

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, at 5:00 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

Also:

Caroline Han, Equity & Diversity Coordinator, METCO Academic Dean
Betsy Gavron, WMS Principal
Allyson Mizoguchi, WHS Principal
Tricia O'Reilly, Happy Hollow Elementary School Principal
Christie Harvey, Claypit Hill Elementary School Principal
Brian Jones, Loker Elementary School Principal
Pat Keefe, WSCP Director
Katy Merrell, TCW Director
Ilana Halko, TCW Inclusion Specialist

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 5:04 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. Superintendent Search:

(a) Update on Process, Visit Days and Next Steps:

Future Management Systems provided the School Committee with the completed reference reports, writing samples, and a summary of the leadership inventory results for the three superintendent finalists. There will not be any additional ZOOM sessions for staff due to a lack of interest. The School Committee discussed the format for the meeting on January 29, and Lyle Kirtman will be invited to the meeting. The community submitted thoughtful and inspirational observations and feedback regarding the finalists. Kim gave a shout out and thanked senior Sam Goldstone who attended the three student interview sessions, asked important questions, and provided feedback on the forms even though he is graduating in June.

2. Consent Agenda (out of order):

(a) Approval of Minutes: December 29, 2020 #1 (revised, December 29, 2020 #2 (revised), December 30, 2020 (revised), January 11, 2021, January 15, 2021 (revised), January 19, 2021, January 21, 2021:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

A spelling correction to the name “Sklar” under corresponding documentation was made to the December 29, 2020 minutes.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda with the amended minutes of December 29, 2020 #1. 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	

3. Administrative/Procedural Matters (out of order):

(a) Open Meeting Law Discussion:

The School Committee reviewed the response drafted by Jeanne in reply to the January 21, 2021 Open Meeting Law Complaint from George Harris. In addition, a document (email from Robin Sklar) was not listed on the minutes. The Committee agreed that Jeanne will send the response to the Attorney General’s office.

4. Comments and Written Statements from the Public:

Jeanne read a public comment from Middle School teacher Peter Curran who expressed his support the ongoing efforts and the School Committee’s approval of the WPS Anti-Racism Vision Statement.

Alexia Obar, 18 Dean Road, supports Dr. Omar Easy as the next superintendent, adding that he brings many of the qualifications that the Wayland Public Schools need right now, including diversity, his ability to address the achievement gap, and his desire to bring change.

Eliya Howard-Delman, 192 Stonebridge Road, commented on the Anti-Racism Resolution. She is part of the administration advisory at the High School and the resolution was discussed this morning during advisory. Eliya read a statement written by some in the advisory group supporting the resolution. The authors believe this is an important step in making all students comfortable and safe while in school, and it is important that the students know they have the administration’s support. The statement also speaks to starting a curriculum about racism in the early years of a student’s education. Finally, the authors state that this resolution will not solve all the race issues, but it includes valuable initiatives to create a safe space in the Wayland Public Schools.

5. COVID-19 Response (out of order):

(a) Discussion of Remote Snow Days:

Arthur presented data gathered from parents and teachers regarding the first “snow day” on February 2 that was a “remote day” of school. The feedback covered technology issues, attendance, student engagement, and curriculum coverage. Additional comments by parents noted that students want to be outside playing in the snow. Staff commented that they would prefer regular snow days and there were challenges with the sudden shift to remote.

A discussion followed and next steps will be a flexible approach in terms of calling a “snow day” or a “remote snow day” depending on the forecast of the weather conditions. Arthur will send a communication to families and staff in this regard.

Jeanne left the meeting at 9:17 p.m.; she returned at 9:19 p.m.

6. Administrative/Procedural Matters:

(a) Discussion of Adoption of School Committee Anti-Racism Resolution and Possible Vote to Approve:

The Administrative Council in its effort to draft an Anti-Racism Resolution did so to voice their support for the Wayland students and families of color following a year of racial unrest. Prepared by Caroline Han and Betsy Gavron, the statement/resolution is taken in part from the MASC statement and incorporated it into the district’s goal of helping students and families of color feel more welcomed, but to also be sure to make all opportunities for students equally accessible.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

Caroline spoke about the horrific death of George Floyd at which time sixteen year-old Darnellia Frazer recorded the last minutes of Mr. Floyd's life. The recording and her courageous actions changed the conversation around anti-racism and violence in this country, adding that racism is deeply rooted in our policies, our culture, and our institutions and schools. This resolution shows the district's commitment in this regard and benefits all students and staff.

Betsy commented that the principals represent the teachers' voices in this effort, as they address issues of racism in the classrooms. The School Committee's show of support will support anti-racist teaching in the Wayland Public Schools. Administrators and staff want to affirm human dignity and basic human rights by openly claiming that black lives matter. Betsy shared a recorded message from a Wayland Middle School sixth grader, Skyler Dixon, who expressed her concerns of blatant biases in the Middle School on behalf of all students of color. One concern was the fact that there are No Black Lives Matter flags in the school, but there are flags representing the LGBTQ community. Betsy noted that symbols matter and the district will address Skyler's and all students' concerns in an all-inclusive process.

The School Committee expressed their appreciation to the administrators and for their commitment to this very important effort and priority.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the resolution. 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	

7. Financial Matters:

(a) Discussion of FY22 Recommended Budget and Possible Vote to Approve:

The School Committee reviewed the guidelines in preparing a level service budget and a level funded budget in compliance with the BOS policy on the annual budget process. If there are additions to either budget, the School Committee must submit justification for the add-ons. The maintenance operating budget (\$231,000) and maintenance contract and part-time project manager (\$247,000) was included; however, the COVID related expenses were not included at this time.

Susan commented that only the WTA's CBAs are included in the projections because the other unions have not wrapped up their negotiations but must do so by February 22 in time for the Finance Committee's vote on the FY22 budget. A discussion ensued about the other unions' projections in terms of Town Meeting and the School Committee's final approved budget.

Susan recommended that the School Committee votes a budget that they support and then the Committee can work with the Town Administrator to consult with the Finance Committee to determine where the maintenance line items belong. Susan added that the State has recommended an increase of \$100,000 to the district's Chapter 70 funding for FY22.

Susan explained the line items in the maintenance operating budget and the maintenance contract that includes a part-time project manager. A discussion ensued about the organizational structure and management of the facilities department, school expenditures, and the current maintenance contract. Susan addressed the prioritization and her strong support of an administrative assistant in the facilities department. Arthur noted his support for an in-house HVAC technician, as suggested by Susan, and a full-time project manager. The School Committee requested more information regarding the maintenance contract before moving forward with a vote and approval of the FY22 operating budget.

Susan will ask Ben for a detailed scope of service and supplies associated with the \$207,000 to determine if there is a possibility of savings in these areas. Kathie also suggested that the anticipated COVID related expenses for next year must be included in the operating budget although the expenses are unknown at this time. Adding unmet needs was discussed that included permanent subs, campus supervisors, a facilities administrative assistant, Math Boost, a behavioral specialist and intervention specialist, particularly if they were related to COVID related expenses to meet the needs of the students next year. The administrators responded to the anticipated needs of students in the fall,

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

adding that the district must be ready to address the needs. Jeanne will present the potential additions to the budget to the Finance Committee before the next meeting. The School Committee will vote on the budget next week.

(b) Review of Special Revenue Fund Budgets and Possible Vote to Approve Fees:

The Children's Way:

Katy Merrell read a brief statement and reflected on her career at The Children's Way during the past few years, as she will be retiring in June 2021. Katy presented the FY21 revenue budget that was based on full enrollment and a 3% tuition increase, but there was capacity decrease, no COLA increases for staff, and staff cuts noting that The Children's Way experienced a severe space shortage this year. Two rooms in the town building were renovated to accommodate some of the space issues. Katy recommended security upgrades for next year, as they were postponed, and to move forward with the pre-COVID model.

Jeanne addressed Katy's 20% pay cut this year and suggested that it should be restored and made up before she retires. The School Committee agreed with Jeanne's proposal regarding Katy's salary. The School Committee asked questions regarding assumptions around enrollment and the cost per student for FY22, and the differential in revenue for private pay enrollment vs. enrollment paid by the school department for special education students.

Preschool Special Education (The Children's Way and Office of Student Services):

Richard described the preschool programming serving children at The Children's Way with high levels of needs. The program operates five full days per week in the Penguin classroom with typical learners and high needs students on specialized IEPs. The classroom is staffed by a licensed preschool special education teacher and a teaching assistant. Ilana Halko spoke about the success of this program, adding that there is more time for specialized instruction in the afternoons, as well as more participation in circle time and morning routines. The students are developing strong interpersonal relationships with staff and play time with their peers and it will prepare them for kindergarten.

Richard described the proposal and the goals for a new structure serving students from almost 3 to 5 years old with moderate levels of need that would begin September 2021. The program would be a half-day program either morning or afternoon, Monday to Thursday and would be staffed by a licensed preschool special education teacher, a teaching assistant, and related service providers. The program also provides the bridge from early intervention to Kindergarten. There would be advances in expressive and receptive language, social skills and self-regulation, and gross and fine motor skills. Some of the anticipated and expected outcomes include an acceleration of progress with focused goals and objectives, documentation of progress through data collection, a continuity of service delivery when transitioning from preschool to Kindergarten, and this program will support the district-wide work in developing skill-based IEP documentation.

The School Committee asked questions about the possibility of inclusivity in classrooms, enrollment expectation, and the daily half day structure. A discussion ensued about the possibility of inclusivity in classrooms, the IDEA special education requirement to deliver services, the benefits of a half day program, as some families may want a full day program, and the continuation of the extended day program.

The School Committee, administrators and Ilana thanked Katy for her six years of service and her tireless efforts for the preschool children and families of Wayland especially this year.

WSCP (Pegasus, BASE, Enrichment, Tutoring):

Pat Keefe began the discussion commenting that all program fees will remain the same as last year's. Since Pegasus did not run last year, there was no revenue and pre-registration deposits were returned. Pegasus will run for the upcoming summer for two three-week sessions from June 21 to July 30, and it will run five days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be about 145 participants, which is about 60% of past enrollments, and kids will be in community pods of ten. Pat described the potential planned activities. Although last year's tuition rates are in place, reductions will be made based on fewer hours and no planned field trips.

If the hybrid model continues into next year, the BASE program cannot be financially sustainable next year. Pat did build a five-day schedule for next year for 304 kids that includes Kindergarten through fifth grade for morning and afternoon programs. Pat created a break in service list for enrollment, and noted that there could be a wait list. BASE for students in grades 6 to 8 will not run. Pat explained why this is not possible, particularly because the enrollment numbers won't be high enough to cover the costs.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

Kathy left at 8:05 p.m. and returned at 8:20 p.m.

The Enrichment Program was not run this year because the program is run by the vendors and running it virtually was a bit of a screen overload for kids. This budget assumes that the vendors can enter the schools next year; thus, the programs will be offered.

Finally, the tutoring program was very successful this year, including the virtual music lessons facilitated by Bernadette Vanaria. There is a goal to increase music tutorials up to 90% either virtual or in-person. The summer math and literacy programs ran last summer, but summer strings did not, and summer fitness at the high school moved into the athletic budget.

Full Day Kindergarten:

Susan noted that the full day kindergarten budget is built on the assumption of 90% enrollment given the costs associated with this program for teacher and teacher assistant salaries. In order to fully cover the expenses related to healthcare benefits, utilities and other costs for full day kindergarten, the fee would have to be increased to approximately \$3,100.

Food Services:

This program is self-sufficient and most of the fund balance generated through careful management by the Director was spent this year because fees for lunches have not been charged and are being supported through food services and through state and federal programs. In addition, any surplus of funds is not enough to purchase capital equipment not supported by the Finance Committee in the past. However, Cheryl Judd has identified a DESE grant that could fund up to \$20,000 for capital equipment and has put the application forward. Susan addressed those capital projects that would qualify per the Finance Committee.

Athletics, High School Parking, Building Use, Instrumental Music:

These fee-based programs will break even with the exception of the athletic sailing club, which is holding to a small balance for unanticipated sailboat repairs.

Susan commented that the Finance Committee has recommended that the School Committee evaluate the fees being charged and the percentages being charged, particularly for athletics. She gave examples as noted on the special revenue funds spreadsheet.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the fee for Pegasus as presented by Pat Keefe. 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 Capitalization Stabilization Fund and Possible Vote to Support:
This agenda item was passed over.

(d) Review of Budget Calendar.
The budget calendar was discussed earlier.

(e) Review of Current Financial Status:
Susan quickly reviewed the current financial summary status noting that the second ESSER Grant is in the amount of \$192,125, and the estimated costs for COVID, the hybrid mode, WRAP, and the return of Kindergartners leaves a projected balance of almost \$75,000. Susan reviewed the areas in which there is a possibility of achieving more savings. This will be reviewed again next week.

8. Superintendent Update:

(a) Hybrid Mode Update:
Arthur congratulated the High School student council and staff on their efforts to hold a mostly virtual and traditional Winter Week next week.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
 Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

9. **COVID-19 Response (continued):**

- (a) Discussion and Review of Planning for Remainder of School Year, including Synchronous Augmentation, Kindergarten and Possible Vote to Approve Kindergarten Fee:

Synchronous Augmentation:

Synchronous augmentation for students will focus on math and some staff has been hired for this work.

Remainder of School Year:

Districts are waiting for more guidance from the CDC regarding bringing students back into schools more often and with the appropriate safety protocols in place.

Kindergarten Planning:

Parry described the work he is doing with principals and curriculum directors that includes the reconfiguration of the specialists' schedules and the use of building space. One challenge is charging the iPads, as more than one charger may be needed for the students for in school and at home. Teachers will need time to prepare for the Kindergarten transition, and at a previous meeting, two days were proposed either before February break or the Monday and Tuesday after February break, which is the teachers' preference. Since Wednesday is a weekly remote day, the Kindergartners would return on Thursday, February 25. Additional remote activities are being planned for the Kindergartners on Monday and Tuesday, February 22 and 23.

Kim does not support this proposal but acknowledged better case numbers, adding that the metrics are mixed. Wayland has been steady in enforcing the safety protocols. However, she has concerns about the overcrowding of hospitals, consistent high numbers, the emergence of virus variants, and the delay in Wayland's testing program. Given all this, she suggested waiting another week to bring the Kindergartners back to school.

Arthur addressed two additional professional days for Kindergarten teachers to prepare for this transition vs. other classroom teachers.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted (4-0-1) to provide the additional professional days to the Kindergarten teachers as presented by Parry and Arthur. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

The School Committee will revisit this discussion on February 3.

Kindergarten Fee:

Arthur proposed that those who join full day kindergarten between now and February 22 or by the end of the year, pay a half the total fee in the amount \$1,350. He highly recommended that families make this decision by February 22. Arthur acknowledged the complex process in issuing refunds. A discussion ensued regarding refunds and the importance of enrollment numbers and planning. Arthur noted that there is a limit for full day students.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve a 50% fee of \$1,350 for students switching between now and the end of the year. 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	

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

Jeanne noted that a joint meeting with the Board of Health was posted for Monday, February 1, at 5:30 to discuss the Kindergarten proposal.

Jeanne left the meeting at 9:17 p.m.; returned at 9:19 p.m.

(b) Surveillance Testing Program Update and Possible Vote to Approve Fee:

Ellen updated the School Committee about the surveillance testing program. The application is being filed with DESE for the state's six-week free testing program then followed by Wayland's testing program with its own vendor. The state will assign/match a vendor before the process begins to collect the online consent forms from families. Since testing will take place in the schools, someone is needed to monitor the students in grades 2 to 12 who self-swab and someone who distributes and collects supplies. Students in Kindergarten and first grade cannot self-swab, thus, a medically trained individual is needed for this task. Lisa Rafferty will coordinate and administer the testing program, as well as two other volunteers who will assist her. School administrative coordinators are needed as well, bringing the total to about ten personnel needed. The principals were consulted in terms of the logistics of testing in the schools. Possible disruption in classroom instruction was addressed, particularly in grades 2 to 5. Ellen described the possible process if a pool test is positive and reflex testing.

The School Committee should decide if the application is filed without identifying the personnel. DESE will provide personnel but, if so, those towns cannot be in the first testing group resulting in a delay in the process and/or not being considered eligible. The School Committee agreed to move forward in filing the application without asking for personnel.

(c) Special Education Update:

There was an update earlier in the meeting.

(d) Ongoing Review Groups: Remote and Hybrid Learning Progress Committee and COVID Learning and Safety Committee:

RHLCP:

No update.

COVID Learning and Safety Committee:

At the Committee's meeting today, the Town Administrator gave an update about her call with the State regarding its testing program and the town's vaccine program was discussed. Arthur and Louise Miller will work together regarding these two programs, and a communication will be sent to staff.

(e) Transportation Update:

No update.

(f) Ventilation Update:

No update.

(g) Next Steps:

Next steps were addressed earlier in the meeting.

10. Administrative/Procedural Matters (continued):

(a) Discussion of Upcoming Meeting Schedule:

The schedule was discussed during the superintendent search update.

(b) Open Meeting Law Discussion (continued):

Jeanne acknowledged omitting an email from the list of corresponding documents in one of the sets of minutes referenced in the complaint.

11. Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:

None.

12. 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 9:47 p.m. for the purposes of (a) discussing strategy with respect to collective

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 27, 2021

bargaining with WESA, Custodial, and Food Services, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; (b) discussing strategy with respect to negotiations with non-union personnel, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(2), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; and (c) the approval of the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: January 11, 2021.

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

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

13. Adjournment:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 10:20 p.m. 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	

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. WPS Anti-Racism Statement
4. FY22 Operating and Capital Budget Guidelines
5. Revised FY22 Incremental Increase over the FY21 Budget
6. Draft Cost Implications for Increased School Instruction
7. Draft FY21 Budget Summary and Status
8. Fee History
9. FY22 Recommended Budgets for Special Revenue Funds
10. Revised Minutes of December 29, 2020 #1
11. Revised Minutes of December 29, 2020 #2
12. Revised Minutes of December 30, 2020
13. Minutes of January 11, 2021
14. Revised Minutes of January 15, 2021
15. Minutes of January 19, 2021
16. Minutes of January 21, 2021
17. Executive Session Motion