

Westport School Committee
Regular Meeting
DATE: Thursday, December 3, 2020
TIME: 6:30 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

Also Present: Thomas Aubin Acting Superintendent, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Kerri McKinnon Acting Assistant Superintendent / WJSHS Principal, Laura Charette JRSRHS Assistant Principal, Darren Elwell Director of Curriculum, Jason Pacheco Athletic Director, Anthony Tomah Director of Technology, 33 Community Participants

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Viveiros opened the Virtual School Committee at 6:39 pm., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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 - There were none.

III. Informational Agenda

A. Superintendent Report - Mr. Aubin gave a COVID19 update. Ms. Charette projected on the screen an informational chart that was put together by the nursing staff to provide more timely information and full disclosure to the community on COVID19 numbers. This information can be found on the school website and Facebook page. To date, 18 students and 7 staff members have tested positive.

MSBA has approved the roof replacement project. The roof is 34 years old and is 72,000 square feet. The total cost will be \$4.5 million dollars, including cost for abatement of asbestos. The project will begin June 21- September 3, 2021. WES summer programs will need an alternative location. Ms. Rapoza reported all the required documents were submitted to the MSBA. The Town will be reimbursed 49% of the project cost.

Mr. Pacheco gave a status on winter sports. MIAA has approved the playing of basketball and ice hockey statewide. There has been a mixed bag among schools on whether they will participate. Winter sports start date would be January 4, 2021. Mr. Pacheco asked the members if they will support offering winter sports?

Discussion was held on whether winter sports should take place. Mr. Pacheco said although there is work to do, they can follow the guidelines. He is concerned about the issue of spectators and space in the gym. Schools are handling this different, some have no fans, and 1 or 2 fans per athlete. Livestreaming the games was mentioned.

Mr. Aubin recommends to begin winter sports without fans and offer livestreaming with the ability to modify this plan.

A motion was made to allow Westport to take part in winter sports at the JRSRHS.
Motion by Stanton Cross, seconded by Tavares, all were in favor, motion passes 5/0/0

Update on Scheduling

Ms. McKinnon and Ms. Charette explained the proposed ideas for schedules.

Ms. McKinnon explained the following:

Introduction of Wildcat Block -

Wildcat block for high school would be twice a week. This block allows for remediation, enrichment, additional instructional time, or extra help. Students select what they want, however teachers can override student selections. Wildcat block at the middle school would be daily for 30 minutes.

High school bell schedule - keep current schedule but added a Wildcat block.

Current graduation requirements - 160 credits - 8 semesters in 4 years.

Block vs. 6 drop1 Schedule

Block Schedule

Pros of block schedule - highly supported by staff and students, extra time to prepare for MCAS, extra time for AP courses, can double up in content, several elective offerings, requires no additional staff.

Cons of block schedule - elective credits, use of full block, continuity of learning, no common planning time.

Ms. Charrette explained the following:

New schedule - 6 drop 1-

Grades 9-12 - enrolled in 6 classes / 5 classes per day with 1 class dropped each day.

Classes - 60 minutes each with Wildcat block in place.

Graduation Requirements would change slightly (need 120 credits to graduate, lessen number of elective credits).

Pros of 6 drop 1 schedule - Meet entire year, lessen graduation requirements and electives, teach 4 out of 6 periods, with a prep, duty, or common planning time

Cons of 6 drop 1 schedule - need additional 1.5 FTE's / 3 positions at .5, lessens elective offerings

Middle School - Current schedule - 6 periods (4 classes and 2 exploratories)

Showed rotation of schedule

For consideration - schedule where core classes meet daily is developmentally appropriate for this age group, revisit requires electives, tiered reading support and teaming. Implementing a 6 drop 1 schedule would not have these.

Timeline -

February 2021- Teachers make recommendations for student placement 2021-2022 SY

March 2021- Students complete their course ballots

April - June 2021 - Master schedule for both schools

June 2021 - Students schedules finalized

August 2021 - Mail schedules

Ms. Charette reviewed the current Graduation Requirements and explained the required classes per content area. Ms. McKinnon will look at other high school to see what other schools offer.

Mr. Elwell recommended in order to lower the graduation requirements electives need review.

Members would like to place scheduling on the following meeting agenda for further discussion.

B. WCS Bill Warrant: 12-4-20 - Chair Viveiros acknowledged reviewing and signing the bill warrant dated 12.4.20 in the amount of \$353,769.87. The bill warrant was emailed to school committee members for review.

C MCAS i-Ready Diagnostic Presentation – Mr. Elwell explained the MCAS schedule for 2021.

Mr. Elwell reported the district is using i-Ready Assessment provided by Curriculum Associates and Lesley University. K-6 is piloting i-Ready for ELA and Math online assessments for free (cost \$20,000). This is taking the place of Dibels testing for this year. Mr. Elwell explained that Dibels consists of a time consuming in-person test. i-Ready is an adaptive assessment providing real-time data and has been approved by DESE for early ready screening as well as dyslexia. In addition, iReady uses less manpower, has a quicker turn around time and makes better connections of student performance data to the MA framework domains for targeted intervention. Chromebooks have helped deliver this assessment. Mr. Elwell thanked members for their technology support.

Chair Viveiros asked if check ins with students are taking place. Ms. McKinnon and Ms. Charette verified that this was being done.

D. SPED Update – Ms. Santos gave an update on Special Education district numbers, primary disabilities, and a continuum of services. The district has a full complement of related service providers. The department's vision is to empower students to be contributing members of society and lifelong learners who are prepared for college or a career.

Discussion took place on inclusion, resource rooms, and sub separate classrooms.

E. Technology Update – Mr. Tomah began by reporting the receipt of 421 new Chromebooks and 250 more arriving soon. Staff are working on these computers for WES students then deployment for MAC. There will be enough Chromebooks to supply the entire district with 1,350 for students and 80 for staff. The IT Department was recognized for their assistance with visiting homes for help with this technology.

Mr. Tomah is working in increasing Internet speed from a shared 300 megs per building to 1 gigabit to reduce connectivity issues. Configurations also need to occur on the Charter side.

Mr. Tomah is working directly with Charter and the architects of the new school building concerning fiber, internet connectivity, and VOIP phone systems. In addition, he is working with the Town to develop a town wide VOIP phone system. A proposal is being formulated to develop a system that will be usable and cost effective. Town fiber optics is another issue that is controlled by another provider. He is working with Keith Novo to resolve issues.

Ms. Stanton Cross recommended for Mr. Aubin to discuss with Mr. King the idea of assigning a Town technology person to work on these issues, considering the reduction to the School Department budget.

Discussion took place on how sports games can be livestreamed to homes. Mr. Tomah suggested several options with the most reasonable being livestreaming on YouTube.

Mr. Tomah is looking at ways for managing the website. Presently it is managed through WordPress. He would like to have a stipend position webmaster/social media person. Secretaries and principals will have the ability to place things on the website quickly.

F. Subcommittee Updates - Chair Viveiros reported the new school continues to be constructed.

Mr. Aubin reported when he requested building tour dates for staff he was informed to wait until the Spring.

Campground Committee - Ms. Stanton Cross mentioned development of the fields on the campground property for the new school project cannot be paid as part of the school building project. There is CPC money available. They are surveying the property now. CPC board wants an overseer of this project.

This could be done by having the school committee set up a subcommittee for this project or the Town could set up a Campground Development Committee. Further discussion will take place.

IV. Action Agenda

A. Review and Act on Minutes of Thursday, November 17, 2020 Work Session, Thursday, November 19, 2020, and Tuesday, November 24, 2020 Work Session -

A motion was made to approve Minutes of Thursday, November 17, 2020 Work Session, Thursday, November 19, 2020, and Tuesday, November 24, 2020 Work Session.

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

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 - Mr. Aubin reported senior Emily McMahon published an article about the discovery of the far-flung minor planet Sedna in the November 2020 edition of Astronomical History Magazine. She is doing an internship at UMASS. Credit was given to the teaching staff in providing a great education for students.

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 5/0/0

Roll call vote:

Orlando Yes Pacheco Yes Stanton Cross Yes Tavares Yes Viveiros Yes

The Virtual School Committee Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

MEETING DOCUMENTS

- 2021 MCAS Administration Information
- i-Ready Assessment Pilot 2020-2021 School Year
- Special Education 2020-2021 School Year
- Special Education Support Staff Breakdown 2020/2021

Submitted by Sharon Pinho School Committee Recording Secretary