Westport School Committee

Regular Meeting
DATE: Monday, September 15, 2025
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Westport Middle High School Auditorium
400 Old County Road
Westport, MA 02790

MINUTES

Members Present: Evan Gendreau, Fred Melnyk, Jason Pacheco, Caitlin Sampers, Christopher Thrasher
Also Present: Holly Hargraves Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, Ryan Keane Student Representative, Kristin McDaniel Director of Human Resources, Lori Melo Executive Secretary, Shelly Morris Athletic Director, Sean Persico Assistant Principal, Paul Poulin Head of Maintenance and Facilities, Kim Ouellette Supervisor of Custodians, Francine Roy Superintendent, 0 Community Participants

I. Call to order - The Westport School Committee Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm. with a quorum of the members present by Chair Christopher Thrasher.

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

III. Informational Agenda

a. Student Representatives - Ryan Keane reported the following:
Middle School Open House was held on September 3, High School Open House was held on September 4 all involved were thanked, Picture Day was September 9 for WMHS, first term progress reports for WMHS will be reported on September 30, Early Release Day with dismissal at 11:00 am. for WMHS will be October 2, no school on October 13, PSATs will be held October 23 for Sophomores and Juniors, college visits are being scheduled, many clubs and student organizations are being formed information will be distributed soon, High School elections will be this week, STEEL Students That Exemplify Extraordinary Leadership Club has been formed and already have plans, High School Drama Club is preparing for Little Mermaid on December 5,6,7, Middle School Drama Club is preparing for Beetlejuice Jr. on October 16,17 and 18, Fall sports season is underway, scores were reported for boys and girls varsity soccer, Middle School boys soccer, girls varsity field hockey, boys varsity golf, girls varsity volleyball and girls JV volleyball. High School will start Unified Basketball and Cheerleading teams for grades 9-12.

b. Superintendent Report – Ms. Rapoza reported the following for Dr. Roy:
Ms. Rapoza and Ms. Hargraves met with Westport Federal Credit Union to make preliminary plans for a Banking and Savings Program for grades 4-8. Meetings will continue with building principals to discuss options for establishing a Financial Literacy Program.

Macomber School - On the first day of Kindergarten administrators accompanied K students on buses. Administration was around at lunch, beginning, midday and end of the day. When Preschool started they were also there.

Westport Elementary School - Last week Open House was well attended. Today is International Dot Day all classes read the book titled The Dot and other stories by Peter Reynolds. These books are about building self-confidence and building connections across the school.

Westport Middle High School - Open Houses took place last week. Parent Teacher conferences will take place in early November. Sophomore and Junior students can take the PSATs on October 23. An opt in form was mailed home and needs to be returned to Guidance Department.

Human Resources 2025-2026 - No new hires at Macomber, Westport Elementary School hired 2 Special Education Teachers, 1 Reading Specialist, 2 Custodians, 2 Teaching Assistants, Westport Middle High School hired 1 CAD Teacher, 2 Special. Education Teachers, 1 Building Substitute, 1 World Language Teacher, 1 Guidance Counselor, 4 Teaching Assistants, 1 Assistant Principal, for the district there is a new Superintendent Dr. Roy and 1 Director of Curriculum and Professional Development.

Open positions still needed is a 1 School Adjust Counselor at Macomber, 1 Teaching Assistant at Westport Elementary School, 1 Teaching Assistant, 1 School Clerk, 1 LPN, 1 Building Substitute at Westport Middle High School.

Out of School Time Program is seeking 2 Group Leaders and 1 Behavior Support Assistant.

District wide open positions include 1 School Psychologist and 1 Teacher for Visually Impaired.

C. Business Manager's Report - Ms. Rapoza reported FY27 budget planning has started. Today leadership was sent an email to look at needs. Ms. Rapoza developed a budget timeline and would like the committee to review the dates. A copy of the FY27 Municipal Budget Calendar was distributed as well.

Ms. Rapoza submitted a Community Preservation Committee Grant for a new playground at Macomber school and this is not on the Capital Improvements list. Estimated costs $425,000 for a new playground, move current playground closer to school and fence in area with some help from the Highway Department.

City hall payment system - A meeting was held last week to work with the Town to help decrease service fees. This may be available by end of October.

Fire and safety drills have been conducted. ALICE trainings online for staff and also school presentations done by Mr. Persico.

Ms. Rapoza confirmed the Capital Improvements Planning Committee CIPC information is due this Friday. Ms. Rapoza sent an email to Mr. Hartnett for an extension.

d. Committee Liaison Report - Mr. Melnyk and Ms. Sampers reported nothing new.

Mr. Pacheco reported a Cable Advisory Board Meeting is scheduled for October 22.

Mr. Gendreau reported there is a School Building Committee meeting tomorrow and the Audit Committee will meet on October 27, 2025.

e. WCS Bill Warrant: 8/22/25 & 9/5/25 & 9/19/25 - Chair Thrasher verified that each member received an electronic copy for review of the bill warrant dated 8/22/25 for a total of $472,097.51, bill warrant dated 9/5/25 in the amount of $300,939.30 and bill warrant dated 9/19/25 in the amount of $332,383.00.

Chair Thrasher asked if there were any questions?

Ms. Sampers had a question on the bill warrant dated 8.22.25 on costs for Amego, Meeting Street, and Melmark New England Consultation Services. This is for in and out of district services pertaining to the Special Education Department.

Chair Thrasher confirmed the bill warrants have been acknowledged.

f. School Closure Discussion - Chair Thrasher reported lightning strikes caused issues at Westport Middle High School resulting in a one-day closure. Maintenance took control of the situation. Ms. Rapoza reported working with the Town to combine the issue into one deductible for insurance purposes. Chair

Thrasher and other members of the committee expressed their appreciation to administrators and the Maintenance Department for their efforts to quickly remedy the situation.

g. NSIP Coach – Dr. Roy explained as part of her Superintendent Program she will be receiving a coach Dr. Marco Rodrigues to assist with feedback on her entry plan. They both share a common set of experiences.

h. Entry Plan – Dr. Roy explained her Superintendent Entry Plan including rationale, timeline, guiding principles, overarching questions, Stakeholder engagement, document and data review.

Dr. Roy asked if there were any questions?

The committee expressed their thoughts and comments on this process.

i. Facilities Update – Mr. Poulin reported the following Summer projects:

Macomber School - received new flooring in bathrooms, ceilings painted, replaced fixtures by updating sinks and faucets, gym floor, electrical upgrade, new 600-amp service, new generator in mid-October with standby generator on site. New water line with new meter and backflow preventer.

Westport Elementary School - upgrades in 10 bathrooms, new sinks, faucets, ceiling tiles, epoxy flooring, new outlets in restrooms, gym repainted and new decals on wall, replaced ceiling tiles in teachers' lounge and cafeteria, new generator by mid-October with standby generator on site, Eversource energy assessment conducted.

Westport Middle High School - new vendor for HVAC.

Fields - seeded and aeriated, field lining will be completed for September 18.

Chair Thrasher asked for status on the building control system issues? Ms. Ouellette, reported there was a meeting with engineers GGD who did the engineering of the systems. The district had graphics but not connections to get an alarm. Current vendor Air Masters came in and we will now get emails for a low water alarm and with well pump issues. Ms. Ouellette reported they are working with a company called KMC to get a programming tool. They are waiting for a plumbing estimate to install physical floats. These items will be passed on to the School Building Committee.

Chair Thrasher asked if there were any questions from the committee? There were none.

j. CIPC Discussion – Ms. Rapoza presented the list of CIPC Capital Improvements Planning Committee items.

Mr. Gendreau shared for FY26 $560,000 was approved at town meeting for security upgrades and generator. Mr. Gendreau places the AC and electrical for Westport Elementary School on the top of the list of priorities.

Chair Thrasher also agrees the AC at WES is a priority and asked if the energy audit effects the costs? Ms. Ouellette explained the energy audit.

Mr. Gendreau asked if there are priorities concerning safety? Ms. Rapoza reported they are currently doing some of the safety issues like cameras.

Electrical at fields and batting cages at the Westport Middle High School were items Ms. Sampers mentioned that should have been done with the original construction.

Ms. Rapoza will add more explanation to items, prioritize, and will send out to the committee.

k. Transportation Opening – Ms. Rapoza explained most things went smoothly, payments need to be paid by Friday Sept. 26. State law requires transportation to be provided to grades K-6. They are not required to transport grades 7-12. These grades have bus fees.

Ms. Rapoza explained that Westport is a CEP district (Community Eligibility District) providing free meals this however cannot qualify for free transportation. A general liability waiver form needs to be filled out.

l. Policy Meeting Discussion - Chair Thrasher reported there are a number of policies that have updates from MASC (Massachusetts Association of School Committees) and other changes totaling at least 10. Chair Thrasher is asking for a full committee policy workshop. The date is Monday October 6, 2025 at 6 pm. for a Special Meeting Policy Workshop. There will be a regular School Committee meeting on October 8, 2025. After this meeting, the Policy Subcommittee will need to hold a meeting. Policy Committee comprises Mr. Pacheco and Ms. Sampers.

IV. Action Agenda

a. Review and Act on SC Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, 8/20/2025 -

A motion was made to approve the SC Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, 8/20/2025.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Sampers 5/0/0

b. Review and Act on Job Description – Multi-Purpose Van Driver - Ms. Rapoza asked to pass on this item until more information is gathered.

c. Review and Act on WCS Staff Handbook 25/26 – Ms. McDaniel explained there were minor changes to names, contact information and typos.

Chair Thrasher asked if there were any questions? There were none.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Sampers 5/0/0

d. Review and Act on Athletic Handbook 25/26 - Ms. Morris explained there were some adjustments that include the intro letter, user fee section, updated language on school and family vacations, athletic trainer, attendance to mirror student handbook, added MIAA policies and added a sportsmanship doctrine.

Chair Thrasher asked if there were any questions?

Mr. Melnyk asked about an emergency evacuation plan? Ms. Morris said this is created by the Athletic Trainer and will consult with them. A suggestion on leaving a bus onsite was mentioned. Ms. Morris explained this would be a high cost to the district. Mr. Melnyk would like to have this issue on an emergency plan addressed.

Discussion was held on whether this issue should be in the Athletic Handbook or in an Emergency Action Plan. Superintendent Roy and Ms. Morris will explore this further.

A motion was made to approve the Athletic Handbook 25/26.

Motion by Melnyk, seconded by Sampers 5/0/0

e. Review and Act on WMHS Washington DC Trip, April 2026 – Mr. Persico explained the dates listed are earlier April 28 - May 1 and is the same setup as last year.

Discussion on how the trip dates effect sports scheduling was held.

A motion was made to approve the WMHS Washington DC Trip, April 2026.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Sampers 5/0/0

f. Review and Act on WMHS Field Trip PPAC Hadestown, the Musical, November 2025 - Chair Thrasher sought clarification that all field trips, including this one, required written parental permission. This was confirmed.

A motion was made to approve the WMHS Field Trip PPAC Hadestown, the Musical, November 2025

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Sampers 5/0/0

g. Review and Act on WMHS Field Trip Dudek Bowling, Warren RI, December 2025 and February 2026 -

A motion was made to approve the WMHS Field Trip Dudek Bowling, Warren RI, December 2025 and February 2026.

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Sampers 5/0/0

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

VI. Topics the Chair could not Reasonably Anticipate Forty-eight (48) Hours in advance of the meeting - There were none.

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

Motion by Pacheco, seconded by Sampers 5/0/0

Roll call vote:

Gendreau	Yes	Melnyk	Yes	Pacheco	Yes	Sampers	Yes	Thrasher	Yes

The School Committee Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Meeting Documents

WCS Bill Warrants: 8/22/2025, 9/5/2025 and 9/19/2025
Superintendent Entry Plan
FY27 Budget Development Timeline
CIPC item list
Job Description Multi-Purpose Van Driver
WCS Staff Handbook 25/26
Athletic Handbook 25/26
WMHS Washington DC Trip, April 2026
WMHS Field Trip PPAC Hadestown, the Musical, November 2025
WMHS Field Trip Dudek Bowling, Warren RI, December 2025 and February 2026

Submitted by Sharon Pinho School Committee Recording Secretary