

**Westport School Committee
Emergency Meeting
DATE: Monday, March 16, 2020
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
PLACE: Virtual Meeting**

MINUTES

Members Present: Melissa Pacheco, Michelle Orlando, Nancy Stanton Cross, Nancy Tavares, Antonio Viveiros
Also Present: Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent

Planning for School Closure due to Governor Baker's announcement on March 15, 2020

This virtual meeting has been scheduled with less than 48 hours' notice with flexibility identified under the "Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c.30A, Section 20", signed on March 12, 2020.

Dr. Reese opened up the Virtual Emergency School Committee Meeting at 2:00 p.m.

1. **Update on the State of the Schools** - Dr. Reese presented information on the school district's current status concerning the coronavirus. Superintendents across the Commonwealth have been receiving information from the Department of Public Health, Education Commissioner and Governor. The latest information directed all school to close for 3 weeks through April 7. This is a fluid timeline and could change, possibly making it longer.

Dr. Reese has been in close contact with the Superintendent's group getting information. The district has distributed information to parents on Frequently Asked Questions FAQ and to faculty and staff on curriculum, resources and payroll.

Instruction is considered to be not direct instruction or structured learning. Discussion on how to handle this time is currently taking place. Issues on how this will affect Special Education, grading, making students accountable and online access are just a few things under discussion. First week will be treated like snow days. No school is required to go beyond their 185th scheduled day regardless of days taken. This means for Westport the last day of school will be June 23, 2020.

Dr. Reese will be meeting with the teacher's union tomorrow to discuss the logistics on how to support students. Having teachers work from home will be discussed.

For now, 10th grade MCAS is being postponed and it has not been determined if there will be an extension of other tests.

There was discussion on staff losing pay when it is a forced closure. Some ideas mentioned were the district providing online Professional Development, having teachers work on curriculum with Mr. Elwell, engaging in meaningful work, using this time to hold MCAS Blasts on weak areas and post these to Google Classroom as well as send papers home for those without Internet connections. Students needing assistance could be helped by teachers using Zoom Video Conferencing.

Michelle Rapoza is looking into providing drive up grab and go meals for breakfast and lunch at the high school location. This will be made available to any child that lives in Westport. Numbers will be recorded. Further details may be needed if anyone has transportation problems, an alternative site is needed or possible use of the van.

Conversations about issues are very fluid. Some items brought up were the ongoing bus contract and any reimbursement, holding off on April vacation, how will this affect the principal's search? Dr. Reese is in contact with MASC to see how others are handling similar situations and will get back to the members on these issues.

Dr. Reese pointed out the Commissioner of Education emphasizes equity and fairness with expectations across all the schools. On the state level, they are beginning to plan for more than 3 weeks of time out of school.

Dr. Reese and Mr. Elwell will be discussing expectations for teachers and how to communicate with students and parents. This will be sent out to teachers and the union.

Dr. Reese mentioned he has been asked many questions and pointed out 4 items:

1. They have not been encouraged to have students take materials home, materials should remain in school where the virus is not active, there is online access.
2. Lesson Plans- Using Cable, Channel 2, Univision and Telemundo
3. Roll out Learning Platform - This will be discussed with the teacher's union tomorrow. Having information by grade level, using Lexia online access, use of QR readers.
4. Create Videos and Letters - State wide communications will be sent out, everything is changing quickly. Everyone is sharing information to assist in getting better prepared.

Dr. Reese is meeting on a regular basis with administration. Communication between administration, teachers, staff, and students is important. There is concern about students losing learning time and the thought is to keep learning ongoing and stay calm.

SC members recommended for Dr. Reese to hold a State of the Schools video segment on Vimeo once a week on the same day and time and also share information on social media. Possibly host a teacher or union person as part of the show.

A reminder to students to check their email on Google Classroom was mentioned. Also informing parents they should make a checklist for their childre, listing items they should do so they can keep in a routine.

Dr. Reese shared the following items with the members:

- Pay, next 3 weeks staff will be paid their regular pay rate.
- MASC Day On the Hill is cancelled.
- School Committee Meeting on March 19, 2020 will be virtual using Google.
- Having remote access for Special Education meetings, setting up timelines, and creating remote opportunities.
- Looking at how to credit preschool and Extended Day (pre-paid).
- Discussion with teacher's union will be about pay, expectations to provide instruction, curriculum development, accountability with students. Teachers are to include principals in their family communications.
- Communication will be sent to staff about the buildings being open from 8 am. -12 pm. on Wednesday March 18 to pick up items they may need.
- Communication will be sent to families about picking up medications from the school nurse.

2. **Adjourn** - A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion by Viveiros, seconded by Stanton Cross

5/0/0

The Virtual Emergency School Committee Meeting ended at 3:05