primarily on the hybrid models. Please also share the safety protocols that will be implemented for hallway passing, in the lunch hall, and in the classrooms - for middle school. Thanks.
Amie Peck	3 sugar maple lane	Thank you for your thoughtful presentation. As a parent with 3 kids at all 3 levels this plan is a very difficult plan logistically. But I appreciate the time and research that went into this so I can get behind it. That being said, at the Elementary level Afternoons sept 8-Feb 1 does not seem fair. Will you please consider alternating the cohorts every other week? Or every 4 weeks? Something more equitable.
Ida Hsu	Old Road	Please clarify what time dismissal would be for children who don't need intervention in each cohort – 11:15 or 11:45 for AM? 3:15 or 3:45 for PM? Are children still going to be allowed to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of their cohort? Have you discussed a plan for pick-up that keeps children and families distanced by cohort?
David Turchi	15 Colony Rd.	Will opt-out students be at any disadvantage as compared to the in person students? Also, what happens with the opt-out students if the pandemic requires a return to full remote learning?
Ida Hsu	Old Rd	Thank you for trying to maintain the AM/PM cohort schedule until Feb 1 – I know that there will be many parents requesting a more frequent flip, but as I am sure you aware it would be a nightmare for working parents to have to find, essentially, a new babysitter for each time the schedule flipped (or hire someone to be available full time which is not in many families budgets).

Alexis Bancroft	25 Gorham Ave	I fully understand that there is no perfect solution, but I am very concerned about frequent switching of AM/PM schedule for elementary students. Switching frequently will be a logistical nightmare to already challenging conditions for working families. Finding childcare on an ever changing schedule would be incredibly challenging.
Robin Lewis	14 Brooklawn Drive	Being in the afternoon session until February is not fair. This has to be rotated more frequently.
Anthony Granata	11 Lorraine Drive, Monroe CT 06468	It was mentioned that instrumental lessons and ensembles will be provided virtually. In order to provide beginning students with an authentic hands-on experience that prepares them for a successful musical experience, a sense of normalcy, and a creative artistic outlet for our students, has thought been given to any amount of in-person instruction? Thank you for all your work during this very difficult time.
Ida Hsu	55 Old Rd	Impressed by the work put into the hybrid model overall. Please put more thought to educational plans for elementary children who need to stay home for symptoms or quarantine (which may wind up now being more frequent, and for extended periods). Please also considering putting some specials back in person - many of them are not as effective online as in person; whereas online literacy and math options may be used at least once a week.
Katherine Whee	22 Sue Terrace	In the Elementary hybrid model, there is one hour and fifteen minutes between cohorts. Realistically how will the entire school be thoroughly cleaned for the PM cohort. Aerosols can linger in the air for up to three hours. During that hour 15 min, the teachers will have to eat lunch, prepare for the PM cohort, assist with dismissal, and how many custodians do we have to clean the whole school? This does not seem safe or fair for the PM cohort.
Sharuna Mahesh	92 Greens Farms Road	Thank you for all your hard work! Given the new guidelines from the state regarding Reopening Guidance for Educating Students with Disabilities, what is being done to provide FAPE for students with disabilities. When will the district start conducting PPT's for students with disabilities. Please see link below https://bureaubulletin.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/adapt-advance-achieve-connecticuts-plan-to-learn-and-grow-together.pdf
Filip Mitev	2 Jennie Lane	For Middle School, how will the distance learners be able to communicate with teachers in real time while a lesson is taking place? For Elementary School: There seems to not have been a lot of thought given to the distance-only students and the plan is inadequate. We may need additional teachers, but how and when will we know if we need them? The district is responsible to provide equal education to all students, not only the ones who are opting in to attending in person. Why was the plan developed in the last three days when we have had almost three months?

		Why do we need a District level for distance-only students? Why can we not have distance learning per school? How can we be sure that our children are grouped with students and teachers from the same school so they are not thrown into groups with people they do not know at all?
Tom Lyle	12 Bolton Ln	For the elementary split day schedule. What is the level of cleaning that will happen between the morning and the afternoon?
Jeff Benner	61 Hillspoint	If a student or member of a the household of a student tests positive, the District should absolutely set its own policy that the classmate of that student will be notified and quarantined. It is not complicated; it is common sense. We can and should exceed the state guidance, which is a floor.

2. **Proposed Changes to the 2020-2021 School Calendar-** No public comment received. One test response was received.
3. **2019-20 Q4 & End-of-Year Financial Report and Carryover Account Recommendation -** No public comment received. One test response was received.
4. **Request of the Board of Finance and Representative Town Meeting a Supplemental Appropriation in the amount of $100,351.80 for the Rentals and Reimbursement Budget** - No public comment received.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. **Update from Policy Committee and Second Reading of the Following Policies:** No public comment received. One test response was received.

    - Policy 2222-C19 "Temporary Policies and Regulations"
    - Policy 1250, "Policy Regarding Visitors and Observations in Schools" (revise existing Westport policy)
    - Policy 1212-C19 "School Volunteers, Student Interns, and Other Non-Employees" (new)
    - Policy 1330, "Use of School Facilities" (revise existing Westport policy)
    - Policy 5114, "Student Discipline" (revise existing Westport policy)
    - Policy 5131.1-C19 "Transportation" (new)
    - Policy 5113.2, "Student Attendance, Truancy, and Chronic Absenteeism" (revise existing Westport policy