



# HAMILTON-WENHAM

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 · TEL. 978-468-5310

**School Committee Meeting**  
**Zoom Virtual Meeting [Link](#)**  
**Zoom Webinar ID: 971 8293 9843**  
**Meeting Password: 574856**  
**Monday, August 10, 2020**  
**3:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

**Present:**

Michelle Bailey, Chairperson  
Michelle Horgan, Vice Chairperson  
Dana Allara, Secretary  
Anna Siedzik, Vice Secretary  
Peter Wolczik  
David Polito (late arrival)  
Stacey Metternick

**Also Present:**

Mary Beth Banios, District Superintendent  
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance & Administration  
Thomas Geary, Director of Maintenance, Facilities & Operations  
Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary  
Jennifer Clifford, Cutler Elementary School Principal  
Ben Schersten, Buker Elementary School Principal  
Carolyn Shediak, Winthrop Elementary School Principal  
Eric Tracy, Hamilton Wenham Regional High School Principal  
Craig Hovey, Miles River Middle School Principal

**1. Call to Order** 3:00 PM

Michelle Bailey calls the meeting to order at 3:00 PM, noting that the meeting is being recorded by HWCAM, and held remotely per the Governor's emergency order.

**2. Executive Session**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PURPOSE #1; TO DISCUSS THE REPUTATION, CHARACTER, PHYSICAL CONDITION OR MENTAL HEALTH, RATHER THAN PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE, OF AN INDIVIDUAL, OR TO DISCUSS THE DISCIPLINE OR DISMISSAL OF, OR COMPLAINTS OR CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST, A PUBLIC OFFICER, EMPLOYEE, STAFF MEMBER OR INDIVIDUAL AND PURPOSE #3; TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OR LITIGATION; AND TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION THEREAFTER.**

**MOTION by Michelle Bailey**

Dana Allara	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES;
David Polito	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.**

*Open Session reconvenes at 3:38 PM.*

Ms. Bailey offers her opening remarks. In today's meeting, the School Committee will approve the school reopening plans for all three learning models: in-person, hybrid, and remote. The meeting will also allow the School Committee to discuss the decision making procedures necessary for safely opening schools to the in-person/hybrid learning models. Every effort will be made to reach these decisions by 5:00 PM.

The School Committee has received an extraordinary amount of emails from concerned community members. Ms. Bailey invites those wishing to offer public comment this evening to indicate their interest through the "raise hand" option on Zoom. Citizens will be allowed 3 minutes to speak, and will not be permitted to speak more than once.

### **3. Citizen's Comments 3:30 PM**

[Exhibit](#)

*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. Total comment time will be limited to 20 minutes.*

*Allison Spies, 14 Farrington Lane Hamilton:* Appears this evening to share that she has received over 200 signatures on her petition to support a revised reopening plan prioritizing safety and equity. She highlights that all Hamilton - Wenham students need to receive an equitable education. Students relying on the remote learning model should not be excluded from the district's excellent education and teaching staff. Ms. Spies concludes that the community voted for the school district's budget with an understanding that excellent education would be provided to all students. She urges the School Committee to keep the students and community together.

*Amy and Tom Starr, 41 Pleasant Street, Wenham:* Ms. Starr appears this evening to speak about the district's school reopening plan. She compares Hamilton - Wenham's plan to Manchester - Essex's reopening plan, which she argues has a predictable and maintainable structure that easily pivots from one learning model to the next. Ms. Starr states that there will be a time in the future when students, groups of students, classes, or the entire school will need to quarantine. Though the Manchester - Essex plan allows for this change, the Hamilton - Wenham plan would fumble. Ms. Starr does not believe the district should need to hire additional external teachers to carry out the school reopening plan.

*Lindsay Whitman, 28 Mayflower Drive, Wenham:* Appears this evening to speak about the school reopening plans as they relate to education equity. Her comment is informative only, and she hopes the information can help those in the community. The State has selected 2 potential Learning Management Systems (LMS) providers. LMS do not provide curricula, rather they are empty shells perhaps better described as *asynchronous courseware* designed by masters level educators. Ms. Whitman explains the changing roles teachers have when transitioning to online learning, noting the role transitions from *sage on the stage* to a *guide on the side*. In the online learning role, teachers check on student progress, identifying areas where student(s) are struggling or accelerating. They would then provide additional direct support, or assign above grade level lessons. Ms. Whitman hopes to better understand whether the district would be relying on Hamilton - Wenham teaching staff for this purpose of providing oversight in the learning academy. She concludes by defining education equity, and reiterates her hope that families are able to make the best decisions for their families.

*Trisha O'Shea, Wenham:* Appears this evening to ask the School Committee to review Ms. Whitman's email. She urges the district and School Committee to consider their offer to help in the 2020/2021 school year preparations.

Ms. Bailey notes that the comments from citizens this evening represent only a small sample of the numerous emails the School Committee received over the weekend.

#### 4. New Business

##### A. FY20 Year End Financials (originally E)

[Exhibit](#)

Mr. Leone explains the details of his presentations this evening, including:

- FY20 year-end accounting;
- Make year-end budget transfers;
- Make year-end transportation transfer;
- Year-end effect on E&D;
- FY21 unbudgeted expenses and transfers;

Mr. Leone reviews the FY20 budget history including projected deficit details, changes to budget, realized savings for the year, and comparison between forecast and actual for FY20.

Ms. Bailey clarifies that the motion to transfer funds allows the district to prepay out-of-district tuitions for next year, and then use the excess funds to distribute throughout the budget's line items.

Discussion regarding Chapter 70 funding and the fluctuations brought upon by COVID-19. Mr. Leone confirms that Chapter 70 funding will be level-funded at approximately \$700,000. Discussion regarding non-negotiable out-of-district tuitions.

Discussion regarding unemployment as well as other challenges in human resources.

Mr. Leone confirms that excess funding flows into the E&D account, and then will go back to the towns in FY20 and at the end of FY21.

##### B. Fund transfers for FY2020 (originally F)

[Exhibit](#)

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVES THE FY20 OPERATING EXPENSE BUDGET TRANSFERS AS RECOMMENDED HEREIN BY THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION AND AS PRESENTED ON THE PREVIOUS SLIDE ENTITLED "YEAR-END TRANSFERS".**

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Stacey Metternick.**

Dana Allara	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES;
David Polito	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.**

Ms. Bailey explains that leftover funds from the transportation account will roll over into a reserve fund. Those funds are to be used for the following year's transportation expenses, and if not used for that purpose, funds will roll over into the E&D account the next year. The School Committee is voting to authorize that roll over through the motion this evening.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVES THE FY20 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION TRANSFERS AS RECOMMENDED HEREIN BY THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION AND AS PRESENTED ON THE PREVIOUS SLIDE ENTITLED "REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION TRANSFER".**

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Stacey Metternick.**

Dana Allara	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
David Polito	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.**

C. Fund transfers for FY2021 (originally G)

Mr. Leone reviews calculations for the district's E&D account including limits, minimum maintained amounts, expense balance, etc. He reviews FY21 revenue reductions, expense increases, and new revenue sources. He asks the School Committee to vote to approve the following FY21 fund transfers:

- Transfer \$18,400 from "Tuitions" to "Inst. Materials"
- Transfer \$30,700 from "Tuitions" to "Capital, Operations, Maintenance"
- Transfer \$81,000 from "Tuitions" to "Teachers"
- Transfer \$81,000 from "Tuitions" to "Instructional Leadership"
- Transfer \$362,000 from "Tuitions" to "Pupil Services"
- Transfer \$24,000 from "Tuitions" to "Other Teaching Services"
- Transfer \$90,000 from "Tuitions" to "Administration"

Discussion regarding furniture expenses; tent purchase versus rental; HVAC placeholder, etc.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVES THE FY21 OPERATING EXPENSE BUDGET TRANSFERS AS RECOMMENDED HEREIN BY THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION AND AS PRESENTED ON THE PREVIOUS SLIDE ENTITLED "FY21 TRANSFERS".**

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Stacey Metternick.**

*Discussion:* Mr. Wolczik asks if it is possible to include a placeholder for a more robust Learning Management System, given that a placeholder exists for HVAC costs. Ms. Bailey states that this issue can be addressed at a later date. Discussion regarding excess Chapter 70 funding and transferring funds back to towns before tax rates are set.

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Dana Allara	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
David Polito	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.**

The E&D account will be discussed in greater detail at the 11/01/2020 School Committee meeting.

D. Review options for fully remote plan (originally B)

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Banios reviews the remote learning design process including the requirements prescribed by DESE. She notes that the accompanying report details the remote learning options and an analysis of each. The district is recommending the following:

- Elementary HW Virtual Academy Option B
- Middle Level HW Virtual Academy Option A;

Lengthy discussion regarding budget implications; pedagogy; access to The Learning Center; cleaning and sanitization of student desks; school ventilation systems; district transportation plans; cohort model;

subjects requiring in-person learning (such as labs in science); choosing an education model and ability to change that initial choice; schedule of classes and learning time; time spent in class; structure of remote learning; importance of individualized feedback, “remote learning” versus “independent learning”, supports offered to teachers, protocol for temperature taking before entering school, addressing anxiety and anticipated mental health issues, HIPPA compliance, nursing staff input and involvement, special education population and heightened risk, remote learning software and built-in assessment, school and class design process, outdoor learning, etc. School principals join the conversation when necessary, offering explanations about what the remote learning model would look like at each grade level, and answering committee members’ questions as they come up.

Ms. Bailey notes that Chapter 70 funding is based on the prior year’s enrollment. She asks families in the community to consider how decisions will affect the district in years to come. She implores families to try the fully remote learning model before transitioning to homeschooling.

The School Committee postpones the vote until Wednesday, 08/12/2020. Ms. Banios asks for an indication as to which option the School Committee is leaning towards, as this will offer insight towards her planning and anticipated staffing changes.

The School Committee indicates a preference for:

- Elementary School Option B
- Middle School Option A

~~E. Vote on school reopening plan (originally C)~~ [Exhibit](#)  
Postponed to the next School Committee meeting, Wednesday, 08/12/2020.

~~F. Vote on Amended School Calendar for 2020-2021 (originally A)~~ [Exhibit](#)  
Postponed to the next School Committee meeting, Wednesday, 08/12/2020.

G. Dates for SC Meetings in August-October (originally D) [Exhibit](#)  
Discussion regarding School Committee meeting dates; deadlines for posting the meeting’s agenda; anticipated agenda; etc. Discussion regarding the meetings coming up this week, including challenges in meeting DESE deadline, 08/14/2020.

The School Committee schedules an additional meeting on Thursday, 08/13/2020 at 3:30 PM. The agenda will be posted tomorrow morning, 08/11/20.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR FROM AUGUST THROUGH DECEMBER 16TH, AS LISTED IN THE [EXHIBIT](#) BEFORE US.**

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.**

David Polito	YES;
Dana Allara	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 6 members present (Ms. Metternick has exited the meeting).**

**5. — Superintendent’s Report**

**6. — Chair’s Report**

~~A. Topics for Future Meetings—School Sponsored Travel~~

~~7. **Committee Reports**~~

- ~~A. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee~~
- ~~B. Policy Subcommittee~~
- ~~C. Negotiations Subcommittee~~

~~8. **Consent Agenda**~~

~~A. Warrants~~

- ~~● Voucher No. 2931~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 2930~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 2928~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 2919~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 2918~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 1003~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 1005~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 1004~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 5~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 2929~~
- ~~● Voucher No. 2926~~

~~[Exhibit](#)~~

~~B. Minutes~~

- ~~● June 3, 2020~~
- ~~● June 10, 2020~~

~~[Exhibit](#)~~

~~[Exhibit](#)~~

**9. Other**

A. Topics for next meeting

**Next School Committee Meetings: Wednesday, 08/12/2020 at 3:00 PM &  
Thursday, 08/13/2020 at 3:30 PM**

- Vote on school reopening plans, including remote learning plans;
- Vote on metrics to guide decision making about in-person learning;
- Vote on amended 2020-2021 School Calendar;
- Update on HVAC status - work completed and next steps.

**10. Vote to Adjourn**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE 08/10/2020 MEETING AT 6:10 PM.**

**MOTION by Anna Siedzik; SECONDED by Dana Allara.**

David Polito YES;  
Dana Allara YES;  
Michelle Horgan YES;  
Anna Siedzik YES;  
Peter Wolczik YES;  
Michelle Bailey YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 6 members present (Ms. Metternick has exited the meeting).**

*Respectfully submitted September 17th, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.*

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\*\*Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A § 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. The School Committee reserves the right to implement additional

remote participation procedures and will notify the public of these procedures as soon as practicable. Please [click here](#) to read the Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20.\*\*

\*Zoom App Information: If you plan to participate, download the [Zoom.com](#) application now. The option to download will also be available at the start of the meeting. When opening the Zoom App, select "Join Meeting" in the upper right corner and enter the webinar id: 971 8293 9843: password: 574856. The community should ask questions via the "chat" function within the Zoom application during the Citizen's Comments section. During the Zoom meeting, participants will be given instructions on how to provide their comments. Unfortunately, we must limit the in-person conversations to just the Committee members. However, for the benefit of all, the School Committee meetings will be available on our local cable channel, HWCam, and [HWCam.org](#), for review a few hours after the meeting has ended. Members of the public can access the meeting via [YouTube HWRSD live stream link](#) the next day.