

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Meeting – September 30, 2020

A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, 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:

Dr. Ellen M. Mahoney
Leisha Simon, Director of Technology & Accountability

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 5:05 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	absent	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

1. Superintendent Search:

- Discussion of Focus Groups, Community Survey, Search Committee and Leadership Profile:
There were 107 responses to the survey and the FMS focus groups were scheduled. The School Committee will facilitate the focus groups for students, the community, and Town Boards/employees for which the members will be trained. The Screening Committee requires a commitment of about 20 to 30 hours.

The Committee discussed the types of improvements they would like to see in the district moving forward and their possible expectations for the new superintendent in terms of his/her leadership style.

2. Comments and Written Statements from the Public:

Jeanne read a public comment from Justine Paul, a mother of a first grader. She supports bringing the K-2 students into the school buildings before October 19 even on a part-time basis to reduce the amount of screen time for these students. Ms. Paul notes that six hours of screen time is too much and it is not healthy for the younger children. Working families are in a difficult position for many reasons.

Alexia Obar, 18 Dean Road, expressed her concerns about the high school hybrid schedule and the WHS school profile. She commented that most districts have more than two days of hybrid-structured time, unlike Wayland who has only two, giving Wayland students five days at home. Ms. Obar asked that the school profile be updated explaining that Wayland students did not have the same advantage that other districts had, as the profile does not mention the grading system. Finally, she believes that school lectures should be recorded for those students who are out sick.

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Ellen arrived at 5:30 p.m.

Jeanne read a public comment from Kamala and Paul Grasso in which they express their concerns about the high school experience and hybrid model. The Grasso's note that for 3 out of 5 days, students are expected to study independently with no teacher supervision or check-ins. In addition, Mr. and Mrs. Grasso believe that the WHS approach to grading in 2019-2020 put the seniors at a disadvantage during the college application process. They suggested that WHS add a caveat about the grading process and the elimination of some classes during the second half of the year to the students' transcripts as soon as possible.

Jeanne commented in response to the public comments and informed the public that Allyson Mizoguchi will attend next week's meeting to discuss the WHS hybrid model. She added that because Wellesley's K-2 enrollment was very low, they were able to change to model. Finally, she, the Board of Selectmen chair, and the high school administration are responding to emails from civically engaged high school students.

3. Administrative and Procedural Matters:

- Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve School Physician:

Arthur introduced Dr. Ellen Mahoney, a practicing pediatrician in the Town of Wayland for the past 10 years. He read the function and role of the school physician. Dr. Mahoney expressed her desire to continue to work with the school community, particularly in a public health role as an advisor in terms of decisions related to medical and developmental issues. The School Committee posed questions for Dr. Mahoney related to COVID and a discussion ensued. Kim informed the Committee that she has known Dr. Mahoney for many years and supports her in this role.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve Dr. Mahoney as the new school physician in Wayland. 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	

4. Consent Agenda:

- Approval of Minutes: August 8, 2020 (passed over) and August 19, 2020
- Approval of Accounts Payables Warrants
Accounts Payables Warrants dated 9/30/2020:
 - \$927,984.64
 - \$470,907.35
 - \$733,737.63
 - \$334,893.87
 - \$953,788.48

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda without the August 8, 2020 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	

Jeanne proposed the process for signing the warrants during COVID.

5. Financial Matters (taken out of order):

- Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve MacBook Air Lease:
Leisha Simon described the standard protocol in terms of accessing bids for leases, particularly for the MacBook Air

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five-year lease for which she is requesting School Committee approval. The computers are for the teachers. Leisha explained the three-warranty.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to authorize Leisha to move forward with the lease. 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	

6. **COVID-19 Response (taken out of order):**

• Update on Technology Support:

Leisha reported that this Genus Bar and internship process has been beneficial for the school district, as high school students are working toward helping and engaging in support with staff, as well as with the families. Leisha and Mary Barber work with the students in terms of mentoring them in this process. Leisha will attend a future meeting with another update.

7. **Superintendent Update:**

• Continued Planning for Implementation of Staged Hybrid:

Arthur updated the School Committee about the planning process to move into the hybrid mode on October 19. Staff is making final changes to the hybrid schedules and is preparing hybrid lessons. Details regarding health and safety protocols will be in place before students return. Principals will communicate with families. Arthur stressed the importance of patience and collaboration as the district moves into the hybrid mode, given that adjustments may be needed as the district moves forward. He added that much was learned from having the special education students in the buildings the last few weeks and during the remote period.

As requested by staff, Arthur proposed that the School Committee approve Friday, October 16, as an in-person teacher professional day so that final preparations can be made to reopen in the hybrid mode on Monday, October 19. He noted that this is first time for the district to be in a hybrid mode and the first time that teachers will combine synchronous education with remote instruction. A discussion ensued about other options and the State's required number of 170 instructional days if there are snow days and/or emergency closings moving forward. The School Committee agreed to have a teacher prep day on Friday, October 16, and to keep Wednesday, October 14, as an instructional day for students.

Arthur described the process for the online screening form for families that will begin on October 19. He explained the random tracking process in place for those families who are non-compliant, as well as those families who indicate a symptom for the student(s). There will be a follow-up process in terms of guidance for the families. A discussion followed about this process and the importance of compliance each morning before the child gets on a bus and/or enters the school.

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

• Special Education Update:

Richard reported that in-person instruction is going well and staff is preparing for the hybrid schedules.

• Discussion of Kindergarten Model and Possible Vote to Approve Revised Model:

Arthur reported that a letter went to kindergarten families and staff indicating that hybrid kindergarten would begin on October 19, the start of the hybrid mode, due to the ventilation work schedule.

Jeanne commented on a kindergarten proposal offered by a group of parents and acknowledged that the School Committee did consider this proposal/model. However, this model would create a much larger program deficit than the other models.

The School Committee discussed options 2A and 2B as presented at the last meeting. Option 2A keeps the full-day kindergarten structure as it is and teachers and students stay as is. Teacher assistants could be re-assigned in the afternoon. The revenue shortfall is \$148,000.

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Option 2B consolidates the traditional day and full-day students at Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow into discrete sections and re-assigns two staff members to work on other assignments in the afternoon while one teacher position would be reduced to .65 FTE's saving \$25,000. About 55 students would be re-assigned and there would be a deficit of \$123,900. If moving forward, more families opted for full day, a second move might be necessary. An additional plan would be developed if WRAP families opted back into full-day kindergarten at the beginning of the second semester.

Kathie proposed bringing the full-day kindergarten program into the existing operating FY21 budget this year under the existing fee structure, which would remove the constraints of having the fees covering the cost of the program. This proposal is similar to other fee-based programs in which fees offset the cost of the programs. Kathie explained further and a discussion followed. Susan recommended reaching out to DESE and school counsel in this regard.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously to adopt option 2A for the kindergarten plan with a simultaneous effort to vigorously pursue to bring the FDK program into the operating budget during FY21 wherever possible. 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	

- Discussion of Professional Development for Hybrid Mode:
This discussion occurred during the Superintendent's update.
- Review of Reopening/Closing Criteria:
The School Committee reviewed the Board of Health criteria/metrics for reopening and closing schools. There is a concern that this document does not set expectations for families. A discussion ensued in terms of the decision making process and the lack of language/direction to address protocols if a positive case of COVID was known in the schools, such as contact tracing, quarantining, or switching between models. Arthur noted that the district will follow the DESE guidelines. Jeanne will provide a video about contact tracing by the Board of Health. This discussion will resume at the next meeting on October 7 at which time a few scenarios may be presented.

Protocols under II: The district is creating a set of questions to be used to determine at each building the level of compliance for health and safety protocols, such as mask wearing, social distancing, and applying hand sanitizer at arrival and dismissal.

Kathie presented a scenario in which Wayland students had a large party without Boston resident students, what protocols would be followed?

- Ongoing Review Groups: Curriculum Progress Committee and COVID Learning and Safety Committee:
The RHLPC (Remote Hybrid Learning Progress Committee) met last week and will meet bi-weekly. It is looking at specific types of data to identify struggling students across different levels. The RHLPC will provide semi-regular updates to the Administrative Council and the School Committee, including potential budget recommendations as it relates to the work of the RHLPC. The COVID Learning and Safety Committee has not yet formed. Ellen will contact the WTA in terms of committee members.
- Review of Upcoming Communications and Listening Sessions:
Kim suggested having a listening session with students.
- Updates: Ventilation, Testing, Health and Safety:
Ventilation:
The School Committee reviewed the most updated ventilation spreadsheet from Louise Miller. The work is almost complete at the Middle School, the elementary schools are in the process of retrofitting filters this week in those rooms that need them, and testing and balancing will begin on October 6. Jeanne explained the testing and balancing process. The Committee discussed the status of the orders for the MERV filters. Arthur will know the status after his meeting with Louise Miller and Ben Keefe.

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Testing:

There are three categories of tests that are very costly: PCR test (like at colleges), pool testing, and rapid at-home tests that are not yet available. Ellen will join Kim in this effort with the focus of available funding. Jeanne suggested that Kim notify the Town Advisory Group who is pursuing a testing program for the town.

Health & Safety:

The School Department and Board of Health are drafting an FAQ Google document that will serve as a resource for staff and families.

- Next Steps:
This agenda item was addressed in previous discussions.

9. Financial Matters (continued):

- Discussion and Review of COVID Related Finances:
The School Committee reviewed the COVID budget summary and status provided by Susan that includes unanticipated and unbudgeted expenses for this year totaling \$721,700. In some cases, the degree of control is good, particularly with new staffing and salaries; however, utilities usage is estimated. In addition, an estimate for the full day kindergarten redeployment of operating expenses were added, including 3.0 FTEs for teacher assistants in classrooms with a high enrollment. Susan reviewed the sources of funding, including funding from unissued degree changes and a reduction of one bus for Boston transportation. The deficit net balance is about \$8,700. A discussion followed Susan's update.
- Transportation Reimbursement for Families for FY21 and Review and Possible Vote to Approve Terms of Bus Contract:
Susan commented that the bus bid spans over 170 school days and consists of two tiers – elementary and secondary. Bus routes were developed to transport registered Kindergarten through Grade 6 students who live more than two miles from their schools. The buses will be parked in the rear of the Town Building, and First Student's bus dispatcher will have office space in the Town Building, and the bus drivers will use the facilities within the building.

After rejection by the Town of the first bus bid, First Student submitted a second bid for general transportation that was 22% over last year because of cleaning and disinfecting costs and training costs. Susan added that the bus drivers negotiated a 12.5% increase in hourly wages with First Student. The transportation program is paid out of the operating budget and this year the cost is \$875,000 leaving a \$97,000 transportation balance, all of which is already allocated to other areas.

Arthur left the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Nine busses are needed in the morning to transport elementary students and four will continue on to transport the 6th graders. Since the remaining five busses will return to the parking lot, the district is paying for the unused 110 seats that could be used to transport some students in Grades 7 through 12 out of over 400 earlier registrations. The School Committee discussed this possibility, such as the use of a lottery system or on a first-come first-served basis. Susan will inquire which families have a need to use bus transportation starting with middle school students. Some reimbursements have been issued and more are forthcoming.

Arthur rejoined the meeting at 8:21 p.m.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the terms of the bus contract. 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	

- Approval of Student Activity Accounts for 2020-2021 School Year:
Per DESE guidelines, the School Committee votes yearly to approve student activity accounts. The School

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Committee reviewed the student activity accounts for each school.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the 2020-2021 student activity accounts as presented and without the school store. 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	

10. **Administrative and Procedural Matters (continued):**

- **School Council Discussion:**
Kim and Ellen will meet to discuss policies related to school councils. Kim asked Arthur for the names of those who serve on the school councils.
- **Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Trunk or Treat Event at Wayland High School:**
Arthur described the logistics of this planned event by Susan Memoli at Wayland High School. The participants will wear masks and socially distance. Susan provided a description of this event to the Health Department in terms of receiving recommendations or suggestions or answering their questions.

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Trunk or Treat Event contingent upon lack of objection from the Health Department. 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	

11. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 8:32 p.m. for the purposes of (a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the custodial union (MA Laborers District Council Local 1116), 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 collective bargaining, grievance filed by Wayland Teachers Association, pursuant to 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; and (c) approving the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: August 19, 2020 and September 11, 2020. The School Committee will pass over the August 8, 2020 minutes.

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

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	

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10. **Adjournment from Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 9:08 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 Comments
3. Accounts Payables Warrants
4. Minutes of August 19, 2020
5. School Physician Job Description
6. Resume for Dr. Ellen Mahoney
7. 2020 Student Activity Accounts
8. Apple MacBook 2020 Lease Quotes
9. FY21 Budget Summary & Status
10. FY21 Transportation Financial Summary
11. Decision Criteria for Opening/Reopening Schools
12. FDK Tuition FY20-21
13. FDK Tuition FY20-21 at \$2,300 Spreadsheet
14. FDK Tuition FY20-21 Other Scenarios
15. Tri-M Trunk or Treat 2020 Proposal
16. Ventilation and School Cleaning Update Spreadsheet
17. Executive Session Motion