

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – October 12, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at Wayland High School.

Present:

Chris Ryan, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
Jeanne Downs
Erin Gibbons
Jessica Polizzotti

Also present:

Dr. Omar Easy
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Tom Lafleur
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Jen Socha, Reading Specialist
Meghan Sullivan, Special Education Teacher
Abigail Dressler, Director, The Children's Way

1. Welcome & Call to Order:

Chair Chris Ryan convened the regular session at 6:03 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being recorded by WayCAM. Jess Polizzotti commented that the Middle School Back-to-School Night for 7th and 8th grades was a wonderful evening.

2. Public Comment:

Andrea Bowditch, White Pine Hill Road, is a liaison for AFS Intercultural Programs and has also hosted international "bonus" daughters in the past who have all attended Wayland High School over the past fifteen years. She described this intercultural program, adding that other school districts also host students in partnership with AFS. Ms. Bowditch thanked Dr. Easy for approving a German student for this school year even though the semester has begun. AFS and Ms. Bowditch will support the schools and host family throughout the year.

Dr. Easy confirmed that a German student will join the school community, adding that it will be a great experience for everyone.

3. Superintendent Update:

3.1 Student Representative Update – Madeline O'Leary:

Madeline is a senior and will be attending School Committee meetings monthly representing all WHS students. Her goal in this role is to bring ideas to the Committee and share information with the hopes of opening the lines of communication. She attends several advisories to get student feedback around positive experiences, as well as students' concerns. Madeline shared that the freshmen transition was very strong given that there was a Club Fair about two weeks for the students to gather information and sign up for extra-curricular opportunities. There is also a great deal of engagement and school spirit at sporting events. The sophomore semi-formal dance is approaching and students are looking forward to this event.

Concerns stem around the parking passes and the yearly fee is \$220, but will decrease with each academic quarter. Students feel that this fee is a hardship for some families and there is a lack of communication about the use of the fees. Jeanne Downs noted that the parking fees are specifically used for expenses, according to the laws, related to the maintenance of parking lots, such as snow plowing. A discussion ensued in this regard. Dr. Easy and Tom Lafleur will research the use of the parking pass fees.

3.2 Presentation of Language-Based Program:

Jen Socha (Reading Specialist) and Meghan Sullivan (Special Education Teacher) presented the Language-

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Based Classroom (LBC) for ten students in Grades 2, 3, and 4 at Claypit Hill Elementary School which was established in early fall. Other team members include Meridith Heckler (Speech & Language Pathologist, Adrienne Dopfel (Teaching Assistant) and Donna Palladino who is Orton Gilliam certified. A language-based disability is a broad term, as the severity of difficulties varies from student to student and have average to above average cognitive abilities. It is also a neurological based disability that affects comprehension and expressive language.

Many areas can be impacted, such as reading, writing, listening, speaking and oral comprehension. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a language-based disability is considered a specific learning disability. More detail was presented in this regard. There may be additional disorders, such as attention-deficit hyperactivity, central-auditory processing, or anxiety. Wayland's Mission Statement directly links to the LBC as noted in the presentation, and the program is partnered with the Landmark School. The expectation is that the Language-Based Program will grow and eventually expand to the Middle and High Schools in the future.

Student profiles were presented in terms of strengths in problem-solving and reasoning skills. Students can excel when given opportunities for hands-on and multi-sensory experiences. However, many students have specific learning challenges, such as cognitive, language and academic challenges. Students must meet a certain set of criteria to be accepted in the LBC which is determined by a team made up of the Superintendent, Director of Special Education, Team Leader, LBC teachers, and a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) and/or Psychologist. The admissions process was explained further, as well as a day in the life of the students in the LBC around multi-sensory instruction with a focus on reading, writing, study skills and executive functioning skills for about 90 minutes per day. Ms. Socha noted that math, science, and social studies are offered in the general education classroom the remainder of the day.

Teachers have received specialized instruction in research-based reading programs, such as The Orton-Gillingham Approach, Wilson Reading System, and others. The students are accommodated in four categories in both the LBC and the General Education classroom in order to meet the four domains of language: time, materials, metacognition, and written language. Ms. Sullivan described further. A chart was displayed showing what a student's services may look like on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) with additional explanation.

A discussion ensued, as questions were asked by the School Committee. Dr. Easy commented on the goals and potential plans for the program.

3.3 Introduction of The Children's Way Director and New Staff, including a Program Presentation:

Abigail Dressler introduced the newest staff members at TCW, Sheyda Flisher, Teacher, and Lucy Johnson, Teaching Assistant. There are five classrooms that are staffed with DESE certified teachers who have their Masters in Special Education. In addition, there is an Early Childhood Coordinator, many specialists who provide services to the students, teaching assistants, and an administrative assistant.

There are 63 students, 19 of whom are on IEP's and 21 speak two or more languages. As an integrated school district, TCW has a responsibility to educate, identify and support children with special needs (Child Find), to act as a resource to area preschools, daycares, and families, to develop family partnerships, to continue to develop an inclusive school, and to foster a love for learning.

Fundations was implemented this year at TCW, and all teachers were trained in this regard. Play-based learning has always been TCW's focus, and in 2021 DESE released its position paper on the importance of play for students in Pre-K to Grade 3. Ms. Dressler added that play-based learning must be student led and inquiry driven. Ms. Dressler addressed a question regarding Fundations.

3.4 Introduction of New METCO Director:

Dr. Easy introduced and welcomed Ms. La Toya Rivers as the METCO Director for the Wayland Public Schools. Ms. Rivers is a METCO alumni and has an extensive background in education.

4. Administrative Matters:

4.1 Discussion regarding the Boston Parent Meeting Scheduled for November 9:

The School Committee and Dr. Easy discussed the agenda for the Boston parent meeting. It will include presentations by the High School and Middle School and will include a Q & A followed by a regular School Committee meeting. Ms. Rivers will retrieve questions from parents well in advance of the meeting.

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4.2 Continued Discussion regarding the School Committee Retreat:
The School Committee retreat was confirmed to be held on Tuesday, October 25, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The location is yet to be determined.

4.3 Discuss Draft Capital Budget Going to Finance Subcommittee for Discussion with Superintendent and Director of Business Prior to Regular School Committee Meeting:
Chris reviewed the capital budget process which will begin at the Finance Subcommittee meeting in discussions with Dr. Easy and Tom Lafleur. The School Committee reviewed the capital budget documents from the Town, as the approved capital budget is due by October 28.

4.4 Discuss School Committee Upcoming Meeting Schedule and Some of the Main Meeting Topics:
After some discussion, the School Committee will review and approve the FY24 capital budget on October 26 and the meeting will begin at 5:00 p.m. given the High School and Middle School Masquerade Concert is the same evening.

Chris reviewed the agenda topics from the present date to December 14. The enrollment update will be presented at the next meeting.

5. **Finance Subcommittee Update:**

5.1 Continued Discussion of the FY24 Budget Process:
Dr. Easy will report to the School Committee on October 26 about his discussions with the Interim Town Manager regarding the FY24 budget process, including upcoming areas to be included in the budget.

6. **Policy Subcommittee Update:**

6.1 Discuss and Possible Vote on Policy GBEB (Staff Conduct):
Parry will submit proposed language changes for Policy GBEB to school counsel before the School Committee can approve the amended policy.

6.2 Discuss Committee Input on Policies for Future Review:
Committee members were asked to bring policies that they would like the Policy Subcommittee to review.

7. **Consent Agenda:**

7.1 Accounts Payables Warrant:
• Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated October 12, 2022, in the amount of \$636,803.24

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Erin Gibbons, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda.

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

Dr. Easy mentioned the continued challenge with PFAS still present in the town water resulting in the school budget picking up the cost of bottled water being provided in the school buildings. A discussion ensued about this ongoing cost.

There is also a concern about the FY23 school budget absorbing the cost of nurses in the schools which, in the past, was covered by the town. A discussion ensued about preparing for the FY24 budget and the impact to the budget.

9. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 7:27 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; and (b) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the 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. 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	

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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 Erin Gibbons, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:23 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	
Jess Polizzotti	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Omar Easy, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. FY23 Student Activity Accounts
4. The Education Cooperative Request to Increase Capital Reserve Account Limit
5. Draft School Committee Retreat Agenda
6. Claypit Hill Surplus List
7. WHS List of Surplus Books
8. WMS List of Surplus Furniture
9. Accounts Payables Warrants
10. Minutes of September 7, 2022
11. Executive Session Motion