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The following item will be discussed at a virtual meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance and Operations on Monday, April 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.:

gb #0-33 - Mr. Foley/Mrs. Clancey/Ms. McCullough/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick (January 8, 2020)

To include a standing item for "Transportation Update" at each Finance and Operations committee meeting with information provided regarding the problems facing student transportation and improvements experienced.

Committee Members

Tracy Novick, Chair
Jermoh Kamara, Vice-Chair
Susan Mailman

Administrative
Representatives
Brian Allen

OFFICE OF THE
CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MA 01609

AGENDA #4

The Standing Committee on FINANCE AND OPERATIONS will hold a meeting:

on: Monday, April 11, 2022

at: 6:00 p.m.

virtually in: Room 410, Durkin Administration Building

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

gb #9-355 -Miss McCullough/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo
(October 23, 2019)

Request that the Administration explore the feasibility of providing bus transportation to secondary students that live less than 2 miles from school.

ROS #0-6 -Administration (May 15, 2020)

UPDATE ON THE STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS) PROCUREMENT PROJECT – Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELT)

c&p #0-13 - Clerk (August 18, 2020)

To consider a communication from the Racism Free Worcester Public School Group regarding nine areas of concerns.

gb #0-33 - Mr. Foley/Mrs. Clancey/Ms. McCullough/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick
(January 8, 2020)

To include a standing item for “Transportation Update” at each Finance and Operations committee meeting with information provided regarding the problems facing student transportation and improvements experienced.

gb #1-44 - Ms. Novick/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Foley/Ms. McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (January 26, 2021)

Request administration propose for Committee consideration a priority list of facilities projects to improve the health and safety of school buildings using the new Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund.

gb #1-67 - Ms. McCullough/Miss Biancheria/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo (February 22, 2021)

To develop procedures for future school years surrounding field clearing and preparedness for Spring seasons, and any other seasons that may be applicable.

gb #1-101 - Mr. Foley (March 23, 2021)

To discuss the use of school buses operated solely on electric power either through acquisition, conversion or a combination of both.

gb #1-146.1 -Administration/Ms. Novick (June 8, 2021)

Response of the Administration to the motion to prepare a report on the cost for the entire district to be part of the Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition (BRYT) Program and present that information at the Budget meeting in June.

gb 1-208 - Administration (July 30, 2021)

To review the status of the FY22 Budget and make appropriate transfers as required.

gb #1-248.1 - Administration/Ms. Novick/Mrs. Clancey/Ms. McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (November 22, 2021)

Response of the Administration to the request to share the October 1 report.

gb #1-271 - Ms. Novick (September 29, 2021)

Provide opportunities for public input on the district's plans for Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief funding, as required by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

gb #1-290 - Administration (October 22, 2021)

To accept the donation of Pixellot, a School Broadcast Program valued at more than \$10,000, as per the attached agreements.

gb #1-300 - Ms. McCullough/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick (October 21, 2021)

Request that the Administration provide a report on all school playgrounds, needed repairs and cost for repairing/upgrading them.

gb #1-302 - Administration (October 25, 2021)

To review the annual audit and agreed-upon procedures report on compliance and internal controls for the City of Worcester, including the Worcester Public Schools, which includes the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) A-133 Reports and the Management Letter.

gb #1-303 - Administration (October 25, 2021)

To review the Independent Accountants' Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education End of Year Financial Report.

gb #1-304 - Administration (October 25, 2021)

To review the Independent Accountant's Report on Applying Agreed Upon Procedures for Student Activity Fund Testing.

gb #2-19 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Clancey (January 12, 2022)

To align Policy DK with the City of Worcester Charter.

gb #2-23 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Clancey/Mr. Johnson/Ms. Kamara/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider a pilot of provision of menstrual supplies at all secondary schools.

gb #2-25 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Clancey/Ms. Kamara (January 12, 2022)

To make provision within all WPS secondary schools of space for prayer during the day for those whose religious observance requires it; relatedly; to add to the student handbook notification to students and families that such provision will be made as needed.

gb #2-44 – Johnson/Clancey/Kamara/Mailman/McCullough/Novick (January 26, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide a pre and post Covid report regarding the timeliness and consistency of school bus routes to include:

- the number of bus drivers that are currently active and indicate how many are needed
- the number of bus drivers and monitors that are needed to be fully staffed and indicate the recruitment efforts being made and
- indicate what Human Resources is doing to help in this regard.

gb #2-61 - Mailman/Clancey/Johnson/Kamara/McCulloughNovick (February 7,9 2022)

Request that the Administration, before further expansion of pre k programming in WPS, include local non-profit early education and care partners in order to incorporate lessons learned and to avoid pitfalls of 20 years ago.

gb #2-63 – Johnson/Clancey/Kamara/Mailman/McCullough/Novick (February 9, 2022)

Request that Finance and Operations discuss that water bottle filling stations be implemented in all schools that do not qualify under the SWIG grant Program.

gb 2-92 – Clancey/McCullough/Johnson/Kamara/Mailman (March 8, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide quarterly reports regarding building maintenance to include timeframes on when work will begin and be concluded.

gb 2-95 – Kamara/McCullough/Mailman (March 9, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide an update regarding the construction of Doherty Memorial High School.

(motion) gb 1-237 - Miss Biancheria (September 23, 2021)

Request that the Grant expenditures be sent to the Standing Committee on Finance and Operations for further discussion.

(motion) gb #1-285 - Ms. Novick, (December 2, 2021)

Request that the question of sustainable funding be forwarded to the Standing Committee on Finance and Operations to research other available sources.

(motion) gb #2-6 - Administration/Mayor Petty (January 4, 2022)

Request that the COVID and Transportation portions of the survey be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Operations.

COVID

Enforce social distancing, mask wearing and provide more sanitation areas along with make-up work guidelines.

Transportation

Expand the bus routes within the current two-mile radius.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

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

STANDING COMMITTEE: **FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**

DATE OF MEETING: Monday, April 11, 2022

ITEM: Mr. Foley/Mrs. Clancey/Ms. McCullough/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick (January 8, 2020)

To include a standing item for "Transportation Update" at each Finance and Operations committee meeting with information provided regarding the problems facing student transportation and improvements experienced.

PRIOR ACTION:

1-16-20 - Referred to the Administration.

2-6-20 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

aor #0-5 - Clerk

(January 29, 2020)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, January 16, 2020.

Mr. Foley made the following amendment to the minutes:

Request that referral for item gb #0-33 be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Operations instead of to the Administration.

On a voice vote, the amendment was approved.

4-12-21 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Mr. Allen stated that the Administration meets weekly with representatives from Durham School Services to discuss the number of drivers that are available to the Worcester Public Schools. The number of buses needed will be based upon the number of students choosing to return to school or remaining remote.

Ms. McCullough wondered what the options would be in the event of a shortage.

Mr. Allen offered potential options which included:

- subcontracting drivers from other companies
- moving tiered school times around
- reducing the number of students who may be eligible for transportation

BACKUP: Annex A (2 pages) contains a copy of the Student Transportation Monthly Update for April..

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 4-12-21 - Mr. Allen stated that all WPS owned buses have been used every
(continued) day since the start of the school year.
Miss Biancheria made the following motion:
Request that the Administration provide weekly transportation updates to include information from the Durham meetings and the status of Durham bus drivers.
On a roll call of 3-0, the motion was approved.
Mr. Foley made the following motion:
Request that the Administration and School Committee work with the City Solicitor to produce a notice of Breach of Contract letter to be sent to Durham School Services highlighting the Breach of Contract reaffirming the Worcester Public Schools' legal and financial rights and raising the imperative nature of the May 3, 2021 return to school and the need to have the full allotment of bus drivers in place by that time.
On a roll call of 2-1 (nay Miss Biancheria), the motion was approved.
On a roll call of 3-0, the item was held for additional updates.
- 4-15-21 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee approved the actions of the Standing Committee as amended.
Mr. Foley made the following motion:
Request that the Administration and School Committee work with the City Solicitor to produce a notice of Breach of Contract letter to be sent to Durham School Services highlighting the Breach of Contract reaffirming the Worcester Public Schools' legal and financial rights and raising the imperative nature of the May 3, 2021 return to school and the need to have the full allotment of bus drivers in place by that time.
On a roll call of 5-2 (nays Miss Biancheria and Mr. Monfredo), the motion was approved:
Mr. Foley requested a vote to reconsider the motion.
On a roll call of 2-5 (yeas Miss Biancheria and Mr. Monfredo), the motion for reconsideration was defeated.
- 10-26-21 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND OPERATIONS
(Considered with gb #1-110)
Mr. Allen stated that there are drivers in training that are interested in 7D training. The Administration is discussing with AA transportation the continued use of their vans that were being used by the National Guard. This will allow the Worcester Public School's bus drivers to continue to drive the same routes as the National Guards.
Mr. Foley made the following motion:
Request that gb 1-110 be filed and that gb 0-33 be held.
On a roll call of 2-1 (absent Miss Biancheria), the motion was approved.
- 11-18-21 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee on a roll call of 6-1 (nay Miss Biancheria), approved the actions of the Standing Committee as stated.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

11-30-21 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Mr. Allen provided information on the following:

- bus driver recruitment
- procurement of vehicles
- other updates

Bus Driver Recruitment

As of November 23, 2021, there were 27 people actively in training. Seven out of the 27 people in training acquired their 7D van license. These seven people are currently driving the bus routes that the National Guards had previously driven. The Commonwealth is conducting another 7D training class on December 4, 2021. Mr. Allen stated that updates will be provided at the December Standing Committee meeting.

Procurement of Vehicles

The district has awarded the bid of school buses as follows:

	<u>Vehicle Cost</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
100 Type C Big Buses	\$99,580	\$9,958,000
38 Type A Mid-Size Bus	\$80,110	\$3,044,180
27 Type A Wheelchair Bus	\$84,030	<u>\$2,268,810</u>
Total Bid Award		\$15,270,990

Mr. Allen stated that the delivery of the vehicles is expected by June 1, 2022 and that the total bid was \$1,229,010 less than the amount included in the ESSER III application. He proposed that the ESSER savings could be used:

- to purchase additional school buses scheduled for regular replacement during the ESSER grant timeframe
- to purchase additional vehicles that may need to be expanded due to the possible change in walking radius or school start times.
- to apply the savings towards a higher capacity 7D van or
- for other district ESSER-eligible initiatives

Other Updates

- The recently signed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will provide \$2.5 billion for new zero-emissions or electric school bus purchases and \$2.5 billion for low-emissions school buses. The Administration will explore the eligibility of applying for these funds for future school bus purchases.
- The Administration is exploring the feasibility of having a dedicated fuel location for up to 335 vehicles at or near the 115 Northeast Cutoff location.
- The Administration will provide the School Committee a 15-year vehicle replacement plan for all existing and newly purchased vehicles which will help to make informed decisions on future budgets and vehicle purchases.
- The Administration is preparing bid specifications for the purchase of 7D vans, which were approved in the ESSER III grant, and is expected to begin service for late FY23 or the FY24 school year.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 11-30-21 - Mr. Foley asked how long the training takes before a person gets their CDL license.
Mr. Allen stated that due to the fact that the School Committee has approved the additional training Job Descriptions, it will help accelerate the training process.
Mr. Hennessey stated that in order to obtain a CDL license, a person has to have 28 hours of classroom time and 32 hours behind the wheel. Once a person receives their CDL learner's permit, he/she can start receiving their 32 training hours on the road.
Ms. Novick suggested that information regarding bus driver recruitment and the free training opportunities be placed on the Worcester Public Schools' social media platforms.
Mr. Foley made the following motion:
Request that the item be held.
On a roll call of 3-0, the motion was approved.
- 12-16-21 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.
- 2-9-22 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND OPERATIONS
Mr. Allen provided information on the following:
- bus driver hiring and recruitment
 - other support staff
 - status of positions added
 - positions to be added for FY23
 - school bus vehicle procurement
- Bus Driver Recruitment**
As of January 28, 2022, the Worcester Public Schools has 36 people actively in training:
- 31 through MassHire / Night Life Program
 - 2 Driver referrals
 - 2 WPS Bus Monitor (1 through the Mass Hire/Night Life Program)
 - 1 from the Civil Service List
- Of these 36 people in training, 12 have also been trained and possess 7D van licenses and have been hired by the Worcester Public Schools, and have taken over the routes previously operated by National Guard drivers during October 2021. (The district is leasing 7D vans from AA Transportation for the remainder of the year).
- Other Support Staff**
The District-Operated Transportation Cost Analysis Report assumed four additional mechanics, one operations supervisor, one transportation liaison, and one Human Resources liaison. Additional supervisory trainers have recently been approved to enhance school, parent, and student customer experience.
- Status of Positions Added**
- Human Resources Liaison (to be called Transportation Personnel Supervisor): *The position is still open, and the Administration is currently accepting applications.*

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

2-9-22 (continued)

- Transportation Systems Coordinator: *The position is in the interview process.*
- Transportation Safety and Training Liaison (3): *Two of the positions have been filled with February start dates. The remaining position is still open, and the Administration is currently accepting applications*
- Transportation Safety Supervisor: *This position has been filled with a February startdate.*

Positions to be added for FY23:

- Four Mechanics
- Operations Supervisor
- Transportation Liaison

Procurement of Vehicles

The district has awarded the bid of school buses as follows:

	<u>Vehicle Cost</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
100 Type C Big Buses	\$99,580	\$9,958,000
38 Type A Mid-Size Bus	\$80,110	\$3,044,180
27 Type A Wheelchair Bus	\$84,030	<u>\$2,268,810</u>
Total Bid Award		\$15,270,990

School Committee Member Mailman asked if the Durham bus drivers have been offered positions to drive for the WPS.

Mr. Allen stated that he will provide an update at the next meeting regarding the civil service process of hiring bus drivers and 15 year replacement plan for all vehicles.

Vice-chair Kamara asked for an update on the MyStop App.

Mr. Freeman stated that the tablets were ordered and will arrive before the start of the next school year. The MyStop App will run off of the tablets and has the capability of tracking all the routes. Individuals will be able to download the App to their Androids or iPhones.

Chair Novick made the following motion:

Request that the item be held.

On a roll call of 3-0, the motion was approved.

3-17-22 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee on a roll call of 7-0, approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION MONTHLY UPDATE
 APRIL 2022

Durham School Services Bus Driver Availability

The following is the availability of bus drivers from Durham School Services to the Worcester Public Schools using a monthly snapshot for the 2021-22 school year:

Date	Available Bus Drivers from Durham School Services*	Contracted Number of Drivers for 2021-22	Difference
8/26/2021	122	141	-19
9/15/2021	115		-26
10/12/2021	115		-26
11/3/21	114		-27
1/12/22	112		-29
2/2/22	110		-31
3/2/22	107		-34

Since Last Report:

3/16/22	109	141	-32
4/6/222	108		-33

**As reported by Durham School Services local management during weekly planning call with WPS Transportation Administration. Included in these available drivers are 6 drivers from other Durham School Services locations*

Bus Driver Hiring and Recruitment

The Worcester Public Schools continues to work in close partnership with MassHire and the WPS Night Life Program to recruit and train potential school bus drivers.

As of April 6, 2022, the Worcester Public Schools have **34 people actively in training (-4 from last month's report):**

- 29 through MassHire and/or Night Life Program
- 2 Driver referral
- 2 WPS Bus Monitor (1 through the Mass Hire / Night Life Program)
- 1 from the Civil Service List

In addition, the district has hired five drivers this year through this process.

Of these 34 people in training, 18 have also been trained and possess 7D van licenses and have been hired (are being hired) by the Worcester Public Schools, and have taken over the routes previously operated by National Guard drivers during October 2021. (The district is leasing 7D vans from AA Transportation for the remainder of the year).

The additional training staff recently approved will allow for accelerated training of the current people in training and expand capacity for other trainees.

Support Staff: Status of Positions Added:

- Transportation Personnel Supervisor: *The position has been filled.*
- Transportation Systems Coordinator: *The remaining position is still open, and the Administration is currently accepting applications*
- Transportation Safety and Training Liaison (3): *These positions have been filled.*
- Transportation Safety Supervisor: *This position has been filled.*

Positions to be added for FY23:

- Four Mechanics
- Operations Supervisor
- Transportation Liaison

School Bus Vehicle Procurement

The school bus industry is impacted by national supply chain issues (around computer chips, engines, and other bus components) and a higher demand for new school bus vehicles. The Administration is in weekly communication with the school bus dealer and manufacturers relating to our Spring-Summer delivery of vehicles. Additional updates will be provided at upcoming monthly Standing Committee meetings. Alternative plans, including the lease of temporary buses with the bus dealer supplying the new school buses, are included in the district's purchase agreement.