



Weymouth

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Weymouth School Committee

Humanities Center & Zoom

August 19, 2021

MEETING MINUTES

(approved 9/16/21)

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

Members Absent: Mayor Hedlund

Also Present: Robert Wargo, Superintendent; Brian Smith, Assistant Superintendent; Melanie Curtin, Assistant Superintendent

The Meeting Came to Order At 7:07pm.

Chair Belmarsh led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda:

The Consent agenda included:

- Warrant 04-2022 in the amount of \$351,274.20. Dated 7/28/21
- Warrant 06-2022 in the amount of \$329,457.55. Dated 8/9/21
- Regular Minutes: 6/17/21, 7/15/21
- Retreat Minutes: 2/13/21, 4/10/21, 6/12/21, 7/15/21
- Budget Sub Committee Minutes: 8/11/21

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the consent agenda. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

The Chair reminded that public comment be in accordance with Policy BED, items on the agenda and kept to 3 minutes; Dr. Sullivan advised that there is an 8 second delay and gave instructions if members wish to speak-name and address should be added in the chat.

-Steven Suppa, 33 Shawmut St.

Spoke on the drawbacks of children wearing masks and expressed his support of parents' choice whether their children wear a mask in school.

-Jean Hay, 165 Elmer Rd.

Spoke in support of parent's choice whether children wear masks at school.

-Lindsay Conley, 154 Elmer Rd.

As a mother of 4 children spoke against policy EBCFA and expressed her support for a parent's right to choose whether their children wear a mask in school. She suggested that masks be recommended and optional not mandated. Ms. Conley has reached out to members via email as well to share her comments and videos.

-Brendan Conley, 154 Elmer Rd,

Shared his support of parents' choice whether children wear a mask in school and suggested that masks be recommended not mandated.

-George Roberts

As a parent of a post graduate special education student, echoed earlier comments and expressed his support of parent choice.

-Mike Murphy, WEA President & Heike Tupland, WEA Treasurer

Expressed their concern for the Covid Delta Variant and urged school committee members to help ensure the safety of all students and staff by considering a mask mandate to start the school year. Ms. Tupland spoke on how well the children did last year with mask wearing.

-Paul Wilman, 73 Shawmut St.

Shared his support of adopting a reasonable mask mandate to allow children the opportunity to stay in school.

-Caitlin McGinnes, 20 Neck St.

Via Zoom, Ms. McGinnes shared she would prefer that students be unmasked but that she will trust the judgement of the committee..

-Danielle Graziano, 430 Ralph Talbot St.

Via Zoom, as a mother of 2 special education children expressed her support of the ESP bill of rights and shared the importance of their role in the classroom.

-Lisa Kimball, 48 Tower Ave.

Via Zoom, as a mother of 3 children expressed her support of a mask mandate to begin the school year.

-Melissa McGlaughline, 22 Van Ness Rd.

Via Zoom, expressed her support for a mask mandate.

-Richard Cassani, 132 Lorraine St.

Via Zoom, shared his support of strongly encouraging masks but not mandating them; that it should be the choice of the parent.

Report of the Superintendent:

Superintendent Wargo expressed his thanks for the community sharing their comments and thoughts.

The Superintendent welcomed and introduced **Melanie Curtin** to the role of Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services & Support.

Superintendent Draft Goals

Superintendent Wargo gave an overview of the educational visioning work that took place with different stakeholders to assist with Mr. Wargo's entry plan. A listening and learning tour will be key in developing the entry plan. The plan will be completed by the end of September.

The Superintendent is part of a 3 year Superintendent Induction Program through the MASC (Massachusetts Association of School Committee) along with 40 other new Superintendents.

Climate and culture will be marked as a goal to improve empowerment of building based leaders, support and coaching to ensure adherence to the district's core values.

Equitable Distribution of Students (redistricting) and school start times will be evaluated as well.

Superintendent Wargo expressed his excitement in working with Assistant Superintendent Smith and Curtin along with administrators at the leadership retreat, August 16 and 20, 2021.

Update on Return to School The Superintendent gave an overview of the presentation including health information from national and state agencies (attached to these minutes). Gena O'Hara, Dan McCormack, Robin Magner, Annmarie Vaney and Julie Long in collaboration with the Mayor's office were instrumental in gathering data. Guidance, masking, the delta variant, distancing and close contact, and contract tracing were reviewed. An overview of state and Weymouth cases by age was given. Rapid testing will be made available.

The Superintendent reassured that air filtration for students and staff is working efficiently and reiterated the goal is to get and keep students in the building in the best learning environment possible.

Community members getting vaccinated was encouraged. In addition to clinics at WHS there are 79 sites in Weymouth to receive vaccination. The Superintendent reminded that if a child is sick to stay home

Frequently asked questions will be made available on the website:

<https://www.weymouthschools.org/district/pages/wps-back-school-protocols-and-faq>

The chair thanked Mr. McCormack for attending the meeting via Zoom and opened another opportunity for public comment.

-Lindsay Conley,

Reiterated her support of a parents right to choose if their children wear a mask in school.

-Steven Suppa

Reiterated his support of a parents right to choose if their children wear a mask in school.

-Paul Wilman,

Reiterated his support of a reasonable mask mandate.

-Dan McCormack, Director of Weymouth Department of Public Health

Via Zoom, with increased counts since July expressed his support of face coverings until case counts decrease and vaccination numbers increase. Thanks was expressed to Mr. McCormack for his assistance and collaboration.

-Gretchen March, 22 Genevieve Rd.

Via Zoom, expressed support for parents' right to choose and suggested strongly recommending but not mandating masks.

-Jess Spencer, 996 Washington st.

Via Zoom, as a mom of 2 special education students shared her support of parent's right to choose.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to take out of order Review of updated policy EBCFA-Face Coverings by MASC. Seconded by Mrs. Curran. Roll call vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Review of updated policy EBCFA-Face Coverings by MASC (action requested)

Chair Belmarsh gave an overview of the face covering policy currently in place until if/when rescinded by vote of the School Committee. Attorney Brunt reviewed the policy and made modifications as did MASC.

The committee thanked community members for sharing their comments via email, zoom and live public comment.

Extensive discussion by the school committee members of the masking policy was had. Comments and concerns expressed were distancing, masking during lunch, contact tracing, distancing, CDC/DESE/DPH/APA strongly recommending masks, science, emotional well being, multi phase approach, parent concerns, as well as exemptions. Members shared their opinions in support or against a mask mandate. Masks can be removed while eating lunch and close contact will be limited as much as possible. Tents will be outside of WHS and Abigail Adams.

Nurse Leader O'Hara gave an update of quarantine procedures and eliminating classroom shutdown with vaccinated students. Vaccinations will eliminate a quarantine if exposed. It was reiterated that if there is a health condition accompanied by a physician's note there will be an exemption for that students' mask wearing.

Dr. Sullivan shared his support of a mask mandate. Mrs. Curran expressed her support to rescind policy EBCFA. Mrs. Nardone expressed her support of strongly recommending masking. The Chair read a statement from the Mayor expressing his support of a mask optional policy. The Chair expressed her support of policy EBCFA as modified.

<https://weymouth.tv/video-on-demand/>

Motion by Dr. Sullivan to accept the modifications to EBCFA as they appear in the packet. Seconded by Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw. Motion passed 4-2. Mrs. Curran and Mrs. Nardone voted against.

Mrs. Curran expressed problems with the language of the policy during lunch periods as well as enforcement of mask wearing and suggested the policy receive 3 readings before voted at this evening's meeting.

Talk of a motion to waive requirements of readings during an emergency was had.

Mrs. Nardone left the table at 9:32pm and returned at 9:37pm.

Update on Transportation and Before and Afterschool Care

Assistant Superintendent Smith advised that 2021-2022 school bus routes are available on the website <https://www.weymouthschools.org/district/welcome-wps-transportation-webpage> and will be on Aspen and in the newspaper. Inquiries regarding transportation can be sent to transportation@weymouthps.org. Work is currently being done to accept transportation payments through an online platform through the town. Payment can still be made by check.

It was mentioned that lunches will be free for all students this school year. Families can work with their building principals if arrangements need to be made regarding bus payments.

The Assistant Superintendent gave an update of the Before and Afterschool care programming. 5 of 8 primary sites are staffed and inspections are currently being done. The anticipated start date is September 7, 2021 dependent on EEC licensing. Champions offers military and staff discounts. Enrollment is ongoing and currently stands at 169 children. Questions can be directed to Champions directly or Stacey Ware.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Report out on Release or Retain Executive Session Minutes; 1/17/19, 5/23/19, 1/16/20, 1/30/20, 12/10/20, 1/7/21 (action requested)

Dr. Sullivan reported on the retain or release status of the above dated minutes.

1/17/19-Will be retained

5/23/19-Affirmed release

1/16/20-Will be released

1/30/21-Will be released as redacted

12/10/20-Will be released

1/7/21-Will be released

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to approve the report as stated by Dr. Sullivan. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

b. Weymouth 400 Informational Presentation-George Raymond & Tom Osich

President George Raymond and Vice President Tom Osich presented a video outlining the events and festivities to commemorate Weymouth's 400th anniversary in 2022. Upcoming events are the last food truck Friday on August 27, Blinking Lanterns on October 9 at George Lane Beach, Trunk or Treat, and a Gala on New Years Eve. More information available at <https://weymouth400.org/>. Thanks was expressed to the school department, the Mayor's office and town hall for their partnership and support.

The committee and the Superintendent thanked Mr. Raymond and Osich for their presentation and offered their support and suggested tying Capstone projects into Weymouth 400.

c. Budget Sub-Committee Report (action requested)

Dr. Sullivan gave a recap of the meeting held Aug 11, 2021. Topics included Before and After school care, budget planning schedule and ESSER funding uses.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to accept the budget subcommittee report. Seconded by Mrs. Curran. Roll call vote. Passed unanimously.

d. Review of ESSER I, II, and III; Funding next steps

Assistant Superintendent Smith summarized ESSER funding.

ESSER I funding received was \$678K and was expended on PPE, Remote Learning, and Technology.

ESSER II funding of \$2.9M application was due July 31, 2021. Funds will be used for Instructional coaches, full day kindergarten, technology, iPads and chromebooks.

ESSER III funding of \$6.8M application is due October 4, 2021. A survey will be conducted of all stakeholders to help determine allocation of funds for district visioning. The survey will take place from August 27,-September 7, 2021. Results will be analyzed and presented to the school committee on September 16, 2021. Highlighted allocations in the survey will be Unfinished Learning, Educational Technology, Operations and Maintenance, mental health, and community engagement and enrichments.

The Chair emphasized the great work and people hired that the ESSER II funding afforded the district and urged community members to fill out the survey. Ms. Belmarsh also mentioned that the Town is receiving \$17M in funding and that there could be shared allocation interests.

e. Policy Sub-Committee Report (action requested)

Mrs. Nardone gave a brief summary of the meeting held July 26, 2021 regarding attendance language. She expressed her thanks to Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw and Principal Strauss for attending the meeting.

Motion by Dr. Sullivan to accept the policy subcommittee report. Seconded by Mrs. Curran. Roll call vote. Motion passed unanimously.

f. Attendance Requirements-WHS Student Handbook-First Reading

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw gave an overview of the suggested edits to attendance requirements highlighting implementation and the interpretation of the policy for clarification. The terms of excused absences and unexcused are proposed to be replaced with absence with documentation and absences w/out documentation.

Up to 4 times per term instead of quarter for consistency and seeing absences in Aspen was talked over. A physician's note should be received within 1 week of absence.

Attendance Requirements Student Handbook moved to a second reading where there will be an opportunity for public comment.

g. Resolution to Support the Education Support Professional (ESP) Bill of Rights, 2021 (action requested)

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw read the Resolution into the record and expressed her thanks to Joani Cederholm.

Ms. Cederholm via zoom expressed her thanks for the resolution and support.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to adopt the resolution to support the Education Support Professional Bill of Rights, 2021. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Motion passed unanimously.

h. Resolution to Support Universal Meals Legislation (action requested)

The resolution was tabled until the next meeting.

Announcements:

Weymouth Market-September 8, 2021-3:30pm-WHS, Gold Cafeteria-Market will return to pre-Covid model of in person pick up

Next School Committee Meeting:

Regular Meeting: Thursday, September 16, 2021 - 7:00pm

The Meeting adjourned at 10:26pm on the motion of Mrs. Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Passed unanimously.

Documents Attached to These Minutes:

- Regular Minutes: 6/17/21, 7/15/21
- Retreat Minutes: 2/13/21, 4/10/21, 6/12/21, 7/15/21
- Budget Sub Committee Minutes: 8/11/21
- Superintendent's Report Presentation
- Weymouth 400 Presentation
- Proposed changes to student attendance policy
- Updated Policy EBCFA regarding face coverings.
- Resolution to support the Education Support Professionals' Bill of Rights.

Respectfully Submitted,



John Sullivan
Secretary