



Weymouth

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Weymouth School Committee

Humanities Center & Zoom

September 16, 2021

MEETING MINUTES

(approved 10/14/21)

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 7:02pm.

Chair Belmarsh led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda:

The Consent agenda included:

- Warrant 08-2022 in the amount of \$366,187.68. Dated 8/23/21
- Warrant 10-2022 in the amount of \$491,264.16. Dated 9/7/21
- Regular Minutes: 8/19/21
- Executive Session Minutes: 8/19/21

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

Motion by Dr. Sullivan to return to the normal process of certifying the warrant by adding the signatures of a quorum of the School Committee members present. Seconded by Mrs. Nardone. 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-WETC-8, name and address should be added in the chat.

-Paul Wilman,, 73 Shawmut St.

Shared his comments on tardiness, traffic, and bus issues and asked the district to help mitigate.

-Emily Jackson DeRosa, 20 Ashmont St.

Shared her thoughts on the bus issues and routes and tardiness and inquired when Covid Metrics and rapid testing will begin.

Chair Belmarsh reminded that there will be another opportunity for public comment for the 2nd reading of the attendance requirements.

Report of the Superintendent:

Superintendent Wargo introduced Dr. Frank Locker who conducted and led in the district educational visioning.

Update on Vision Work-Frank Locker

A diverse group made up of community members, educators, students and parents, administrators and municipal workers met over 3 days at the beginning of the summer to discuss district educational visioning.

Dr. Locker gave an overview of the presentation (attached to these minutes) and stakeholder recommendations. Topics included vision concepts, 21st century skills and planning; student engagement, project based learning, small group work/student collaboration, facilities, learning modalities/spaces and social emotional learning.

The Chair suggested that the visioning report be made public.

The Superintendent advised that the think tank groups consisted of 9 students, 18 educators, 9 parents, and 2 school committee members.

All questions asked by the committee were addressed.

The committee thanked Dr. Locker for attending and for his presentation.

Update on Return to School-Superintendent Wargo

The Superintendent shared that vandalism in schools will not be tolerated and thanked Principal Strauss for addressing the issue of bathroom vandalism right away.

Superintendent Wargo advised that during his visits to buildings that students are adjusting well and smiling behind their masks.

He advised that there are more coaches to support Teachers and interventionists to support students especially during this adjustment period of reestablishing routines and relationships.

Open houses started 9/8/21 and talks with WEA in the future will be had regarding scheduling.

There is no school for students on September 21, 2021 due to a professional development day. The focus of the professional development will be increasing student achievement. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Shawn Woodly. School Committee members are invited to attend, the first session is from 8am-10am.

Superintendent Wargo expressed his thanks for the school community's patience, and their questions which allow for engaging conversations and great results of engagement, empowerment, and equity.

Getting information out to families does need improvement and is being worked on.

The Superintendent introduced Gena O'Hara, Director of Health Services who gave an overview of procedures and protocols, testing and quarantining that will be given on Friday, September 17 at the virtual Covid Q & A session that will be held via Zoom.

 COVID-19 Q&A Virtual Event

<https://www.weymouthschools.org/district/district-information/pages/covid-19-protocols-and-faq>

There will be free access to rapid antigen testing through CIC health for students and staff. Close contact and consent, distancing, 'testing and stay' were talked over.

Ms. O'Hara explained that the testing is a double nasal swab and results are determined in 15 minutes which will determine action to be taken. Students who participate in athletics or extracurriculars are encouraged to test and stay.

Children who are unable to tolerate the swab test will have to quarantine.

Chair Belmarsh advised that the metrics team consisting of Dan McCormack, Superintendent Wargo, Assistant Superintendent Smith, Health Director, and herself met today to discuss putting metrics back on the website including town/school infection/vaccine rates. The team meets on Thursdays and information will be updated on the website.

There will be a vaccination clinic on Oct 7 & 28 inside of Adams and WHS. More information will be available when the clinic is finalized.

Mrs. Nardone left the table at 8:29pm and returned at 8:33.

Update on Transportation and Before & Afterschool Care-Assistant Superintendent Smith

Assistant Superintendent Smith thanked all building principals and staff for their assistance over the past days regarding bus issues and advised that Transportation Director Howard, First Student and himself are meeting everyday to discuss staffing and bus shortages as well as 3 routes which had to be collapsed as a result of the shortage.

The Assistant Superintendent advised that the school department is working with the town on the transportation/traffic issue. The High School will be opening at 6:30 to allow for early drop off to assist with traffic congestion.

Earlier dismissal times were mentioned. Parent pick up parking in the overflow parking lot at St. Francis was suggested. It was reminded that there is free breakfast and lunch for students. Late buses will begin September 20, 2021. Families are encouraged to complete free and reduced applications as they could be eligible for discounted transportation/athletic fees.

Parents will have the option to attend teacher conferences virtually.

The Assistant Superintendent gave an update of the Before and Afterschool care programming. After the determination to discontinue Weycare a rigorous RFP process was performed and Champions was awarded a 3 year contract. EEC licensing is needed for each site and currently 5 of 8 primary sites are staffed and inspections are being done. The anticipated start date is dependent on EEC licensing. Champions offers military and staff discounts. Enrollment is ongoing and currently stands at 169 children. Families with questions can reach out to Lora Lee at Champions. EEC is aware and has acknowledged the staffing crisis and delay in background checks.

WPS staff is available an hour before and after school and there is a prorated drop in rate. Billing specifics will be spoken about at the next budget subcommittee meeting on September 22, 2021, at 6pm at 111 Middle St.

All questions by the committee were addressed.

NEW BUSINESS

a. ESSER III Survey Results-Assistant Superintendent Smith

Assistant Superintendent Smith and Dr. Pamela Stazesky gave an overview of the data collected from the stakeholder feedback regarding ESSER III funding. 5 categories were highlighted, Community Engagement, Instructional Technology, Mental Health, Operations and Maintenance, and Unfinished Learning. Demographic of participants was reviewed.

Funding and allocation will be spoken about further at the budget sub committee on September 22. The final plan and application must be submitted October 4, 2021.

Counselor to student ratio was talked over. Dr. Stazesky summarized the data collected from the different populations of the survey.

78 staff members completed the survey, however Principals are talking with building staff regarding allowable needs through ESSER.

Suggestions made were to update athletic uniforms, update CTE, hosting opportunities for large group social emotional activities to experience engagement. Percentage of Capital needs list items was discussed as well as overlap of needs with the Town.

Wednesday's budget subcommittee meeting will discuss prioritizing and determining the most impactful allocations for spending over the grant timeline. Future amendments are allowed

Refer August 25, 2021 Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Gerard Mackin against Weymouth School Committee, Chair Belmarsh to Attorney Joe Emerson (action requested)

Motion by Dr. Sullivan to refer open meeting law complaint filed by Gerard Mackin on August 25, 2021 against Weymouth School Committee, Chair Belmarsh to Attorney Joe Emerson. Seconded by Mrs. Nardone. Motion passed unanimously.

Attorney Emerson's response will be to the Attorney General's office.

b. Policy Sub-Committee Report (action requested)

Mrs. Nardone summarized the meeting of September 7, 2021. Topics included the updated policy EBCFA; face coverings and the handbook attendance requirements. The committee recommended deleting policy EBCFA and following MASC and DESE guidelines.

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

c. Attendance Requirements-WHS Student Handbook-Second Reading

Assistant Superintendent Curtin reviewed attendance requirement language changes. Excused absence will be replaced with documented absence; unexcused absence will be replaced with absence without documentation. Per quarter will be changed to term for consistency.

The Chair opened for public hearing.

-There was none

A suggestion was made to have a general absence email address. Defining tardy; late to school and late to class was talked about.

Attendance requirements will be moved to a third reading.

d. Policy EBCFA-Face Coverings by MASC (action requested)

Policy Subcommittee in talking with administration recommends to eliminate policy EBCFA and follow the guidelines of DESE going forward. Current requirement is until October 1, 2021.

If a school has an 80% vaccination rate, those vaccinated individuals are able to be maskless. Talk of gathering vaccination data, determining the percentage vs. cases was had. There haven't been any DESE updates provided since August 25, 2021.

Discussion of implementing the DESE mask requirements and differences in policy EBCFA was had. DESE recommends ages 5 and above wear masks in doors, individuals exempt from wearing masks is for medical or behavior reasons.

Superintendent Wargo recommended adding the same language of EBCFA regarding exemption to the DESE mask requirement and advised that the DESE language is a better fit for the district.

Mask wearing for student athletes, coaches and spectators was talked over as well as rescinding EBCFA.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to rescind policy EBCFA. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mrs. Nardone to implement DESE mask requirement as dated August 25, 2021 with additional language in bullet 5 as discussed; A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption for students and staff. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances. Seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Motion passed unanimously.

e. Discussion on Superintendent and School Committee Goals, Superintendent Evaluation

Superintendent and School Committee goals will be discussed at a future school committee retreat.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Updates and Status of Chapman Middle School Opening 2022-Assistant Superintendent Curtin

Assistant Superintendent Curtin advised that the team meets on Thursdays and that sample furniture is arriving now to assess and review.

Leadership posting for the New Chapman will be posted around Oct 1, 2021 .

A suggestion was made to name the auditorium the Joyce McDonough Performing Arts Center. It will need to be brought before the Memorial Committee.

It was noted that there was only 1 school committee meeting for the months of August and September respectively.

Announcements:

Weymouth Market-October 6, 2021-3:30pm-WHS, Gold Cafeteria-Market will return to pre-Covid model of in person pick up

WCFCC-September 29, 2021, Tufts Library, room 133, 6:30pm

Harvest Fest at JECC

Next School Committee Meeting:

Regular Meeting: Thursday, October 14, 2021 - 7:00pm

The Meeting adjourned at 10:14pm on the motion of Mrs. Nardone, seconded by Dr. Sullivan. Passed unanimously.

Documents Attached to These Minutes:

- Regular Minutes: 8/19/21
- Executive Minutes: 8/19/21
- Frank Locker visioning presentation
- Proposed changes to student attendance policy
- Updated Policy EBCFA regarding face coverings.

Respectfully Submitted,



John Sullivan
Secretary

