

**Westport School Committee  
Special Meeting  
DATE: Tuesday, September 28, 2021  
TIME: 6:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Virtual Meeting**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85019434218?pwd=MXdveFRzS3prRVNyLzNSL3JjNjVHUT09>  
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Webinar ID: 850 1943 4218  
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**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Melissa Pacheco, Nancy Stanton Cross, Nancy Tavares, Antonio Viveiros

**Members Absent:** Michelle Orlando

**Also Present:** Kevin Aguiar Assistant Principal Westport High School, Thomas Aubin Superintendent, Stacey Duquette PreK-Gr.4 Principal, Darren Elwell Director of Curriculum, Kristin McDaniel Human Resources Director, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Elaine Santos Director of Special Education, Anthony Tomah Technology Director, 4 Community Participants

**I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance** - Chair Tavares opened the Virtual School Committee Special Meeting at 6:33 pm. with a quorum of the members present, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Chair Tavares 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**

A. Discuss the American Rescue Plan Act (ESSER III) Funding - Ms. Rapoza shared her screen with a document entitled "**ESSER Funding FY22 - FY23 American Relief Act ESSER III**". There have been 2 Public Hearings and the committee met as a working group. The committee decided rather than hiring a Social Emotional Director a change to School Adjustment Counselor was made.

Chair Tavares asked if there were any questions on this? There were none.

Chair Tavares asked if there were any questions on the playground?

Chair Tavares shared there are options for the playground.

Ms. Rapoza shared her screen with diagrams of 3 different playground options.

Ms. Duquette said the biggest thing they looked at was safety. They learned about different kinds of turf and came up with options. What experience would kids have with the playground? Ms. Duquette explained the set up. In the middle there are climbers, cubes can fit many kids on one, children process how to get down, use team building, socialization and self-confidence. Swings can fit multiple people, ropes have sensors, seats give sensory input, back has pulls and ropes, climber has challenges for all kinds of children's levels.

Surfacing options - Ms. Rapoza showed pictures of 3 kinds.

1. Artificial turf
2. Engineered Wood Fiber/rubber mats
3. Poured in place Rubber

Pricing for the playground ranged from \$329,000 - \$251,478 depending on surfacing/turf used. Three options were looked at. If the district removes old equipment and does leveling \$75,000 would be saved on the total price. Ms. Duquette would like to lock in 2021 prices. Also, additional funds would be needed for any work done to the basketball courts. Special Education equipment was not looked at.

Ms. Pacheco asked if any grant opportunities were explored for funding of the playground? Using either CPC or CIPC funding may be a possibility. Whatever is decided Ms. Pacheco recommends adding swings. Ms. Rapoza mentioned adding an obstacle course for older kids closer to the new school.

Ms. Stanton Cross expressed being happy with the playground concept, however there should be more thought and discussion on what will be placed there. Make it so that pieces can be added so it can grow and cover children of all ages. She is willing to approve funds of up to \$400,000 and spend more time having conversations on what should be included. The surface is very important.

Chair Tavares mentioned the committee can approve up to \$400,000 and continue discussions on what it will look like. For tonight's purposes approval of the bottom figure is sufficient.

Mr. Viveiros mentioned the need for having more swings. Flooring is expensive and asked if the use of wood chips was thought of? Ms. Duquette mentioned different surfaces can be looked at.

Committee is all set with playground funding at this time.

Chair Tavares said the other item that had questions was the Pre-K Class. Chair Tavares mentioned she has been receiving parent phone calls.

Ms. Santos explained parents submitted applications in August. After the last discussion there is a wait list. A total of 20 parents were called. A total of 9 families want a 3-day program. A total of 5 families want a 2-day program. Total program cost - \$95,000. Ms. Santos explained there will be a deficit in later years.

A question was raised on the total number of students that will be enrolled in the program. Ms. Santos explained as of Thursday they have the numbers she mentioned. They also get referrals all year long through rolling Early Intervention (EI)

Committee members believe this program is a good idea, will provide support for the community and there is a lot of interest in it. They would like to see this program grow with children interacting with their neighborhood peers. They would like to see the enrollment numbers at a good level.

There were no further items for questions at this time.

## **VI. Action Agenda**

### **A. Review and Act on American Rescue Plan Act (ESSER III) Funding -**

A motion was made to approve and submit ESSER III Funding as presented on Ms. Rapoza's slide in the amount of \$1,607,934.

Motion by Stanton Cross, seconded by Viveiros, all were in favor, motion passed 4/0/0

### **V. Routine Matters - Correspondence and Notices - There were none.**

### **VI. Topics the Chair could not Reasonably Anticipate Forty-eight (48) Hours in Advance of the Meeting - There were none.**

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

Motion by Stanton Cross, seconded by Viveiros 4/0/0

### **Roll call vote:**

Pacheco Yes Stanton Cross Yes Tavares Yes Viveiros Yes

The Virtual School Committee Special Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

