

**Westport School Committee  
Work Session  
DATE: Tuesday, November 2, 2021  
Time 7:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Virtual Meeting**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:  
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**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Michelle Orlando, Melissa Pacheco, Nancy Stanton Cross, Nancy Tavares, Antonio Viveiros (*arrived at 7:56 pm.*)

**Also Present:** Thomas Aubin Superintendent, Stacey Duquette Pre-K - Gr. 4 Principal, Kristin McDaniel Human Resources Director, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, 0 Community Participants

**I. Call to Order** - Chair Tavares opened the Virtual School Committee Work Session at 7:47 pm. with a quorum of the members present, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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.**

**II. Discussion of COVID Protocols -**

Chair Tavares reported the committee received the "*Extension of DESE Mask Requirement*" dated October 26, 2021 and a joint statement from DESE/DPH on "*Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios - SY 2021-2022*" dated August 13, 2021.

Ms. Stanton Cross reported she has received significant questions about mask breaks for grades 5-8. She expressed the need to ask questions brought forth by her constituents and wants to know what is going on in the buildings, so she can answer accordingly. To date she has not received any concerns about the MAC or WES.

Mr. Aubin shared that students are receiving at least 1 mask break and at lunch they can remove masks to eat.

It was noted that mask breaks can be inside if people are 6 feet apart for no more than 3 minutes.

*(Mr. Viveiros arrived here at 7:56 pm.)*

Ms. Duquette informed everyone they have incorporated mask breaks into recess, students have snack outside and some teachers have been teaching outside. Nobody is being told they have to take their mask off. Students have masks off in cafeteria while eating and they have built in mask breaks at guaranteed times.

Mr. Aubin shared that Mr. Armendo from the Board of Health is waiting for the CDC to give vaccine approval for children ages 5-11. They will be holding a vaccination clinic in the old high school location.

A discussion took place concerning the COVID statistics. Mr. Aubin shared every Thursday district COVID cases are sent to staff as part of a request from the union. A suggestion was made to have these numbers on the Westport Community Schools website. Ms. Rapoza will put these figures on the school website and Facebook page.

Ms. McDaniel shared the town of Hopkinton has received a 98% vaccination rate and was able to eliminate masks in their high school.

Discussion took place on the changes to the quarantine protocol. Ms. Duquette said they rely on seating charts to determine close contacts. The Test and Stay Program has allowed children to return to class. The entire class is not quarantined like in the past. This has helped more students stay in school.

Mr. Aubin shared some current data. Since October 28, 2021 Westport children 12-15 years old has a vaccination rate of 48.7% and children 16 -19 years old is at 70%.

Items noted were the following:

Protocols are working

Students can take off masks at designated times

Additional opportunities for mask breaks

Decision making not as rigid as last year, however not as clear cut as last year

**III. 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

5/0/0

Roll call vote:

Orlando Yes Pacheco Yes Stanton Cross Yes Tavares Yes Viveiros Yes

The Virtual School Committee Work Session adjourned at 8:20 pm.