

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 25, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, May 25, 2022, at 5:30 P.M.

Present:

Chris Ryan, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair (arrived at 5:35 p.m.)
Jeanne Downs
Erin Gibbons
Jessica Polizzotti

Also present:

Dr. Omar Easy
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

1. **Welcome & Call to Order:**

Chair Chris Ryan convened the regular session at 5:34 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being recorded by WayCAM. Chris welcomed the newly elected School Committee member Erin Gibbons. The Chair explained that masks are not being worn, as they are not mandatory at public meetings.

2. **Public Comment:**

Craig Gruber, Sears Road, commented on the potential candidate for the Director of Special Education, adding that since this person has expressed a desire to be a Superintendent, he should not be considered as Wayland needs someone who will be here for a while. He asked the School Committee to declare a failed search in order to find the best hire for the town. Mr. Gruber expressed his concerns that Dr. Harvey is a principal finalist in another town, as he is for other potential staff exits.

Chris Ryan read a public comment from Peter Curran, a visual arts teacher at the Middle School. Mr. Curran is in support of adding Lunar New Year to the school calendar, as it is globally celebrated holiday. Revising the school calendar provides an opportunity to reflect on the schools' values and to correct a historical wrong, as the acknowledgment of the AAPI community has been ignored. (see email).

Jeanne commented that she attended the Wayland Music Festival in the Wayland Town Center last Saturday which came to fruition in 2019 when several middle school students brought forth a Town Meeting article, with the help of the former Superintendent, to hold an annual Music Festival in the Town.

The School Committee thanked Parry Graham and Melissa Ricci for the wonderful Staff Recognition Program.

3. **Special Matter:**

(a) Conduct School Choice Hearing and Vote to Adopt a Resolution to Participate or Withdraw from School Choice for the 2022-2023 School Year:

Chris Ryan opened the Public Hearing on School Choice at 5:45 p.m. and announced that the School Committee conducts this hearing each year prior to June 1 after a preliminary discussion at a prior meeting. The School Committee has made the decision in past years not to participate in School Choice.

The following resolution was read by the Chair.

Effective September 1994, every city, town, or regional school district is required to enroll non-resident students under the choice program, unless the school committee votes prior to June 1 not to participate. The section of the law states in part, "...this obligation to enroll non-resident students shall not apply to a district for a school year in which its school committee, prior to June 1, after a public hearing, adopts a resolution withdrawing from said obligation, for the school year beginning the following September. Any such resolution with said reasons shall be filed with the Department of Education, provided, however, that said department shall have no Power to review any such decision by a school committee..."

There were no public comments regarding School Choice.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – May 25, 2022

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, and seconded by Ellen Greico, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following resolution as read by Jeanne Downs.

Resolution on School Choice

Whereas the Education Reform Act of 1993 requires the enrollment of non-resident students under the School Choice provision unless the Committee votes by June 1 not to participate, and

Whereas the School Choice provision takes money away from the sending district and awards it to the receiving district, and

Whereas Wayland's per pupil expenditure is greater than the maximum allowable reimbursement, which means Wayland taxpayers would subsidize each choice student, and

Whereas once Wayland accepts a pupil, it must keep the pupil through graduation even though Wayland's demographic situation might change considerably, and

Whereas it is possible that a number of students could return to their sending districts or otherwise leave Wayland, thus creating a potential income loss, now hereby be it

Resolved that the Wayland School Committee respectfully declines to participate in the choice program with the provision that should surrounding school districts subsequently and prior to June 1 decide to accept the provisions of School Choice, the Wayland School Committee reserves the right to do likewise in order to protect its fiduciary interest in this matter.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 5:50 p.m.

4. **Superintendent Update:**

- (a) Continued Discussion and Possible Vote regarding Lunar New Year and Adding It to the School Calendar:
Dr. Easy welcomed Erin Gibbons as a member of the School Committee.

The School Committee reviewed the spreadsheet indicating holidays that will be observed in 2022-2023 Wayland, including those holidays not indicated on the school calendar. Dr. Easy pointed out the days that are "no school" days in observance of Federal, religious and cultural holidays. Lunar New Year will be observed on Sunday, January 22, 2023 and will not affect the school calendar for 2022-2023. Other districts have been researched in this regard.

A discussion ensued about adding religious and cultural holidays to the school calendar. It was suggested that the policy should be revisited to be in line with the calendar, as well as looking at the exam schedules, and to seek the input of the WHS School Council.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to add this list of holidays and observances to the 2022-2023 calendar and going forward with the edits and revisions as discussed.

Given that Lunar New Year falls on the weekend in 2023 and 2024, it will not affect the school calendars. Concerns were expressed that Duwali is another major cultural holiday. Dr. Easy noted that other districts do celebrate Duwali and it is a "no school" day and could be revisited going forward.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to add Lunar New Year to the school calendar.

- (b) Approval of Fundraising for the SADD Trip:
More information was requested for the next meeting.
- (c) Discussion regarding the August Administrative Retreat to Include a School Committee/Superintendent Afternoon Retreat/Meeting:
Dr. Easy invited the School Committee to the Administrative Retreat on August 17 and 18 at which time the School Committee and he would participate in a workshop regarding norms and priorities for next year during the afternoon of August 17. The topic of the workshop will be discussed at a future meeting.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – May 25, 2022

(d) COVID-19 Update:

As cases are reported every Wednesday to the State, Parry's report is from the previous Thursday to the following Wednesday. From April 28 to May 4, there were 50 positive student cases and 13 staff cases. From May 5 to May 11, there were 161 positive student cases and 27 staff cases. From May 12 to 18, there were 113 positive student cases and 17 staff cases, and from May 19 to today there were 29 positive student cases, and 2 staff cases. Overall for those four weeks, there were 353 total student cases and 59 total staff cases.

The State announced today that there will be no state funding for pooled testing during this summer or next school year, nor will the CIC support the database going forward. However, at-home tests will be state-funded for the summer programs only.

Dr. Easy noted that when masks were mandated in the school buildings, the cases dropped significantly, and if the cases continue to decrease as a result of pooled testing, the mask mandate could be lifted next week. Chris Ryan added that the Select Board voted to release the COVID testing funds that were raised in 2020 which will be used for the Extended School Year Program. The School Committee agreed to move forward in this regard.

5. Administrative Matters:

(a) Discussion of Hiring Process and Timeline for Director of Finance & Operations:

The School Committee discussed its role in terms of the hiring process for the Director of Finance and Operations as defined in Policy GCF. Dr. Easy noted that the policy does not state that the School Committee would interview the finalist. The School Committee agreed to proceed with the interview screening process by a Committee put together by Dr. Easy, and the finalist(s) would then be interviewed by the School Committee which is the process followed in the past. At Dr. Easy's recommendation, Jeanne will serve on the screening committee, and at the suggestion of the School Committee it should include a town staff member, such as the Finance Director, and one school principal. The interview timeline was discussed with a final interview by the School Committee on or before June 8.

Policy GCF was reviewed and discussed and will be brought back to the Policy Subcommittee for revision.

(b) Discuss and Review Wayland School Committee Protocols:

The School Committee reviewed the School Committee protocols for the purposes of the new member Erin Gibbons. They include governing, representation and commitment, setting meeting agendas, conduct and behavior, discussing principles, communication, and collaboration with town officials. Chris read the protocols in more detail. Jeanne stressed the importance of teamwork even when there is a split vote, and communication which is typically handled by the Chair. Chris reminded the members about posting on social media, and since the protocols are not updated around social media posts, they will be reviewed during the summer.

(c) Continued Discussion of Superintendent Evaluation, Including Logistics and Timing:

Jeanne noted the changes for the evaluation timeline. On June 14, the Committee will review the draft evaluation and will make its final edits on June 16. The Superintendent's evaluation will be complete by June 30, and the meetings will be held in the School Committee Room. A discussion ensued about how to incorporate the feedback from the interviews into the evaluation.

(d) Discuss and Possibly Vote on Revised 2021-2022 School Year Calendar:

This agenda item was passed over.

Dr. Easy asked the School Committee about the interviews conducted in regard to his evaluation.

(e) Discuss and Possible Vote to Approve the 2023-2024 School Year Calendar:

Lunar New Year will be added to the calendar, and there will be a Super Wednesday release on the last day of school for 2022-2023 as voted earlier in the year by the School Committee.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the school calendar for the 2023-2024 calendar.

A discussion ensued about the time of graduation on Friday, June 3.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 25, 2022

6. **Financial Matters:**

- (a) COVID Testing Fund Update:
This agenda item was passed over as it was addressed earlier in the meeting.

7. **Policy Matters:**

- (a) Discussion regarding Possible Revisions to the Following Policies:
- GCF – Professional Staff Hiring
 - JF – School Admissions

Earlier in the year, the Policy Subcommittee met with Dr. Easy about school registrations and Policy JF. The steps and process are on the school website. A discussion ensued in this regard including the content of the Landlord/Property Owner Affidavit. The Affidavit will be linked in the policy to the table on the website as well as the residency guidelines.

8. **Consent Agenda:**

- (a) Accounts Payables Warrant:
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated May 25, 2022, in the amount of \$465,925.65.

- (b) Approval of Minutes: April 27, 2022:
Jess Polizzotti made one correction regarding her address in the public comments

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

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

Ellen Grieco asked the School Committee to authorize Erin Gibbons to be appointed to the Policy Subcommittee to replace former member Kim Reichelt.

10. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 7:28 p.m. for the 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 a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; (b) discussing strategy with respect to litigation, 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; and (c) approving the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: April 27, 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	
Erin Gibbons	X	
Jess Polizzotti	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.

10. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:18 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	
Erin Gibbons	X	

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 25, 2022

Jess Polizzotti

X

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Omar Easy, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

See attached.

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. School Choice Resolution
3. Holiday Observances
4. School Committee Protocols
5. Superintendent Evaluation Timeline
6. School Calendar 2023-2024
7. Policy GCF – Professional Staff Hiring
8. Policy JF – School Admissions
9. WPS Residency Verification
10. Accounts Payables Warrant
11. Draft April 27, 2022 Minutes
12. Executive Session Motion