

**Westport School Committee
Special Meeting
DATE: Wednesday, August 12, 2020
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Virtual Meeting**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81206070905?pwd=VURyQTVVeHFWYktoNHRqSVBqTHdodz09>

Meeting ID: 812 0607 0905

Passcode: zmjG7h

Switched to Google Meeting

Join video call: meet.google.com/tuh-usyn-nkw

Join by phone: +1 316-746-8091 (PIN: 342776145)

MINUTES

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

Absent: Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent

Also Present: Thomas Aubin Assistant Superintendent / WJSHS Principal, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Melissa Sousa Executive Assistant for Business Services, Darren Elwell Director of Curriculum, Cheryl Greeson MAC Principal, 151 Community Participants

I. Call to Order - Chair Viveiros opened the Special Virtual School Committee Meeting at 6:40 pm.

Chair Viveiros 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

II. Comments and Statements from the Public -

Chair Viveiros announced that comments and statements would be taken after Mr. Aubin's presentation on the re-entry plan.

III. Action Agenda

A. Review and Act on Re-Entry Plan -

Mr. Aubin explained the ground rules for decorum.

It was noted that moving to the Zoom platform only allows a maximum capacity of 100 online users. Additional participants were trying to log into the meeting and could not get on. Discussion took place on the best way to resolve this issue. It was decided to announce the original Google Meet login information and move the meeting over to that platform to allow everyone the opportunity to participate. The login information was shared in the Zoom chat and also shared on the Westport Community Schools Facebook page.

IV. Comments and Statements from the Public - Moved to the Google Meet Meeting.

V. Adjourn - A motion was made to close and adjourn the Special Virtual School Committee Meeting at 6:55 pm. and reconvene using the original Google Meet Meeting logon information.

Motion by Tavares seconded by Orlando

5/0/0

The Special Virtual School Committee Meeting ended at 6:55 pm.

Meeting Moved to Google Meet

I. Call to Order - Chair Viveiros opened the Special Virtual School Committee Meeting at 7:09 pm.

Chair Viveiros 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

II. Comments and Statements from the Public - Chair Viveiros announced that comments and statements would be taken after Mr. Aubin's presentation on the re-entry plan.

III. Action Agenda

A. Review and Act on Re-Entry Plan -

Mr. Aubin explained the ground rules for decorum.

Mr. Aubin explained the district was required to submit 3 plans for re-entry. 1. 100% students/staff fully in the buildings 2. hybrid ½ in building ½ remote 3. 100% completely remote. Based on a survey, whatever platform was chosen, parents and stakeholders made it clear more rigor was needed as well as continuity of education.

Mr. Viveiros reported they received over 800 responses to a survey. Some responses from parents expressed concerns over their child's learning loss by distance learning as well as a lack of interaction with peers and teachers. Respondents were asked if they were comfortable with their child returning to school in the fall, 54% said YES, 34% MAYBE, 11% NO (not sending kids to school). There was a preference for a hybrid model with alternating days / alternating weeks. A question on placing students on the bus resulted in parents not sure, 26% not applicable and 33% YES they would use the bus.

Chair Viveiros shared that many volunteers worked on the Re-entry Plans and informed everyone the plan is posted on the school website.

Mr. Aubin reported that Dr. Reese has purchased fans, HEPA air filters and UVAC ultra lights, with funding through the CARES Act.

Jennifer Chaves from the Extended Day Program was congratulated for all her hard work in organizing the program this summer. Westport was the first district to be recognized by SouthCoast. Parents were happy with the services their children received.

II. Comments and Statements from the Public - *(taken out of order)*

Kathryn Clark has been a teacher for 30 years and has a student in Westport. She is advocating to start out with a rigorous remote learning model, then transition into a hybrid model. She wants what is best for parents and students and shared that a remote start is prudent.

Jaclyn Horgan works in Special Education at WES. She expressed concerns and anxieties of educators, and advocates to make the responsible call for all remote learning in the Fall. Many of her students had nothing but added stress this past Spring. She misses students and interactions and wants to be back in the classroom, however only when it is safe. There is still time to plan effective remote learning and she is willing to be a part of this.

Melissa Gifford mentioned listening to Governor Baker who said there is no reason why students can't go to school, if less than 5% infection rate exists. She wants to lead with hope not fear.

Meagan Soares mentioned that children will not be getting as good of an education unless they attend in school. She does not feel comfortable trying to be the teacher for her child.

Matt Forbes thanked the School Committee for all their hard work.

Amanda Melo works at WES and shared that the hybrid model is not responsible and will increase exposure. Children serve as spreaders and there is more to learn concerning the virus. Children need to be healthy and safe.

Discussion on choosing a model took place among the members.

A motion was made to move forward with the recommendation from Dr. Reese to begin with a Hybrid Plan for the fall.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by St Cross, all were in favor 5/0/0

Roll call vote:

Orlando Yes Pacheco Yes Stanton Cross Yes Tavares Yes Viveiros Yes

Individuals can choose a remote option. The State will be providing a platform, details will be upcoming.

A survey from staff was sent out. Responses showed if buildings were to reopen 48.7% can return but are nervous, 25.5 % can return and are comfortable. A total of 81.4% teachers have adequate technology at home.

IV. Comments and Statements from the Public - Part 2

Tracy Priestner had questions with what the hybrid model will look like with rigor academically. Will there be a camera on Westport teachers, using Westport curriculum? Will there be differentiation for students? Mr. Aubin mentioned they are currently in negotiations relative to remote and hybrid plans.

Ms. Priestner inquired about the Ingenuity Program. This will be used as a supplement. Ms. Priestner spoke about social emotional supports. Students will be entering buildings that they recall; however, expectations will be social distancing, masking, hallways one way, no more sharing, no more communicating, etc. This will be frightening for young children and middle schoolers crave interaction. Ms. Priestner was informed that there will be ongoing work to create supports with staff embedding information into the curriculum and using morning meetings to communicate. Professional Development will include the social emotional piece. Ms. Priestner asked about Special Education learners. Mr. Aubin said they will be attending school 5 days per week. Ms. Priestner emphasized there is no replacement for quality teaching. She further stated education cannot take place if social emotional needs are not addressed.

Andrienne Beauregard has a student in the system and believes the hybrid plan is the right decision.

Kaitlyn Carroll has 3 students in the district and will be choosing a remote option for her children.

V. Adjourn - A motion was made to adjourn the Special Virtual School Committee Meeting.

Motion by Orlando, seconded by Stanton Cross 5/0/0

The Special Virtual School Committee Meeting ended at 8:10 pm.