

IN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Worcester, Massachusetts  
Thursday, December 15, 2016  
Agenda #31

The School Committee of the Worcester Public Schools met in Open Session at 6:05 p.m. in the Council Chamber at City Hall on Thursday, December 15, 2016.

There were present at the Call to Order:

Ms. Colorio, Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough, Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell and Mayor Petty

There was absent: Miss Biancheria

It was moved to recess to Executive Session:

Executive Session

- 1. gb #6-418 - Administration  
(December 7, 2016)

Finding that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining and litigation position of the School Committee, the committee votes to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to litigation and strategy for collective bargaining for a denial of access.

Communication and  
Petition/PCBs/  
Burncoat High and  
Doherty Memorial  
High schools

c&p #6-9

To consider a communication from a citizen relative to a request that the School Committee drop its Court Appeal and allow for testing for PCBs at Burncoat High and Doherty Memorial High schools.

PCBs/  
Burncoat High and  
Doherty Memorial  
High schools

gb #6-332

Request that the Administration drop the appeal and allow PCB testing at Burncoat High School and Doherty Memorial High School this school year and do what is necessary to correct the problem.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for Teachers and Unit B, if an open

meeting may have a detrimental effect on the collective bargaining position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

Finding that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining and litigation position of the School Committee, the committee votes to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to litigation. - Lyons vs. The Worcester Public Schools, et al.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion:	Ms. Colorio, Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough, Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell, Mayor Petty	6
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Against the motion:		0
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Absent:	Miss Biancheria	$\frac{1}{7}$
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The motion carried.

The School Committee recessed to Executive Session from 6:06 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

Miss Biancheria arrived at 6:20 p.m.

The School Committee reconvened in Open Session at 7:15 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was offered and the National Anthem was sung by the South High Sax Trio.

There were present at the second Call to Order:

Miss Biancheria, Ms. Colorio, Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough, Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell and Mayor Petty

APPROVAL OF RECORDS

Minutes/approval of

2. aor #6-27 - Clerk  
(December 7, 2016)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, December 1, 2016.

It was moved and voice voted to approve the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, December 1, 2016.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONStudent  
Representatives/  
input

3. gb #6-406 - Administration  
(December 5, 2016)

To consider input from the School Committee's student representatives.

It was moved and voice voted to file the item.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENTReport of the  
Superintendent/  
Pre-School  
Expansion Plan

4. ros #6-12 - Administration  
(December 7, 2016)

PRE-SCHOOL EXPANSION PLAN

Kim Davenport and Eve Gilmore from Edward Street Child Services presented the report regarding the Pre-School Expansion Plan.

Ms. Colorio made the following motion:

Request that the Administration seek copies of the new research from Kim Davenport regarding the future success of students who have received high quality early education.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

It was moved and voice voted to accept and file the item.

It was moved and voice voted to suspend rules to take up the following item:

5. gb #6-408 - Mr. Monfredo/Mr. Foley/Mr. O'Connell/  
Ms. Colorio/Mayor Petty  
(November 28, 2016)

Recognition/  
S.O.F.A./forward  
letters

Request that the Administration forward letters of congratulations to S.O.F.A (Save our Fine Arts) – Worcester Arts Magnet School, Burncoat Middle School, and Burncoat High School for the sponsorship of ("Fame", the Fine Arts Magnet Extravaganza) held in the Friel Memorial Auditorium at Burncoat Middle School and thank the students and staff who participated in this outstanding event.

It was moved and voice voted to forward letters.

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

6. The Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports met at 5:34 p.m. on Monday, December 5, 2016 in Room 410 at the Dr. John E. Durkin Administration Building.

gb #2-139 - Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Colorio  
(April 11, 2012)

Boston Debate  
League

To consider development of a partnership with the Boston Debate League to support academic debate teams in high schools in Worcester.

12-5-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

Mr. Crompton made an excellent presentation relative to the Model UN.

Mr. O'Connell made the following motions:

Request that the Administration develop proposals for a Debate Team, a Model Congress, a Model UN and other debating initiatives in each of the high schools.

Request that the Administration develop proposals for a Debate Team, a Model Congress, a Model UN and other debating initiatives in each of the interested middle schools.

Request that the Administration add the two documents that have been provided to us by Mr. Crompton entitled Model UN and Model UN: Definition and Rationale as backup information for this item.

Request that the item be held for further discussion in February.

On a voice vote, the motions were approved.

12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

gb #4-175 - Ms. Novick/Mr. Monfredo/Mr. Foley/Mr. O'Connell (May 28, 2014)

Later Secondary  
School Start  
Times/benefits and  
drawbacks

To consider the possible benefits and drawbacks of later secondary school start times on teaching and learning.

12-5-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

Mr. Monfredo made the following motions:

Request that the Administration establish an advisory committee to include school personnel, community representatives and experts in the field of student health to review options in connection with an earlier start time for secondary school students. The committee will be provided the backup information accumulated from the studies on this topic from 2000 to the present as well as any information provided to us by Professor Amy Wolfson.

Request that the Administration contact Professor Wolfson and ask her if she could provide an update as to any recommendations she would have including any studies she has conducted with the Worcester Public Schools as to a later start time and its impact on student attentiveness and student achievement. He further requested that the backup for the item be made available to the advisory committee without the section regarding the elimination of bus transportation for secondary school students.

Request that the Administration provide a report in May or June and, if that is not feasible, alert the School Committee of the problem.

Request that the advisory committee consider among the options available for the school system the possible establishment of one or two pilot secondary school programs for a later start time.

On a voice vote, the motions were approved.

#### 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

gb #6-23 - Mr. Foley/Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria/Miss McCullough (January 8, 2016)

Recess  
Sessions/Playworks/  
potential pilot program

Request that the Administration work with Fallon Health and other interested funders to explore the potential opportunity to implement a pilot program developed by Playworks in several elementary schools that train staff and volunteers to run recess sessions that include positive play, greater levels of exercise and better utilization of limited recreational space.

#### 12-5-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:

Request that the item be referred to the Administration to continue its search for funding and fielding an outside source. It was further requested that the Administration consider this topic in connection with the FY18 Budget deliberations.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

#### 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

## Mentoring Program

gb #6-293 - Mr. Monfredo/Mr. Foley/Ms. Colorio/Mr. O'Connell (August 22, 2016)

Request that the Administration review the Mentoring Program for principals in their first three years in the Worcester Public Schools.

12-5-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

FILE.

12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

Radiofrequency  
Electromagnetic  
Radiation

gb #6-308 - Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Colorio/Miss Biancheria (September 7, 2016)

To discuss the impact of radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation from wifi and cellular towers on students and staff in schools, potentially including neurologic impairment and malignancy, and to consider means of minimizing any such risk within the Worcester Public Schools by changes as to practice and policy.

12-5-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

Mr. Walton made a presentation with respect to the impact of radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation from wifi and cellular towers.

Ms. Doucette provided the following links to information regarding wireless and cell phone technologies:

- Harvard University's Law School Center for Ethics report, [Captured Agency: How the Federal Communications Industry is Dominated by the Industries it Presumably Regulates](#). This provides information on why our government has not informed the public that wireless and cell phone technologies are biologically hazardous.

- The U.S. National Toxicology Program study finding DNA damage, brain and heart tumors in 2016; more findings will be reported out in 2017. Please remember that although this is a cell phone study, cell phones and wi-fi all operate off of radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation in the microwave spectrum so the hazard applies to all wireless technology. Dr. Joel Moskowitz of U.C. Berkeley has included information in the link above to help separate fact from industry spin for those of us new to the conversation.
- The BioInitiative Report contains peer-reviewed studies that indicate evidence for damage to sperm and reproduction, children are more vulnerable, fetal and neonatal effects, effects on Autism (Autism Spectrum Conditions), Alzheimer's, electrohypersensitivity, blood-brain barrier opening, brain tumors, genotoxicity, neurotoxicity, childhood Leukemia, adult cancers, melatonin, and more. In mainstream media we generally hear only about cancer risks, which can take decades to develop during which time the industry makes great profits. The other shorter-term effects are seldom reported on and so the public is unaware.
- In this 16-minute lecture, Dr. Martin Pall explains what electromagnetic radiation is doing to our bodies and why it is causing illness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kQQyU8NHv8>.
- The World Health Organization list of classifications: This link shows the five categories. This link shows how they determine which agents to evaluate: "Agents are selected for review on the basis of two main criteria: (a) there is evidence of human exposure and (b) there is some evidence or suspicion of carcinogenicity." This link shows Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields are a Group 2B Possible Human Carcinogen. Feel free to sort by Group to

see what else is a 2B; I could understand Lead, Chloroform, Welding Fumes, BHA, Diesel Fuel, Engine Exhaust, Gasoline, HIV and HPV but there are many others. More research has come through since the 2B classification was made in 2011, and some of the scientists who served on the review committee are now asking that Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields be raised to a Group 1 Human Carcinogen.

Mr. Monfredo made the following motions:

Request that the Administration place on the WPS website the handout entitled Best Practices for Mobile Devices from the Ashland Public Schools leaving out the following bullet:

- ❖ Turn wifi on only when needed.

Request that Dr. Knorr be invited to a meeting in February.

On a voice vote, the motions were approved.

12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as amended.

Ms. Colorio made the following motion:

Request that the Administration develop its own Best Practices for Mobile Devices and discuss the pros and cons of this issue prior to posting anything on the website.

On a roll call of 4-3 (nays-Miss Biancheria, Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell), the motion was approved.

It was moved and voice voted to invite Dr. Knorr to a Standing Committee meeting in February.

gb #6-334 - Miss McCullough/Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria (September 26, 2016)

Request that the Administration consider the feasibility of establishing a citywide girl's ice hockey team.

Citywide Girls Ice  
Hockey Team/  
consider  
establishing

## 12-5-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

Miss McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the item be held for discussion in February for additional information from the Administration relative to the possibility of forming a co-op.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. Monfredo suggested that the Administration check with the local colleges and Michael Myers, Manager of the Worcester Railers, the new professional hockey team for possible equipment support for a citywide girls hockey team in the Worcester Public Schools.

## 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

7. The Standing Committee on Finance and Operations met at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, December 12, 2016 in Room 410 at the Dr. John E. Durkin Administration Building.

gb #5-157 - Ms. Novick/Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo/Miss Ramirez (May 27, 2015)

FY15 Capital Spending

Request administration update the School Committee regarding FY15 capital spending, including MSBA reimbursements.

## 12-12-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

FILE

## 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

gb #5-172 - Mr. Foley/Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick/Miss Biancheria (June 22, 2015)

FY16 Budget

To review the status of the FY16 Budget and make appropriate transfers as required.

## 12-12-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

It was moved and voice voted to approve the Account Summary Final Report and file the item.

## 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

School Committee/  
approve bills to be  
paid

gb #6-281 - Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Miss McCullough/Miss Biancheria (August 10, 2016)

To implement the provisions of the November 1995 letter of the Commissioner of Education, and the Advisory on School Governance which accompanied it, that "the school committee remains the body responsible for approving and transmitting school department expenditures to the municipal accountant for the drawing of warrants. The Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services has advised that all school department bills must be approved by the school committee. When the superintendent, or principal and superintendent, have statutory authority to incur expense, the Department of Revenue advises that the bills must be approved by them as well as by the committee."

## 12-12-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

The Administration researched its current practices to verify its adherence to current state laws and the City Charter and Ordinances. A legal opinion from City Solicitor David Moore summarized the legal authority within the City of Worcester for the approval of school department bills prior to payment. In summary, he stated that the November 1995 letter from the Commissioner of Education does not apply to Worcester since the School Department is one of the City's departments which falls under the rules and regulations of the City Charter.

Therefore, the Administration recommended no changes in the current process of payment of bills of the school department.

FILE.

## 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as amended.

Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:

Request that the item be referred together with the opinion of the City Solicitor to the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services for its advice as to what the obligations are as a School Committee under Massachusetts Law keeping in mind and taking into account any applicable or relevant provisions of the City Charter or Ordinances of the Council.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

gb #6-294 - Administration (August 22, 2016)

FY17 Budget

To review the status of the FY17 Budget and make appropriate transfers as required.

## 12-12-16 - STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION

The members discussed the status of Salary and Ordinary Maintenance accounts for the first quarter report and held the item.

## 12-15-16 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

PERSONNEL

8. It was moved and voice voted to file Personnel Items 6-51 and 6-52.

- 6-51 The Superintendent has APPROVED the RETIREMENT of the persons named below effective as shown:

Retirements

Noone, Barbara, Teacher, Elementary, Tatnuck Magnet School, effective November 30, 2016

- 6-52 The Superintendent has APPROVED the APPOINTMENT of the persons named below effective as shown:

Appointments

Beaudoin, Paul, Teacher, Music, Worcester East Middle School, Doc, Step 8, \$83,311 effective November 23, 2016. Licensed: Music All levels.

Blake, Tara, Teacher, Special Education, Goddard School of Science and Technology, BA, Step 2, \$47,522 plus alternative stipend \$4,506 effective December 5, 2016. Waiver in Severe Disabilities – all levels.

Collins, Eileen, Teacher, English as a Second Language, Systemwide, BA, Step 1, \$45,064 effective December 5, 2016. Licensed English as a Second Language Prek-6.

Kennedy, Amy, Teacher, Elementary, Tatnuck Magnet School, CAGS/2MA, Step 9, \$82,124 effective November 28, 2016. Licensed: Early Childhood with and without Disabilities Prek-3.

Maher, Stephanie, Teacher, Elementary, Elm Park Community School, BA, Step 1, \$45,064 + extended day stipend, effective November 28, 2016. Licensed: Elementary 1-6.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Salary Schedules/  
2 non-represented  
confidential  
principal clerks and  
2 non-represented  
confidential head  
clerks

- 9. gb #6-399.1 - Administration/Mr. O'Connell  
(December 7, 2016)

Response of the Administration to the request to provide the salary schedules for both the two non-represented confidential principal clerks and the two non-represented confidential head clerks to align with the represented 52 Week Administrative Secretaries.

It was moved to approve the item.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion: Miss Biancheria, Ms. Colorio  
Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough,  
Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell,  
Mayor Petty 7

Against the motion: 0  
7

The motion carried.

10. gb #6-407 - Administration  
(November 28, 2016)

To accept the following donations in the total amount of \$1,700 for the Goddard Scholars Academy:

\$500.00 from Susan & Seth Popinchalk  
\$500.00 from Steven & Clare Gentilucci  
\$700.00 from Elena & Frank Fehner

It was moved to approve the item.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion: Miss Biancheria, Ms. Colorio  
Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough,  
Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell,  
Mayor Petty 7

Against the motion:  $\frac{0}{7}$

The motion carried.

11. gb #6-409 Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Colorio  
(November 28, 2016)

School Improvement  
Plans

To establish a process for consultation by the Superintendent with the School Committee as to school improvement plans, as mandated by Chapter 255 of the Acts of 2016.

It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Student Achievements.

12. gb #6-410 - Miss Biancheria/Mr. O'Connell/  
Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Colorio  
(December 1, 2016)

Evaluation Process/  
principals

Request that the Administration provide the following information regarding the evaluations of principals:

- a description of the prior evaluation process indicating who was responsible for its execution and

- a description of a current evaluation process indicating who is responsible for its execution and include any changes that have been developed

Mayor Petty left the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Mr. O'Connell chaired the meeting from 9:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.

It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Administration for a report back on January 5, 2017.

School Building/  
address issues of  
older buildings

13. gb #6-411 - Miss Biancheria/Mr. O'Connell/  
Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Colorio  
(December 1, 2016)

Request that the Administration develop a process to address the issues of older school buildings to include examinations of:

- water systems
- foundations
- leaking roofs
- heating systems and
- wrapped pipes

It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Standing Committee on Finance and Operations.

Licenses/  
administrators and  
teachers

14. gb #6-412 - Ms. Colorio/Mr. O'Connell/  
Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria  
(December 5, 2016)

Request that the Administration renew the licenses of all administrators and teachers working in the Worcester Public Schools using the new data base tool from DESE.

It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Administration for a report back on January 19, 2017.

Ms. Colorio made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provide a list of all teachers and administrators, currently employed by the Worcester Public Schools, who are in violation of expired licenses including temporary, preliminary, initial and professional licenses and also provide recommendations as to ways to correct these violations.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

15. gb #6-413 - Ms. Colorio/Mr. O'Connell/  
Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria  
(December 5, 2016)

Rockdale Recovery  
School/robo call

Request that the Administration send out a robo call informing parents of the availability of an educational alternative, if needed, at the Rockdale Recovery School for students struggling with drugs and alcohol addiction.

- gb #6-414 - Ms. Colorio/Mr. O'Connell/  
Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria  
(December 5, 2016)

Worcester Opiate  
Educational Forum/  
robo call

Request that the Administration send a robo call informing parents of the Worcester Opiate Educational Forum, sponsored by the Worcester District Attorney's Opiate Educational Task Force, which will take place at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, January 9, 2017 at Worcester Technical High School.

(These items were considered together.)

Superintendent Binienda suggested taking gb #6-413 and gb #6-414 together and include information about the Rockdale School in the Worcester Opiate Educational Forum.

Mayor Petty returned to the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

It was moved and voice voted to refer the items to the Administration.

16. gb #6-415 - Administration  
(December 7, 2016)

Prior Year Contractual  
Reimbursement/bus  
driver's physical and  
certificate

To approve payment of a prior year contractual reimbursement in the amount of \$125.00 for a bus driver's physical and certificate.

It was moved to approve the item.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion:	Miss Biancheria, Ms. Colorio Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough, Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell, Mayor Petty	7
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Against the motion:		$\frac{0}{7}$
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The motion carried.

Electricity/authorize Superintendent to enter into contracts up to twenty years for the purchase of

- 17. gb #6-416 - Administration  
(December 7, 2016)

To authorize the Superintendent to enter into contracts of up to twenty years for the purchase of electricity through net metering energy credits.

It was moved to approve the item.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion:	Miss Biancheria, Ms. Colorio Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough, Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell, Mayor Petty	7
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Against the motion:		$\frac{0}{7}$
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The motion carried.

Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:

Request that the Administration keep the School Committee updated as it negotiates that contract with appropriate information as to what is being done.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Prior Year Invoices/  
Special Education  
Transportation/  
\$74,967.76

- 18. gb #6-417 - Administration  
(December 7, 2016)

To approve prior year invoices totaling \$74,967.76 for special education transportation services.

It was moved to approve the item.