

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 26, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, May 26, 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 (arrived at 5:38 p.m.)
Jessica Polizzotti
Kim Reichelt
Chris Ryan

Also participating remotely:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Tricia O'Reilly, Happy Hollow Principal
Christie Harvey, Claypit Hill Principal
Brian Jones, Loker Principal
Kathleen Merrell, The Children's Way Director

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 5:33 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	
Jessica Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	

1. Public Comment:

Jeanne read a public comment from Sasha Gill in which she asked for the School Committee's consideration in discontinuing the daily COVID attestation form requirement given that COVID cases are decreasing. In addition, Ms. Gill asked if the School Committee could be more proactive in making decisions to eliminate some processes/protocols when their effect is no longer warranted in correlation with verified data, evolving state and CDC guidance, and the incredible importance of returning to normalcy in a responsible manner.

Ellen arrived at 5:38 p.m.

Jeanne praised Parry and his staff for organizing a wonderful staff recognition ceremony.

2. Special Matters:

(a) Discussion with The Children's Way Director and Elementary Principals regarding 2020-2021 Goals: Katy Merrell, TCW Director, and each elementary principal presented one district priority, Elevating Achievement, Deepening Social-Emotional Wellbeing, and Equity, and they described how everything has worked over the past year given the challenges and opportunities of the pandemic. The administrators reviewed what was done differently or more emphatically this year that produced effective outcomes and if there were any future implications. Some themes of the presented will be how teachers were able to get students to take responsibility and advocate for

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 26, 2021

themselves in ways necessary for student engagement, increasing the depth of the content covered, but reducing the amount of content covered, and staff collaboration support.

To elevate achievement, teachers/staff tried to make school “personal” for students in an effort to give them a sense of value and effectiveness and created a meaningful purpose by engaging in dynamic, small group guided instruction and experiences. In addition, technology was integrated in a way that students could interact and collaborate with each other while providing timely 1:1 support for students.

To deepen social-emotional well-being, teachers reassessed the assignment of homework in terms of quantity, and they reassessed schedules in terms of length of classes and the impact on students. Teachers also looked at assessments in order to make them more meaningful and how assessments can provide more effective teaching practices. Finally, teachers took a deeper dive into SEL instruction around healthy relationships whereby secondary students could become more engaged and vocal about many things they are experiencing, as well as looking at SEL for elementary students.

To provide equitable learning opportunities for all students, an Anti-Racist Statement was adopted by the School Committee and has informed decisions in the classrooms to provide the best learning environment. All students will be provided the same rigorous academic opportunities and necessary support system. The district continues to recruit a more diverse staff, provides ongoing professional development in this regard, and provides more community engagement related to equity and diversity in the schools.

The Children’s Way Director Katy Merrell presented a pre-school perspective whereby The Children’s Way is learner centered, relationship centered, and play-based. Starting with the child, he/she is involved in developing their learning and the connections which helps them to become life-long learners. Through play, children create who they are and who they will become. Katy explained how balanced environments are cultivated, how the child’s knowledge and spark can foster meaningful and engaging experiences at the right level of challenge, and how giving the child space and time allows them to process, consolidate, connect, organize and gain confidence. Finally, Katy described the collaboration this year across all agencies, such as the families, classroom teams, the BOH, facilities, the town, and the nurse liaison.

The Loker School principal Brian Jones presented the Elevating Achievement goal in the elementary schools. During the hybrid model, students experienced small-group instruction and access to help or encouragement almost immediately. This model also provided opportunities for teachers and administrators to collaborate on a regular basis, particularly in PLC’s. Relationships were strengthened in a way that will be beneficial moving forward. Despite the challenges, technology skills were developed and allowed children to share their knowledge in a variety of ways. Staff were also able to closely track language arts and math assessment data for all students.

The Claypit Hill principal Christie Harvey presented the Deepening Social-Emotional Wellness goal. There were beneficial options for participation in meetings, assemblies, and cultural enrichment. Teams, particularly 4th grade, were able to collaborate virtually. School meetings were also held virtually focusing on student engagement, strengthening communication and the principal’s read-alouds around race and culture. The elementary schools collaborated with McLean Hospital during which they held a workshop for parents to help them develop strategies in which to help their children overcome pandemic challenges. Community events, such as Virtual Family Math Night, STEM Night and Drive-in Bingo, were also held virtually. Morning meetings each day were held to connect students at home and in school during the hybrid model, and homework was minimized given the increased screen time which proved to be beneficial for students and families.

The last goal, presented by Happy Hollow principal Tricia O’Reilly, is all about the district’s focus on equity. There is benefit to using technology for access and equity and should be continued given the well-attended informational meetings for parents. The best way to provide students with access to information around issues of race and culture is through literature with the use of the community book stop libraries in each elementary school, a multi-cultural holiday calendar, and school-wide discussions on Black Lives Matter and Hate against Asian-Americans. The staff also collaborated with Caroline Han, Diversity and Equity Coordinator. She provided instructional resources and practices, as well as effective ways to have proactive discussions around racial inequalities in the classroom. Finally, progress of all students, particularly the needs and achievements of students of color, was tracked as a way to inform instruction moving forward.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 26, 2021

The School Committee asked questions about the increase in behavioral issues when students came back all-in, the possible reconsideration of class size guidelines, creating smaller groups for some subjects/activities, the balance of homework given without impeding progress, and block scheduling. Ellen suggested the creation of a committee to research class sizes based on the past year.

3. **COVID-19 Response:**

(a) Grades K-12 All-In Update:

Arthur reported that there have been no COVID cases during the past two weeks. It appears the vaccines are working and the district continues to keep safety protocols in place. Pooled testing will continue for the next three Fridays until June 11. There was a vaccination clinic at the high school today.

(b) Update of Class Size Implications:

Arthur updated the School Committee regarding elementary class sizes noting that enrollment is at or beneath class size limits except for one class at one elementary school. Kindergarten placement will go out by Friday or early next week, adding that the Loker Spanish Immersion class at 22 which is the maximum and there is a waiting list.

(c) Special Education Update:

Richard reported that staff is working on transitional spreadsheets for students who are going to another school. The Extended School Year Program starts June 28 and about four or five teaching assistants are still needed. Staff is also in the planning stages of next year's professional development.

(d) Transportation Update:

There were no updates.

(e) Remote and Hybrid Learning Progress Committee (RHLPC) and COVID Learning and Safety Team Update:

RHLPC:

Parry reported that the spring assessment data is in, and he will report on this data as well as the end-of-the-year data at a future meeting.

COVID Learning and Safety Team:

The team communicated with staff about cleaning protocols in the school buildings. The WTA COVID one-year agreement ends on June 30, and Parry added that the agreement would revert back to the current CBA. Finally, Jeanne noted that this group could be renamed moving forward.

(f) Surveillance Testing Update, including Current Enrollment in Program and Senior Activities:

Testing was reported on earlier in the meeting.

(g) Vaccine Update, including Wayland Clinics for Students and Possible Mandate by State/District:

Kim recommended a process in terms of learning about and deciding upon mandating vaccinations and if it is appropriate for staff to ask students if they are vaccinated in an effort to create small groups. It was recommended to seek legal counsel about Kim's latter suggestion, as well as the Board of Health opinion regarding vaccine mandates. Ellen noted that students who hold jobs or participate in out-of-school activities do require vaccinations. A discussion ensued about Kim's recommendations.

(h) Discussion of Summer Programming Plans:

The State came out with more information regarding summer grant opportunities, and the district will pursue additional money to fund the summer programs.

(i) Next Steps:

Next steps were discussed earlier.

4. **Administrative Matters:**

(a) Possible Vote to Approve Director of Finance and Operations Contract:

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve Ellen Whittemore's contract as discussed. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
 Regular Meeting – May 26, 2021

Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X
Jessica Polizzotti	X
Kim Reichelt	X
Chris Ryan	X

- (b) Superintendent Transition Update:
 Arthur has provided Dr. Easy with the critical information that he will need in his role. Dr. Easy is meeting with Central Office administrators and building principals, as well as facilities staff. Arthur's last day will be June 17 and Dr. Easy will begin on June 18.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the transition date of June 17 and Dr. Easy's start date will be June 18. 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	
Jessica Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	

- (c) Review of OML Determinations:
 Kim updated the School Committee on the recent Open Meeting Law determinations in other towns during the past week of which there were ten determinations.
- (d) Acknowledgement of School Committee Protocols:
 The School Committee reviewed its protocols in terms of its role and collaboration, as a new member, Jess Polizzotti, was elected at Town Meeting. Jeanne informed Jess about Conflict of Interest training that occurs every three years for all municipal staff and elected officials.
- (e) Discussion of Committee Liaison Roles:
 Chris Ryan will continue on the Finance Subcommittee as Chair, and Jeanne will attend until June 23 when new liaison roles will be appointed. Kathie Steinberg will continue on the working group for the school bus parking.
- (f) Discussion of Upcoming Meeting Schedule:
 The last two meetings of this fiscal year will be June 9 and 23.

5. **Financial Matters:**

- (a) Update on Capital Project Scheduling:
 The School Committee reviewed each summer building project by category based on who is overseeing the completion of each of the projects listed. Susan explained that the following projects may not be completed before school starts in the fall due to time constraints, delay in job specifications, and/or funding concerns: floor tiling at Loker and Middle Schools, Happy Hollow cooling unit, Happy Hollow and Loker chair lifts, and the fire alarm systems. Detail regarding funding shortfalls is not available at this time. The town's priorities as shared by the Town Administrator with Susan are the Loker roof and the town playgrounds. A discussion ensued about the concerns noted by Susan. Dr. Easy joined the conversation and shared his concerns.

Ellen moved that the School Committee resolve and consider that the first four projects listed on Susan's memo a priority to be completed this summer and that the School Committee ask the Town to engage in a bidding process with a timeline that will ensure that those projects are completed this summer.

A discussion followed the motion, and Richard asked that the playgrounds be added to the list as there are significant access issues. Susan noted that the equipment is ready to be installed, but the installation services could be delayed later than July. Ellen withdrew the motion.

- (b) Update on Bus Contract and Bus Parking:
 Susan reported that the summer solicitation for bids went out last Friday and quotes were due today. Assistant Town Manager John Bugbee will compile the quotes and a contract will be executed after reference checks. He will consult

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
 Regular Meeting – May 26, 2021

with Susan and provide the name of the vendor with the lowest bid. Mr. Bugbee is also managing the three-year bus bidding process and a final copy of the bid will be posted by the end of the week. The bid was advertised on Wednesday and he has scheduled an opening date for the bids of June 10. Susan added that although the bus routes are established, it is important to know where the busses will be parked, so that the starting and ending location is known. Then the routes can be completed and posted.

Susan updated the School Committee regarding the status of the pending bus RFP, adding that the town is not issuing an RFP. Jeanne commented that there is a working group regarding bus parking, and they will review all options available. Kim noted her concern that the working group's meetings may not be open to the public.

(c) Update on Minuteman Enrollment and Budget:

Given that questions came up at Town Meeting regarding the Minuteman enrollment and budget, Jeanne provided some information in this regard. Minuteman enrollment funding falls under the Town's budget, and in FY20 \$301,000 was spent on vocational education for the students of Wayland and transportation was shared with Weston. Nine students attended Minuteman in FY21, and since Weston had only one student, transportation is no longer shared with them. Since Wayland is a non-member district, one 8th grade student did not get in for FY22 and it's possible that only six upper-class students will attend. The cost per student is approximately \$32,000 not including transportation. Jeanne will look into what is involved to become a member district again.

(d) Possible Vote to Authorize Superintendent to Enter into Procurement Card Agreement:

The P-card is similar to a credit card but has a very low interest rate designed for school districts and purchased through the MASBO through the Bank of Montreal. School counsel did review the agreement. More than 50 school districts have a P-card, including some peer towns and several regional schools. It will be used for those vendors who do not accept purchase orders.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to authorize Dr. Easy to execute and sign the agreement for the Procurement Card Agreement. 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	
Jessica Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	

(e) Review of ESSER III Grant and Possible Use:

Dr. Easy presented an overview of the ESSER III Grant and a proposal of how he intends to use the funds in the amount of \$409,000. He consulted with Susan Bottan and the principals prior to drafting his proposal.

The purpose of the ESSER III Grant is to support the reopening and sustained safe operations of the schools to meet students' academic, social, emotional, and health needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address social emotional learning, Dr. Easy proposed adding a .5 FTE resulting in 2.0 FTEs whereby Loker and Happy Hollow Schools' will each have an additional guidance counselor/social worker. In addition, funds will be available to hire another assistant principal so that Loker and Happy Hollow will have a 1.0 assistant principal each.

Summer programming will address the instruction and learning that was lost since March 2020. There will be a math/reading program, a Spanish Immersion program, and elementary music enrichment. In addition, there will be a new Summer Bridge Program for high school and middle school students, a music enrichment program for middle school students, and a Special Education enrichment program for high school students.

To address teaching, learning and assessment, Dr. Easy recommends combining the .3 FTE EL position now held by the Claypit assistant principal and add a .7 FTE to create a new 1.0 FTE Teaching and Learning position in an effort to concentrate on data analysis, best practices on teaching and learning, and assessment of the literacy program. The person hired would also have knowledge about multi-tiered systems of support and the program iReady in an effort to benchmark assessments around Math/English Arts.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 26, 2021

Since the ESSER Grant is for one year only, the positions proposed could be included into the following year's budget. A discussion followed in terms of budget priorities for FY23, possible benefits packages, and training for teachers involved with new programs.

Dr. Easy left the meeting at 8:59 p.m.

6. Consent Agenda:

- (a) Approval of Minutes: April 28, 2021 and April 30 2021:
- (b) Approval and Designation of Technology Equipment as Surplus for Recycling:
- (c) Approval of Accounts Payables Warrant:
 - Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant dated May 26, 2021 in the amount of \$1,124,625.96

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda. 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	
Jessica Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	

8. Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:

None.

9. Executive Session:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Jessica Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter executive session at 9:00 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: May 5, 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	
Jessica Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	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.

10. Adjournment:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 9:42 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	
Jessica Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – May 26, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Downs, Chair
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Public Comments
3. School Committee Protocols
4. Status of Summer Capital Projects
5. Notice for Request for Quotes for Summer Bussing
6. Minutes of May 5, 2021 and May 19, 2021
7. Summer Recycle Memo
8. Accounts Payables Warrant
9. Executive Session Motion