

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – April 7, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, April 7, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

Present and participating remotely were:

Jeanne Downs, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
Kim Reichelt
Chris Ryan
Kathie Steinberg

Also participating remotely:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 5:33 p.m. WayCAM recorded the meeting and it was livestreamed via ZOOM. The meeting was conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and according to the revised open meeting law that allows remote participation. A roll call was taken:

| <u>Roll Call</u> | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Jeanne Downs, Chair | X | |
| Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair | X | |
| Kim Reichelt | X | |
| Chris Ryan | X | |
| Kathie Steinberg | X | |

1. Comments and Written Statements from the Public:

Carole Plumb inquired about the process regarding school bus parking, since the busses are to be moved from the Town Building. She reminded the School Committee that it voted some time ago not to park the busses at the schools.

Arthur responded to the public comment stating that a memo to the School Committee from the Town Administrator is forthcoming, and although the busses have to be moved by June 30, there isn't a location in Wayland currently available or identified.

Kim Reichelt made a public comment in which she asked residents to be vigilant, patient, cautious, and smart for a bit longer because the kids are not vaccinated. She added that there are more and more cases among the younger people and the variants are concerning, as they could be more serious for the younger population. Kim noted that a resident reported that students were playing sports without masks.

2. COVID-19 Response:

(a) Discussion and Review of Planning for Remainder of School Year, including Grades K-12 All-In Update:

Arthur addressed the COVID variants, particularly prevalent on Cape Cod, and ways in which to remain vigilant during this ongoing pandemic. If some families do travel to Cape Cod during April break, Arthur strongly recommends that they follow the state's travel advisory, get tested, and follow the instructions on the health attestation in an effort to avoid positive cases in the schools and large group of quarantines. In addition, Arthur encouraged families to rejoin or sign up for the first time for the pooled testing program.

Arthur congratulated the K-5 staff and CO administrators for a great job planning for K-5 all-in. The first three days in the elementary schools have been successful while working through some of the challenges. The WRAP program is still going strong as well. Arthur also thanked the transportation coordinator and the PTO for working to alleviate

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some of the traffic at the schools.

Parry reported that two elementary students moved from in-person to WRAP and about 22 elementary students from WRAP to in-person. Susan noted that 60 students joined the busses and there are still seats available.

Richard thanked the special education teachers/staff for pulling the schedules together in a short amount of time while preparing for any challenges that may arise.

Grades 6 – 12:

Arthur noted the challenges for scheduling at the Middle School and the High School, as well as the huge task of moving furniture. Susan is working with the facilities team, secondary principals and assistant principals to ensure that there is adequate furniture, placing furniture, and making arrangements for additional custodial services. Despite the challenges, the rewards are greater.

In terms of secondary students moving from WRAP to all-in and in-person to WRAP, the numbers of students are in the single digits.

(b) Special Education Update:
Richard gave an update in the previous discussion.

(c) Transportation Update:
In addition to an update in the first discussion, Susan added that there are 127 spaces available for middle school families for which there will be a lottery. Notification in this regard will be sent to families on Friday. Most distanced middle school families, if not all, can be accommodated.

A discussion ensued about bus parking and the timeline to reach a decision of where to move the busses from the Town Building. Jeanne will follow up with BOS Chair Cherry Karlson regarding the memo from the Town Administrator outlining the process moving forward.

(d) Remote and Hybrid Learning Progress Committee (RHLPC) and COVID Learning and Safety Team Update:
RHLPC:
Parry reported on the next steps for the RHLPC, as they will begin to look at spring math and literacy data for the middle school and high school, as well as report card data.

COVID Learning and Safety Team:

Jeanne updated the School Committee about today's COVID Learning and Safety Team meeting during which they discussed the all-in transition at this time of the year. The WTA brought up concerns were raised by school staff regarding teachers' planning time and lack of planning space, as well as having less time to teach academics because more time is needed to address SEL matters for students. A reminder about safety protocols will be sent to families. In addition, Ben Keefe and an engineer will meet with high school staff next week about the ventilation at the high school.

Since Kori Rogers resigned as the representative on the COVID Learning and Safety Team, Jeanne and Ellen will draft a letter requesting that her replacement is named.

(e) Surveillance Testing Update:
Arthur reported that there were no positive pools this week, as there were fewer pools because the elementary pooled testing was moved to Fridays. Kim advocated that pooled testing be mandated for athletic participation, as Lincoln-Sudbury has done. Jeanne added that Weston mandated pooled testing for the music and sports programs. A discussion ensued about the possibility of mandating testing for certain groups of students, while considering equity and fairness for all students.

(f) Travel Policy:
The health attestation has been changed in which a link was added for families to fill out the form if the family has traveled.

(g) Summer Programming:
Extended School Year summer programming addresses significant regression for some students over the extended

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summer break in an effort to help them retain their skills. The criteria was broadened because of the past COVID school year resulting in a larger summer program of up to five weeks. Families can choose a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of five weeks during which there will be a focus on math and ELA. The district will collaborate with Classworks which is a tiered intervention program that plans and develops curriculum for the summer program. Richard described the process within the program that focuses on a personal instructional level rather than a general instructional level.

Elementary Math and Reading Program:

This program will run during the weeks of August 9 and 16 for about 100 rising first through fifth grade students (20 per grade) whose skills in math and reading are below grade level. There will also be a new but similar program during the last two weeks of July for about 70 rising first through fifth grade students who may have fallen below grade level in math and reading, but who may also need additional social emotional support. Parry spoke about the funding of these programs through Title I and grant funding. Other programs include a fee-based Spanish Immersion program for current Spanish immersion students, elementary and middle school programming for band and orchestra students, a summer program for rising ninth graders who may have struggled during the past year, and a possible middle school program. The proposals for the middle and high school programs are still being developed that includes possible grant funding. Parry commented on potential funding and staffing for the summer programs, and Susan added that she will hear from DESE on April 13 regarding summer program funds.

- (h) Next Steps:
Next steps were covered in the previous discussions.

3. Financial Matters:

- (a) FY22 Operating Budget Update, including Review of Q3 and COVID Expenses:

The School Committee reviewed the summary for COVID-driven expenses and sources of funding that shows all unanticipated expenses incurred this year to date and those that are projected to the end of the year. Susan categorized and reviewed those expenses that total \$1.9M. Susan explained the process by which she was able to curate a number of sources of funding to meet all of the expenses, and about \$890,000 was reimbursed through grants. If there are other unanticipated expenses that come up through the end of the year, funds will be prioritized and shifted. Susan added that the ESSER grant in the amount of \$59,000 from last summer was not reflected in this summary. The School Committee suggested that this is useful information and should be shared with the public, the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. A discussion followed in this regard.

Preliminary FY21 Q3 Summary:

Susan reported that there will be a small positive balance remaining at the end of the fiscal year and all financial obligations will be met. She will have a discussion with the School Committee regarding the allocation of any remaining balance going forward. She added that the substitute teacher account is projected to have a greater deficit due to the possible use of personal days and maternity leaves. Other changes in the budget include custodial services, transportation, and contracted services; Susan explained. The School Committee asked questions about the reduction in out-of-district tuitions and the town revenue posting by the Town Treasurer.

- (b) Director of Finance and Operations Search Update:
Parry reported that the search team is assembled and the first meeting will take place next week to review and approve the candidate profile and to draft interview questions. Twelve applications were received and interviews will be during the week of April 26.

4. Administrative Matters:

- (a) Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Remote Day for Wayland Middle School on May 11, 2021:

Arthur confirmed that the Commissioner's office will not allow the middle school students to learn remotely on May 11, 2021. Other options include not having classes and adding an extra day at the end of the year or have a half day/early release day on May 11 excluding lunch. Arthur and Betsy decided to have an early release day with dismissal at 12:20 p.m. and lunch will not be served. There will be a follow up discussion with the Town Administrator.

Ellen suggested swapping the May 11 and May 12 schedules allowing students to have a half day on Tuesday and a full day on Wednesday eliminating the loss of learning time. Arthur will bring this suggestion to Betsy Gavron.

- (b) Discussion and Possible Vote to Appoint School Committee Member to Permanent Municipal Committee (PMBC) for Loker Roof Project:

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Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Jeanne Downs as a member of the Permanent Municipal Committee for the Loker Roof Project. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

| <u>Roll Call</u> | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Jeanne Downs, Chair | X | |
| Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair | X | |
| Kim Reichelt | X | |
| Chris Ryan | X | |
| Kathie Steinberg | X | |

- (c) Discussion of March 25, 2021 Letter from George Harris to Division of Open Government regarding January 21, 2021 Open Meeting Law Complaint Filed by George Harris:
The Attorney General's office provided Jeanne with sample cases regarding drafting minutes for candidate interviews. Jeanne revised the minutes again for pending approval. The School Committee reviewed the draft response to the Attorney General, so Jeanne can send it along with the revised minutes. Kathie noted how other towns conduct an interview process in terms of this situation being an example of an unintended consequence.

5. Consent Agenda:

- (a) Approval of Minutes: December 29, 2020 #2 revised, December 30, 2020 revised, March 24, 2021:
Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

| <u>Roll Call</u> | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Jeanne Downs, Chair | X | |
| Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair | X | |
| Kim Reichelt | X | |
| Chris Ryan | X | |
| Kathie Steinberg | X | |

6. Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:

None.

7. Executive Session:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter executive session at 7:12 p.m. for purposes of (a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) as discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; (b) reviewing executive session minutes for possible declassification as listed on the agenda, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22; and (d) approval of the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: March 24, 2021. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

| <u>Roll Call</u> | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Jeanne Downs, Chair | X | |
| Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair | X | |
| Kim Reichelt | X | |
| Chris Ryan | X | |
| Kathie Steinberg | X | |

The School Committee will be joined by Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent of Schools, Parry Graham, Assistant Superintendent, Kevin Bresnahan, Esq., and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will adjourn in executive session and will not reconvene in open session.

8. Adjournment:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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| <u>Roll Call</u> | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Jeanne Downs, Chair | X | |
| Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair | X | |
| Kim Reichelt | X | |
| Chris Ryan | X | |
| Kathie Steinberg | X | |

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. FY21 Summary of COVID-Driven Expenses and Funding
3. Preliminary FY21 Q3 Financial Status
4. 1-22-21 OML Complaint
5. 1-22-21 OML Complaint Exhibits
6. Letter to AGO from George Harris
7. Draft Response to 1-22-21 OML Complaint
8. Minutes of March 24, 2021
9. Revised Minutes of December 29, 2020
10. Revised Minutes of December 30, 2020
11. Executive Session Motion