



# Weymouth

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## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Weymouth School Committee

[ZOOM Meeting](#)

September 17, 2020

#### MEETING MINUTES

(approved 10/8/20)

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**Members In Attendance:** Lisa Belmarsh, Chair; Tracey Nardone, Vice-Chair; John Sullivan, Secretary; Kathy Curran; Rebecca Sherlock-Shangraw; Carrie Palazzo,

**Members Absent:** Mayor Robert Hedlund

**Also Present:** Jennifer Curtis-Whipple, Superintendent; Brian Smith, Assistant Superintendent; Robert Wargo, Assistant Superintendent.

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#### **The Meeting Came to Order At 7:03pm.**

Mrs. Nardone led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Consent Agenda:**

The consent agenda included:

- Warrant 12-2021 in the amount of \$523,157.85, Dated September 21, 2020
- Regular Minutes 8/20/20, 8/25/20
- Executive Session Minutes 8/20/20, 8/25/20, 9/4/20

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Passed unanimously.

#### **Public Comment**

The Chair reminded that community members are allowed to speak to items on the agenda and to be mindful to keep comments to 3 minutes and that if you add your name and address in the chat, community members will be unmuted in order.

-Lindsey Conley

Shared her feelings regarding remote learning and asked the committee to reconsider hybrid learning also suggesting that primary schools have the same lunch/recess/break time so that siblings can be together during that time. She also made the recommendation for remote days to be ½ days as 6 hours of screen time is too long.

-Greg Agnew, 15 Lynnway Street

As a parent of an 11 and 7 year old he expressed his feelings that remote learning is not viable and shared his support for hybrid and in person learning as soon as possible. Mr. Agnew also advised that private, catholic and charter schools are back to in person learning and that Weymouth should collaborate with private institutions on how they are able to provide in person learning. He also conveyed his unhappiness with the technical difficulties experienced in the first 2 days. Mr. Agnew communicated that he and his girlfriend are both essential workers and have to take time off work to monitor remote learning.

-Arthur Burke's daughters,

As a senior and sophomore at WHS expressed their support for in person learning as soon as possible. They also shared their unhappiness with technical issues and mentioned anxiety levels of not being in school to be able to speak to adjustment counselors in person.

-Lisa Dembowski, 80 Heather Lane

As a mom of 4 children (1 set of twins) at 3 different schools commended teachers for going above and beyond and expressed her disappointment in the technical issues experienced and also in not having a trial run. Ms. Dembowski shared that if it is safe for some students to be in the buildings then all students should be in the building as there is no replacement for in person learning. She communicated her support for hybrid learning and that 'better than the spring' is not good enough and that the kids are suffering and that school should never make you cry.

-Joy Sicardio, 175 King Avenue

Expressed her support for hybrid and in person learning as soon as possible advising that redirecting her 1st grader for 6 hours during remote learning is not a viable option. Ms. Sicardio also mentioned that childcare is an issue as she has to take time off from work to facilitate remote learning.

-Kelly Carcier, 74 Raymond

Echoed the speakers before and shared her support for hybrid learning and in person learning for the Kindergarten and PreK students. Ms. Carcier also expressed her dissatisfaction with technology and the amount of time spent in front of a computer.

-Annie Greenwood, 123 Knollwood

Shared her feelings of lack of transparency and expressed her support for hybrid learning advising that it can be done in a safe way and that students need to form in person connections

with teachers and peers. Ms. Greenwood conveyed her hope of the metrics being used to return to school as soon as possible.

-Lynn Marie, 5 Central Street

Shared her agreement with the previous comments and expressed her concern of mental health for students not returning until January. Ms. Marie mentioned that neighboring districts have returned in a hybrid model and suggested collaborating with them.

Nicole Gates, 147 Robinswood

Expressed her thanks to the IT department and Superintendent Curtis-Whipple for help in troubleshooting technical issues and posting tips in social media. Ms. Gates shared that as a mom of 3 having different lunch, break and recess times is a challenge and shared her support for hybrid and in person learning returning as soon as possible.

-Kat Castro-Files

Expressed her unhappiness with the technical issues.

-Deirdre Savage, 16 Grampian Way

Echoed previous statements and commented on the lack of communication between the August 4 and 6 meeting and the drastic change in the return to school plan. Ms. Savage shared her support for the metrics and the return to school as soon as possible.

-Erin Dodds, 421 Summer Street

Echoed previous comments and expressed her thanks to the teachers at Murphy School and the Superintendent for going above and beyond during technical difficulties and shared her support for returning to school as soon as possible.

-Shawn Dewitt, 45 Knollwood Circle

Shared his belief that the chromebooks are sufficient devices and advised that it's premature to assume the tech issues will persist as it's only been 2 days. He encouraged patience and positivity.

-Leilah Briggs, 55 East Street

Expressed her thanks to Dr. Curtis-Whipple for help with technical issues and emphasized the number of users and the bandwidth of the google platform and encouraged the community to be patient. She also shared her appreciation for the teachers.

-Matt Rountree, 154 Sea Street

Expressed his disappointment with the technology and shared the difficulties of a 6 year old sitting in front of the computer for the whole day. Mr. Rountree asked the committee to reconsider remote learning.

-Scott McCormick, 95 Union Street

Shared his family's experience with technology and urged the community to have patience and be calm as it's only day 2 and that things will get better. Mr. McCormick expressed his thanks and appreciation for the amazing teachers.

-Amy Kabilian, 7 Kipling Road

Expressed her frustration with technology over the last 2 days; that her children were in tears. As a family with two essential working parents, having to take time off to manage remote learning is a challenge. Ms. Kabilian shared her support for hybrid and in person learning as surrounding towns are currently doing.

-Mary Roy, Bray Road

Expressed her thanks and appreciation for Dr. Curtis-Whipple going above and beyond in helping with technical support and shared her son's positive experiences with remote learning. Ms. Roy also conveyed her thanks to the teachers.

-Michelle Keller, 90 Wampum Street

Expressed her support for hybrid learning stating that even though remote learning is better than what it was in the spring and appreciates the structured schedule; for social emotional well being students need to be back in school.

-Forest Marsh, 46 Randolph Street

Expressed his unhappiness and disappointment with the technology issues and suggested a change in school committee members.

-Kim ferreira, 105 Charles Diersch

As a mom of a high needs special education 3rd grade student expressed her support for other families however is thankful her son is able to be in the building as he is in CEP (Communication Enhancement Program). She shared her thanks for the teachers at Wessagusset, especially Mr. Sbarra.

-Town Councilor, Becky Hough, 44 Evans Street

Shared her family's (high school and middle school) relatively positive experience over the last 2 days and expressed her thoughts on how difficult it must be for little learners to be in front of the computer for the whole day. She conveyed her support for the schools and the tremendous work being done by administrators, teachers and staff and hopes for returning as soon as safely possible.

-John Dyer,

Expressed his appreciation for the teachers at the Murphy school and shared his concern for young learners K-6 grade with too much screen time suggesting maybe ½ days. Mr. Dyer supports the hybrid model.

-Frances Jumellon, 136 Burkaugh Street

Shared her family's experience for her 10th, 6th and Kindergarten students. The 10th and 6th are dealing and adjusting however the Kindergartener is struggling.

-Leah Grimes, 5 Hickey Road

Echoed the comments of many parents before and thanked them for speaking and the committee for listening and expressed her support for hybrid learning and hopes of synchronizing lunch, break, recess time for primary students. She suggested remote days be ½ days.

-Tiara Murphy,

Recently moved to Weymouth and part of the Ralph Talbot school expressed her concern for remote learning and being in front of the computer for 6 hours. She also inquired about picking up lunch between 11-1 when families are home facilitating remote learning. Ms. Murphy supports hybrid learning.

-Meaghan Block, 47 Lakewood Road

Expressed her thanks to teachers and staff who are doing their best and also her concern of 6 hours of time being too much to be in front of a computer and how students will be assessed correctly. She suggested a shorter day and inquired if parents or the students will be uploading work to teachers.

-Susanne Kelley, 86 Knollwood

Emphasized that it's impossible for a plan to make everyone happy and that it is hard on the whole community, not just the school community.

-Janet Murray, 85 Commercial Street

Expressed her opinion that it is unfair to speak negatively as it is only day 2. Students need movement time and she agrees that a shortened day should be considered. She shared her thanks and appreciation to school staff.

-Suzanne Nelson, 153 Cedar Street

Expressed appreciation for the return to school plan however feels 6 hours is too long to be in front of a computer and that only core subjects should be taught during remote learning and suggested providing gym, art, music, stem when in hybrid and in person learning.

Amber Ramos, 600 Pond Street

Spoke on behalf of learners where english is not their first language and that learning virtually is a struggle for ELL students.

-Christine O'Herron, 134 Hawthorne

Expressed her concern that 6 hours is too long to be in front of a computer, especially for CEP students.

Chair Belmarsh thanked the Superintendent for her support and constant work especially during the past 2 days. Dr. Curtis-Whipple inturn thanked the entire team.

### **Report of the Superintendent**

The Superintendent reported on the following:

Dr. Curtis-Whipple acknowledged that the remote start of school was not smooth and that it will get better and that being in school is best.

The Superintendent introduced Principal Angelos.

Principal Angelos gave an overview of Google Classroom tips and Remote Learning Support. Mr. Angelos advised that remote learning is not ideal for instruction and expressed his appreciation for families going above and beyond as well as the teachers and staff. Changes are being made by the minute as new information becomes available.

It was reiterated that ½ day is not an option as the Commissioner has not waived school day hours and DESE requires a full day. Remote full days will aid in the transition to hybrid learning which are full days. Principal Angelos encouraged patience and flexibility. Spotlight view in Google classroom and Clever log in was mentioned. A copy of the presentation attached to these minutes.

All questions by the committee were addressed.

Mrs. Curran commented that the updated presentation is helpful and that full day is not mandatory for Kindergarten students.

Vice Chair Nardone thanked Mr. Angelos for the presentation and the helpful hints and agreed that the tiled view is distracting.

### **New Business**

#### **A. Acceptance of Gifts (Action requested)**

Assistant Superintendent Smith gave a summary of the gifts received; usually reported out in the spring however was pushed back due to Covid. Mr. Smith recognized and thanked Community Relations Liaison Betsy Harris for her hard work and efforts. Gifts are donated to the school, in partnerships (Stop and Shop, Tanner B Foundation). Gift amounts received are \$105,029.00 cash and \$57,901.00 in kind (value of items). Total gifts received for FY90 (2019-20 school year) was \$162,930.00.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the gifts. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

Mrs. Curran mentioned matching gifts from Prudential, Apple and Voya and advised that they are needed and appreciated.

### **B. Review of Continuing Virtual School Committee Meetings**

Discussion on meeting in person was had.

Mrs. Nardone expressed wanting to meet in person however feels the public attendance is higher via zoom and would like to see that continue.

Dr. Sullivan agreed and mentioned the potential problem of accommodating the public in a large enough space and logistics of broadcasting and 'zooming' live.

Mrs. Curran thanked the Chair for adding this agenda item and expressed her support of meeting in person.

Chair Belmarsh conveyed her support in waiting to meet in person and discussed technology options with WETC. The Chair emphasized the high community engagement through Zoom.

Ms. Palazzo added that the public comment has been crucial and shared her support for the Zoom format.

The committee members do not want to add extra work to the already busy custodial and maintenance staff. More discussion to come.

### **Old Business**

#### **a. Review of Return to School Metrics**

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple shared that the advisory group which comprises Town and School Department, and Department of Health staff members meets on a weekly basis. Conditions look good now.

The State metrics are released on Wednesdays and the group meets on Thursdays to discuss possible recommendations. Cases in the community and age groups/areas specific to Weymouth are considered.

Assistant Superintendent Smith gave an overview of Systems and Facilities, Infrastructure and PPE. Elaine Lane went over local and public health and advised that a testing site would be mobilized if a cluster of cases was discovered. Ms. Lane is in constant contact with other towns as well.

No recommendations have currently been made however 4 weeks of data is available for review of recommendation.

The Superintendent suggested a special committee meeting October 1, 2020 to consider metrics and the possibility of moving forward into a hybrid phase sooner. A 2 week window to allow for transportation and lunches would be preferred. The first cohort of students will be entering the buildings on September 22.

John McLeod was consulted and confirmed that buildings are on target with inspections, PPE and systems.

Chair Belmarsh reiterated the ongoing collaboration between Dan McCormacks staff, John McLeod and the advisory group and agrees with having a meeting soon. The chair emphasized that metrics has been a topic of discussion for quite some time as data has been collected for 5 weeks thus far. It was also posted on the school committee agendas in compliance with open meeting laws.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw commented that other districts are only using state metrics and commended the collaboration of the town coalition of experts and expressed her support of adding a meeting prior to the next scheduled school committee meeting. Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw shared her feedback received from the community of anxiousness and apprehensiveness and suggested a comprehensive proposal of moving forward to a hybrid model that allows enough time for adjustments for families, teachers and staff, and members of SEIU.

The Superintendent confirmed that administrators and staff are getting 'ducks in a row' so the district is prepared and provisioned so students can return.

Plans in the event of positive testing were discussed and Dr. Curtis-Whipple emphasized the importance of adhering to self monitoring each morning. The Superintendent also advised that the district is keeping an eye on private and parochial schools.

Mrs. Nardone agreed that there are a lot of moving parts and confirmed the metric collection weeks. Transportation for the cohorts beginning September 22 was talked about as well as the limited capacity on buses due to social distancing. If families are able to drive their students it will help immensely but understand that it is not an option for everyone. Transportation Manager, Robin Howard has been reaching out to families.

Dr . Curtis-Whipple agreed that there are many moving parts and that new information is forthcoming all the time and that the districts' approach is slow to allow promises to be fulfilled.

Mrs. Curran mentioned monitoring other towns that are currently in session for hybrid learning and inquired about demographics and was assured that Elaine Lane and Robin Howard are in constant communication.

#### **b. Policy Section I - Second Reading**

Policy regarding instruction.

No public comment.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to combine the second and third reading. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.



Motion by Mrs. Nardone to approve Policy I. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

**c. Policy Section J - Second Reading**

Policy regarding students.

Mrs. Curran commented on policy JLCB regarding immunizations that 'inoculations' be taken out and brought attention to policy JJA allowing Weymouth residents attending a private or charter school being able to participate in extracurriculars and athletics.

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple suggested that the community would want to weigh in and the MIAA does have rules regarding this and that slots are already limited for WPS students.

Mrs. Nardone suggested the policy sub committee reconvene before the third reading.

Chair Belmarsh agreed not to combine the readings at this time to allow for public comment.

Policy section J will be kept on the agenda for the third reading.

**d. Policy Section K - Second Reading**

Policy regarding Community Relations

Mrs. Curran brought attention to KBE; parent boosters needing a 501C3 number.

No public comment.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to combine the second and third reading. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to approve Policy K. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously. (voted on after section L)

**e. Policy Section L - Second Reading**

Policy regarding education agency relations.

No public comment.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to combine the second and third reading. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to approve Policy L. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

**f. Chapman School Building Update**

Assistant Superintendent Smith advised that the construction is running on time.

Teachers are currently using modulars. There will be a transportation building update at the next meeting.

**Announcements:**

SEPAC-October 6, 2020, 6:30pm, Zoom

Weymouth Market-October 7, 2020-NEW time-3:30pm-WHS Gold Cafeteria

**Next School Committee Meeting:**

Regular Meeting: Thursday, October 8, 2020 - 7:00pm

**The Meeting adjourned at 9:57pm** on the motion of Mrs. Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote - passed unanimously.

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**Documents Attached to These Minutes:**

- Remote Learning Tips
- Policy I, J, K, L change grid

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John P. Sullivan", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

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John Sullivan  
Secretary