

**Westport School Committee  
Special Meeting  
DATE: Tuesday, August 25, 2020  
TIME: 6:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Virtual Meeting**

Join Zoom Meeting

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**MINUTES**

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

**Also Present:** Thomas Aubin Assistant Superintendent / WJSHS Principal, Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Mr. Armendo Westport Board of Health, Julie Morotti and Jennifer McMahon Health and Safety Subcommittee members, Jason Pacheco Athletic Director, 208 Community Participants

**I. Call to Order** - Chair Viveiros opened the Virtual School Committee Meeting at 6:50 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** - Chair Viveiros announced it would be best for Dr. Reese to give his presentation first, then public comments and statements would be entertained.

**III. Informational Agenda**

A. Discussion of Re-Entry Plan - Dr. Reese apologized for the delay in beginning the meeting. Zoom settings needed to be adjusted in order to accommodate over 100 participants.

Dr. Reese informed everyone that tonight there will be no votes taken. He will explain where the district is with the re-entry plan, public comments will take place and members will have time to review all the information. An additional meeting will take place tomorrow evening.

Dr. Reese began by sharing his screen with a PowerPoint presentation. The overarching goal is a safe reentry of students and staff. In addition, there is a goal to get everyone in the buildings. Dr. Reese presented a timeline beginning in March 2020 with school closures. All districts were asked to provide 3 learning model plans remote, in person, and hybrid. The intent was to be fluid and be able to transition seamlessly between any of the plans if needed.

A school re-entry committee was established comprising of staff, students and parents. This committee looked at curriculum, health and safety, and how to best support students regardless of the learning model.

**New Proposal** - Dr. Reese originally recommended to begin school with the hybrid model over 2 weeks using 2 cohorts of students. There was a positive vote by the School Committee to get this hybrid plan working, however as more information has been received a change in the plan has occurred. Dr. Reese is now recommending to delay the hybrid model and start school with a remote learning model. This is based on a delay of getting some materials and resources.

Dr. Reese acknowledged that plans are very challenging and consistently changing. Meetings with the Commissioner of Education are taking place on a regular basis for clarification. They are preparing for the unknown.

Other information:

There will be a 10 day delay for students to begin, offering Professional Development to teachers. Teachers will work in buildings, maintaining appropriate social distancing, and wearing masks, etc.

Remote model will have specific schedules during the day and be more structured. There will be live instruction presented by teachers to students. Re-evaluate in beginning of October to determine when to pivot to hybrid.

Families choosing complete remote access will be using the platform provided by the state.

Grab n Go Food Program will be available no matter what model.

Students from special populations were discussed:

--Students with disabilities that receive instruction to substantially separate classroom will come into the building.

--Students that receive some types of academic instruction, on IEP's, EL's, Language Program, etc. will be in-person on Mondays to work with staff members one hour in afternoon. Small group, one staff member. Tuesday - Friday remote with virtual check-in to monitor and support.

--Students that receive speech, PT, OT services will be in school, if not possible, then remote.

--Students on 504 plans discuss on an individual basis how to provide accommodations at home

--Pre-school students in person small group size - 4-year old's 2 ½ days, 3-year old's 2 days.

HEPA units to be placed in classrooms.

Although orders were placed back in May, not all items have arrived. Everyone is competing for same products. A list of items ordered and received, ordered not yet received, and not ordered yet were reviewed.

Additional protective measures - On September 7, a professional company will clean HVAC systems, HEPA air filtration or UVC Systems will be placed, balancer for HVAC systems, tree removal at WES and WJSHS to extend outdoor learning opportunities, door for MAC Office, and installation of plexiglass partitions.

Facilities Mr. Aubin and Mr. Duarte - Mr. Aubin shared they have ordered 50 HEPA purifiers for delivery next week with another 200 ordered costing \$140,000. Cleaning and disinfecting materials have been ordered for a cost of \$96,000. A company will begin cleaning HVAC systems on September 7 taking approximately 4 weeks. A 2<sup>nd</sup> company will do balancing of the HVAC systems. Electricity and amperage can run with no problem with some adjustments needed. UV System would take 10-12 weeks, needing 224 hours for 5-6 weeks for installation running to end of December if this option is chosen.

Board of Health - Mr. Armendo from Westport Board of Health is working with the School Department with input and recommendations along with guidance from state. Schools should adopt combinations and strategies to make them as safe as possible. Mr. Armendo visited schools, there are many questions raised with more work still needed. He mentioned the buildings are safe for staff without purifier units and fans or UVC systems, as long as masks and social distancing is used. Students should not enter the buildings. Introducing more people into buildings gives a chance for the virus to spread. There should be a remote start until ventilation and other things are ready.

B. Discussion of Re-Entry Subcommittee Information

Health and Safety Subcommittee - Julie Morotti Health and Safety Subcommittee member mentioned this subcommittee is a smaller group from the Re-Entry Committee. Ms. Morotti covered 3 items.

1. Create policies for when kids return on bathroom breaks, mask breaks, signage, cafeteria plans and procedures, arrivals, snack breaks, water bottles.
2. Recommend to email parents page 33 of the Re-entry Plan discussing what parents can do. Also place on school website.
3. Recommend each school have their own Health and Safety Committee.

Jennifer McMahon Health and Safety Subcommittee member reported they discussed circulation and air exchange options, used Erin Bromage as a resource to work with risk mitigation, masks and distancing would be a safe way to return for teachers, open windows, moving items in classrooms if not necessary for easier cleaning and minimize adults in each room.

#### C. Discussion of School Athletics Program

Athletics Mr. Pacheco and Mr. Aubin - Mr. Aubin explained that sports will be challenging for the district. Different schools are doing different things and this is creating a problem. Mr. Pacheco reported that the MIAA came out with guidelines for the Fall with the creation of 4 seasons. They are still having meetings. Mr. Pacheco wants to offer sports at a safe time.

**Comments and Statements From Public** - Chair Viveiros announced a 3 minute or less timeframe for each person that would like to speak.

Adrienne Beauregard thanked everyone for all their hard work. She asked about the start for K. She mentioned Erin Bromage's opinion about transmission from kids to adult being much lower, especially under age 10. K-1<sup>st</sup> graders more difficult to do remote. She asked if the buildings have been looked at.

Rachel Lambower agrees with the person above and recommends to think about Kindergarten doing a 2-day schedule in person.

Jennifer Medeiros a K teacher, asked if there was some way to do a hybrid or half day for the younger children so they can be face to face.

Julie Jodoin mentioned connectivity in the buildings and equipment for the teachers. She asked if teachers would teach from classrooms.

Amy Pacheco - She has a 1st grader and asked about how much work can be done with air issues. She requested a remote learning outline/schedule in order to help her child and to better accommodate household needs. She also mentioned that teachers should be careful about comments on social media.

Mark Carney thanked everyone for all their hard work. He is disappointed at the decision for a hybrid plan and mentioned it is hard to keep the older students engaged. Bringing students back as soon as possible when safe is preferred.

Lindsey Cabral agrees with others and wants younger grades to go back hybrid.

Stacy Silva-Boutwell asked where will mask breaks be taken and how will students who do not wear masks be separated? What is the plan to protect from outside intruders?

Sarah Smith works with infectious disease protocols and wants to share information. COVID 19 is an aerosol generating disease spread by cough, sneezes, and droplets. She has seen people working first hand with patients COVID positive. When both are wearing masks there is no transmission. Right now, is the safest time to have students go back before the uptick in flu season and having higher numbers of staff and students entering buildings.

Nicole Potter thanked everyone and mentioned her child lost instruction in March. She is concerned about development of reading skills. She would like the committee and administration to relook at the proposed

plan and consider bringing the lower grades back in person. Younger students need to be in school to learn and develop relationships.

Sandra DaCosta mentioned both of her children went to the Extended Day Program where the precautions were phenomenal, however she felt the engagement was not as effective as being in school. She hopes to get students back in the buildings soon.

Trevor Pacheco would like to stick to a hybrid plan. He mentioned that testing is inconclusive on HEPA and UVC systems and spending money on older buildings is just placing a bandage on a problem. His child was showing progression until COVID hit.

Mike Ponte shared that he misses his students tremendously and wants to help students.

At this time discussion was open to committee members. Members will review all the information provided in order to make the best decision.

Chair Viveiros announced that the best way to contact School Committee members is by email. For all members email [SC@westportschools.org](mailto:SC@westportschools.org) or email individual members.

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

Motion by Tavares, 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 8:43 pm.