

IN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Worcester, Massachusetts
Thursday, September 19, 2019
Agenda #16

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, September 19, 2019.

There were present at the Call to Order:

Miss Biancheria, Mr. Comparetto, Mr. Foley,
Miss McCullough and Mr. Monfredo

There were absent: Mr. O'Connell and Mayor Petty

It was moved to recess to Executive Session to discuss:

- Executive Session 1. gb #9-311 - (Administration)
(September 11, 2019)

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining regarding Grievance #18/19-10.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for Plumbers and Steamfitters, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the collective bargaining position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for Tradesmen, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the collective bargaining position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigation position of the School Committee and the chair so declares - Educational Association of Worcester and Worcester School Committee, Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations, Case No. CAS-19-7323.

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and the chair so declares - Worcester School Committee v. International Union of Public Employees, Tradesmen, Local - 135 and International Union of Public Employees, Plumbers and Steamfitters, Local - 125, Worcester Superior Court Civil Action No. 1885CV01520

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion: Miss Biancheria, Mr. Comparetto, Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough, Mr. Monfredo,	5
Absent: Mr. O'Connell Mayor Petty	2
Against the motion:	$\frac{0}{7}$

The motion carried.

Mayor Petty arrived at 6:22 p.m.

Mr. O'Connell arrived at 6:50 p.m.

The School Committee recessed to Executive Session from 6:07 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The School Committee reconvened in Open Session at 7:35 p.m.

The invocation was given by Reverend Robert Jackson from First Congregational Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was offered and the Burncoat High School's Quadrivium sang the National Anthem.

2. APPROVAL OF RECORDS

aor #9-17 - Clerk
(September 11, 2019)

Minutes/approval of
as amended

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, September 5, 2019.

On a voice vote, the minutes of the School Committee were approved as amended.

It was moved to delete the vote on item gb #9-280 on page 266 of the Minutes and vote by roll call on item gb #9-297 on the current agenda to correct the amount of the grant from \$28,683.00 to \$200,000.

Grant/
Comprehensive
School Health
Services

3. gb #9-297 - Administration
(September 4, 2019)

To accept the Comprehensive School Health Services (CSHS) Grant in the amount of \$200,000.00.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

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

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

The motion carried.

4. IMMEDIATE ACTION

Recognition/
Burncoat High
School's
Quadrivium

gb #9-151.1 - Administration/Miss McCullough/
Miss Biancheria/Mr. Foley/
Mr. Monfredo/Mr. O'Connell/
Mayor Petty
(September 5, 2019)

To recognize Burncoat High School's Quadrivium for winning the WEC'Appella contest.

Mayor Petty and Superintendent Binienda presented a certificate of recognition to the Burncoat High School's Quadrivium.

Recognition/
Ciara McDade

gb #9-210.1 - Administration/Administration
(September 9, 2019)

To recognize Ciara McDade, a student at Worcester Technical High School, who performed CPR on her mother which saved her life.

Mayor Petty and Superintendent Binienda presented a certificate of recognition to Ciara McDade.

gb #9-253.1 - Administration/Mr. O'Connell/
Miss Biancheria/Mr. Monfredo/
Mayor Petty
(August 16, 2019) Recognition/set date

To recognize Sarah Kyriazis, Manager of Instructional Technology and Digital Learning, on her selection as recipient of the 2019 Administrator Award from MassCUE (Massachusetts Computer Using Educators).

It was moved and voice voted to hold the item for the School Committee meeting on Thursday, October 3, 2019.

gb #9-259.1 - Administration/Mr. Monfredo/
Miss Biancheria/Mr. Foley/
Miss McCullough/Mr. O'Connell/
Mayor Petty
(September 9, 2019) Recognition/set date

To recognize the Worcester Bravehearts as Champions of the Future Collegiate Baseball League and for its community service activities in the Worcester Public Schools and in the community.

It was moved and voice voted to hold the item for the School Committee meeting on Thursday, October 3, 2019.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

5. ROS #9-12 - Administration
(September 11, 2019) Report of the Superintendent/held

OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

It was moved and voice voted to hold the item for the School Committee meeting on Thursday, October 3, 2019.

6. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee on Finance and Operations met on Monday, September 16, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 410 at the Durkin Administration Building.

Student
Transportation
Services/award
contract

gb #9-59 - Administration (February 13, 2019)

To review bid specifications for student transportation services and award contract to lowest responsive and responsible bidder for a contract term to begin in June 2020.

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

Superintendent Binienda stated that her recommendation was to award the bid to Durham School Services.

Mr. Foley suggested a discussion of the following three issues relative to the choice of vendor for transportation:

A. Pricing and the financial impact upon the district

Mr. Foley stated that it is not an \$800,000 reduction in the bid but rather \$700,000 as a result of the \$100,000 returned to Durham by the Worcester Public Schools for the 2018-19 payment credits taken by the district. He also stated that having the option of a Self-Operated Transportation System is at least some competition.

Mr. Foley stated that the Self-Operated Transportation System would offer a projected savings of 2.1 million in the first year.

B. Service history of the current vendor

Mr. Foley stated that there have been some issues with Durham management over the past several years which include late buses, shortage of buses and bus drivers, non-working cameras, non-functioning block heaters and problems with buses not starting which resulted in communication issues with families.

Superintendent Binienda stated that one of the challenges at present is the bus driver shortage and the number of bus drivers that call in sick.

C. Capacity of the district to self-operate student transportation

Mr. Castango, Regional Manager of Durham, stated that there are issues with drivers calling in sick and the need to hire additional drivers is made more difficult by the change in licensing from the State Police to the Registry.

Mr. Allen stated that the Worcester Public Schools has reached out to Central Mass Work Force Development for the hiring of additional bus drivers and is offering a course in Night Life to help individuals to gain licensure. The goal would be to offer current Durham drivers positions, abiding by collective bargaining and civil service regulations, if the Worcester Public Schools votes in favor of a Self-Operated Transportation System.

Miss McCullough requested that the GPS tracking system be integrated as soon as possible. In addition, she requested the date for the transition to a Self-Operated Transportation System, if it were to be approved.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the date for the proposed Self-Operated Transportation System, if it were to be approved, would be the 2022-23 school year.

Mr. Monfredo stated that he was in favor of renewing the Durham contract.

Miss Biancheria requested the following information to include the costs if the system were to have a Self-Operated Transportation System:

- all types of insurances needed
- the use of gas versus diesel and
- total budgeted amount

Miss Biancheria recommended that the Administration hire an outside consultant to provide a cost analysis for a Self-Operated Transportation System.

The following individuals commented on the bus issues:

Mr. D'Andrea, a parent, stated that it is very frustrating that the buses are always late and he would like to see the Worcester Public Schools run a Self-Operated Transportation System. He further stated that trying to reach anyone at Durham is nearly impossible and would like to see some changes made.

Mrs. Novick stated that the problem is not with the bus drivers but rather with management. She would like to know when the GPS monitoring system will be operational. She further stated that she is in favor of a Self-Operated Transportation System.

Mr. Guardiola, Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy at the Worcester Chamber of Commerce, stated that the members are in favor of a Self-Operated Transportation System.

Mr. Marks, Business Agent for Teamsters Local 170, stated that the comparisons between Durham and the Self-Operated Transportation System are not equal. The Worcester Public Schools needs to include all the cost factors to include cameras running diesel buses, bus drivers calling in sick and more to make the comparison between Durham and the Self-Operated Transportation System. He further stated that some of the issues were due to the fact that Durham would get requests for an extra bus route too late to make the changes.

Ms. O'Connor, a Durham bus driver, stated that the miscommunication and delays go both ways. The buses are overloaded and timing is poorly mapped out for the routes. She further stated that the drivers' number one concern is safety.

Mr. Bergen, Business Agent for Teamsters Local 170, stated that there are many reasons for delayed buses such as weather, road conditions, traffic, an accident or a route change. He also stated that it is not easy to run a Self-Operated Transportation System and it has to be done correctly. He also emphasized the need to hire an outside consultant with an unbiased opinion to provide a cost analysis for the Self-Operated Transportation System for the Worcester Public Schools.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the Administration is working closely with Durham to resolve any bus issues as quickly as possible. She also stated that the Worcester Public Schools has offered to help out with routes by using its buses, subject to availability. Durham is purchasing 2 more buses and the Worcester Public Schools has also purchased 2 more buses and they are hiring more bus drivers. As far as the system operating its own bus company, the Administration feels that there is still more work that needs to be done to accomplish this goal. She stated that the system cannot get a Self-Operated Transportation System up and running in a half a year or a year. That is the professional opinion of everyone here that has been asked to present today.

Mr. Foley made the following motion:

Request that the School Committee approve the Self-Operated Transportation System, effective the first day of summer school 2020.

On a roll call of 1-1-1 (absent Mr. Comparetto), the motion was defeated.

The chair announced that the item and the committee vote would be reported out to the full School Committee on Thursday, September 19, 2019.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Mr. Foley reported out the actions of the Standing Committee members followed by testimony from the following individuals:

Mrs. Novick, a parent, stated that she is in favor of a Self-Operated Transportation System. She commented on the fact that many other systems were encountering difficulties with Durham School Services. She expressed real concern if the Committee were to vote for Durham.

Mr. Bergen, Business Agent for Teamsters Local 170, emphasized the system's need to hire an outside consultant with an unbiased opinion to provide a cost analysis for a Self-Operated Transportation System for the Worcester Public Schools. He stated that the scheduling of routes by the Worcester Public Schools does not allow ample time to reach destinations and route changes are not provided to Durham by the Worcester Public Schools Transportation Department in a timely manner.

Stephen Schmuck, Vice President, Operations for Durham, apologized for the issues of late buses and is currently working with the Worcester Public Schools to resolve any issues. Durham will hold all employees accountable if they do not meet Durham's standards.

Mr. Corbin, a parent of a special needs student, stated that it is unacceptable for a special needs student to be on a bus for more than 50 minutes.

Miss McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provide frequent reports, as needed, regarding transportation issues.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mayor Petty stated that the transportation issues are not acceptable and that one or 2 hour delay for children getting home cannot continue to happen.

Mayor Petty made the following motions:

Request that the Administration provide on the Worcester Public Schools' website all telephone numbers of the transportation offices of both Durham and the Worcester Public Schools.

Request that the Administration provide a report to include:

- the bussing history since 1970 to include who owned them and
- the date that the system went out to bid for school bus transportation

Request that the Administration seek input from a district that is providing a Self-Operated Transportation System.

Request that the Administration provide a report on the pension and disability liabilities for the past 6 years for transportation employees for both the Worcester Public Schools and Durham School Services.

On a voice vote, the motions were approved.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the Worcester Public Schools is currently working on creating the myStop Mobil App to allow for tracking of school buses.

It was moved and voice vote to take the following item out of order:

gb #9-286 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/
Mr. Monfredo
(August 28, 2019)

Student
Transportation Issues

Request that the Administration provide an update regarding ongoing student transportation issues.

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

Miss Biancheria made the following motion:

Request that the Administration hire an outside consultant to provide a cost analysis for a Self-Operated Transportation System.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:

Request that the Administration contact the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) to potentially collaborate to provide transportation for students in Worcester.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

The other motions voted at the meeting include the following:

Mr. Foley made the following motion:

Request that the School Committee approve a Self-Operated Transportation System, effective the first day of summer school 2020.

On a roll call of 1-6 (yea Mr. Foley), the motion was defeated.

Miss McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the School Committee approve a 2 year contract for Durham School Services and provide monthly reports on transportation issues and resolutions to them.

On a roll call of 2-5 (yeas Miss McCullough and Mayor Petty), the motion was defeated.

Miss McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the School Committee approve the operation of a Self-Operated Transportation System in 2022-23.

On a roll call of 3-4 (yeas Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough and Mayor Petty), the motion was defeated.

Miss Biancheria made the following motion:

Request that the School Committee approve a 2 year contract to Durham School Services, with an option of a one year extension.

On a roll call of 5-2 (nays Mr. Comparetto and Mr. Foley), the motion was approved.

It was moved to suspend the Rules of the School Committee to reconsider the motion to approve a 2 year contract to Durham School Services, with an option of a one year extension.

On a roll call of 6-1 (nay Mr. O'Connell), it was moved to suspend the Rules of the School Committee.

It was moved to reconsider the motion to approve a 2 year contract to Durham School Services, with an option of a one year extension.

On a roll call of 1-6 (yea Mr. Foley), the motion to reconsider was defeated.

GENERAL BUSINESS

7. gb #8-252.1 - Administration/Administration (September 11, 2019) Textbooks/civics/
approval of

Response of the Administration to the request to approve the selection of McGraw-Hill as the choice for textbooks in the Grade 8 Civics Course.

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

8. gb #8-277.1 - Administration/Mr. Monfredo/
Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/
Mr. O'Connell (September 11, 2019) Buddy Benches

Response of the Administration to the request to provide a report regarding the number of schools that have "Buddy Benches" and consider expanding the concept to other schools based on feedback from the principals.

Mr. Monfredo made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provide an updated report in a Friday Letter in October 2019 on additional schools who will receive Buddy Benches.

On a voice voted, the motion was approved.

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

Fire Drill/
compliance with
the law

9. gb #9-285.1 - Administration/Mr. O'Connell/
Miss Biancheria/Miss McCullough/
Mr. Monfredo
(September 9, 2019)

Response of the Administration to the request to verify full compliance of the Worcester Public Schools with the provisions of 527 CMR 1.00, Section 20.2.4.2.1.4, which require that the first fire drill of the year occur within three days of the start of school.

Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provide a report indicating the dates of the fire drills at each school.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

Sex Education
Curriculum

10. gb #9-288 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/
Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo
(August 28, 2019)

Request the establishment of an inclusive and transparent process for selecting and implementing a comprehensive Sex Education Curriculum that is age-appropriate, evidence-based, medically-accurate and LGBTQ inclusive in the Worcester Public Schools.

It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Administration for a report in November 2019.

Prior Fiscal Year
Payments/
school nurses

11. gb #9-293 - Administration
(August 28, 2019)

To approve a prior fiscal year payment in the total amount of \$7,800.00 to school nurses for longevity rates.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

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

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

The motion carried.

12. gb #9-296 - Administration Recognition/set date
(September 4, 2019)

To set a date to recognize the following North High School's art teachers who received the following awards from the Massachusetts Art Education Association:

Lizzie Fortin - Art Educator of the Year,
(Coach)
Callie Mulcahy - Exceptional New Art Teacher
of the Year

It was moved and voice voted to set the date of Thursday, October 17, 2019.

13. gb #9-297 - Administration Grant/
(September 4, 2019) Comprehensive
School Health
Services

To accept the Comprehensive School Health Services (CSHS) Grant in the amount of \$200,000.00.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

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

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

The motion carried.

- Stand for Children Program 14. gb #9-298 - Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria/
Mr. O'Connell
(September 4, 2019)
- Request that the Administration consider involving students in the Stand for Children's four week program challenge on teaching kindness.
- It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Administration for a report in October 2019.
- Grant/21st Century Community Learning Center 15. gb #9-299 - Administration
(September 5, 2019)
- To accept the 21st Century Community Learning Centers - Support Additional Learning Time Grant in the amount of \$175,000.00.
- Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:
- Request that the Administration provide a report in November 2020 on a recommendation to continue implementing and providing funds for the Academically Enriching Program within the Worcester Public Schools' Budget.
- On a voice vote, the motion was approved.
- On a roll call, the vote was as follows:
- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| For the motion: Miss Biancheria, Mr. Comparetto,
Mr. Foley, Miss McCullough,
Mr. Monfredo, Mr. O'Connell,
Mayor Petty | 7 |
| Against the motion: | <u>0</u>
7 |
- The motion carried.
- Recognition/
set date 16. gb #9-300 - Administration
(September 9, 2019)
- To set a date to recognize the Barbara Sargent, Nicole Delamere, Phil King and Mary Scully for receiving exemplary program recognition by Governor Baker for its 21st Century Out of School Time Program.

It was moved and voice voted to set the date of Thursday, October 3, 2019.

17. gb #9-301 - Administration Recognition/set date
 (September 10, 2019)

To set a date to recognize Unum for being named one of the 50 most community-minded companies in the United States.

It was moved and voice voted to set the date of Thursday, October 17, 2019.

18. gb #9-302 - Administration Prior Fiscal Year
Payment/
Glass America
 (September 11, 2019)

To approve a prior year payment to Glass America in the amount of \$869.80 for windshield repair services for vehicles in the Worcester Public Schools.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

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

Against the motion: 0
7

The motion carried.

19. gb #9-303 - Administration Prior Fiscal Year
Payment/Early's on
Park Avenue, Inc.
 (September 11, 2019)

To approve a prior year payment to Early's on Park Avenue, Inc. in the amount of \$360.00 for towing services for vehicles in the Worcester Public Schools.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion: Miss Biancheria, Mr. Foley,
Miss McCullough, Mr. Monfredo,
Mr. O'Connell, Mayor Petty 6

Against the motion: Mr. Comparetto, $\frac{1}{7}$

The motion carried.

Donation

20. gb #9-304 - Administration
(September 11, 2019)

To accept a donation in the amount of \$250.00
from a donor to the Patricia Falcone Memorial
Scholarship.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

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

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

The motion carried.

Prior Fiscal Year
Payment/bus
driver license

21. gb #9-305 - Administration
(September 11, 2019)

To approve prior fiscal year payments in the total
amount of \$350.00 for bus driver license
renewals.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

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

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

The motion carried.

22. gb #9-306 - Miss Biancheria/Miss McCullough/
Mr. O'Connell
(September 11, 2019) Vaping/dangers of

Request that the Administration provide its plan on informing students on the dangers of vaping.

Mr. Monfredo made the following motion:

Request that the Administration invite Tina Grosowsky, Project Coordinator from the Department of Psychiatry UMass Medical School, to a School Committee meeting to provide a presentation on the dangers of vaping.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

23. gb #9-307 - Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/
Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/
Mayor Petty
(September 11, 2019) Recognition/ forward
letter

Request that the Administration forward a letter of congratulations to Darcy Schwartz on receiving the Thomas Jefferson Award "honoring the significant contribution she and her studio's Visiting Artist Outreach Program have made to the children, families and staff of the Worcester public school system and the community at large."

It was moved and voice voted to forward a letter of congratulations.

24. gb #9-308 - Administration
(September 11, 2019) Prior Fiscal Year
Payment/Durham
School Services

To approve prior year payments totaling \$100,458.23 to Durham School Services for amounts owed following the final reconciliation of payments and service credits for non-compliance during the 2018-2019 school year.

On a voice vote, the motions were approved.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows:

For the motion: Miss Biancheria, Miss McCullough,
Mr. Monfredo, Mayor Petty 4

Absent: Mr. Comparetto, Mr. Foley,
Mr. O'Connell 3

Against the motion: 0
7

The motion carried.

Recognition/
set date

25. gb #9-309 - Administration
(September 11, 2019)

To set a date to recognize the following students
who received the AP Capstone Diploma and their
teachers:

Sara Gace	Doherty Memorial High School
Alyssa Goins	South High Community School
Gia-Han Le	South High Community School
Tu T. Luu	South High Community School
Sarah White	South High Community School

and the following students who received the AP
Seminar and Research Certificate:

Rolanda Nubuor	Burncoat High School
Lauren Pichette	Burncoat High School
Gabriella Vallejo	Burncoat High School
Tranh Nha Tran	Claremont Academy

It was moved and voice voted to set the date of
Thursday, October 3, 2019.

Focused
Instructional
Coach/Mairecait
Binienda

26. gb #9-310 - Administration
(September 11, 2019)

To consider approval of the selection of Mairecait
Binienda as the Focused Instructional coach at the
Challenge and Reach Academy.

It was moved and voice voted to approve the item.
The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
Clerk of the School Committee