

**Westport School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
DATE: Thursday, January 6, 2022  
TIME: 6:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Virtual Meeting**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83014073431?pwd=Qm1WcFo4bEdGNzdYN0NadGpxRnZ3QT09>  
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Webinar ID: 830 1407 3431  
Passcode: 608438

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Michelle Orlando, Melissa Pacheco, Nancy Stanton Cross

**Members Absent:** Nancy Tavares, Antonio Viveiros

**Also Present:** Kevin Aguiar Assistant Principal Westport Middle School, Thomas Aubin Superintendent, Nathaniel Brown Teacher, Stacey Duquette PreK-Gr. 4 Principal, Darren Elwell Director of Curriculum, Clare Giblin EF Tour Director, Michael Grandfield Assistant Principal Westport High School, John Jack Keane Student Representative, Kristin McDaniel Human Resources Director, Kerri McKinnon Principal Westport High School, Rick Monast Teacher, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Elaine Santos Special Education Director, Anthony Tomah Technology Director, 2 Community Participants

**I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance** - Vice Chair Stanton Cross opened the Virtual School Committee Meeting at 6:41 pm. with a quorum of the members present, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. Vice Chair Stanton Cross announced:**

**This meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c.30A, Section 20 and on June 16, 2021 Governor Baker signed an Act relative to extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the state of emergency.**

**Comments and Statements from the Public** - There were none.

**III. Informational Agenda**

**B. Student Representative – (taken out of order)** - John (Jack) Keane reported on school events. Winter sports began with 6 girls and boys basketball teams. Cheerleaders showed energy at the games and the Pep Band has started to play. Follow @westportsports on Twitter for any schedule changes. Monday January 24 and Tuesday January 25 exams will take place. On the 25<sup>th</sup> students can be dismissed if they return a permission slip that is available in the main office.

Ms. McKinnon clarified that exams will be until 11 am. on Monday January 24<sup>th</sup> and January 25<sup>th</sup> with 2 exams each day. On the 24<sup>th</sup> only, students will have review periods. In order to be dismissed, students need to pass in a permission slip by Wednesday January 19. There will be no bus routes provided for an early release so students need to find a ride home. Students that stay after lunch will report to the auditorium. All information has been published in the Wildcat Family News.

**A. Superintendent Report** - Mr. Aubin sent his appreciation to the admin team and district personnel for keeping things running. Mr. Aubin shared the attendance rates for staff and students of all the Westport Community Schools.

Mask mandates are still in effect until January 15, 2022, then they will be revisited. There will be a decision on contact tracing soon.

There was a meeting with an epidemiologist from Harvard where the importance of keeping kids in schools was discussed. Keeping schools open is extremely important and they are working with the Board of Health to make this happen.

Mr. Aubin thanked Ms. Ouellette for picking up COVID tests for the schools. Tests were distributed to staff on Monday afternoon.

There are a host of things to be excited about with many extracurricular events going on.

Fundraiser event scheduled for Friday was postponed and tomorrow's vaccination clinic is postponed until next week. Westport Apothecary will resume vaccinations on Tuesday and Thursday between 9 am. and 2 pm.

Vice Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any questions? There were none.

Vice Chair Stanton Cross thanked Mr. Aubin for his efforts to assist in helping fill out paperwork concerning COVID testing.

C. Bill Warrant: 12-31-21 and 1-14-22 - Vice Chair Stanton Cross reported a Bill Warrant dated 12-31-21 in the amount of \$251,235.31 and a Bill Warrant dated 1-14-22 in the amount of \$267,436.63 was emailed to school committee members for review.

Vice Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any comments or questions? There were none.

D. Technology Update – Mr. Tomah gave an update. The installation of interactive TVs at the new middle high school and WES is completed. They are waiting for finalization of the wi-fi and for access points brackets. A recycling day will take place in 3 weeks for damaged and non-functioning smartboards. They have been working on access with VPN, HVAC, and security. Cell phone boosters have arrived and they are waiting for the installer to come in. Some reconversion is taking place to move the PA system from old school to new school. It was recommended to bring over the clocks. They are waiting for a quote. They are properly labeling camera locations in the new school. Staff can view cameras through a software client. Access cards for staff are going well. A quote is being requested to make access cards universal for all schools. Mr. Tomah is working on a Chromebook policy, turnaround time for repairs and pricing technology costs.

Vice Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any questions?

Ms. Stanton Cross asked if the Chromebook policy will include what to do if repairs are needed? Mr. Tomah clarified that they are looking at student accountability and trying to weigh options. Using general fees and fee reductions with a possible 1 free damaged piece are some options being explored.

E. DESE/DPH Protocols for Responding to COVID Update - Mr. Aubin reported receiving an update today from DESE on protocols for quarantining and isolation. Protocols are applied retroactively, if testing positive for COVID use 5 days as well as meeting certain other conditions stated in the protocols. Removing masks for meals is allowed only when actively eating and at least 3 feet apart. Masks are on when waiting for meals or sitting during lunchtime. Definition of fully vaccinated is two weeks following the completion of the Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

F. Subcommittee Updates - Ms. Pacheco reported the CIPC met yesterday. They went through the submitted capital planning items and numbered them based on needs and priorities. Next meeting, they will decide which items to fund. For the school part, Ms. Pacheco would like additional information on the WES parking lot and the sod needed. Can school building money be used? Is this area being re-constructed? Ms. Pacheco asked what is being done with the pods? Purchase pods or sending pods back? Mr. Aubin shared the pods are a depreciating asset and they are looking for the best price to have them removed. Ms. Rapoza mentioned CIPC items for the schools were numbered in order. The pods were removed from the latest list. Ms. Rapoza will send the final list to the members. Ms. Pacheco will provide this information at the next CIPC meeting.

Ms. Pacheco reported the Cable Advisory Board has not met in the new year.

Ms. Orlando reported the Audit Committee did not have a meeting.

Ms. Stanton Cross reported after the Budget Subcommittee meeting today they will have conversations with the Selectboard, Mr. Hartnett, and FinCom. Updates will be forthcoming.

Ms. Stanton Cross reported for Mr. Viveiros on the new school building project. The latest information has been attached to the SC meeting documents. Fields are being prepared with soil, survey markers and lots of progress is happening. Mr. Aguiar reported he has been meeting weekly with Mr. Gilchrist. There is a defined punch list that is getting smaller. They are working over vacations, stairs have new treads, tile is going in, outdoor fields are being prepared and they are working hard on logistics. The punch list has been streamlined with 1 master list. Presently there are 150 different items still outstanding. Over the break, relays were installed to make lights and heat work appropriately. They are making headway.

Vice Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any questions? There were none

## **VI. Action Agenda**

### **A. Review and Act on Minutes of Thursday, December 16, 2021 -**

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of Thursday, December 16, 2021.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Orlando

3/0/0

**B. Review and Act on WHS Grades 11-12 Field Trip – DECA District's Conference – Hyannis, MA - January 11, 2022 – January 12, 2022** - This event has been changed to a virtual conference by DECA. A vote is not needed because this is not an in-person field trip. Business teacher Mr. Clark has specific details on the event. Ms. Stanton Cross suggested to get some clips from this virtual event and place them on the school website.

### **C. Review and Act on International Trips – Greece & Panama -**

**Panama Trip Mr. Brown** - Mr. Brown reported this trip will take place during February school vacation week. EF Tours has put safety measures in place and they are available for SC members to review. There will be 7 students and 1 adult besides himself.

Vice Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any questions for Mr. Brown?

Ms. Pacheco mentioned Panama is seeing high rates of COVID, what happens if someone develops COVID can they come home on a plane? Ms. Giblin EF Tours Director informed everyone they recently departed 25 groups over the break successfully. If someone becomes positive on tour they isolate and quarantine, they provide testing and pay for a parent to fly over during the isolation period as well as have an EF Tour person for support. Rebooking to have a later return flight can also be arranged. These features are a part of EF Tours COVID Care Promise at no additional charge. They require all travelers to be vaccinated, need a test prior to traveling and on return. If a traveler is sick during the trip a test will be provided. EF Tours facilitates the testing. Mr. Brown is in communication with each student to sign up for testing. Ms. Giblin explained there is no insurance needed for COVID and the student gets a refund minus \$500 or a voucher at 100% for a future tour.

A question on why this item was on the Action Agenda was asked? Mr. Aubin mentioned this item should have been on the Informational Agenda. The trips were approved before; however, it was brought up again in case any SC member has any objection.

Ms. Pacheco stressed that clear information to parents is essential. Ms. Giblin said all families have communication from EF. Ms. Pacheco asked what if they stop travel to Panama? Ms. Giblin said EF Tours will provide options. If the trip is unproducible a full refund will be given. If you could not travel to Panama 50% of travel price is the cost in cancellation fees. This cost is due to already booking flights, hotels, and reservations. There is cancel for any reason insurance that can be purchased. Mr. Brown mentioned the Panama trip is a middle school trip, so if a future voucher was issued the student has plenty of time to take another trip.

**Greece Trip Mr. Monast** - Mr. Monast reported this trip will take place during April school vacation week. Parents are receiving all applicable information about the trip. Details of their last meeting was sent to school committee members and Omicron was discussed at their meeting. A total of 40 students and 5 parents are going and this is their largest trip ever to take place. The trip will also be well chaperoned with 8 staff and 5-7 adult travelers. Ms. Stanton Cross mentioned the trip information should be sent to SC members ahead of time and not the day of the meeting.

Vice Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any questions?

Ms. Pacheco asked what happens if there are any changes with international travel? Ms. Giblin will inform everyone if there are any changes. Flexibility on refunds or do something else for parents will be done. Ms. Pacheco requested to be kept on the radar about these trips due to the high rate of COVID.

No action needed.

**V. Routine Matters - Correspondence and Notices** - Mr. Aubin received correspondence from Amanda Cronin concerning water testing for the new building. The latest test showed high carbon numbers. They are working with Mr. Duarte and Ms. Ouellette. Water fountains will be shut down and coolers will be provided until acceptable levels can be reached. Kitchen in the cafeteria is also affected. Ms. Stanton Cross would like information on this to be sent to Mr. Viveiros Chairman of the School Building Committee. This is an issue the SBC should address.

**VI. Topics the Chair could not Reasonably Anticipate Forty-eight (48) Hours in Advance of the Meeting** - There were no items.

**VII. Adjourn** - A motion was made to adjourn. With members being present and voting individually and unanimously, the motion passes.

Motion by Viveiros, seconded by Pacheco

3/0/0

Roll call vote:

Orlando Yes

Pacheco Yes

Stanton Cross Yes

The Virtual School Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

**MEETING DOCUMENTS**

Bill Warrants: 12-31-21 and 1-14-22

DESE/DPH Protocols for Responding to COVID

School Building Committee Minutes December 15, 2021

WHS Grades 11-12 Field Trip – DECA District’s Conference – Hyannis, MA - January 11, 2022 – January 12, 2022

International Trips – Greece & Panama

*Submitted by Sharon Pinho School Committee Recording Secretary*