



# Weymouth

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## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Weymouth School Committee

[ZOOM Meeting](#)

February 4, 2021

#### MEETING MINUTES

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

**Members Absent:** Mayor Hedlund

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

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**Thank you, farewell and best wishes to Superintendent Curtis-Whipple.**

Senator O'Connor presented a citation on behalf of a grateful State Senate to Dr. Curtis-Whipple for her 25+ years of dedicated service to the students of Weymouth and expressed his thanks and appreciation for her outstanding leadership.

Representative Murphy presented a citation on behalf of Ron Mariano and of the House of Representatives to Dr. Curtis-Whipple for her 25+ years of dedicated experience to the students of Weymouth and expressed his pleasure for serving the public together with her.

Town Councilor Hackett presented a citation on behalf of Town Council recognizing Dr. Curtis-Whipple's 25+ years of compassionate service and leadership, commenting on the legacy which she is leaving behind. Ms. Hackett added her personal feelings and remarked on Dr. Curtis-Whipple's commitment to doing what is best for kids and shared her sadness for Dr. Curtis-Whipple leaving the district.

A video was presented by the Weymouth High Theatre Company featuring a song from the 'Wicked'.

A video was presented by the Wildcat Media Club, featuring pictures and video clips of students, staff, and administrators expressing their thanks and appreciation and farewell wishes to Dr. Curtis-Whipple.

Mayor Hedlund presented a town tile to Dr. Curtis-Whipple in recognition and thanks of her 25+ years of service to the district and expressed his best wishes.

A video of thanks and appreciation was presented by the School Committee with personal best wishes. The School Committee members gifted Dr. Curtis-Whipple with a gift certificate for a Broadway show of her choice for when Broadway is open again.

The Weymouth Wildcat (Former Assistant Superintendent Bryan) and Melanie Curtin presented Dr. Curtis-Whipple with cake and flowers.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple expressed her heartfelt thanks and appreciation for all of the video presentations and well wishes and shared her esteem for the kindness and support from all staff, including leadership teams (past and present), school committee, students, the Mayor, his staff and town council staff as well as state officials that she has received throughout her career. She emphasized that all WPS employees are her extended family and that her legacy of 'What is best for children' continues. Dr. Curtis-Whipple summarized her traits of leadership highlighting: choosing kindness, doing 1 thing each day to make the community a better place, be respectful, be vulnerable, to smile and laugh each day, and to stand up for what you believe in a respectful way. She conveyed her gratefulness and honor to serve Weymouth students stating that she is truly 'Weymouth Proud'.

Chair Belmarsh reiterated her thanks and advised that even though this is Dr. Curtis-Whipple's last school committee meeting, her last day is not till the end of the month. Well wishes can still be sent to 111 Middle Street.

### **The Meeting Came to Order At 7:21pm.**

Chair Belmarsh led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed for Jack Aherne, former WPS teacher who also worked in Silver Lake and as a Superintendent in Abington who passed away.

### **Consent Agenda:**

The Consent agenda included:

- Warrant 32-2021 in the amount of \$559,823.85. Dated February 8, 2021.
- Regular Minutes: 1/21/21
- Executive Session Minutes: 1/7/21
- Budget Sub-Committee Minutes: 1/13/21
- Joint Meeting with Town Council Compressor Station Minutes: 12/9/21

- Interim Superintendent Search Committee: 12/10/20

Mrs. Curran inquired about the search committee notes and questioned the budget sub committee minutes of 1/27/21 regarding the needs and compliance list.

Mayor Hedlund questioned the Joint meeting with Town Council minutes for accuracy.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll Call vote. Motion Passed. Mrs. Curran and Mayor Hedlund voted present.

### **Student Advisory**

Members Katelyn and Caroline Horan, Natalie MacDonald, Lauren Crisileo and Josphine Burke summarized the clubs and activities going on at the high school, highlighting Best Buddies, VIP Club, Book club, WHTC, Skills USA, SADD and SALSA and Unified Sports. For DECA, Divy Vyas and Ryan Hickey moved on to states. Dance and Step team meet virtually each week.

Ms. Horan shared that the brain cancer has returned for the Mighty Quinn. In the past during non covid times, visitors could visit through the 'Quindow'. The family is reminding the community how important blood and platelet donation is. More information or to make an appointment is available at <https://www.childrenshospital.org/ways-to-help/donate-blood>, 617-335-6677.

The students thanked Dr. Curtis-Whipple and expressed their gratitude for her as a Principal (students at Academy Ave.) and Superintendent.

Principal Strauss advised that Step and Dance are not MIAA sports but will run in the Fall 2 Season and that cheer will be able to perform at Unified Sports games which will be on an intramural basis.

### **Public Comment**

The Chair reminded that public comment be in accordance with Policy BED, items on the agenda and kept to 3 minutes; if members wish to speak-name and address should be added in the chat. Dr. Sullivan reiterated Zoom etiquette.

-Kimberly Ferriera, 105 Charles Diersch St.

On behalf of SEPAC expressed thanks and appreciation for Dr. Curtis-Whipple's consistent support in advocating for special education students and wished the Superintendent Congratulations and Best Wishes.

-Danielle Graziano, 430 Ralph Talbot Street

On behalf of SEPAC shared that a donation to the Weymouth High Theater Company was made in honor of Dr. Curtis-Whipple.

-Maeve Mohaghan, 1196 Pleasant St.

Inquired if elementary schools had leeway in bringing back more students as some buildings/classrooms have more space than others. She shared that the safest place children regarding transmission is in the schools.

-Lisa Dembowski, 80 Heather Lane

Expressed her thanks and appreciation to Dr. Curtis-Whipple for her commitment in doing what is best for the kids.

She also suggested a survey be sent out to families regarding comfort level of 3" and also that the return to school updates be their own meeting. Ms. Dembowski emphasized that numbers are going down and shared her support for more children being in the buildings reiterating that the long term effects or remote learning are unknown and expressed her concern for mental health.

-Diana Crisileo, 25 Emery Lane

Read a poem entitled 'Life Stream Of Life' written by Vice Chair Nardone's father who recently passed.

### **Report of the Superintendent:**

The Superintendent reported on the following:

Academy Avenue staff completed ALICE training the morning of 2/4/21. Academy also received a \$2K MassCue grant. Dr. Curtis-Whipple expressed her thanks to Dennis Jones, Teri Fleming, Lt. St. Croix, and Justin Myers for their assistance with ALICE training as well as Beth Arthur for her work with the grant.

Author Elly Swartz will be visiting Abigail Adams on February 11, 2021 at 9:30am.

New updates have been made to the counseling page of the website, social emotional resources to help support families:

<https://www.weymouthschools.org/middle-school-chapman-campus/counseling-services/pages/resources>

SEAPC will be on February 9, 2021, guest speaker will be Bryna Rogers from Bay State Community Services. WISE (Weymouth for Inclusion, Solidarity and Equity) will also be present. All community members are welcome to attend.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple advised that the 'thin blue line flag' petitions are the topic of thoughtful discussions and that the High School Team in conjunction with Interim Superintendent Smith are working on more dialogue to share out. The Superintendent met with Mrs. Chesna. Dr. Curtis-Whipple reminded students to be respectful of each other and value all opinions.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple reinstated the 'Abigail Adams Medal' which was originally given out by Superintendent West. The honor ended in 2002. During these unprecedented times, Dr.

Curtis-Whipple wanted to recognize employees who have gone above and beyond who have shown initiative, courage and fortitude.

Abigail Award Medal 2020-2021 Recipients: John Barker, Melanie Curtin, Maryann Foley, Robin Howard, Besty Harris, Elaine Lane, Make Manning, Briane Smith, Deb Smith, and Stacey Ware.

Dr. Curtis-Whipple expressed her hope that the award would continue and stated that it has been an honor and a privilege to work in Weymouth.

Assistant Superintendent Smith and the Committee also shared their thanks to the Superintendent, the recipients and their families.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Report of the Budget Subcommittee: 1/13/21 & 1/27/21 (action requested)**

As the minutes of the January 13th meeting were approved earlier, Dr. Sullivan read his report of January 27, 2021 into the record. Topics included an update to the FY22 Budget preparation, Budget proposal of WHS, CTE, IT and Abigail Adams, and full day Kindergarten (to be talked about more later in the agenda).

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the report of the budget subcommittee. Seconded by Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw. Roll call vote. Motion passed. Mrs. Curran voted present.

### **b. Support Universal Full Day Kindergarten pending FY22 budget considerations (action requested)**

Dr. Curtis-Whipple shared that full day kindergarten is what is best for kids but decisions need to be fiscally responsible and that budget conversations are currently still in the process. She advised that for planning purposes, families should be informed sooner than later and suggested opening registration without a deposit. Registration would open Monday, February 8. In person paperwork dropoff at primary schools would be February 24, 25, 26 by appointment only. Full day registration will be open only at this time and families will be registering with the caveat that tuition may be charged pending budget determination.

Assistant Superintendent Smith advised that initially for FY21, 18 classrooms were budgeted; however to comply with social distancing, 20 classrooms were run. Enrollment data is needed to determine staffing which drives the budget. Budget proposal for 20 classrooms for FY22 is ~\$1.1M, which equates to 1.5% of the budget.

Dr. Sullivan recognized the 'weird' timeline of registering early for Kindergarten before the budget is set advising enrollments prepare the budget regarding staffing and materials.

Mrs. Curran inquired about the registration window and confirmed that paperwork drop off will be in person by appointment only.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw inquired about the 'ESSER-2' funds. Assistant Superintendent Smith shared that the district potentially could receive ~\$2.5M and that funds would not expire until 9/30/23 and the recommendation is to preserve the fund use.

Ms. Palazzo confirmed that registration is for full day only at this time and expressed her concern for working families during this time if universal full day kindergarten is not an option.

The Chair advised that there is strong community support for the program and conversations are underway with the Mayor and town hall, and Interim Superintendent Smith and Assistant Superintendent Smith. She reiterated that the Esser 2 funding amount is still to be determined as well as charter assessments.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Policies for Second Reading**
  - i. EBC-S: Policy on Covid Related issues**
  - ii. IHBHE-Remote Learning**
  - iii: IHBHE-E Remote Learning Addendum**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

Policies EBC-S, IHBHE, IHBHE-E will be moved to a third reading.

- b. Return to School Plan**
  - I. Review Updated Metric**
  - II. Staffing update**
  - III. Hybrid Learning Update**

Dr. Curts-Whipple advised that there will not be a vote this evening as there are not any changes to the return to school plan but reminded that work is ongoing and is being done by the leadership team to bring more students back safely. Currently bringing back second grade is being looked at; space is a concern. All options are being looked at including thinking outside the box. Interim Superintendent Smith is having conversations with the high school regarding space as well. The Superintendent reminded that the district is down a building and that everyone is working hard to get kids back in the building. If there is an increase in students in the buildings it will have a transportation impact.

Staffing is an issue. Postings have been advertised for quite some time without applicants. Other school districts are experiencing the same problem.

Assistant Superintendent Smith summarized the metrics, sharing that community spread is in the red at 6.9% and that staffing is in the yellow. Weymouth resources and PPE remains in the green due to the forsite of Mr. MacLeod and Mr. Barker in ordering supplies; the district is in a great position.

Elaine Lane shared that state and local numbers are in the red and that there are 22 new hybrid cases down from 29 cases the previous week. She reminded school community members and staff to be mindful of safety guidelines and protocols over February school vacation.

Ms. Palazzo inquired if a single grade or team could be 'closed' rather than an entire building. Dr. Curtis-Whipple shared her faith in the leadership and nursing staff and explained that staff could be out for a variety of reasons and if a maintenance, custodian or food service team member is out the impact is to the whole school.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw questioned if pooled testing is being considered. Dr. Curtis-Whipple advised that there is an application process and that DESE only provides funding for 6 weeks and also does not provide staff. During an upcoming meeting and webinar different trials/options as well as viability will be discussed.

**Chapman School Building Update, Adams Renovation and Transportation Building Update  
(Town Measure 20 072 - Amend Measure 17 017)**

Work is ahead of schedule and drone pictures are available. Tiles and exercise equipment has been decided. Auditorium discussions are underway. There is a mock up at Gate B and the steel foundation is in place.

Updates can be found at: <http://anewchapman.org/>

**c. Superintendent Search**

Ms. Palazzo is the chair of the permanent Superintendent search screening committee. The names of the members are on the website:

<https://www.weymouthschools.org/district/district-information/pages/superintendent-search-information-and-documents>

Next meeting will be February 18, 2021 to review survey data. A tremendous number of survey responses were received. An executive meeting will be February 24 at 7pm to review and discuss resumes. Interviews with the screening committee will be scheduled in the beginning of March.

Interview questions have not been compiled yet and will be done in an open session.

**d. Review of status of Joint Committee and Community Host Agreement between  
Weymouth and Algonquin Gas Transmission regarding North Weymouth Compressor  
Station**

The committee is awaiting a response from MEMA regarding a regional response plan.

The committee thanked Teri Fleming, Chair of the Safety committee for her work in running different scenarios with table top displays.

This Item will be kept on the agenda.

**Announcements:**

Weymouth Market-March 3, 2021-NEW time-3:30pm-WHS Gold Cafeteria in a drive thru manner  
SEPAC-February 9, 2021-6pm , [sepac.wps@gmail.com](mailto:sepac.wps@gmail.com)  
Budget Subcommittee- February 10, 2021-6pm

**Next School Committee Meeting:**

Regular Meeting: Thursday, February 25, 2021 - 7:00pm

**The Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm** on the motion of Mrs. Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote - passed unanimously.

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**Documents Attached to These Minutes:**

- Student Advisory Report
- Report of the Budget Subcommittee

Respectfully Submitted,



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John Sullivan  
Secretary



## WEYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

One Wildcat Way, Weymouth, Massachusetts 02190  
Telephone: 781-337-7500 Fax: 781-340-2569 Web site: [weymouthschools.org](http://weymouthschools.org)

Student Advisory Group - School Committee Presentation - Thursday, February 4, 2021  
Members Present (Virtually): Josephine Burke, Lauren Crisileo, Caroline Horan, Katelyn Horan, Natalie MacDonald

Clubs and Extracurricular Activities Updates

**Caroline Horan - Best Buddies** meets one Monday every month via Google Meet, we currently have about 40 members in the club. During the meetings, we do activities such as arts and crafts and a game



called “How would I get there”, where we would color sheets with different modes of transportation and ask the members how they would get to various places. We hope to end our year with Best Buddies in any way that is possible.

**Caroline Horan - VIP** is currently involved in a project where we are having “lunch bunches” where WHS students will be mentoring elementary school students from Murphy School. Some examples of these lunch bunches is Minecraft, Exercise, and Storytime. By having these “lunch bunches” we hope the highschool and elementary school students will create bonds with each other and gain tools to overcome this challenging time.

**J. Burke:** The **WHS Book Club** meets on Wednesdays via Google Meet from 3:00pm until at least 4:00pm. It is open to students in grades 8-12. We discuss books of all genres and choose one book as a group each month to read and discuss. We just finished discussing a fantasy book, *Six of Crows* by Leigh Bardugo, and our February book is a mystery, *The Cousins* by Karen McManus. The discussion for *The Cousins* will be on February 24th. Copies of the books are always provided to anyone who needs one and can be delivered to remote learners who cannot pick up a copy at school. Anyone interested in joining Book Club can contact the club president, senior Alyssa McInnis ([21almcinnis@weymouthps.org](mailto:21almcinnis@weymouthps.org)) or Mrs. O'Neill in the library ([annmarie.oneill@weymouthschools.org](mailto:annmarie.oneill@weymouthschools.org)) for more information and to receive the Google Meet link.

**K. Horan - Rotary Club:** Running strong! We meet remotely with 50 kids at the meetings! We bought tons of presents at the Holidays for needy families and hope to sell BLM laptop/phone stickers soon.

**Caroline Horan - Weymouth High Theater Company** had a full first half of the year. Our students rehearsed and performed in two fully online Murder Mystery plays that the at-home audience was encouraged to play along with during our WHTC "Who-Done-It" Series. These plays afforded WHTC students not only the chance to act in these productions but to create tech designs for costume, hair, makeup, set, sound, and lighting.

They also participated in 4 Masterclasses with industry professionals including two acting masterclasses with professional actor and WHS Alum Nate Corddry, and a set design/art direction masterclass with the art director of both "The Today Show" and "The Tonight Show", April Bartlett, who is also a WHS Alum.

WHTC students also competed in the annual Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild contest and scholarship day that was held virtually this year. WHTC students submitted entries in multiple contests including the Doug Ingalls Monologue Scholarship Contest, the Scene Partner contest, the Musical Theater contest, and the Excellence in Technical Theater contest.

**Lauren Crisileo - SKILLS USA:** As with most things, this year has been quite challenging for this organization, participation in competition has unfortunately dropped because everything went virtual and a large part of this particular organization is the collaboration and interaction with students and staff from other schools. Every CTE student in grades 10-12 at WHS are registered members, we typically send approximately 50 students to district competition, we will only be sending 13 this year, they are registered for and preparing to compete virtually in their shop subject area, employability, SkillsUSA knowledge, & OSHA virtually on February 24th. In November WHS had 5 students participate in the Fall State Leadership Competition Senior President Gianna Conti, Junior Vice President Emily Nicholas, Junior Secretary Hannah

Maling, Senior Treasurer Allison Meighan and Junior participating member Katreena Stanley along with their advisor. The Fall State Leadership Virtual Conference was two days of excitement and experiential learning as members develop personal, workplace and technical skills and discover Chapter development strategies. Experiences will also include interactions with education, business and community leaders and opportunities for individual and team recognition. Gianna received a shout out award as well as the award for chapter spirit, Emily also won a shout out award.

SkillsUSA is kicking off a fundraiser where they are raffling off a Bruins jersey signed by the complete 2019/2020 team. Please be on the lookout for information on how to help these dedicated students to continue to pay for their competition fees.

**Lauren Crisileo - SADD/SALSA:** The SALSA/SADD participated in a successful virtual field trip with the elementary schools in Weymouth. SALSA/SADD partnered with Thayer academy to complete this field trip and are preparing for the next virtual field trip. Club members had conversations in breakout rooms with elementary students that revolved around why they choose to not make poor choices involving alcohol and substances. The SALSA/SADD club is also focusing on fundraising and spreading positivity during these unprecedented times

SADD = Students Against Destructive Decisions

**Natalie MacDonald - DECA:** Went to 2 district competitions - Divy Vyas (12) and Ryan Hickey (11) moved on to the states round

**Natalie MacDonald - MODEL UN:** have meetings every friday - the have had a virtual conference at St. John's Prep and plan to virtually attend more

**Natalie MacDonald - MULTI-CULTURAL:** created interactive virtual activities to learn about different cultures

**Natalie MacDonald - ADL:** created virtual lesson plans for health classes

**Josephine Burke - COLOR GUARD:** We have been meeting virtually once a week

**Josephine Burke - MEDIA CLUB:** Will be making a video of all clubs, introducing themselves and also informing the school what they do and when they meet.

**Katelyn Horan - STEP TEAM:** Step Team has been meeting virtually almost every week since the beginning of November. We have enjoyed the ability to stay connected, although we can't wait until we can practice in person again. We have welcomed five new members to the team and they're doing awesome!"

**Katelyn Horan - DANCE TEAM:** The seniors of the Dance Team have shown remarkable leadership this year! The Dance Team seniors have been doing a stellar job keeping all of the dancers motivated, positive and connected through various different virtual team building experiences. The Dance Team program is extremely excited to participate in the upcoming Fall 2 season. They can't wait to get back together with their Dance Team family and be doing what they love.

**Katelyn Horan The Mighty Quinn:** Member of the Weymouth Community whose Brain Cancer has returned. In the past members of the Weymouth Community and beyond have visited the Quindow to visit Quinn to keep him company as he could not go outside due to a compromised immune system. Member of Quinn's family "did not realize how important blood donations were until we needed them," "For Quinn, we saw an instant reaction to getting a blood transfusion and getting platelet transfusions. He lost color in his skin, he lost energy, he

was lethargic. And as soon as he got the transfusion, it was like a light switch went off, and he was ready to take on another day.”

As friends, family and complete strangers send thousands of messages of support to the family, they say it’s that love that is helping them stay positive.

“As bad as this is, there’s an awful lot of good coming out of it,” Jarlath said. “So, the support has been overwhelming. And it’s gotten our family through before, and it will get us through again.”

Several blood drives have already been organized in Quinn’s name, the family said.

To make an appointment with The Children’s Blood Donor Center or get more information, call 617-355-6677, or visit [this site](https://www.childrenshospital.org/ways-to-help/donate-blood). <https://www.childrenshospital.org/ways-to-help/donate-blood>

**Message to Superintendent Whipple:** Natalie MacDonald, Katelyn Horan, Caroline Horan and Lauren Crisileo