

WEBSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WEBSTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OPEN SESSION MINUTES (M.G.L. C.39) OF Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Date: March 23, 2021

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Remote ZOOM

The meeting was called to order by: Chair Seddiki

The following Committee Members were present

- Member Millet
- Member Blythe
- Member Napierata

The following Committee Members were absent:

- Member Adamopoulos

Chair Seddiki stated as a reminder the changes in Open Meeting Law issued, just over a year ago, by Governor Baker on March 12, 2020 given the COVID19 outbreak and the Executive Order modifying Open Meetings. The meeting is posted on the district website with the zoom link allowing the public to join in the meeting. As another reminder this meeting is being recorded both audio and video and will be posted on the district website.

I. Call to Order:

II. Approval of March 9, 2021 Minutes

Motion: To approve March 9, 2021 Minutes

The motion was made by Member Blythe

The motion was seconded by Member Millett

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

III. Superintendent's Report

A. Superintendent Update/ District Wide Reports / Correspondence

1. Personnel Updates

New Hires: Jessica Adams – Para at PAE
Caitlin Hughes – Para at PAE
Ford Jarmolowicz – Lunch Monitor

Jenna Gouin and Bridget Heuston have been hired as the Interim Directors of the Adult Education Program. They will still have the guidance of Terri Gillardi. Just got off goggle meets with the entire adult education staff; very clear goals were rolled out, bringing staff back on site soon.

Mrs. Pierangeli has extended her contract for 3 years title change to Assistant Superintendent for Business and finance.

Mrs. Baris, Director of Student Support Services, has signed a 3 year extension to her contract.

2. Return to in person learning Update

It's been one year of dealing with COVID. The WPS staff have been done an amazing job. The Food Service Staff has done an incredible job of providing meals to our families from the first day.

Webster was one of the first districts that brought in person learning to some SPED students during the summer. We now have new mandates from DESE. We have been busy working on the transition to 5 days of in-person learning per the DESE mandate. Date for PAE is April 5th. Date for WMS & BHS is April 28 for in person learning for 5 days

Currently focusing on PAE, students can sit 3 ft in classrooms, 6 ft during eating. This safety mandate is the biggest challenge. Custodians have been working very hard. We can fit about 100 students in caf. Breakfast in the classroom is the biggest challenge. We're making a breakfast area in the gym. Half a class will eat in their classroom, half in gym. Purchasing TV style tables and hula-hoops for breakfast in the gymnasium and purchasing smaller folding tables for eating in the cafeteria to maximize the number of students we can fit in the cafeteria. In process of ordering storage pods, movers will be coming Friday.

There will be some staffing adjustments - Increasing Gr 1 teacher (long term sub). We did not have a remote academy in Gr 3 – will be hiring a gr 3 LTS as well as increase in caf and lunch monitor staff. Will increase hours for paraprofessionals and ABA's due to the addition of Friday in person instruction. Due to class sizes there are some assignment adjustments being made.

Member Napierata asked what percentage of students are choosing to return to in person. Dr. Goguen said she does not have percentage, but there is enough students at PAE to have one remote classroom. Majority of students are choosing in person.

In cases that we do not have enough staff we are not able to call a "remote learning day" after April 5th as DESE will not count it as a school day. We have asked DESE for consideration of this type of situation.

Half-day Fridays for PAE and WMS - We do not need a waiver as DESE first suggested. We meet the time on learning with the new in-person mode and we could keep ½ day Fridays for elementary and middle school with student coming in-person for a half day. However, we feel it is best to gradually transition back to full days on Friday for several reasons: learning loss, safety/supervision, busing, and ensuring adequate nutrition. The plan is to keep the ½ day Fridays for the elementary and middle school thru May 7 (PD ½ day) and start full day Fridays on May 14th. The middle and high school will move to full in-person learning on April 28th, the return to full day Friday on May 14th.

3. Sports Update

Beginning April 5th– BHS Boys & Girls Track
Beginning April 26th– Varsity Baseball & Softball
JV Baseball & Softball
Middle School Baseball & Softball
Boys & Girls Tennis
Middle School Boys & Girls Track
Middle School Real Madrid Soccer

Towns participating = Tantasqua, Auburn David Prouty, Leicester, Grafton, Millbury, Northbridge, Oxford, Quaboag, Southbridge, Uxbridge, and Webster

All safety guidelines are being followed- see School Committee packet for more information on each sport. Shout out to Mr. Paranto for his due diligence in following the new guidelines and all the student athletes that are following all these guidelines.

4. Other updates

A. Congratulations to Bartlett High School, Fran Thomas for his work on being granted the final designation for Innovative Pathways in Healthcare and Social Assistance and Manufacturing. This designation is a 5-year performance contract

B. The Massachusetts Association of Superintendents presented a position paper to the Board of Education and Commissioner Riley to cancel MCAS and ACCESS testing this year and allow districts to rely on local assessments to diagnose learning gaps this year. Feel that testing takes away from teaching time.

C. COVID dashboards for past two weeks are in the SC packet. While we have seen a decline, we do still see COVID cases and close contacts in our schools and we continue to adhere to our safety protocols across the district. Week ending March 16th we had 1 positive cases, 5 cases this week.

D. Professional Development Grids for March 18th and 19th are in the SC packet. WMS and BHS continued work with Ribas consultant Elayne Gumlaw on using explicit learning targets/objectives, SEI strategies, and summarizers to ensure student engagement. WMS and BHS counselors continued work with Noel Foy on decreasing anxiety in students and becoming more aware of how executive functioning skills impact student success. Mrs. Baris led several workshops: School to school grade to grade transitions and Mrs. Baris led Special Education Compliance and Pitfalls training. PAE ILT members led their grade levels through a data analysis of multiple measures of student assessment data to discover learning loss and areas that need more focus for the last trimester.

E. BHS Educational Vision – We continue to work on finalizing the first draft due to MSBA in April. The Innovative Pathways Designation along with more work with the BHS staff has assisted in formulating an AMAZING vision for how we will create more career and college pathways for future BHS students! We continue to justify spaces with our programming and it is our hope to have an Engineering Lab, a Simulated Health Lab, and a Media Lab with a designated Maker Space.

F. After School Programming at WMS and BHS has been pushed back. It is our hope this starts the week of March 29th. We will no longer be providing Saturday school. Counselors are putting together an outreach program. Some of the programs being offered at WMS are Fitness and Friends, Be YOU Girls Group and Yoga. At BHS Walk and Talk Group.

G. Parent / Guardian Outreach Events:

- a. The Middle School Child for WMS Parents/Guardians – March 25th 6:00 p.m.
- b. SEPAC Parent Orientation – March 25th 6:30 p.m – this is a parent orientation meeting for our Tiered focus Monitoring Review.
- c. Middle School Counselor Mr. Sweeney is starting Parent Group on Mondays 2:25 to 3:25 – virtual starting March 29th.

H. ST Math Grant - In an effort to continue this program, we are completing Part II of the grant. This is a 3 year grant sponsored by the same organization that funds Project Lead the Way. We would be obligated to pay the \$3,500 annual fee (from LEA funds)

I. Almost April and DESE just released graduation guidelines

Member Millet asked if the district is providing assistance for teachers to get the COVID vaccine. Dr. Goguen said we have been sending notifications of open appointments. School nurses have been assisting staff. Time off is not being provided as we are short staffed. There was additional discussion on the challenges staff have had and what types of plans and accommodations are in place.

B. Business Manager Report

1. School Building Committee Update

Held meeting March 18th. Reviewed existing conditions and work that may be involved. Scheduled next meeting April 1st as we have a mid-April report due to DESE. This is beginning stages.

2. Other Updates

A. Telephone project at WMS has been completed last Thursday and Friday. This should be of great assistance to staff.

B Getting ready for return of full learning Coordinate with custodians, movers, food services, ordering supplies and furniture that will have future use Shout out to Sheryl Spink for researching best prices for items we are buying. Transportation – making sure all students are added to appropriate busses, getting bus passes.

C. Principal Report – Fran Thomas, Bartlett High School

1. 8th Grade Parent Information Night

Mr. Thomas thanked Mrs. Peterson, WMS Principal and WMS staff for notifying families of this event. We will follow up on April 5th about the Nichols Academy We found many freshman that have never set foot at BHS, with the return to in person we will set up tours so they feel comfortable before they actually return

2. PBIS Activities

Return to in person will challenge students with new rules, we are looking at a rewarding method

Social Distancing will be the first - if staff saw a student adhering they were given a ticket. All the students that received a ticket were invited to an Ice Cream party.

Feb/March theme was Cool To Comply – give out tickets as reward and acknowledge students doing the right thing

Student of the month – Will be awarded for both in person and remote students. Will continue this for April/May with rewards at the end of each month.

3. Innovative Pathways Update

22 Pathways awarded this year. Only Chelmsford and Webster were awarded both pathways, great accomplishment. Reflective of the industry partners and looking for BHS to be a pipeline. Approx 25% of our graduates indicate they are going directly into the workforce. There are 22,000 manufacturing open jobs in this area. There was an extensive vetting process. Will allow equitable access for our kids.

4. Nichols Partnership

Been offering accelerated / due enrollment courses, but they haven't been connected to any programs at Nichols. Many students took advance of the online classes this year at Nichols and QCC. Looking to connect our students to partner with Sports Management and Criminal Justice at Nichols. Looking at stacking some classes/micro-credentials. Trying to determine if Nichols course could replace some a BHS class and still get credits for graduation.

Member Blythe asked about the Innovated Pathways – will they be open to incoming freshman or upper classroom. Mr. Thomas said we must offer some upperclassman but they must be taken by junior year

IV. Student sports Update – Vivian Poplawski

- Sports update given
- Class of 2021 voting was held for class dedications
- Seniors are being asked to submit their baby photos by 4/2 for the yearbook
- Grade 9, 10 & 11 are accepting self-nominations for class officers: president, vice president, secretary and treasurer or student council member
- Students are attending SOS Signs of Suicide training during math periods March 22nd & 23rd
- DECA has been meeting to work on Senior sweatshirt designs

V. Old Business

A. FY 22 Budget Update

Mrs. Pierangeli said we are in a holding pattern until the state releases figures. Working with the town. No changes since our last meeting. Going to finance committee beginning of April – date has not been confirmed.

Public Hearing will be April 13th

VI. New Business

A. Approval of Donation from It Starts at Home

Dr. Goguen thanked It Starts at Home for their continued support of our students. They donated 7 boxes of food that was distributed to middle and high school families. The also donated two boxes of toys for the elementary aged student. ALSO – in process of receiving a donation of 25 pairs of sneakers

Motion: To approve donation from It Starts at Home

The motion was made by Member Napierata

The motion was seconded by Member Millet

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

B. Approval of Donation of 100 PPP masks donation from United Way

Mrs. Pierangeli said these masks have different designs for all age levels. Thank Mary O'Coin from United Way. Looking to be a district partner

Motion: To approve the donation from United Way of 100 PPP masks

The motion was made by Member Millet

The motion was seconded by Member Blythe

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

C. Approval of donation of 816 pies from Table Talk Pies for PiDay

Dr. Goguen said very lucky to receive over 800 pies they were distributed at WMS and BHS for PiDay

Motion: To approve the donation of 816 pies from Table Talk Pies for PiDay

The motion was made by Member Millet

The motion was seconded by Member Napierata

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

D. Approval of DESE waiver to keep Grade 5 with all other WMS grades for return to in person learning

Dr. Goguen explained that Gr 5 was originally included in the DESE guidelines. We requested the waiver to keep Gr 5 with the other WMS students

Motion: To approve the DESE waiver to keep Grade 5 with all other WMS grades for return to in person learning

The motion was made by Member Blythe

The motion was seconded by Member Millet

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

E. Approval of Special Education Student Transportation contract

Mrs. Pierangeli said this contract does not have to go out to bid – can negotiate more freely. We locked in a rate of 2% increase for the next 3 years.

Motion: To approve the 3 year contract for Special Education Transportation as presented

The motion was made by Member Blythe

The motion was seconded by Member Napierata

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

F. Approval of Job Description – Interim Co-Director of Curriculum and Instruction – Adult Education

G. Approval of Job Description – Interim Co-Director of Operations/IET Project Coordinator – Adult Education

Dr. Goguen said that the last School Committee meeting a new job description was presented for Director of Adult Education was approved – we have split it in two and titled them interim positions through June 30, 2021

Motion: To approve the job descriptions of Interim Co Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of Operations / IET Project Coordinator – Adult Education as presented

The motion was made by Member Millet

The motion was seconded by Member Blythe

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

H. Approval of Special Town Warrant Article

Mrs. Pierangeli is seeking approval for a Town Meeting article, it must be submitted by April 12th. Working with town for available funds to repave the WMS parking lot. Town will do the work, we pay for supplies.

Motion: To approve the Special Town Warrant Article as presented

The motion was made by Member Blythe

The motion was seconded by Member Millet

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

VI. Review / Transfer / Signing of Bills, Payrolls and Vouchers:

There were no questions

X. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:08 PM

The motion was made by Member Napierata

The motion was seconded by Member Blythe

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Marrazzo

Documents included in the packet:

- 3-9-2021 Minutes
- MIAA Guidance for Tennis, Baseball, Softball and Track
- COVID Dashboard
- Professional Development grids
- MCAS Access testing information
- Special Education Contract FY22-24
- BHS Innovative Pathways
- United Way Donation
- DESE Waiver of Grade 5 return to in person learning
- Job Description – Interim Co-Director of Curriculum and Instruction – Adult Education
- Job Description – Interim Co-Director of Operations/IET Project – Adult Education
- Special Town Meeting Article
- Warrant