

**Westport School Committee
Work Session
DATE: Tuesday, July 27, 2021
Time 6:00 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 (*arrived at 6:20 pm.*), Nancy Stanton Cross, Nancy Tavares, Antonio Viveiros

Also Present: Thomas Aubin Interim Superintendent, Darren Elwell Director of Curriculum, Lori Melo Administrative Assistant, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Elaine Santos Special Education Director, Anthony Tomah Director of Technology, 0 Community Participants

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Tavares opened the Virtual School Committee Work Session at 6:04 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.

III. Discussion of the Language Based Program - (*taken out of order*)

Ms. Santos began by explaining the Language Based Program has been available for grades 5-8 and now is expanding to grade 4 and grade 9. Ms. Santos reported staff training for grade 4 has been completed and training for grade 9 will be in September around the 14 or 15th. There is a tentative contract with Ann Larson that needs to be approved. This program is a general education model for students that struggle in reading and written language. The LBP training is being funded by a Special Education entitlement grant and Title II. Initial full day training and a monthly consult is included. To receive certification, the participant will need to do a practicum with a student. In order for an employee to abide by a 3-year commitment to the district after receiving training there will need to be a MOA with the WFT.

Mr. Elwell reported there are a total of 15-16 practitioners with some having professional status that have signed up for the OG training. The Special Education grant does not include the OG training. Out of 16 signed on, a total of 3 are committed for the certification.

A question was brought up about the OG training including the ability to use the "train the trainer model". Ms. Santos will look into this question.

On August 10, there will be a 1-day virtual training on Orton Gillingham strategies with funding secured from a grant. Cost is about \$1,135 per teacher including materials.

Mr. Elwell shared that the sooner intervention takes place, the better students will be prepared and could avoid the Special Education pathway as well as out of district placements.

Discussion took place on the eligibility requirements for the Language Based Program. Ms. Santos explained there is a referral process at the end of the year as well as looking at assessment results. Students could have a learning disability in reading and writing, or have ADHD. There is an evaluation that takes place every 3 years. Some students continue to have a disability upon reevaluation and some do not.

(Ms. Pacheco arrived here at 6:20 pm.)

Ms. Stanton Cross shared some information from a recent conference attended on ESSER funds. Districts are encouraged to define a wish list, where do you want to go and what do you want to accomplish. Then get community and stakeholders to back these wish list items and fund it on year 3. This strategy will use ESSER funds wisely.

An item on the wish list could be having 2 teachers OG certified in each grade level. This would be impactful for the district. Use stipends through ESSER funds or hire teachers that are certified. It was noted that a 1-day seminar is not going to give the district what it really needs.

Offering a higher rate of salary due to experience in OG could help expand the program and get it where we need it. Making the job description a bit different and adding inhouse PD would provide a long-term benefit for the district.

II. Discussion of ARP / ESSER - Use of Funds -

Ms. Rapoza reported the ESSER II funding needs to be solidified and the grant submission is due July 31, 2021. This meeting is to go over the items highlighted in red from the spreadsheet entitled *ESSER Funding FY22-FY23*.

Chair Tavares requested for Mr. Tomah to give a recap of the items related to technology which include the following:

Wi-Fi MAC and WES, Interactive TV's (WES) Includes Install, 50 Laptops, 200 Chromebooks (4-year supply)

Mr. Tomah began with line 4 MAC and WES Wi-Fi explaining infrastructure behind the scenes. Upgrades will be made to have the same controller to control wireless access. This includes wiring for teacher's workstations, interactive tv's and computers.

There will be interactive TV's which are like a 75-inch laptop hanging on the wall. You have the ability to log into it, go to zoom, broadcast, use a camera, and experience distance learning. This equipment does not need bulb replacements and has 10 touchpoints. Lifespan reaches a total of 50,000 hours (half of the life) or 12 years and is warrantied. A total of 82 interactive tv's will be located at the middle high school, 1 per classroom, 2 Library Media Center, and some in a wheeled location. WES will have 36 located in cafeteria and gym as well. Projectors will be removed from the MAC and WES.

A district wide training will take place with Mr. Tomah doing the training. A recommendation was made for Mr. Tomah to receive a stipend and prepare an educational video for staff so they can view how to work the technology and solve problems. Mr. Tomah will get prep work done and speak with Mr. Rezendes to plan a Vimeo session.

Mr. Tomah is requesting 50 laptops and 200 Chromebooks so he will have enough equipment for the next 4 years. Mr. Tomah explained he ran short this past year when surface pros were issued to SC members and long-term substitutes. E-rate funding will give an allowance of \$400 per device. Having these devices will give him leeway to swap out devices needing repair and can loan devices out if people need them when meetings are held. Mr. Tomah will re-evaluate this every year.

Chair Tavares asked if there were any questions on technology?

Ms. Orlando asked if there could be anything used to improve hybrid meetings? Mr. Tomah mentioned there are premium devices that would eliminate sound issues. He can prepare a cost list for these devices.

Social Emotional Learning Director -

Discussion took place on the job description. Mr. Aubin mentioned that it was hard to find a job description for this position. The district is just starting this program and developing an initiative of culture and wellness. It was mentioned that the position evolved into a Director of Guidance, however this is not the intent. Mr. Aubin will continue to look for a better description.

It was agreed that the position is needed. The salary will be increased to \$80,000. Chair Tavares and Mr. Aubin will work with the consultant and present updated information to the committee.

Summer Programs - Ms. Stanton Cross requested a summary of participation including numbers, gender, activities and budget for the summer programs. Ms. Rapoza will email this information to the committee.

Data Team stipends IReady - Ms. Rapoza reported this item is covered by the Special Education entitlement grant.

O.G. Certified Teacher - A request was made for Ms. Rapoza to get a proposal together about hiring 2 teachers for the district that are Orton Gillingham certified for the upcoming school year.

Tent Rental - Ms. Rapoza reported there is no contract for this item and they are going through ABC Rental. This will be kept if still needed.

PPE filters and chemicals - Item moved to ESSER III funding.

ASPEN Software - This item will need a Registrar Data Administrator position. In the FY21 budget, this position of Registrar Data Administrator was budgeted at \$70,300 with part of these funds going to Mr. Cabral to assist with the technology part. In the FY22 budget, this position is funded at \$50,000 with the technology piece removed.

The Registrar needs to work with special education, civil rights, new enrollments (does enrollment online remotely) and help principals with data reports. It was recommended to have training videos for this software to assist in use.

Yearly license fee is \$30,000 per year and goes year to year.

Edgenuity - Online credit recovery program formerly Odysseyware for grades 9-12. \$11,000 - \$12,000 - ESSER III funding. Ms. Rapoza and Mr. Elwell will write narratives and make adjustments for the next meeting

Mr. Viveiros asked how the district is doing with new enrollments? Ms. Rapoza reported about 14-16 new enrollments at the high school. She will bring numbers to next SC meeting for new enrollees and ones that left the district.

Ms. Stanton Cross requested to see a schematic design for the playground. Ms. Rapoza will provide one at the next meeting.

Ms. Pacheco would like to see a Co-Op program for sports and music in the future. Mr. Aubin would like to develop a culture that starts children at a younger age and he would be glad to look at this.

Mr. Aubin shared the idea of school committee members receiving stipends for all their hours of work. Ms. Rapoza will see which boards receive stipends. It was suggested that school committee members keep a log of what is done to document time spent.

FOLLOW UP ITEMS

The committee requests:

- Ms. Santos to look into whether the OG training includes the ability to use “train the trainer model”.
- Mr. Tomah will prepare a cost list for devices that can help with sound issues to be used for hybrid school committee meetings.
- Ms. Stanton Cross requested a summary of participation numbers, gender, activities, and budget for the summer programs. Ms. Rapoza will email this information to the committee.
- Ms. Rapoza to get a proposal together about hiring 2 teachers for the district that are Orton Gillingham certified for the upcoming school year.
- Ms. Rapoza and Mr. Elwell will write narratives and make adjustments on the Edgenuity Program for the next meeting
- Ms. Rapoza will bring numbers to next SC meeting for new enrollees and ones that left the district.
- Ms. Rapoza will provide a schematic design for the playground for the next meeting.
- Ms. Rapoza will see which boards receive stipends.

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

Motion by Pacheco, 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 8:06 pm.