

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – March 16, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 5:30 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

*Present:*

Chris Ryan, Chair  
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair (arrived at 5:36 p.m.)  
Jeanne Downs  
Jessica Polizzotti  
Kim Reichelt

*Also present:*

Dr. Omar Easy  
Superintendent

Parry Graham  
Assistant Superintendent

Ellen Whittemore  
Director of Finance & Operations

*Also:*

Michelle Crowell, Director of Teaching, Learning, Assessment & EL

Chair Chris Ryan convened the regular session at 5:32 p.m. The meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

**1. Public Comment:**

Craig Gruber, 108 Sears Road, celebrated that Boston Magazine ranked Wayland High School #2 of all high schools in the Commonwealth saying that it reflects the educational excellence in Wayland based on years of effort and continued hard work and a common-sense approach by our excellent teachers and administrators who do their best for our children. Mr. Gruber believes that some of the changes made this year have contributed to an “increasingly polarized and caustic environment.” He asks what we are trying to fix if our educational approach is working. Mr. Gruber believes that the School Committee must do a better job to understand and engage in its responsibility to appropriately supervise employees and provide direction and policy guidance.

Chris Ryan read a public comment from Alexia Obar in which she referred to a Facebook post that spoke of a meeting between WTA members and the School Committee. She asked for transparency in this regard by posting these meetings, as only one point of view is apparent on Facebook.

Ellen Grieco, Mellen Lane, spoke on her own behalf, that she has received some phone calls from Wayland residents for whom she has a lot of respect about concerns expressed by teachers and families regarding issues publicized on social media about the schools. Although the School Committee has not discussed this, she stated that the School Committee has listened to and heard the concerns, have read the emails, appreciate the public comments, and the concerns expressed on social media. The School Committee is doing its best to resolve the issues concerning the schools.

Jeanne Downs, Concord Road, as the Middle School liaison thanked the teachers and students of the Middle School for the opportunity to see a lot of the goings on in the school. She spoke about the meeting held by one sixth grade cluster in which they were doing PIE day activities.

**2. Superintendent Update:**

(a) Presentation regarding iReady Mid-Year Diagnostic and English Learners Update:

Michelle Crowell, Director of Teaching, Learning, Assessment and EL, provided the School Committee with updates on the iReady mid-year diagnostic and English Learners.

The mid-year iReady Math diagnostic was administered in January for Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 5 and another is scheduled for May. However, the first Math diagnostic was given in October for Grades 1 to 5 only. Michelle cited the data for 197 Kindergarten students which showed that 99 students tested at mid or above grade level, 36 emerged early on grade level, and 62 scored one grade level below. Michelle explained the data, adding that when

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the May test is administered, it is hopeful that there will be some growth for some of the students, as an impressive 68% of the students scored on grade level.

Ms. Crowell reviewed the district overall data for the fall vs. the winter diagnostic. Grade level movement improved in the winter diagnostic. Placement changes shows significant growth. The data is determined by a combination of Tier 1 supports that the teachers provide and this program that provides some of those prerequisite skills. The standard of what students are expected to know is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework. A discussion ensued in this regard.

Ms. Crowell reviewed the district's overall growth for which the expectation is about 50 percent. In January, the district's growth was at 64% which was above the recommended growth. In addition, grade levels 1 to 5 were all above 50% with a range of 61% to 73% as shown on the slide provided. Stretch growth in students' scale scores is defined as growth recommended to put students who are below grade level on a path towards proficiency and students on grade level on a path to advanced proficiency. Ms. Crowell explained the data and answered questions from the School Committee.

iReady meets the needs of all learners, not just those who are at risk, and is customized to students' abilities. In addition, teachers can assign lessons to students. It is also a platform whereby students can log in to a lesson that is customized. The hope is that the lessons target those prerequisite skills that kids are struggling with. Ms. Crowell described the contents of a parent report which is shared at parent/teacher conferences.

### *English Learner Update:*

As reported to DESE on March 1, there are 87 K-12 English learner students. Twenty-five languages are represented in the program. Access testing is done from January 6 to March 4 as determined by the State. The test determines a child's continued eligibility in the program and it assesses the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Ms. Crowell introduced the new English Learner newsletter, as it highlights students and the schools. Volume 1 was released in November and Volume 2 in March.

There was a focus on the current Progress Reports that are sent out to families and is required by the State to send to families at least twice a year. During team meetings, the goal was to align the current tool and align it with the four domains. It was revamped to reflect the standards for English proficiency. This was done for grades 1 to 5. Ms. Crowell explained further. Reports are also sent home in the native language translated. Finally, there are six EL teachers in the district.

### (b) COVID-19 Update:

Parry reported on the trend of positive cases during the past two weeks during which there were 26 student cases and 2 staff cases. However, from February 3 to 16, there were 48 student cases and 5 staff cases and from February 17 to March 2, Claypit Hill had 10 student cases with a drop in cases in other schools. He added that the virus shows that the trend is to move through households and reported other positive case results, but Parry is unsure if they come from home tests as well. Dr. Easy reported that the State has not committed to fund pool testing beyond late April. A discussion ensued in this regard, including school funding of pool testing.

For about two years as a result of COVID, students were dismissed earlier than the normal dismissal times. Dr. Easy will let families know that dismissal times will now be extended to the regular time beginning March 28.

Ellen Whittemore reported on the ridership around the Spanish Immersion routes and bus capacity on the current elementary buses, as there is a need for a third bus given the length of the rides. There will be a test run tomorrow morning and Friday morning. First Student will be installing a GPS system on the buses making it easier for families to track the whereabouts of buses in the morning and afternoon. Information will go out to families within the next few days. Kim added that the daylight savings time legislation should be considered moving forward.

Dr. Easy announced that he met with the WTA E-Board members last week during which the meeting was productive, transparent, and the first steps in rebuilding trust.

### (c) Special Education Update:

Dr. Easy met with the SEPAC group recently at which he answered their questions about special education. The

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Extended School Year (ESY) programming will begin on June 27, some programming will be 3 weeks and some will be 5 weeks, at which time extra services will be provided. Dr. Easy is going to hire a special education consultant who will attend IEP and evaluation meetings.

Parry reported on the Kindergarten registration and the Spanish Immersion Program. The Spanish Immersion blind lottery will be the morning of March 28, and the Statements of Interest are due by the evening of March 25. He announced that if families did not attend the informational night, families should reach out to the Loker Principal, Brian Jones, to learn about the program. A second informational night could be held. When the lottery is completed, a K-3 waitlist will be maintained. Dr. Easy reported that currently there are 140 kindergarten registrations, but there could be more coming. The list is compiled from the town census and Child Find, and he asked families to notify the school department if they are new to Wayland

### 3. **Administrative Matters:**

#### (a) Review of Open Meeting Law Determinations:

The Wellesley Board of Selectmen was found in violation because an agenda item was not sufficiently specific; Kim explained. Also, the Lanesborough Town Administrator Search Committee violated the Open Meeting Law when some of the members did not complete the OML certifications to serve on the search committee. In addition, this search committee was not in violation for some social media posts. The Attorney General found that the group to which it was posted was so large that the post was directed to the public, not the governing body, and that there was no ensuing deliberation. Committees were warned to be cautious when using social media.

#### (b) Discuss Preparation for Annual Town Meeting (May 14 & 15, 2022)

Chris Ryan will write a statement for the Town Meeting and will bring it to a future meeting for the School Committee's input.

### 4. **Financial Matters:**

#### (a) PMBC Update:

- Loker Roof Project

Jeanne reported on the recent PMBC meeting regarding the Loker roof project. The PMBC voted a change order in the amount of \$768,000 to change the rooftop units to two electric heat pumps from natural gas heat pumps as a result of the town's Climate Change Action Plan. The voted funding appropriation was higher than what was the actual cost/appropriation. The net cost for the rooftop units is about \$425,000. Jeanne explained.

Dr. Easy reported that the Loker School could possibly be the second emergency shelter in Wayland given that it will have solar power. He also reminded the School Committee about possibly closing the Claypit Hill elementary playground for construction. Ellen Grieco asked for a facilities update at a future meeting.

#### (b) Discussion of Logistics for Budget Hearing:

Chris Ryan will present the FY23 budget for a final time during the public Budget Hearing at one of the April meetings.

### 5. **Consent Agenda:**

#### (a) Accounts Payables Warrant:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated March 16, 2022, in the amount of \$556,827.20.

#### (b) Approval of Minutes: February 16, 2022

Jeanne pointed out one amendment to the minutes.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda with the amendment to the minutes as described by Jeanne Downs.

### 6. **Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

None.

### 7. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 6:55 p.m. for the purposes of a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining

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with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), 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 with Wayland Educational Secretaries Association (WESA), 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; (c) discussing strategy with respect to negotiations with non-union personnel as listed on the agenda, 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; (d) reviewing executive session minutes for possible declassification as listed on the agenda: February 24, 2021, March 10, 2021, March 17, 2021, March 24, 2021, March 31, 2021, April 7, 2021, April 14, 2021, April 28, 2021, May 5, 2021, and May 12, 2021; and (e) approving the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: February 16, 2022. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

The School Committee will be joined by Dr. Omar Easy, 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.

8. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Omar Easy, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

**Observers:**

Craig Gruber, 108 Sears Road  
Stan Wohlfarth, 29 Woodland Road

**Corresponding Documentation:**

1. Agenda
2. Public Comment & Statements for the Record
3. Accounts Payables Warrant
4. February 16, 2022 Minutes
5. Executive Session Motion