



HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting ([agenda](#))

In-Person Meeting

Buker Elementary School

Multipurpose Room

Thursday, September 23, 2021

7:00 PM - 9:30 PM

Present:

Dana Allara, Chairperson

Michelle Bailey

Julia Campbell, Vice Secretary

Jennifer Carr, Secretary

Michelle Horgan

Anna Siedzik, Vice Chairperson

Also Present:

Eric Tracy, HWRHS Superintendent

Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance and Administration

Thomas Geary, Director of Maintenance, Facilities & Operations

Stacy Bucyk, Director of Student Services

Becky Bonenfant, SEPAC Co-Chair

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Ms. Allara, Chairperson, calls the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Ms. Allara notes that there are currently technical challenges with the Zoom link for Public Comment.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All those in attendance, with the exception of School Committee member Anna Siedzik, rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Citizen's Comments

[Exhibit](#)

Mr. Geary states that the technical issues have been resolved, and the Zoom link for citizen's comments is currently open. Ms. Allara reviews the procedure involved with public comments:

Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify himself or herself by name and address. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. After Citizen's Comments, the chat feature will be turned off. If members want to be recognized, they can use the raise hand feature.

Meeting ID: 858 4460 9879 Passcode: 675805

In-Person Meeting, Zoom Link below is for Public Comment Only:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85844609879?pwd=TUFvNzdnNzQ1Roo3cmRqZjdJM1ZQdzog>

There are no citizen comments at this time.

Ms. Allara closes public comments at approximately 7:08 PM, noting that those wishing to view the meeting can do so through HWCAM's livestream on the HWCAM [website](#) or [YouTube channel](#).

4. Review of School Committee Protocols

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Horgan reads School Committee protocols #3 and #4, as detailed in the [exhibit](#).

5. Consent Agenda

A. Warrants

[Exhibit](#)

- Voucher No. 8
- Voucher No. 1011
- Voucher No. 1012
- Voucher No. 3041
- Voucher No 3042
- Voucher No. 3043

B. Executive Session Minutes

- June 2, 2021
- June 16, 2021
- August 19, 2021

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEM A, WARRANTS, AND EXCLUDING ITEM B, EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES; THERE SHALL BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.

MOTION by Jen Carr; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.

Ms. Siedzik points out some minor corrections needed in the Executive Session minutes listed above:

- 06/16/2021 Executive Session minutes: correct the spelling of Ms. Banios and Ms. Allara's name;
- 08/19/2021 Executive Session minutes: correct the spelling of Ms. Allara's name.

Ms. Bailey requests clarification regarding the process involved in approving and releasing the Executive Session minutes. Ms. Allara explains that the minutes listed above have been reviewed by the district's legal counsel, and are therefore ready to be approved by the School Committee and also released to the public.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES AS PRESENTED IN THE EXHIBITS ABOVE, WITH THE CHANGES MENTIONED EARLIER BY MS. SIEDZIK, TO BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC; THERE SHALL BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.

MOTION by Jen Carr; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.

6. New Business

A. SEPAC Introduction

[Exhibit](#)

Stacy Bucyk, *Director of Student Services*, introduces Becky Bonenfant, *SEPAC Co-Chair*.

Ms. Bonenfant introduces herself and reviews the *Hamilton - Wenham Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC)* presentation as shown in the [exhibit](#). She reviews the organization's mission, goals, communication with district families, and goals for the upcoming school year.

Generally, SEPAC will meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, with the first meeting scheduled next Tuesday, 09/28/2021, at 6:00 PM (via Zoom). An *Annual Parent's Right Workshop* is scheduled in November, and throughout the year presentations will be offered to address the needs of students: managing behavior, anxiety, and community resources. Meeting [agendas and minutes](#) have been updated on the Hamilton - Wenham Regional School District [Website](#) [*District Information* → *Student Services* → *Special Education Advisory Council (SEPAC)*].

There is discussion about the frequency and schedule of SEPAC's updates to the School Committee, with Ms. Bucyk explaining that historically, SEPAC provided updates twice a year. Both Ms Siedzik and Ms. Campbell would like more frequent updates. Ms. Bonenfant agrees, and will work to schedule regular presentations to the School Committee throughout the year. Ms. Campbell encourages SEPAC members to join the DEI working group, as it is vital to have representation from parents in this group to ensure inclusion and goal alignment between the groups.

Ms. Bonenfant extends her gratitude to the hard work and dedication of current SEPAC members: Lindsay Whitman, previous Co-Chair, and who will be serving as Treasurer in the upcoming school year; Kristin Crockett, Secretary; and Nancy Waddell, previous Treasurer.

B. Vote Vaccination Requirement

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Eric Tracy reviews the district's vaccination requirements, as detailed in the 09/17/2021 memorandum ([exhibit](#)). Mr. Tracy consulted with Lea Tabenkin, *Lead Nurse/ High School Nurse*; Mary Beth Ting, *Miles River Middle School Nurse/ Wenham Town Nurse*; and Rachel Lee, *Hamilton Town Nurse*. Their collective opinion is that a required vaccination for all school department staff is the safest route for everyone.

There is a discussion regarding the district's vaccination requirement, including potential resignations from staff; challenges involving the number of current vacancies in the district; Salter Transportation and complexities if district seeks to require vaccinations for non-employees (Salter is contracted); COVID-19 transmission changes and data in surrounding communities; etc.

The School Committee discusses the language of a motion that require staff vaccination and specifies the timeline for such action.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE REQUIRE ALL HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES TO BE FULLY VACCINATED WITH AN FDA APPROVED OR EMERGENCY USE AUTHORIZED (EUA) COVID-19 VACCINE BY NOVEMBER 29, 2021. THIS POLICY IS SUBJECT TO ALL DOCUMENTED LEGAL EXEMPTIONS. EMPLOYEES WHO ARE GRANTED EXEMPTIONS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL MITIGATION STRATEGIES. THE SUPERINTENDENT WILL BE TASKED WITH IMPLEMENTING APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES TO IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE THIS MANDATE.

MOTION by Jen Carr; SECONDED by Julia Campbell.

Discussion: CDC recommendations surrounding booster shots; eligibility to receive booster shots; booster shots as a consideration for the School Committee in implementing the vaccination requirement; etc.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.

There is discussion about volunteers (who are present in the facilities), as Ms. Bailey points out this population was not addressed in any way in the School Committee's motion requiring vaccination for all district staff. This topic will be considered in a later meeting.

C. HWRSD MOA - Regional Agreement/Primer

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Bailey provides a summary of the Regional Agreement, and the history of revisions and adoptions, pointing to the most recent amendment on 02/13/2014 ([exhibit](#)). She provides an overview of the major themes found in the agreement, and how the Agreement guides the operations of the district. The School Committee received a letter expressing an interest in changing the Regional Agreement.

There is a lengthy discussion surrounding the bandwidth of the School Committee, and whether the School Committee agrees that a restructuring of the Regional Agreement is necessary. There is discussion about the cosmetic changes necessary; process of amending; Town agreements; letter from Hamilton with requested changes; etc.

Ms. Allara, as liaison to the Board of Selectmen, will have a conversation and report back to the School Committee. Ms. Siedzik asks that the 08/03/2021 letter from the Hamilton Board of Selectmen (Lori Wilson) be recirculated.

This item will appear on a future agenda with action items, and likely a motion or more detailed information about the next steps.

D. .2 Math Miles River Middle School

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy requests that the School Committee approve a .2 math position at Miles River Middle School, as detailed in the [exhibit](#).

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT SUPERINTENDENT ERIC TRACY'S RECOMMENDATION TO HIRE A .2 FTE MATH TEACHER AT MILES RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL, AS DETAILED IN THE [EXHIBIT](#) PRESENTED IN THE AGENDA.

MOTION by Jen Carr; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Anticipated interest and candidates for this position. Mr. Tracy indicates that there is a candidate interested in this position. Mr. Tracy anticipates that this position will fill an on-going need in the district, and confirms that the position would be built into future budgets.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.

7. Finance and Operations

A. ESSER III Grant Update

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy provides an ESSER III grant update, as detailed in the [exhibit](#). There is discussion regarding the ESSER III funds and allocating funding throughout the district. There is some discussion regarding elementary special programs, particularly the music program.

8. Policy

A. Face Coverings Policy

[Exhibit](#)

The School Committee voted on 08/19/2021 to revisit the Face Coverings Policy at every School Committee meeting. Ms. Siedzik points out that the Face Covering Policy linked in the exhibit on tonight's

agenda is not the most current policy: the School Committee voted to approve a revised policy - with significant changes - during the 08/19/2021 School Committee meeting¹ (that revised policy can be found in the 08/19/2021 meeting minutes, or the [exhibit](#)).

B. Data for discussion

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy reviews the data as presented in the [exhibit](#), explaining the number of cases throughout the district.

Ms. Allara reminds the School Committee that the agreement was to revisit this policy and updated data at every meeting. Mr. Tracy reports that there has not been noticeable pushback or refusal to participate in the district's face covering policy.

There is discussion about the current DESE guidelines on Face Coverings. The School Committee will continue revisiting their policy at each meeting, and will address any changes in DESE guidance that may arise.

9. Superintendent's Report

A. District Goal Updates

Superintendent Tracy reviews the progress on the District Goals, including team meetings; DEI audit status; Title 9 training; inclusive practices and evaluation standards; professional and student learning goal status and implementation; foundational work and athletic improvement meeting schedule; etc. The district is keeping an updated document to track progress, and folks in charge are updating the document on a weekly basis.

Ms. Campbell asks about the DEI advisory board, with Ms. Bucyk responding that the DEI leadership team met yesterday, reviewed applications, and will be sending out emails next week to inform those members chosen. She encourages those who were not chosen to continue to participate in surveys offered. Ms. Siedzik follows up with questions about how members were chosen and action taken to ensure diversity within the chosen board. Ms. Bucyk believes the choices reflect a diverse membership. There is a brief discussion about creating accessible meeting times for participation.

There is brief discussion regarding the status of MSBA applications, with Mr. Tracy reporting that the High School roof application was not approved, and the elementary application decision is anticipated in December.

There is a discussion regarding various capital projects throughout the school buildings.

10. Committee Reports

A. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee

The *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* met Wednesday, 09/22/2021, and developed subcommittee goals, agendas, and a timeline. Ms. Campbell reports that since there was not a third member present at the meeting, they were unable to elect officers as planned. Officers will be elected at the next scheduled meeting, Wednesday, 10/13/2021.

B. Policy/Legislative Subcommittee

¹ From the 08/19/2021 meeting: I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADOPT THE FACE COVERINGS POLICY AS PRESENTED IN THE MEETING AGENDA [EXHIBIT](#), EFFECTIVE MONDAY, AUGUST 23 2021, WITH PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO REVISIT THIS POLICY ON A REGULAR BASIS.

The *Policy/Legislative Subcommittee* has a meeting scheduled for Monday, 10/25/2021 at 6:00 PM. The agenda for this meeting includes discussion of the district's flag policy, which initially had a deadline for the end of September.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE EXTEND THE FLAG POLICY DEADLINE TO 10/31/2021.

MOTION by Michelle Bailey (no second).

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AMEND THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR TO EXTEND THE FLAG POLICY DEADLINE TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULED 11/04/2021.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Julia Campbell

Discussion: Ms. Siedzik does not believe that the one discussion at the 10/25/2021 Policy Subcommittee meeting will result in any substantive presentation/agreement. There is further discussion regarding the policy and deadline for presentation to the full School Committee.

MOTION PASSES through majority (5:1) vote of six (6) members present.

C. Negotiations Subcommittee

The *Negotiations Subcommittee* had a tentative meeting with the custodial union scheduled for 11/06/2021, however scheduling conflicts arose and Ms. Allara is now waiting to hear back from the union about rescheduling the meeting. The Subcommittee has not had an opportunity to vote in officers, however, this will be done at a meeting in the near future.

11. Chair's Report

- Ms. Allara is a member of the *Hamilton Master Planning Committee* and provides an update on the Shop Local event that took place this past Sunday, 09/19/2021. Many community members visited the Master Planning booth and it was a great opportunity to begin determining citizen's values and the direction needed for town planning.
- Ms. Allara reports that there are a number of meetings scheduled to ensure lines of communication remain open with the Towns and stakeholder groups: Wenham Finance introductory meeting (October); Town of Hamilton meeting to be scheduled.

There is discussion regarding School Committee liaisons to various groups and schools, as well as the responsibilities in serving as liaison. Superintendent Tracy will make sure that the district's website is updated to reflect the current School Committee member liaisons.

12. Topics for Future Meetings

- Recirculate District Work Plan;
 - Foreign Language Report tentatively scheduled for November;
- Appoint Superintendent Eric Tracy for the Northshore Education Consortium;
- Vote to approve MASC Resolutions;
- Various TA position vacancies and the impact on district goals.

13. Vote to Adjourn

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE 09/23/2021 MEETING AT 9:10PM.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.
MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.

Respectfully submitted October 22 2021 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.
