

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – April 14, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at 5:30 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:

Heath Rollins, Athletic Director

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 5:36 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. Consent Agenda (out of order):

- (a) Approval of Minutes: January 15, 2021 revised, January 19, 2021 revised, January 21, 2021 revised, and March 31, 2021:

Jeanne explained that the January minutes were revised because the School Committee met with each finalist again in January and more detail was added to the 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 and thanked Jeanne for redoing the minutes. 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	

2. Comments and Written Statements from the Public:

Alexia Obar, 18 Dean Road, commented about WHS school council meetings, especially regarding the process in terms of communication about meeting postings for parents and the general community. She noted that today's school council meeting was rescheduled, but there wasn't notification about the postponement. Ms. Obar asked the School Committee

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – April 14, 2021

to study the issues around school council meetings before creating new policies and to speak to parents before moving forward.

Kim Reichelt stated that the intent was not to take a vote tonight but to discuss the process going forward and agreed with Ms. Obar about getting parents' feedback about adjustments to Policy BDFA. She added that a posting at the Town Building is inadequate and should be in the school newsletters.

Jeff Sklar made a public comment about school councils as well and noted that the law has not been followed. The spirit of the law is for parent involvement and principals should follow the existing policy. The School Council also writes the School Improvement Plan and reviews the school budget. Mr. Sklar noted that an agenda was not made available to the high school community nor advertised for the last three WHS school council meetings. In addition, videos of the meetings have not been available and the minutes lack adequate detail.

Ellen Grieco commented that it is the School Committee's job to set policy, not to monitor compliance. Monitoring compliance is the administrators' job.

Arthur presented a different perspective from those who made public comments. During the COVID climate, Dr. Mizoguchi has done her best to hold School Council meetings, adding that the administrators participated in a training session for this purpose, and the law has been followed according to the advice of the attorney who held the training session. Arthur added that although it is difficult to get staff and parents to participate, Dr. Mizoguchi has taken on substantive issues and has made significant progress in leading and addressing any concerns. Finally, he suggested that everyone should support and understand the work that the administrators are doing and asked the School Committee if they would like the principals to make a presentation in this regard. The School Committee declined given the principals' busy schedules. A discussion followed.

3. COVID-19 Response:

(a) Discussion and Review of Planning for Remainder of School Year, including Grades K-12 All-In Update:

High School Sports:

Heath Rollins reported that the Fall 2 athletic season will end in 9 days and spring sports will begin. He listed the lower risk sports that will be played. Wrestling, however, was pushed off to the spring season. Heath explained that the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) has worked on appropriate modifications and guidance on having a competitive wrestling season, but was not accepted by the MIAA or the Sports Medicine Committee because there was a delay in the modifications and guidelines. After discussions with Department of Public Health and with those who have voiced their concerns, Wayland High School will not offer wrestling this year because the safety criteria cannot be met.

K-5:

Arthur noted that it has been over a week in which K-5 has returned to school five days a week, and the greater majority of students are adapting well to the all-in transition. He reported that there have been a few positive cases but there is no evidence of in-person spread.

Richard shared that social emotional learning issues have surfaced in some instances, and research shows how brains are operating in a different way given the last year of learning experiences. Parry added that dealing with student behaviors are now handled in person whereas those conversations did not take place virtually. He gave some examples.

A discussion ensued about the difficulty of contact tracing when there are positive cases and students are three feet apart. More students may have to quarantine as a result for ten days even without symptoms. A close contact is someone who is less than six feet away and in close contact with others for more than 15 minutes.

Grades 6 – 12:

Students in Grades 6-12 will return all-in on Tuesday, April 27. Middle school students have been added to the transportation service and 35 cars will be eliminated from the traffic line. The stage three reopening plan for the middle and high schools will be sent to parents and will include the schedules and a review of safety protocols. At both schools, the Wednesday early release schedule will have longer periods with half of the scheduled classes one week and the other half the following Wednesday.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – April 14, 2021

Susan described the activities at the middle and high schools that are ready to go once the students leave Friday for April break, including furniture placement and cleaning services by an outside custodial contractor. Some tents have been set up as well.

- (b) Special Education Update:
There was no further update.
- (c) Transportation Update:
There was no further update.
- (d) Remote and Hybrid Learning Progress Committee (RHLPC) and COVID Learning and Safety Team Update:
RHLPC:
There was no RHLPC update.

COVID Learning and Safety Team:

Joanne Schmidt has replaced Kori Rogers as the WTA representative at today's meeting. Discussions included social distancing, contact tracing, and MERV 13 filter replacements on the rooftops and some school interiors over April break. The team will send out a communication to staff about the transition to all-in, including the health and safety protocols and ventilation. Jeanne noted that there was a presentation to the high school staff today about the building's ventilation and how it works. The PowerPoint presentation will be posted on the website.

- (e) Surveillance Testing Update:
As of today, 1,120 pools tested since beginning in late February. About 45% of students and over 50% of staff, including TA's and teachers, are being tested. There were four positive pools followed by reflex testing to identify the positive cases. There is a plan to continue the testing through the end of the school year with DESE's support and possibly continuing during summer programming. Participants enrolled after April break is about 1,000 total, including about 800 students and 200 staff, which is lower than the current numbers. Arthur described the subsequent process if someone tests positive and is asymptomatic.

A discussion ensued about requiring WHS students to be tested. Kim expanded upon some statistics for student athletes adding that only about 18% of Wayland's athletes are testing and 51% of non-athletes are testing. The question is, why is there lower participation among athletes, and given the high COVID concerns in this group, Kim recommended mandated testing. Jeanne reported that Weston's secondary athletes and music students must test. Lincoln/Sudbury athletes are required to test, and they will be adding students who participate in all extra-curricular activities. Neither town will charge for testing going forward.

Arthur presented four options: 1) mandate testing for all students or they could opt out; 2) mandate testing for all co-curricular activities including sports; 3) mandate testing for athletics, band, chorus and musical practices, such as higher risk activities; or 4) mandate testing for athletics only. Arthur reported his discussions with school counsel who did not recommend an opt-out option in terms of 4th amendment rights. Other concerns include testing cannot be mandated for music and/or chorus if students' grades are impacted and volunteers run after school co-curricular activities and keeping the volunteers informed can be challenging. Athletic teams are set up to be the most successful. High-risk teams such as lacrosse could be their own testing pools.

A discussion ensued about the options for mandating testing in Wayland based on the risks and equity for all students, as well as the possibility of cancelling the fee for families.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to ask the administration to assess if we can provide the testing program for free. 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 – April 14, 2021

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted to mandate testing for students participating in the athletics program. A discussion followed, the roll call was incomplete, and the votes were withdrawn.

Kim moved that the School Committee mandates testing for students participating in the athletics program and to the extent that the administration finds it feasible, testing is mandated for all other extra-curricular activities. A discussion followed and motion was withdrawn.

Kim moved that the School Committee mandates testing for all extra-curricular activities, including in-person music and band, and testing cannot have an impact on the grade. This motion was withdrawn.

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to mandate testing for any high school students participating in in-person extra-curricular activities. 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	

Ellen voted yes on the condition that the testing program can be free. The motion was amended for the high school students only.

A discussion ensued about exempting students who have tested positive for COVID and the possibility of testing over the summer. A huge thank you went out to the volunteers – Lisa Raftery, Sejal Sirinivisan, and Elizabeth Wurts and others.

- (f) Travel Policy:
There was no update.
- (g) Summer Programming:
There was no update.
- (h) Next Steps:
Next steps were covered in the previous discussions.

3. Financial Matters:

- (a) Bus Parking Update:
The Town and School Department will be working together to find a short-term solution for parking the school busses.
- (b) Director of Finance and Operations Search Update:
Parry reported that the search team had its first meeting and semi-finalist interviews are being scheduled for April 26 and April 27. The School Committee will interview the finalists brought forward by the search committee.

4. Policy Matters:

- (a) Review and Possible Vote to Approve Updates to
 - BDFA – School Councils

Information regarding Policy BDFA was shared with and reviewed by the School Committee. Moving forward, the Policy Subcommittee will seek input from parents, administrators, and staff. It was suggested to separate out the procedures from the policy itself. A discussion ensued about the meeting requirements per the Open Meeting Law in terms of setting monthly agendas in advance, posting meetings, providing the minutes within a reasonable time, and the makeup of the school council.

5. Administrative Matters:

- (a) Review of Resolution to Declare a Climate Emergency and Possible Vote to Support:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – April 14, 2021

The petitioners of this resolution are asking for the School Committee's support, as the Board of Selectmen and the Climate Energy Committee have already given their support. The School Committee provided their views of the proposed resolution.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to support Article JJ as presented. 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	

(b) Review Committee Meeting Schedule:

The School Committee reviewed dates for the School Choice Hearing, set for May 12, and the finalist interviews for the Director of Finance and Operations possibly on April 29 or April 30.

7. **Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

Arthur revisited the options for the Middle School schedule on May 11, 2021. As discussed at the April 7, 2021 School Committee meeting, Arthur and Principal Gavron agreed that on Tuesday, May 11, students will be dismissed at 12:20 with a grab and go lunch and on Wednesday, May 12, students will be dismissed at 3:10. This schedule will result in no loss of learning time.

8. **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 7:55 p.m. for purposes of (a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) as discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; (b) reviewing executive session minutes for possible declassification as listed on the agenda, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22; and (c) approval of the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: March 31, 2021. 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	

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

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

9. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:36 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	absent	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – April 14, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Article JJ
3. 2020-2021 Meeting Schedule
4. Revised Minutes of January 15, 2021
5. Revised Minutes of January 19, 2021
6. Revised Minutes of January 21, 2021
7. Minutes of March 31, 2021
8. Executive Session Motion