

Westport School Committee
Work Session
DATE: Thursday, June 11, 2020
Time 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Virtual Meeting

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

Join video call - meet.google.com/bwr-uoci-krw

Join by phone +1 813-425-1020 (PIN: 254510138)

MINUTES

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

Members Absent: Michelle Orlando

Also Present: Jennifer Chaves Extended Day Director, Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager

I. Call to Order - Chair Viveiros opened the Virtual School Committee Work Session at 4:30 pm.

II. Extended Day Summer Program - Jennifer Chaves provided an update on the Extended Day Program for the members. The Board of Health and the Town nurse visited the site of the MAC trailers where the potential program will take place beginning June 29 - August 21, 2020. Ms. Chaves walked through beginning and end of the day procedures and reviewed the EEC Health and Safety Guidelines. Both visitors provided feedback and commented that the program was well thought out.

Ms. Chaves emphasized providing health and safety for the children as a top priority. Normal program enrollment is 60 - 70 students, however they reduced it to 38 children with a staff to student ratio of 1 to 5. EEC guideline's ratio is 1 to 10, so this program is smaller compared to the average.

Procedures begin with parents verbally screened on entry with contact questions to answer. Thorough documentation is key, answers will be recorded daily. Children receive forehead scan for temperature, then they can enter. During the day, if a child moves, for example to the restroom, a sign in/sign out record is completed every time. Rooms were measured, staff wear masks, children are not required to wear masks, but if no mask social distancing needs to be in place, siblings remain together and groups do not change. Not using playground equipment.

Doors will remain open to avoid touching handles, ventilation, windows cracked, all masks will be provided by parents, disposable masks are available if needed, using hand sanitizer and disinfectant. All DESE, CDC, and BOH guidelines need to be followed.

Further discussion was held on the program's procedures. A concern brought up was what happens if a child gets COVID19. Ms. Chaves explained if a person exhibits symptoms, they are placed in a quarantine/isolation room. Parent/Guardian is called. Person needs to seek a physician based on symptoms. Person needs a 14-day quarantine, as well as everyone in the room including anyone in contact with the person if a positive result is found. Documentation from their PCP stating they can return is needed.

Ms. Chaves informed everyone that masks are needed if leaving the room to go somewhere. Ms. Chaves will be disinfecting, custodian will take care of cleaning after they leave the program for the day.

Ms. Chaves mentioned to reduce potential for infection, every child has a laundry basket and will be allowed 4 items from home that they play with. Students are not using any program supplies and will be bringing their own pens and pencils to be placed in their cubby for the summer.

Questions were asked about the program:

A concern was mentioned, that what if Ms. Chaves who runs the program becomes ill? Ms. Chaves replied that Katie the lead teacher would take over the responsibilities.

A child can be absent from the program under an excusable absence and the PACE subsidy will remain in place.

Ms. Rapoza will look into how a staff member is paid if they become quarantined.

Staff members are on call if they need to be replaced.

Ms. Chaves will be the person to sit with a child if they experience symptoms and need to be in isolation before the parent/guardian arrives. They have shields, scrub wear, and gloves. The nurse bed will be moved into the isolation room.

It was mentioned that the isolation room may be very scary for children. Introducing the students to this room ahead of time was suggested.

Ms. Chaves emphasized that parents understand the protocols that are expected of them and the children. Parents/Guardians are leaving 3 emergency contacts and will be participating in an informational virtual session that will spell out all the guidelines.

Ms. Rapoza mentioned that Matthew from the Board of Health and Linda the nurse can come and speak about the program and answer any questions if further clarification is needed.

Ms. Chaves will be keeping communication lines open between the BOH, the nurse and Allie the program monitor that is in charge of licenses for these kinds of programs. At the end of each week she will report how the program went.

Some of the members expressed their appreciation for all that Ms. Chaves has done, however they are hesitant to begin the program and do not want re-entry in the fall to be jeopardized if something happens. In addition, liability to the district is a concern.

Ms. Chaves filed an application of intent to open. It was asked if the program application can be withdrawn if the program does not open. Funding of a monthly COVID19 payment of \$5,300 will be lost. In addition, Ms. Chaves reported 17 out of 38 children are subsidized and this will automatically end if the program ends. As of June 8, the governor approved a rate increase for each child.

Ms. Chaves mentioned that the BOH did not find a connection to reopening if there was a summer quarantine of 14 days. The program ends August 21 and is only taking place in the pods.

A question was asked about the program losing or maintaining its funding? Ms. Rapoza mentioned parents are providing supplies, snacks, lunch, refillable water bottle, and toys.

After speaking with every parent, the parents want this program. Parents have a choice whether to participate and make a conscious choice to join.

It was noted as many places begin to open up, people start to have picnics, go to beach, etc. it will be very hard to isolate where someone picks up COVID19. Putting all protocols in place and following all guidelines will ensure that this needed program can happen.

Ms. Rapoza will have the attorney review the parent agreement form and will place this item on the next school committee meeting. Having the district be held harmless was also mentioned.

Chair Viveiros stated if anyone has further questions forward them to Dr. Reese.

No decision was made at this time concerning the Extended Day Summer Program.

IV. Adjourn - The School Committee Work Session ended at 5:38 pm