

**Westport School Committee
Regular Meeting
DATE: Thursday, March 23, 2023
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Westport Middle-High School Auditorium**

MINUTES

Members Present: Michelle Orlando, Melissa Pacheco (*arrived at 6:34 pm.*), Nancy Stanton Cross, Antonio Viveiros

Members Absent: Gloria Cabral

Also Present: Thomas Aubin Superintendent, John Jack Keane Student Representative, Ryan Keane Student Representative, Lori Melo Administrative Assistant, Alden Priestner Student Representative, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Melissa Sousa Executive Assistant for Business Services, Anthony Tomah, Technology Director, 0 Community Participants

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Stanton Cross opened the Regular School Committee Meeting at 6:30 pm. with a quorum of the members present, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Comments and Statements from the Public - There were none.

III. Special Agenda – FY24 Education Budget Public Hearing

A. Proposed FY24 School Committee Education Budget (Separate Cover) -

Chair Stanton Cross informed everyone that tonight is the Open Public Hearing on the FY24 School Budget. The Public Hearing will remain open for 20 minutes. This will give the public an opportunity to make statements or ask questions on the budget.

Chair Stanton Cross asked if there are any questions on the procedure? There were none.

FY24 Education Budget Public Hearing

Chair Stanton Cross announced the FY24 Education Budget Public Hearing is now officially opened at 6:32 pm.

Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any public comments or questions on the budget? There were none at this time.

B. General Discussion of FY24 Proposed Budget - Ms. Rapoza posted the FY24 Proposed Budget on the screen.

IV. Informational Agenda

A. Student Representatives:

Ryan Keane - MCAS testing will be April 3, 4 for grs. 5, 6 and April 12,13 for grs. 7, 8, no school April 7, early release April 11, 8th gr. semi-formal will be June 9 at Rachel's Lakesider, grs. 5,6,7 will have a dance, 8th gr. Math Team will be competing tomorrow, Middle School Student Council will have a Ronald McDonald House fundraiser, Spring sports tryouts began this week, gr. 8 promotion ceremony will be June 14 at 9 am.

Alden Priestner - High School Drama Club performed Little Shop of Horrors this past weekend, seniors were honored as Westport's 2023 Dave Cowen's Award Nominees, top girls and boys will be playing basketball for the Rick Jalbert All-Star Basketball Challenge, Westport Police Department was thanked for hosting a tour for RISE students, Special Education Parent Advisory Council will meet March 29,

Math in Motion 2 Vacation Camp for grs. 3-10 will have projects, games, and a robotics station, kudos to Ben Cross for working with Out of School Time Program, thanks to Paul Joncas from Greater Fall River Development Corporation for support with Westport's neo-technical programming initiative, to date seniors have received college acceptance to 60 colleges.

John (Jack) Keane - MCAS testing for gr. 10 will be March 28, 29, Senior Dinner March 31, quarter 3 ends April 3, Junior/Senior Prom will take place May 26 at Rosebrook in Wareham, High School graduation June 3, Sophomore class is collecting men's, women's, and children's clothes, household goods, blankets, etc. drop off April 14 at Middle School 2-4 pm., STEEL will host a Prom Pop Up Shop April 1, MAC/WES PTO is selling tickets to see Harlem Wizards on April 1, recaps were announced for winter sports.

B. Superintendent Report –

Superintendent Aubin gave a shout out to students and the Drama Department for their performance of Little Shop of Horrors. Grade 8 went on a trip to Washington DC 2 weeks ago that was previously postponed. MAC held their first hoedown for K students. Superintendent Aubin gave a shout out to primary school teachers. Superintendent Aubin gave a shout out to staff at Westport Community Schools for communicating by writing cards to students to tell them how awesome they are.

C. WCS Bill Warrant: 3-24-23 - Chair Stanton Cross reported bill warrant dated 3-24-23 in the amount of \$205,142.09 was emailed to school committee members for review. Members also have a hardcopy of the bill warrant.

Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any questions regarding the bill warrant? There were none.

D. Discussion of Private Schools - Ms. Rapoza mentioned that a letter reaching out to Bishop Connolly will be done.

E. Discussion of School Choice Participation - There was a vote to accept 9th graders last year for School Choice. Ms. Rapoza reported there are 14 Westport students that go to Bishop Connolly. They would not need School Choice because they are town residents.

Chair Stanton Cross requested a report on the LEAP Program.

Discussion took place on what can be offered to Bishop Connolly families. Having a presentation, tour of the school, send a mailer, identify what Westport offers, and have a visit from staff and students were some ideas presented.

Superintendent Aubin will make a plan.

FY24 Education Budget Public Hearing

Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any public comments or questions on the budget? There were none.

Chair Stanton Cross announced the FY24 Education Budget Public Hearing has been open for 22 minutes and is now officially closed at 6:54 pm.

(Ms. Sousa left here at 6:54 pm.)

Discussion resumed on School Choice.

It was determined there is room for openings in grades 10,11,12.

Ms. Rapoza presented some past numbers on School Choice.

Ms. Rapoza reported the deadline date for School Choice is June 1.

Chair Stanton Cross asked if there were any questions? There were none.

V. Action Agenda

A. Review and Act on Minutes of Thursday, March 14, 2023 -

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of Thursday, March 14, 2023.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Orlando 4/0/0

B. Review and Act on a \$25,000 Grant from Greater Fall River Development to put toward the ZSpace Initiative - Chair Stanton Cross reported this is a donation received and their generosity is very much appreciated.

A motion was made to accept the \$25,000 Grant from Greater Fall River Development to put toward the ZSpace Initiative.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Orlando 4/0/0

C. Review and Act on a \$500 Donation from WEF for the Westport Wildcat Newspaper Program -

Chair Stanton Cross informed everyone the newspaper will be printed 4 times a year and they plan to increase distribution. Chair Stanton Cross thanked the WEF for their much appreciated donation.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Viveiros 4/0/0

D. Review and Act on Revised WCS Policy JLCD – Administering Medication to Students - A question on whether this policy should be a First Read was asked? Ms. Pacheco explained that policies typically go to the Policy Subcommittee and are placed on the Informational Agenda for a First Read.

Discussion took place on whether this policy is just an update. It was determined that more information is needed.

Item was tabled until the next School Committee meeting where it will be reviewed and acted upon. A request was made to have further explanation of the policy by a staff member.

E. Review and Act on Rescinding Policy EBC-S (COVID Policies) – Per MASC - This policy is a MASC recommendation.

A motion was made to rescind Policy EBC-S (COVID Policies).

Motion by Orlando seconded by Pacheco 4/0/0

F. Review and Act on WHS Field Trip – March 29, 2023 – Dudek Bowling Alley, Warren, RI -

A motion was made to approve the WHS Field Trip on March 29, 2023 to Dudek Bowling Alley, Warren, RI.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Viveiros 4/0/0

G. Review and Act on the Approval of the 2023-2024 District Calendar - It was noted this is the second year the start date of the school year will begin in August.

A motion was made to approve the 2023-2024 District Calendar.

Motion by Orlando seconded by Pacheco 4/0/0

H. Review and Act on Participating in School Choice for the 2023-24 SY -

Discussion took place on whether the district should allow participation in School Choice for the 2023-24 SY.

A motion was made to allow up to 10 students in each of the following grades: 9,10,11,12.

Motion by Viveiros, seconded by Pacheco

Superintendent Aubin mentioned the district would logistically be able to handle 10 students in each grade.

Committee members asked additional questions and shared concerns.

Ms. Rapoza will provide more detailed numbers for the committee to review.

Superintendent Aubin recommended to table this item until the next meeting.

A vote was called on the motion.

Roll call vote:

Orlando No Pacheco No Stanton Cross No Viveiros No 0/4/0

I. Review and Act on FY24 Proposed Education Budget -

Discussion took place on the budget. There has been a loss of over 1.3 million dollars over the past 3 years.

Ms. Rapoza verified that the FY24 Proposed Education Budget is \$21,435,162.

A motion was made to accept the budget number of \$21,435,162.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Viveiros 4/0/0

VI. Routine Matters - Correspondence and Notices - There were none.

VII. Topics the Chair could not Reasonably Anticipate Forty-eight (48) Hours in Advance of the Meeting-

Discussion took place on the loss of the SRO at the elementary schools. Mr. Aubin was contacted by the Police Department and was told they need the officer in order to cover a shortage.

Chair Stanton Cross would like to send a request to Ms. Shufelt and Mr. Hartnett asking to provide compensation for an SRO for the remainder of the school year.

Chair Stanton Cross asked about the badge system operation. Mr. Tomah verified that the system is working to swipe badges at MAC and WES.

Chair Stanton Cross would like to see some kind of way to honor and recognize students in Pep Band and Drama similar to sports players that receive a varsity letter. A proposal will be worked on. Drama and Music Departments will be contacted.

FOLLOW UP ITEMS

The committee requests:

- More explanation on Policy JLCD – Administering Medication to Students
- Item for School Resource Officer to be placed on agenda for next meeting
- Numbers on School Choice for next meeting
- Report on the LEAP Program

VIII. Adjourn - A motion was made to adjourn. With members being present and voting individually and unanimously, the motion passes.

Motion by Orlando, seconded by Pacheco 4/0/0

Roll call vote:

Orlando Yes Pacheco Yes Stanton Cross Yes Viveiros Yes

The Regular School Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.

MEETING DOCUMENTS

WCS Bill Warrants: 3-24-23

\$25,000 Grant from Greater Fall River Development to put toward the ZSpace Initiative

\$500 Donation from WEF for the Westport Wildcat Newspaper Program

WCS Policy JLCD – Administering Medication to Students

Policy EBC-S (COVID Policies)

WHS Field Trip – March 29, 2023 – Dudek Bowling Alley, Warren, RI

2023-2024 District Calendar

School Choice for the 2023-24 SY Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Submitted by Sharon Pinho School Committee Recording Secretary