

**Westport School Committee
Regular Meeting
DATE: Thursday, August 20, 2020
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Virtual Meeting**

Join Zoom Meeting

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MINUTES

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

Members Absent: Michelle Orlando

Also Present: Thomas Aubin Assistant Superintendent / WJSHS Principal, Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Darren Elwell Director of Curriculum, Elaine Santos Special Education Director, Jennifer Chaves Extended Day Coordinator, Anthony Tomah Director of Instructional Technology, Michael Duarte Director of Facilities and Maintenance, Kim Ouellette Supervisor of Custodians, 73 Community Participants

I. Call to Order - Chair Viveiros opened the Virtual School Committee Meeting at 6:52 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

Comments and Statements from the Public -

Amanda Melo raised several concerns with school reopening. She referred to a Boston Globe article that states children play a larger role in spreading COVID and carry a higher viral load. She stated not enough is known to reopen schools safely. Other items mentioned were status of air quality, proper air exchange, installation of HEPA filters, procedure for when a student or teacher gets sick, effective mask enforcement or monitoring, procedure for materials forgotten at home and what a typical school day will look like.

III. Informational Agenda

A. Superintendent Report – Dr. Reese understands and appreciates all the concerns that staff have. They are continuing to tweak the re-entry plan to meet the best needs of everyone and that safety is met. Concerning safety measures, an outside company is doing cleaning and repairs of the HVAC systems. They are replacing filters with MERV 8 and looking at other supports such as HEPA air filters, and utilizing electrostatic sprayers.

Discussion took place on adding HEPA air filters and fans. Dr. Reese is in the process of getting quotes which could range from \$130,000 - \$140,000. Members agreed these purchases need to be ordered. Dr. Reese will be finalizing this tomorrow and will work with custodial staff on logistics and electrical capacity issues.

B. Bill Warrant Update: 8-28-20 - Chair Viveiros acknowledged reviewing and signing the bill warrant dated 8.28.20 in the amount of **\$153,311.97**. The bill warrant was emailed to school committee members for review on 8.18.20.

C. Curriculum Update – Mr. Elwell explained 2 district initiatives. First, there will be 10 days of Professional Development. Goals are to insure staff are fully trained to maintain a safe learning environment, ensure staff are prepared to use the Google Classroom platform and have staff equipped with curriculum contingencies to allow for seamless shifts if needed. Second, a plan for textbook access was shared to ensure students have an online subscription or use of a textbook. Textbook access depends on the course. Students will have a one to one text and do not share textbooks.

Mr. Elwell noted that budget planning is needed for online subscriptions and phasing out textbooks. There are purchase costs associated with online subscriptions. Three funding sources were identified; 1. existing textbook line, 2. Title IV funds, and 3. CARES Act funds.

D. SPED Update – Ms. Santos reported they are moving ahead and committed to providing necessary services. Students will be in person as much as possible. Remote learning is done in a co-taught model. There are breakout sessions and therapy services. Special Education meetings are held virtually. They will complete all evaluations in a timely manner. Ms. Santos will start evaluations as soon as possible once staff returns.

E. Athletic Update – Dr. Reese reported for Mr. Pacheco. Guidance from MIAA and DESE was received yesterday. It will be a local decision about student participation. There will be a Fall 1 and Fall 2 season. There is a meeting on Wednesday with recommendations to be presented at the next school committee meeting.

F. Maintenance Update – Ms. Ouellette outlined all the cleaning protocols and status of PPE supplies. She is working with cleaning companies on estimates. Staff attended COVID cleaning training.

Mr. Duarte was asked about the electric ability for fans and HEPA filtration. Dr. Reese will work with Mr. Duarte on these issues. Mr. Duarte reported they are going through all units making sure dampers are bringing in air and motors are functioning. In addition, they are changing exhaust fans and making sure unit ventilators are working. Mr. Duarte is working with a contractor about unit and duct work cleaning as well as exhaust fans. Explanation of updates to the nurse's office, kitchen serving lines, and office plexiglass guards were presented.

G. Technology Update – Mr. Tomah reported that 169 Surface Pro laptops were received with 24 more on order. They are presently waiting for 671 Chromebooks that have been embargoed. An additional 650 Chromebooks will soon be received. There are 65 Chromebooks to cover TAs and other staff. Mr. Tomah is working on installation of exterior Wi-Fi for 5-6 locations. It was noted that laptops can be used for remote learning if needed.

H. Transportation – Ms. Rapoza is working with both bus companies. Bus runs have been made with full amounts of students. There was a meeting about transportation with MAPT with no clear information on what other districts are doing. Surveys out to parents concerning transportation are due tomorrow. There are still a lot of factors that need to be worked on to determine a plan moving forward.

I. Extended Day – Ms. Chaves reported she has received many emails and phone calls from parents. She has been in communication with parents regularly. They are waiting for final state guidance. There will be a meeting soon where they will receive a 2-month supply of PPE.

Ms. Chaves was acknowledged for her exemplary work with the Extended Day Program.

J. Subcommittee Updates - Mr. Aubin reported that the SBC continues to move forward. There have been change orders, however they are below costs when compared to other school building projects within the state of Massachusetts. The building will be enclosed by the end of October making it possible for all the interior work to take place. Furniture samples are in the Library and they are having staff test it. Mr. Aubin reminded everyone to start decluttering since they are less than a year away from moving into the new school. They are working with the Town on the communication system.

Chair Viveiros added the driveway to the Town Library has been paved with a base coat and the parking lot is ready for the Library.

Mr. Aubin addressed everyone using his 35 years of experience in education. The objective is to educate students as safe as possible. In the Town of Westport, there have been 5 COVID cases in the last 2 weeks, with a population of over 15,000 people. They are looking at the best decisions to educate students with staff and student safety foremost. Mr. Aubin made a counter argument concerning the Boston Globe article presented at the beginning of this meeting, stating the use of a small sample of 290 people.

Policy Subcommittee - Ms. Tavares informed members a meeting will take place on Monday August 24, 2020 at 5 pm.

IV. Action Agenda

A. Review and Act on Minutes of Thursday, August 6, 2020 and Thursday, August 12, 2020 -

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of Thursday, August 6, 2020 and Thursday, August 12, 2020.

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

B. Review and Act on Transportation Fees for the 2020-2021 School Year - Tabled until next meeting.

C. School Calendar 2020-2021 REVISED -

A motion was made to approve the revised 2020-2021 School Year Calendar dated 8.10.20.

Motion by Tavares, seconded by Pacheco 4/0/0

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

VI. **Additional Agenda Issues** - Members can send items into Mr. Viveiros or Dr. Reese.

Ms. Stanton Cross would like clarity and direction about the school re-entry plans for parents as soon as possible.

Public Comment - Melissa Maltais-Avila expressed concerns with HEPA filters, HVAC systems, fans and cleaners. She mentioned they are entering the buildings with no answers.

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 Pacheco 4/0/0

Roll call vote:

Pacheco Yes Stanton Cross Yes Tavares Yes Viveiros Yes

The Virtual School Committee Meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.

Meeting Documents

Revised School Calendar 2020-2021

WJSHS Athletics FAQ's

Submitted by Sharon Pinho School Committee Recording Secretary