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

STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

The School Committee will hold a meeting of the Student Representatives:

on: Thursday, May 19, 2022
at: 6:00 p.m.– Student Advisory Committee
in: Esther Howland South Chamber, City Hall

ORDER OF BUSINESS

To conduct a bi-monthly meeting with the School Committee's student representatives.

Stacia Zoghbi, Ex-Officio	Worcester Technical High School
Adalise Rivera Lugo	University Park Campus School
Rachel Oppong	Burncoat High School
Alisa St. Helene	Claremont Academy
Julianna Manxhari	Doherty Memorial High School
Nancy Tran	North High School
Shelley Duodu	South High Community School

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in-person and remote participation. To partake in the "Public Participation" section of this meeting, you may attend the meeting in-person within the meeting location, click on the link below to join via Zoom or by dial the direct line as indicated.

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

AGENDA #16

The School Committee will hold a virtual and/or in person meeting:

on: Thursday, May 19, 2022
at: 5:00 p.m. - Executive Session
6:00 p.m. - Student Representative Meeting
6:30 p.m. - Regular Session
in: Esther Howland South Chamber, City Hall

ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. General Business Items taken in Executive Session

gb 2-142 - Administration
(May 11, 2022)

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation for a Worker's Compensation for a Cafeteria Worker, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation for a Worker's Compensation for a Teacher, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining regarding Grievance 21/22-23.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining regarding Grievance 21/22-24.

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel - Superintendent of Schools Elect Rachel Monárrez

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel - Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services - Kay Seale

(continued)

General Business Items taken in Executive Session (continued)

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares – Educational Association of Worcester and Worcester School Committee, American Arbitration Association, Grievance Arbitration: Failure to Place on Administrative Leave; Educational Association of Worcester and Worcester School Committee, American Arbitration Association, Grievance Arbitration: Access to Teacher Protection Language; and related statutory personnel action – Unit A Employee.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares – Successor Contract Negotiations – Educational Association of Worcester, Aides to the Physically Handicapped, Monitors and Drivers Unit.

B. Call to Order

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Roll Call

E. Consent Agenda

i. Approval of Minutes

AOR 2-17 - Clerk
(May 11, 2022)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, May 5, 2022.

ii. Approval of Donations

iii. Notification of Personnel Records

2-27 The Superintendent has APPROVED the APPOINTMENTS of the TEACHERS named below:

Cortes, Samantha, Special Education, Woodland Academy, MA, step 6, effective April 25, 2022

Tran, Khanh-Houng, School Adjustment Counselor, Systemwide, MA, step 8, effective April 25, 2022

Rodriguez de Vera, Christina, Special Education, Systemwide, MA, step 6, effective May 2, 2022

2-28 The Superintendent has APPROVED the RESIGNATIONS of the TEACHERS named below:

Buffone, Briana, Teacher, Vernon Hill, Elementary, effective April 1, 2022

Flynn, Kerrie, Teacher, Systemwide, Special Ed, effective April 22, 2022

Maglitta, Juliet, Teacher, Systemwide, Music, effective April 18, 2022

Notification of Personnel Records (continued)

2-29 The Superintendent has APPROVED the RETIREMENTS of the persons named below:

Aspen, Deborah, Teacher, Flagg Street, Art, effective May 1, 2022

Desa, Joao, School Psychologist, Systemwide, effective March 30, 2022

2-30 The Superintendent has APPOINTED the persons named below to the position of Cafeteria Substitute Helper, permanent/intermittent at a salary of \$14.28 per hour, from Civil Service List #322-002, effective as shown:

Ovalle, Lorena 4/4/2022

Santiago, Jannexsy 5/9/2022

2-31 The Superintendent has provisionally APPOINTED the person named below to the position of 189 Day Word Processor, permanent/fulltime at a salary of \$21.12 (minimum) to \$26.49 per hour (maximum) effective as shown:

Nevalsky, Kelly 5/2/2022

2-32 The Superintendent has provisionally APPOINTED the persons named below to the position of Junior Custodian, permanent/fulltime at a salary of \$17.21 (minimum) to \$21.90 per hour (maximum) effective as shown:

Campos, Brandon 4/4/2022

Kea, Barry 4/11/2022

Poske, David 5/2/2022

Santiago, Jorge /4/2022

iv. Initial filing of individual recognitions

gb 2-143 -Administration
(May 3, 2022)

To set the date of Thursday, June 2, 2022 to recognize the Seal of Biliteracy recipients.

v. Notices of interest to the district or to the public

Recommendation of Administration

Approve the Consent Agenda items on a roll call.

F. Items for Reconsideration

G. Recognitions

H. Public Comment

Any member of the public may address the Committee regarding any item before them for two (2) minutes. Those speaking will state their name, their residence, and the item on which they wish to speak for the record. Those speaking may do so in person or via remote participation. Those wishing to address the Committee in a language other than English are asked to notify the Clerk of the Committee in advance, so the Committee may be provided with an interpreter. Members of the Committee may not respond to the comments of the public at the meeting.

I. Public Petitions

c&p 2-11 - Clerk
(May 3, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW for approval of a donation of sick days to a systemwide teacher from a co-worker.

Recommendation of Administration

Refer to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues

c&p 2-12 - Clerk
(May 9, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to provide member feedback on the student dysregulation issue.

Recommendation of Administration

Refer to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

J. Report of the Superintendent

ros 2-7 - Administration
(May 11, 2022)

REGGIO EMILIA – WPS PILOT 2021-22

Recommendation of Administration

Accept and file.

K. Reports of the Standing Committees

The Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports met virtually on Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 4:45 p.m. in Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building.

The Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues met virtually on Thursday, May 12, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building.

Recommendation of Administration

Approve on a roll call

L. Student Advisory Committee item

M. Approval of Grants and other Finance Items

N. General Business

gb 2-18.7 - Administration/Novick/Clancey/Johnson/Kamara/Mailman
(May 9, 2022)

Response of the Administration to the request to update the community on the Worcester Public Schools and COVID.

Recommendation of Maker

Provide an update and hold for the next meeting.

gb 2-118.1 - Administration/Novick
(May 11, 2022)

Response of the Administration to the request to update the School Committee on principal succession planning, including parent and educator voice in the process.

Recommendation of Administration
Accept and file

gb 2-144 - Mailman
(May 6, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide the rules from the Human Resources Department regarding CORI background checks for school based volunteers, including PTOs.

Recommendation of Maker
Refer to the Administration

gb 2-145 - Mailman
(May 6, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide a report, from January to present, regarding teacher shortages to include teacher absences by school and indicate the resources utilized to cover their classroom.

Recommendation of Maker
Refer to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports

gb 2-146 - Novick
(May 11, 2022)

To consider a proposed resolution regarding sanctuary laws for passage for formal consideration by the 2022 Massachusetts Association of School Committees Delegate Assembly.

Recommendation of Maker
Pass the resolution

gb 2-147 - Novick
(May 11, 2022)

To review district policy ACAB to ensure alignment with the United States Department of Education August 2021 "Letter to Students, Educators, and other Stakeholders re: Victim Rights Law Center et al. v. Cardona," the United States Department of Education July 2021 "Questions and Answers on the Title IX Regulations Regarding Sexual Harrassment," and proposed rulemaking as released by the United States Department of Education.

Recommendation of Maker
Refer to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues

gb 2-148 - Novick
(May 11, 2022)

Request administration review and report promptly back to the Committee before the close of the fiscal year district adherence to MGL Ch. 32, sec. 90 and 91, as operational under the waiver passed during the FY22 budget process.

Recommendation of Maker
Refer to administration

gb 2-149 - Novick
(May 11, 2022)

Request Superintendent, Superintendent's office, and all other employees of the district follow district policy GBEBC and state ethics laws regarding fundraising.

Recommendation of Maker
Refer to administration

gb 2-150 - Kamara
(May 11, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide a report, in the form of a chart, on all secondary schools specialized programs occurring in each quadrant.

Recommendation of Maker
Refer to the Administration

gb 2-151 - Kamara
(May 11, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide a report, in the form of a chart, on the relative ability of a child to get into a specialized program that is in a secondary school that is outside their home quadrant.

Recommendation of Maker
Refer to the Administration

gb 2-152 - Mayor Petty
(May 11, 2022)

To set up a meeting among Adjustment Counselors, School Psychologists, Wraparound Coordinators, Dr. Castiel, the Department of Public Health and certain members of the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force to discuss Mental Health issues facing students in the WPS.

Recommendation of Administration
Refer to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports

gb 2-153 – Mayor Petty
(May 11, 2022)

To vote to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Dr. Rachel H. Monárrez for the position of Superintendent of Schools for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025.

Recommendation of Administration
Prerogative of the School Committee

gb 2-154 – Mayor Petty
(May 11, 2022)

To vote to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Kay Seale for the position of Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025.

Recommendation of Administration
Prerogative of the School Committee

O. ANNOUNCEMENTS

P. ADJOURNMENT

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

The Worcester Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Educational Institution and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, ancestry, sex, gender, age, religion, national origin, gender identity or expression, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or a related condition, veteran status or homelessness. The Worcester Public Schools provides equal access to employment and the full range of general, occupational and vocational education programs. For more information relating to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, contact the Human Resource Manager, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609, 508-799-3020.

A. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Administration
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb #2-142
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEMS:

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation for a Worker's Compensation for a Cafeteria Worker, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation for a Worker's Compensation for a Teacher, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining regarding Grievance 21/22-23.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining regarding Grievance 21/22-24.

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel – Superintendent of Schools Elect Rachel Monárrez

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel – Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services – Kay Seale

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares – Educational Association of Worcester and Worcester School Committee, American Arbitration Association, Grievance Arbitration: Failure to Place on Administrative Leave; Educational Association of Worcester and Worcester School Committee, American Arbitration Association, Grievance Arbitration: Access to Teacher Protection Language; and related statutory personnel action – Unit A Employee.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares – Successor Contract Negotiations – Educational Association of Worcester, Aides to the Physically Handicapped, Monitors and Drivers Unit.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Discuss.

i. APPROVAL OF RECORDS
Clerk
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - aor 2-17
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, May 5, 2022.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

Annex A (16 pages) contains a copy of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, May 5, 2022.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Approve on a roll call.

The School Committee of the Worcester Public Schools met in Open Session at 5:03 p.m. in the Esther Howland Chamber at City Hall on Thursday, May 5, 2022.

There were present at the Call to Order:

Ms. Clancey, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Mailman, Ms. McCullough, Ms. O'Connell Novick and Mayor Petty

There was absent: Ms. Kamara

The Pledge of Allegiance was offered and the National Anthem was played.

1. **Consent Agenda**

iii. Approval of Minutes

AOR 2-11 - Clerk
(April 12, 2022)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, April 7, 2022.

AOR 2-12 - Clerk
(April 20, 2022)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Tuesday, April 19, 2022.

AOR 2-13 - Clerk
(April 27, 2022)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Monday, April 25, 2022.

AOR 2-14 - Clerk
(April 27, 2022)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Tuesday, April 26, 2022.

AOR 2-15 - Clerk
(April 27, 2022)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, April 27, 2022.

AOR 2-16 - Clerk
(April 29, 2022)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, April 28, 2022.

iv. Approval of Donations

gb 2-132 – Administration
(April 20, 2022)

To consider approval of the following donations:

- \$110 from the Blackbaud Giving Fund on behalf of Abbvie to the WPS
- \$600 from Boston College to Elm Park Community School for Participation in a Math Project Study to be used for classroom materials
- \$400 from Boston College to City View School for Participation in a Math Project Study to be used for classroom materials
- \$400 from Boston College to Worcester Arts Magnet School for Participation in a Math Project Study to be used for classroom materials
- \$1,000 from a donor to be used as a scholarship for a graduating senior who played football at Doherty Memorial High School in memory of Tom Wallis.
- \$15,000 from the Worcester District Attorney's Office to help assist with the cost of the Herren Talks at South High Community, Doherty Memorial High and Forest Grove Middle schools.
- \$4,005.54 from the United Way of Central Massachusetts to Woodland Academy to go towards the purchase of books
- \$4,000 from IPG Photonics to La Familia Dual Language School to go towards the purchase of books

iv. Initial filing of individual recognitions

gb 2-133 – McCullough
(April 4, 2022)

To forward letters of congratulations to Christine Lloyd and principals of all elementary schools that participated in the 11th Annual VEX IQ Robotics Tournament.

On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Ms. Kamara), the Consent Agenda was approved.

The following items were taken out of order:

2. **Public Petition**

c&p 2-8 - Clerk
(April 13, 2022)

To consider a petition from the PTO at Chandler Magnet School to convert the school to a completely bilingual school.

Two parents spoke on behalf of 65 families of Chandler Magnet School regarding the proposal of converting the school into a completely bilingual school. They believe that the school needs to have a clear vision and mission statement that supports and is equitable to the diverse community it serves.

On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Ms. Kamara), the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

Ms. Kamara arrived at 5:08 p.m.

3.

c&p 2-9 - Clerk
(April 27, 2022)

To consider a petition from the EAW requesting that the School Committee vote for the Fair Share Resolution.

Mr. Sal Ramos requested that the School Committee support the Fair Share Resolution which will be on the ballot in November. The Fair Share Amendment would establish an additional tax income earned in excess of \$1,000,000 which will go specifically to transportation and education.

On a roll call of 7-0, it was moved to support the Fair Share Resolution.

c&p 2-10 - Clerk
(April 27, 2022)

To consider a petition from the EAW inviting the School Committee to shadow EAW members in their workplace.

Ms. Tina Mansfield invited the School Committee to shadow EAW members to learn what they do on a daily basis.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Clerk of the School Committee.

3. **Recognitions**

gb 2-102.1 - McCullough
(April 20, 2022)

To recognize the Burncoat Dance Team for placing 5th in the Hip Hop Division and 1st place in the Jazz Category at the MSAA New England Regional Competition.

Mayor Petty and Superintendent Binienda recognized the Burncoat Dance Team.

gb 2-134 - McCullough
(April 27, 2022)

To recognize the Worcester Tech Eagles for their MA High School Bowling State Team Championship win for the third year in a row.

Mayor Petty and Superintendent Binienda recognized the Worcester Tech Eagles Bowling team and gave each of them a Key to the City.

4. **Report of the Superintendent**

ros 2-5 - Administration
(April 27, 2022)

MEETING THE EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS

Ms. Mahoney presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the emotional and mental health needs of students and how student dysregulation is manifesting itself in schools. The two partnerships that are used when a student is in crisis are:

- Emergency Mental Health-(EMH) located at UMass is for mental health episodes at a crisis level and
- Youth Mobile Crisis-Community Health Link (YMC) which responds to students in need of assessment at community locations.

4.

In the 2021-22 school year, there were 13 School Adjustment Counselors and 3 School Psychologists positions added to the Budget and there are approximately 90 School Adjustment Counselors and 30 School Psychologists in the schools at present. In the FY23 Budget, the Administration is requesting four additional SAC positions which will focus on addressing social emotional needs of all students and 14 Wraparound Coordinators. The Office of Social Emotional Learning staff will be offering a variety of resources and activities to raise awareness of mental health importance. The expansion of professional development opportunities related to the implementation of Universal Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) in schools will increase the universal practice of mindfulness, distress tolerance and healthy decision making in schools.

Ms. Clancey asked that her item be taken with the ROS.

gb 2-140 - Clancey
(April 11, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide an update on the caseload numbers for the following positions:

- School Psychologists
- School Adjustment Counselors and
- any other positions that provide social-emotional support to WPS students.

Member Clancey stated that the Administration needs to make sure that the School Adjustment Counselors and Psychologists are available to address the mental health needs of the students and not being utilized to help out in the classrooms. She would like to see ten Adjustment Counselors added to the Budget not just four.

Superintendent Binienda stated that Administration and the schools have asked to have thirteen additional Wraparound Coordinator positions added to the FY23 Budget.

Member Clancey made the following amendment to her item:

to make sure that the Mental Health staff is placed where the biggest need is in the schools.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item, as amended, was approved.

Ms. Mahoney stated that her department reviews data during the summer months to analyze where the greatest needs are in the schools for the Adjustment Counselors and Psychologists. They also listen to the principals to determine where their greatest needs are in their schools.

Superintendent Binienda stated that there is a shortage of mental health services in the community and throughout the Country. There are some students experiencing difficulty in the schools and the Administration, principals and staff have been working with the students and their families to help them.

The Administration would like to add a special education teacher to the Woodland Academy stabilization model.

Member Novick stated that she would like to see stronger recommendations from the Administration regarding additional staff in the FY23 Budget and any policy changes that need to happen regarding the emotional needs of the students.

Vice-chair Johnson made the following amendment to Ms. Clancey's item:

to provide an update within the next couple of weeks

5.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item, as amended, was approved.

Vice-chair Johnson asked how the Administration identifies students who missed numerous days in school due to being evaluated in the E.R. and indicate how they deal with them once they are back in the classroom.

Ms. Mahoney stated that those situations are challenging but it is about communication between the school and the parents that really matters the most. The Home and Hospital Department reaches out to the parents of a student who is absent and tries to attend the discharge meeting so they will be able to help that student get the needed support.

Vice-chair Johnson stated that he agrees that more funding is needed to allocate additional School Adjustment Counselors and School Psychologists.

School Committee student representative Zogbhi stated that students deal with mental health issues in different ways and sometimes a call to the parents might escalate those situations. She is concerned that the mental health services that schools offer is not well known to students and states that it is important that they know what services are available to them. She also stated that she would like to see a safe place in all schools like the Zen Den at Worcester Technical High School. It is important to have a place for students to go and learn to self-regulate.

Superintendent Binienda asked School Committee student representative Zogbhi what recommendations she would suggest to the Administration on how best to notify students of all the mental health services available to them.

School Committee student representative Zogbhi stated that students are more likely to go to social media platforms to see if there are any mental health services available to them. She suggested that they be posted on the schools' digital screens or announcement walls in the classrooms, in the Guidance Offices, on the schools' social media platforms and any place where students are able to see them.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the high schools are finishing up their welcoming book which contains a list of all services available to students. She will also make sure that Social and Emotional Learning services are listed in these books.

Member McCullough suggested utilizing Google classroom spaces at the beginning of the school year for students to access regarding what resources are available to them for emotional and mental health.

School Committee student representative Zogbhi also suggested that the resource information be placed on the student portals and Clever Accounts.

On a roll call of 7-0, gb 1-311.1 and ROS 2-5 were filed and gb 2-140 was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

5. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was moved to recess to Executive Session and Mayor Petty stated that the committee would reconvene in Open Session.

On a roll call of 7-0, it was moved to recess to Executive Session at 6:43 p.m. to discuss the following items:

6.

gb 2-131 – Administration
(April 25, 2022)

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation for a Worker's Compensation for a Cafeteria Worker, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to litigation for a Worker's Compensation for a Custodian, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining regarding Grievance 21/22-22.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to conduct collective bargaining regarding Grievance 21/22-14.

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel – Superintendent of Schools Elect Rachel Monárrez.

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel – Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services – Kay Seale.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares – Request for Voluntary Recognition – Teamsters Union Local 170 – School Bus Mechanics (proposed unit).

The School Committee recessed from Executive Session at 8:58 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 9:07 p.m.

There were present at the second Call to Order:

Ms. Clancey, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Mailman, Ms. McCullough, Ms. O'Connell Novick and Mayor Petty

There was absent: Ms. Kamara

Ms. Kamara arrived at 9:14 p.m.

6. Pursuant to action taken in Executive Session, it was moved to approve a Worker's Compensation lump sum payment of \$30,000 for a custodian.

On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Ms. Kamara), the Worker's Compensation lump sum payment in the amount of \$30,000 for a custodian was approved.

7. Pursuant to action taken in an Executive Session, it was moved to approve a Worker's Compensation lump sum payment of \$25,000 for a cafeteria worker.

On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Ms. Kamara), the Worker's Compensation lump sum payment in the amount of \$25,000 for a cafeteria worker was approved.

8. Pursuant to action taken in Executive Session, it was moved to deny Grievance 21/22 -14.

On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Ms. Kamara), Grievance 21/22-14 was denied.

9. **Reports of the Standing Committees**

The Standing Committee on **Governance and Employee Issues** met virtually on Monday, April 4, 2022 at 4:34 p.m. in Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building.

gb #2-30 - Administration - (January 19, 2022)

To consider approval of the proposed 2022-23 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

Chair Clancey made the following motion:

Request that, under the Superintendent's message on page ii, that Superintendent Binienda's name be omitted.

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

Chair Clancey made the following motion:

Request that the proposed changes for the first third (pages 0-30) of the Student Handbook, as contained in Annex A of the backup, be approved as amended.

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

gb #2-51- Administration (February 9, 2022)

To conduct a bi-monthly meeting with the School Committee's student representatives.

The following item was referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues for discussion:

Request that governance include a position description for student representatives in the school committee rules.

Chair Clancey made the following motion:

Request that the following description for the student representatives be approved to be included in the School Committee Rules:

Basic Description:

The Student Advisory Committee, composed of eight Student Representatives to the Worcester School Committee, shall include students enrolled in a public or alternative school within the Worcester Public School district, elected by the students of each high school. The Student Advisory Committee shall, in accordance with Chapter 71 Section 38M of Massachusetts General Law, elect from their number a chair-person who shall serve a term of one year as an ex-officio member of the School Committee. They are subject to the same privileges as other School Committee members and are to be held subject to the same rules except with the ability to vote, and unless permitted to do so by the School Committee to attend Executive Session.

Purpose:

To provide for a meaningful link and to promote a mutual sense of respect and understanding between the student body and the School Committee.

To represent before the School Committee, the attitudes, interests and concerns, both positive and negative, of the student body.

To advise the School Committee and add insight to their deliberations.

To carry to the School Committee and to support proposals and items of concern to the student body, and to initiate, on behalf of the student body and in conjunction with the student government, projects and proposals for presentation to the School Committee.

To inform the student body of the functions and workings of the School Committee.

To represent to the School Committee a cross-section of the entire student body.

Regular Responsibilities:

- Be accessible to, and representative of, the entire student body.
- Gather collective sentiment that is representative of the entire student body and present those views to the full Committee.
- Share information among the Committee, staff, and students.
- Contribute to Committee deliberations.
- Communicate with staff and students about student concerns and help develop solutions.
- Collaborate with other student representatives and members of the School Committee.

Ex-Officio Member Responsibilities:

- Attend every Regular Session meeting during their term
- Prepare and present a "Student Report" at every Regular Session that includes, but is not limited to: student events, concerns, recommendations, projects, etc
- Attend Standing Committee and Special/Ad-Hoc Committee meetings to share sentiment of the student body
- Contribute to Committee deliberations where appropriate

Student Advisory Committee Representative Responsibilities:

- Attend Regular Sessions during their term when scheduled, if possible
- Help prepare and present a "Student Report" at every Regular Session that includes, but is not limited to: student events, concerns, recommendations, projects, etc.
- Encouraged to attend Standing Committee and Special/Ad-Hoc Committee meetings to share sentiment of their respective student body

Composition:

The Student Advisory Committee shall be composed of one student representative from each of the following schools:

- Burncoat High School
- Claremont Academy
- Doherty Memorial High School
- Gerald Creamer Center
- North High School
- South High Community School
- University Park Campus School
- Worcester Alternative School
- Worcester Technical High School
- The Challenge and Reach Academy

References:

Chapter 71 Section 38M MGL

<https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titlexii/chapter71/section38m>

On a roll call of 3-0, the description for the student representatives was approved to be included in the School Committee Rules.

9.

gb #0-109 - Mr. Monfredo (March 16, 2020)

Request that the School Committee submit to the Clerk any proposed changes to the Rules of the School Committee.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was filed.

Member Kamara arrived at 9:14 p.m.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

On a roll call of 7-0, the Action Sheet for the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues was approved as stated.

10. The Standing Committee on **Finance and Operations** met virtually on Monday, April 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building.

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.

Chair O'Connell-Novick opened the meeting by stating that the members of the Finance and Operations Standing Committee toured the Worcester Public Schools' Transportation Facility.

In the report Mr. Allen stated that the Durham bus driver availability continues to be approximately the same with thirty drivers fewer than what was contracted at the beginning of the year. The WPS has thirty-four people in training with thirty of them coming from the MassHire Night Life Program.

The Information Technology Transportation Systems Coordinator is the only unfilled position. The FY23 Budget will reflect the addition along with four mechanics, a Transportation Personnel Supervisor and a Transportation Safety and Training Liaison.

Mr. Allen stated that all the busses are on order and provisions have been made within the contract for purchase of those busses and the supplemental lease of busses if any or all of the busses are not available for the first day of school. That is the result of supply chain issues that are happening across the country.

The contract with the dealer allows for accessing vehicles from their fleet as soon as June 1st. The district is working on a plan to make those vehicles accessible by May 1st.

The new Transportation Human Resources Coordinator will be working closely with the WPS Human Resources Department and the Chief Diversity Officer to continue the trend of diversity hiring within the department.

Mr. Allen stated that it would be beneficial to have the approval of the positions prior to the start of the school year, knowing that it will take time to go through the posting process.

Chair O'Connell-Novick made the following motion:

Request that School Committee approve the hiring process for the following additional transportation positions:

10.

- Four Mechanics
- Operations Supervisor
- Transportation Liaison and
- whatever else the Transportation Department feels necessary to be prepared for the beginning of fiscal year 23.

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

Ms. Novick asked Mr. Allen if the Worcester Public Schools are competitive in regards to wages to attract drivers.

Mr. Allen stated that 28 drivers were offered positions during a civil service hiring event. The Administration has been looking at the local trends regarding the competitive pay rates for drivers and found that other districts are making adjustments to their rates. Therefore, he suggested that discussions take place in Executive Session regarding adjustments to increase the hourly rate for the Worcester Public School bus drivers.

Chair O'Connell-Novick made the following motion:

Request that School Committee approve the hiring process for the following additional transportation positions:

- Four Mechanics
- Operations Supervisor
- Transportation Liaison and
- whatever else the Transportation Department feels necessary to be prepared for the beginning of fiscal year 23.

On a roll call of 7-0, the motion was approved.

On a roll call of 7-0, the Action Sheet for the Standing Committee on Finance and Operations was approved as amended.

11. The Standing Committee on **Teaching, Learning and Student Supports** met virtually on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building.

gb #2-41 - Kamara/Clancey/Johnson/Novick (January 26, 2022)

To review the 2022 Summer Reading List per grade.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was accepted and filed.

c&p #0-13 -Clerk (August 19, 2020)

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

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was held until the petitioners are able to attend a meeting.

gb #1-53 - Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria/Mrs. Clancey/Ms. McCullough/Ms. Novick (February 12, 2021)

Request that the Administration collaborate with community agencies, retired teachers and other groups, to study the feasibility of establishing a summer learning program to assist K-8 students.

11.

Member Kamara made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provide more information regarding the grants.

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

Chair McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provided a report on the Jump Start Program by mid July 2022.

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

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was held.

gb #1-312 - Ms. McCullough/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick (November 9, 2021)

Request that the Administration explore utilizing virtual tutoring services for the students of the WPS.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was held.

c&p #2-4 - Clerk (February 9, 2022)

To consider a communication from a citizen regarding the addition of elementary school librarians.

gb #2-56 - McCullough/Clancey/Johnson/Kamara/Mailman/Novick (February 7, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide an update on library programs and the use of librarians throughout the district. **(consider these items together)**

Member Kamara requested that a report be provided regarding what the roles are for elementary librarian and a high school one. Chair McCullough suggested that member Kamara file a separate item regarding the roles of librarians at both the elementary and secondary levels.

Ms. Chapdelaine asked what the next steps would be to get elementary librarians back in the schools and what elementary schools have library access.

Chair McCullough made the following motion:

Request that the Administration provide an update on library spaces in the elementary schools.

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

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was held.

gb #2-45 - Johnson/Clancey/Kamara/Mailman/McCullough/Novick (January 26, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide the data on how many secondary students have had a mental health crisis in school and indicate how many have inquired about mental health services at school.

.

12.

Member Kamara requested that a report be provided focusing on behavioral issues and suspensions. Chair McCullough suggested that member Kamara file an item on suspensions and discipline.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was filed.

gb #2-68 - McCullough/Clancey/Johnson/Kamara/Mailman/Novick (February 14, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide an update on the Environmental Tech Program at Worcester Technical High School.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was filed.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

On a roll call of 7-0, the Action Sheet for the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports was approved as stated.

12. The **Ad Hoc Search Committee for the Next Superintendent** of the Worcester Public Schools met on Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 4:35 p.m. in the Esther Howland South Chamber at City Hall.

gb #1-232 - McCullough
(March 22, 2022)

To review and approve the questions for the finalists for the next Superintendent of Schools.

Chair McCullough stated that the following ten questions were submitted for review for the final round of public interviews with the School Committee on April 25 through April 28:

What are the top three priorities that you would identify in your entry plan as essential to the Worcester Public Schools. Please describe why and what action steps would you take to address these priorities?

(Ms. O'Connell Novick) Add: Please describe why, what action steps and what timeline you would take in addressing these priorities.

Please explain what level of autonomy and support you give to principals and district leaders.

(No change)

As we have lost significant learning time in the classroom during the pandemic. What would be your plan to close the achievement gap and help all students reach the highest possible goals taking into account the disadvantages that our ESL students and students of color may have?

(Ms. O'Connell Novick) Add opportunity to achievement gap and mention poverty.

Change ESL to English learner students

(Ms. Kamara) Add our students with disabilities, especially those on IEPs.

Given the stress in the lives of young people today and the social, academic and even financial pressures they face, how can educators in general and a superintendent, in particular, have an impact on the emotional wellbeing of students? What social emotional learning supports have you had success with and/or what would you look to implement?

(Ms. Kamara) Could a timeline be included?

(Chair McCullough) That could end up being one of their priorities. They may have a timeline in that already. I'm wondering if this should be a standalone question, so they can give examples of supports they have had.

(Ms. O'Connell-Novick) This question is already asking three things. I think I would let it be as is.

(Ms. Kamara) Is there a way to follow-up if a timeline was not given?

(No change)

Tell us about your experience of working with children and families who don't look like you or speak the language you do or who do not have the economic advantages you do. How have these experiences shaped your view of public education and its mission?

(No change)

Our district is investing mightily in expanded chapter 74 programs across the district. Please describe your experience and knowledge about vocational education and the distinctions with CTE and your vision for maintaining the integrity of strong vocational educational curriculum.

(Ms. Kamara) Please spell out the acronym CTE.

Further development of community relationships is a priority of the committee. Please tell us how you have developed these relationships in your current and past roles and how this has benefited the district. Share with us what you envision this will look like in Worcester.

(No change)

Worcester is a very large school district with a need for open communication. What are your plans for communications between invested stakeholders, including staff, administrators, families, and the public?

(Ms. O'Connell Novick) Take out "invested"

(Ms. Kamara) Change to invested and vested

(Chair McCullough) Remove invested because stakeholders encompasses all

What is your view of the role of the school committee? What is your vision for this partnership

(No change)?

What is your philosophy on discipline for students. When is it appropriate to give out suspensions (short or long-term) or even send a student to an alternative school?

(Chair McCullough) Add and can you cite any practices you have initiated and how those have worked in the respective district.

(Ms. O'Connell-Novick) There are legal restrictions in the second half of the question. Amend to read "please speak to your past experiences"

Ms. O'Connell-Novick asked if the questions could be sorted to provide a better flow.

Chair McCullough made a motion to approve the questions as amended.

On a roll call of 3-0, the questions were approved as follows:

- 1) What are the top three priorities that you would identify in your entry plan as essential to the Worcester Public Schools? Please describe why, what action steps and what timeline you would take in addressing these priorities?
- 2) Please explain what level of autonomy and support you give to principals and district leaders.

- 3) As we have lost significant learning time in the classroom during the pandemic, what would be your plan to close the achievement and opportunity gap and help all students reach the highest possible goals taking into account the disadvantages that our English learner students, our students of color, our students with disabilities and our students in poverty may have?
- 4) Given the stress in the lives of young people today and the social, academic and even financial pressures they face, how can educators in general and a superintendent, in particular, have an impact on the emotional wellbeing of students? What social emotional learning supports have you had success with and/or what would you look to implement?
- 5) Tell us about your experience of working with children and families who don't look like you or speak the language you do or who do not have the economic advantages you do. How have these experiences shaped your view of public education and its mission?
- 6) Our district is investing mightily in expanded chapter 74 programs across the district. Please describe your experience and knowledge about vocational education and the distinctions with Career and Technical Education and your vision for maintaining the integrity of strong vocational educational curriculum.
- 7) Further development of community relationships is a priority of the committee. Please tell us how you have developed these relationships in your current and past roles and how this has benefited the district. Share with us what you envision this will look like in Worcester.
- 8) Worcester is a very large school district with a need for open communication. What are your plans for communication between stakeholders, including staff, administrators, families, and the public?
- 9) What is your view of the role of the school committee? What is your vision for this partnership?
- 10) What is your philosophy on discipline for students? Please share your past experiences and past practices with discipline both in and out of school?

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACTION

On a roll call of 7-0, the Action Sheet for the Ad Hoc Search Committee was approved as stated.

13. **Student Advisory Committee item**

gb 2-135 - Administration
(April 27, 2022)

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

School Committee student representative Zogbhi stated that the student representatives' Instagram is up and running. She also stated that the next election for the School Committee student representatives will take place on first day of June.

It was moved and voice voted to file the item.

15.

14. **Approval of Grants and other Finance Items**

gb 2-136 - Administration
(April 27, 2022)

To approve prior year payments, from FY13-FY21, in the total amount of \$100,110.63 as a salary correction for an employee as contained in the backup.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was approved.

15. **General Business**

gb 2-18.6 - Administration/Novick/Clancey/Johnson/Kamara/Mailman
(April 27, 2022)

Response of the Administration to the request to update the community on the Worcester Public Schools and COVID.

Superintendent Binienda provided the COVID-19 numbers for the week of April 29 through May 5th.

Students

131 positive
0 quarantined
304 Test and Stay

Staff

60 positive
0 quarantined
22 Test and Stay

She stated that the Commissioner of Education extended the Test and Stay until the end of the school year due to the increases in COVID cases. She also stated that the City Manager will be releasing a statement on May 15th regarding requirements for vaccinations and testing for staff.

Ms. Novick stated that she would like her colleagues to remember that they are their own independent bargaining units when it comes to dealing with vaccinations and the staff. The City Manager sets policy for the City side not for the school side. She asked for an update on the vaccinations of students and staff.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the regular vaccinations for students are almost all up to date. A ConnectEd message will be sent out regarding the second set of COVID shots for students and staff. The City has been running vaccination clinics and she will get the data from them to provide to the School Committee at a later date.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was held for updates at the next meeting.

gb 2-137 - McCullough
(April 6, 2022)

To explore partnering with Massachusetts Safe Routes to School, a federally funded, free program through Mass DOT that is centered around the 6 Es - Education, Engagement, Equity, Encouragement, Evaluation and Engineering.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Administration.

16.

gb 2-138 – McCullough
(April 8, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide an update regarding school safety plans when evacuations are required such as gas leaks, fires and other safety issues.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Administration.

Mayor Petty stepped down Vice-chair Johnson took the chair

gb 2-139 – McCullough
(April 11, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide an update on High School Non-MCAS programs and explore utilization of space at schools in the district.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports.

gb 2-141 – Administration
(April 11, 2022)

To consider approval of the Fundamentals of Cybersecurity course.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports.

16. Pursuant to action taken in Executive Session, it was moved to approve the voluntary recognition of the Teamsters Local 170 as the exclusive bargaining representative for the bargaining unit consisting of the bus mechanics to comply with any applicable regulations relative thereto.

On a roll call of 7-0, Teamsters Local 170 was recognized as the exclusive bargaining representative for the bargaining unit for the bus mechanics.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

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

iv. INITIAL FILING OF RECOGNITIONS
Administration
(May 3, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-143
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To set the date of Thursday, June 2, 2022 to recognize the Seal of Biliteracy recipients.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Recognize on June 2, 2022.

G. PUBLIC PETITION

Clerk
(May 3, 2022)

ITEM - c&p #2-11
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to a systemwide teacher from a co-worker.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the petition.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Refer to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.



May 3, 2022

Mayor Joseph Petty
c/o Dr. Helen Friel
Clerk of School Committee
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609
VIA Email Scan

Dear Dr. Friel,

I would like to speak at the next School Committee meeting on May 19th.

I will be speaking about co-workers donating sick days for a Systemwide teacher.

Please let us know when we will be presenting. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Roger Nugent

Roger Nugent
EAW President

G. PUBLIC PETITION

Clerk
(May 9, 2022)

ITEM - c&p #2-12
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To consider a communication from the EAW to provide member feedback on the student dysregulation issue.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Refer to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

H. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
Administration
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - ros #2-7
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

REGGIO EMILIA – WPS PILOT 2021-22

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

Annex A (13 pages) contains a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Accept and file.

Reggio Emilia

The Worcester Public Schools Pilot

2021-2022



Presented by: Carlene Sherbourne, Ed.D. - Head Start Education Manager
Karen Waters - Head Start Assistant Director

The History of Reggio Emilia

- Originated in Reggio Emilia, Northern Italy, at the end of WWII
- School was built “brick by brick” by the hands of parents
- Approach founded by Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994), teacher and humanitarian
- 30 municipal infant toddler centers and preschools





The Reggio Emilia Philosophy

“Children are the authors of their own learning.”

- Social justice perspective
- Roots in social constructivist learning theory
 - Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky
 - Learning based on real world, active experiences with others
- “The optimistic gaze” - Children are born with many resources and extraordinary potentials
 - 100 Languages of children - Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Philosophy continued...

- Children learn through meaningful and intentional play experiences
 - March 2021 joint position statement of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Massachusetts School Administrators Association (MSAA)
 - [Approaches to Intentional and Playful Learning in Preschool through Grade 3 Classrooms](#)
- Environment plays a central role in making learning meaningful
 - “Environment is the third teacher”
- A true partnership between children, teachers, families, and community
- Documentation is at the heart of understanding

Role of the Children

- Active constructors of knowledge – children decide on the direction they want to learn
- Children's interests are encouraged and fostered
- They are citizens of the community
- "Children with special rights" are treated as equals in the environment
- Every child has something to offer!



Role of Teachers

- They are the spark that inspires children!
- Collaborators and co-learners share in the sense of wonder
- Guides and facilitators – invitation and provocation, What do TEACHERS have to offer children?
- Researchers – What are children telling us? What more is there to learn?
- Reflective practitioners – collaboration with children, parents, colleagues, and community experts



Role of the Families

- Invited to be part of the children's journey
- Included in decision making
- Help to shape the learning environment
- Share opportunities and experiences outside of school to continue to foster children's learning



Role of the Community

- Must have an invested interest in the children
- Play an active role in supporting children, school, and families
- View children as **CURRENT** citizens of the community
- How do **WE** connect with **OUR** community?



The Worcester Public School Reggio Pilot

- Monthly professional development to introduce the principles of the Reggio Emilia approach to the early childhood departments of Worcester Technical High School and South High School
- Pilot included:
 - Preschool Teachers
 - Infant Toddler Teachers
 - Chapter 74 Teachers
 - Early Childhood Administrators
 - Research and Evaluation Specialist





The Experience

- Hands-on exploration of materials each session provided a “lived experience” for the group
- Topics explored included:
 - Considering their own image of the child
 - Learning with children through reflective practice
 - 100 Languages of Children
 - The environment as the third teacher
 - Creating meaningful learning experiences
 - Documenting to make children’s learning visible
 - Working together with families and the community

Testimonials

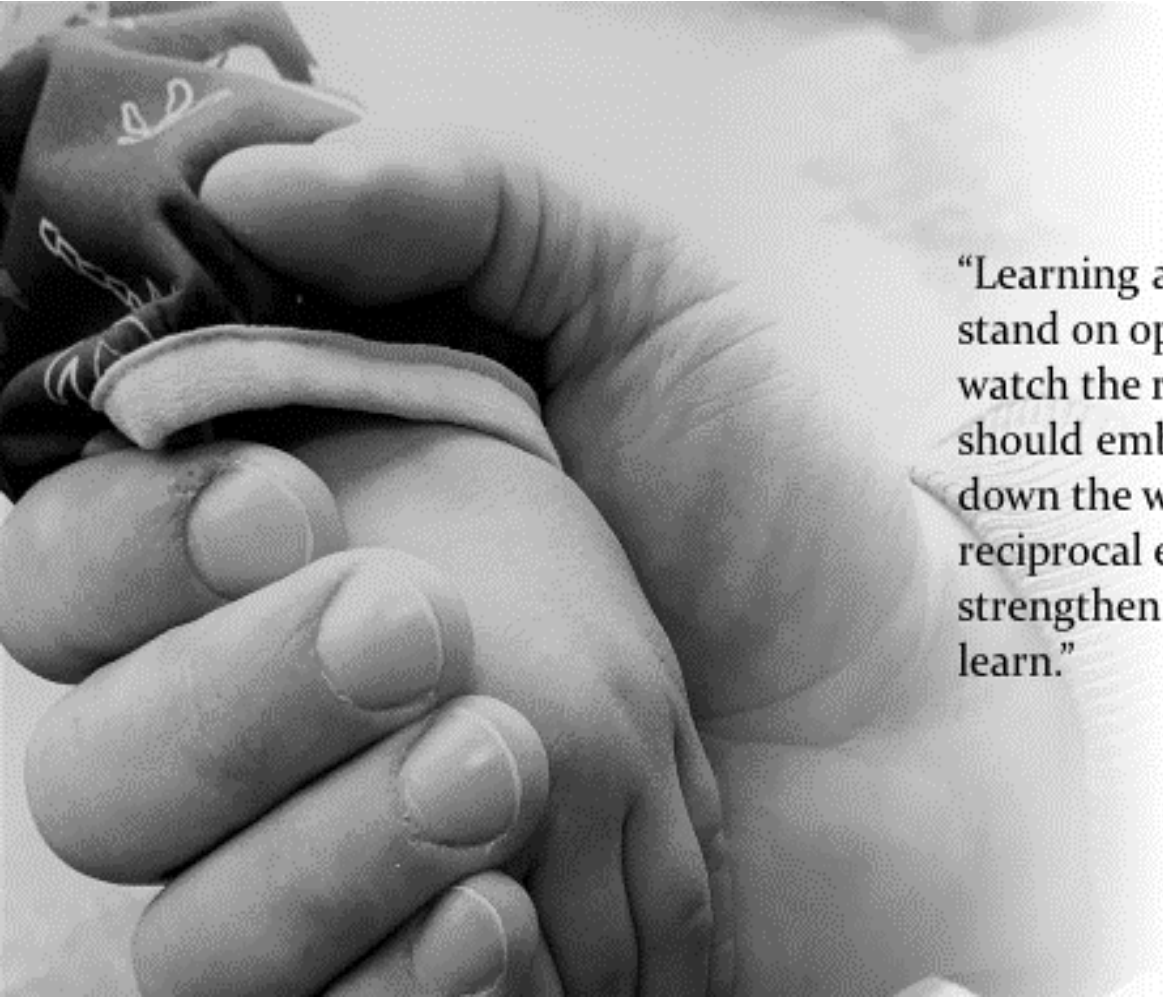
- "I am so excited to have been encouraged to really examine children's interests and play that is child centered."
- "I am now looking at children from more of a strength-based lens."
- "I have always felt strongly that children need to be heard (actually listened to) and respected. When we take the children's lead, we are able to create more meaningful experiences not only for the children but for the teachers and families."
- "A takeaway is the reflection piece. We reflect every day, but by adding in the question prompts we will be able to dig a little deeper during the reflections with the high school students and children."
- "The Reggio approach creates and fosters a sense of community within our schools, classrooms and learning environments. This happens when there is collaboration that includes the children's input, ideas, and creativity. It empowers the children and their rights as learners."
- "The Reggio approach values and respects the children by including them in the planning, which in turn keeps their interest high. The Reggio approach supports ALL learners as they delve deep into learning and become invested."
- "The Reggio training has affirmed that what we do everyday in our classroom with the children as well as their families is correct!"





Next Steps

- Met with all WPS preschool teachers on May 16
- Teachers' choice to participate
- Monthly meetings to delve more deeply and intentionally into Reggio principles and their application in classrooms
- Identifying how families and the community can be a more integral part of children's learning
- Future plans to include kindergarten teachers and beyond



“Learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water. Through an active, reciprocal exchange, teaching can strengthen learning and how to learn.”

-Loris Malaguzzi

Committee Members
Molly McCullough, Chair
Susan Mailman, Vice-Chair
Jermoh Kamara

AGENDA #5
TLSS
5-10-22
Page 1

A C T I O N S

The Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports met virtually at 4:45 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at the Durkin Administration Building in Room 410.

There were present: Vice-Chair Mailman, Member Kamara and Chair McCullough

Representing Administration were: Dr. O'Neil, Superintendent Binienda and Dr. Friel

Others in Attendance: J. Chapdelaine, E. Kelley, M. Mahoney, Dr. Castiel, Dr. Ross, J. Safford, Dr. Keenan and R. Seward

gb #1-312 - Ms. McCullough/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick (November 9, 2021)

Request that the Administration explore utilizing virtual tutoring services for the students of the WPS.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was held for a meeting in June.

c&p #2-4 - Clerk (February 9, 2022)

To consider a communication from a citizen regarding the addition of elementary school librarians.

gb #2-56 - McCullough/Clancey/Johnson/Kamara/Mailman/Novick (February 7, 2022)

Request that the Administration provide an update on library programs and the use of librarians throughout the district.

(Consider these items together.)

Dr. O'Neil stated that due to budget cuts, there are no elementary librarians. Burncoat Prep, Goddard and Tatunck Magnet schools house Worcester Public Library satellites. The bookmobile is also available during the school day.

Member Mailman asked if the Administration is considering reinstating librarians in the elementary schools.

Member Kamara asked that the item be held for additional information, in a grid format, regarding what schools have library spaces and indicate whether or not there are volunteer working in them.

Ms. Chapdelaine suggested that the Administration contact other elementary school districts regarding the use of public library materials in their schools.

Chair McCullough made the following motions:

Request that the item be held for additional information, in a chart format, on which schools have library spaces and indicate whether or not they are being utilized.

Request that the Administration explore budgetary options for the hiring of elementary school librarians in the for FY 2023-24 Budget

On a roll call of 3-0, the motions were approved.

HOLD

gb #2-42 - Kamara/Novick (January 26, 2022)

To consider developing a framework in the Worcester Public Schools to target mental and social emotional health and provide an update on the implementation of the health curriculum.

Dr. Ross provided a PowerPoint regarding a comparison of suspension data February through March which indicated that there was a 160% increase in emergency removals, 61% increase in in-house suspensions, 38% increase in out-of-school suspensions and 128% increase in long term suspensions. Latino students have a higher suspension rate than the Asian and white students and black students are more likely to have in-school suspensions. It's important to point out that students who are disciplined are a relatively small percent of the overall school population.

Dr. Keenan, Chief of Community Health, provided a PowerPoint on the comparing the:

- Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) districts' plan which is from DESE
- Advancing Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems Guidance which is a 2019 Federal document and
- School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System (SHAPE) model which is a public access web-based platform.

A Multi-Tiered System of Support:

- targets intervention of students with serious concerns that impact daily functions.
- supports an early intervention for students identified through needs assessments as being at risk for mental health concerns.
- promotions positive social, emotional and behavioral skills and overall wellness for all students.
- provides professional development and support for a healthy school workforce and family, school and community partnerships.
- creates multiple and diverse funding and resources to support a full continuum of services.

- maximizes leveraging and sharing of funding and resources to attract an array of funders.
- increases reliance on more permanent funding and has adequate funding for services and supports at each tier.
- uses best-practice strategies to retain staff.
- de-implement programs that are not achieving desired outcomes and reallocate resources to evidence-based and effective programs.
- evaluate and document outcomes, including the impact on academic and classroom functioning and uses those findings to inform school, district and state-level policies that impact funding and resource allocation.

Comprehensive School Mental Health System (CSMHS) is defined as school-district-community-family partnerships that provide a continuum of evidence-based mental health services to support students, families and the school community. It provides a full array of tiered mental health services, includes a variety of collaborative partnerships and uses evidence-based services and supports.

SHAPE is used to:

- monitor a school's or district's progress toward achieving the National Performance Measures.
 - provide resources and action planning guides for each domain.
 - gathers data to inform the national census to understand school mental health nationally and
- individuals, schools and districts can complete the measures and results can be aggregated by teams and staff.

Mrs. Mahoney stated that the districts approach for the mental health support for students is looking at climate and culture as the foundation and for use of the tiered intervention. The concept of the different tiers are:

- Tier one is an acceleration and prevention for all students.
- Tier two is for those students who need that extra boost.
- Tier three is for students needing intensive intervention.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the number of elementary school emergency removals have gone down significantly from previous years. There was one student in kindergarten, two in first grade and three in second grade who were removed from school. In-house suspensions have increased due to students vaping and smoking marijuana. Those students are being sent to a five-day drug program with great success. Since this program started, there have been no repeat offenders which has decreased the suspension rates.

Member Mailman requested that Dr. Castiel forward the PowerPoint slides that were presented at the meeting. She asked if it was the opinion of the Administration and Dr. Castiel that more Wraparound Coordinators are needed in the schools rather than School Psychologists.

Dr. Castiel stated that Wraparound services are important because they are the ones that understand what mental health issues students are dealing with at home.

Member Kamara requested that her item be held. She also would like to have an in-person visit to Dr. Castiel, Dr. Ross and the Office of Social Emotional Learning to better understand the comprehensive mental health services they offer for the district.

Member Kamara and Chair McCullough made the following motions:

Request that the item be held for additional information and data regarding the mental health issues in the district.

Request that the School Committee contact Mrs. Mahoney from the Office of Social and Emotional Learning and Dr. Castiel from the Department of Public Health in order to set up an in-person site visit to discuss the services they provide.

Request that the Administration provide a chart indicating the information provided by the Worcester Public Schools in one column and the information from the Department of Public Health in the other.

Member Mailman made the following amendment to be added to the motion:
by requesting that a good assessment be provided for the WPS.

On a roll call of 3-0, the motions were approved.

gb #2-108 - Mailman (March 22, 2022)

To consider Night Life updates regarding:

- workforce and extracurricular classes
- numbers of in person and remote classes
- partnerships and attendance data
- most popular programs
- current and future challenges

Ms. Seward provided an overview of the nightlife programs that were provided in the backup.

Member Mailman requested that the Administration provide, in a grid format, the data of how many people are attending online verses in-person nightlife courses.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was filed.

On a roll call of 3-0, the meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Committee Members
Laura Clancey, Chair
Molly McCullough, Vice-chair
Jermaine Johnson

AGENDA #5
G/EI
5-12-22
Page 1

A C T I O N S

The Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues met virtually at 4:36 p.m. on Thursday, May 12, 2022 in Room 410 at the Dr. John E. Durkin Administration Building.

There were present: J. Johnson, Vice-Chair McCullough and Chair Clancey

Representing Administration: Dr. Andrade, Superintendent Binienda, Dr. O'Neil and Dr. Friel

c&p #2-5 - Clerk (February 3, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to an Instructional Assistant at Worcester Technical High School.

c&p #2-6 - Clerk (March 25, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to:

- a. a teacher at Burncoat High School and
- b. a systemwide teacher

c&p #2-7 - Clerk (March 30, 2022)

To consider a communication from the EAW to consider approval of a donation of sick days to a systemwide teacher from a co-worker.

(These items were considered together.)

On a roll call of 3-0, the items were approved and filed.

ros #0-9 - Administration (September 23, 2020)

RENNIE CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH & POLICY – REPORT ON THE TECHNOLOGY SECTION FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN

ros #1-7 - Administration (April 7, 2021)

RENNIE CENTER-PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC PLAN

(Consider these items together.)

Dr. Andrade discussed the Strategic Plan's metrics that were put together in 2016-17. One of the goals for the district's school improvement plan was to have the student growth percentiles, in areas like ELA and mathematics, higher than the state level but because of the pandemic the percentiles dropped in a few areas.

Member Johnson asked who set the benchmarks for the Strategic Plan and should the 2023 benchmarks be revisited or kept the same.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the benchmarks were done by individuals from WEC, the Worcester Regional Research Bureau, Rennie Center and community members. She also stated that the benchmarks should be revisited and the metrics need to be more clearly defined because some can't be measured.

Dr. Andrade stated that some of the benchmarks did not have a starting baseline so it was hard for the district to have a measure or percentage to reach the target. He also stated that due to the pandemic, some of the targets that were set in the Strategic Plan will need to be shifted or readjusted.

Chair Clancey asked if the Rennie Center has completed all five areas in the Strategic Plan.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the work for the Strategic Plan has been completed by the Rennie Center and it is no longer involved in the final aspect of it. She stated that the Federal Government will be changing some of the State's metrics in late summer. Therefore, she recommends that once those changes are made, that the Strategic Plan can be revamped and Dr. Andrade can provide a report next year of the analyzed metric data.

Ms. Clancey made the following motion:

Request that the item be held.

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

gb #2-21 - Ms. Novick/Mr. Johnson/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider eliminating the test out option within the employee vaccination requirement.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the City has dropped its mandate for employees to get tested weekly. She also stated that by mandating everyone to get vaccinated would mean that there will not be enough teachers, nurses or bus drivers to run the school system and that the Administration cannot require people to get vaccinated.

Chair Clancey stated that she is aware that the City changed its policy requiring the weekly testing and believes that employees should not be mandated to get the vaccinations. Therefore, she is recommended that the item be accepted and filed.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was accepted and filed.

gb #2-22 - Ms. Novick/Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

To consider implementing a student vaccination requirement for participation in extracurricular activities.

Superintendent Binienda stated that there is only two weeks left for spring sports and it doesn't make sense to require students to get vaccinated.

Chair Clancey stated that extracurricular activities are very important to some students and she would hate to see that taken away from them because of a vaccination requirement. There are enough students dealing with mental health issues without adding this requirement. She also stated that Worcester is a very diverse city and that some cultures have different views on vaccinations. Therefore, she is recommended that the item be accepted and filed.

On a roll call of 3-0, the item was accepted and filed.

gb #2-30 - Administration - (January 19, 2022)

To consider approval of the proposed 2022-23 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

Chair Clancey made the following motion:

Request that the proposed changes for pages 30 through 80 of the Student Handbook, as contained in Annex A of the backup, be approved as amended and that the Student Handbook be approved as amended.

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

On a roll call of 3-0, the meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

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

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Administration/Novick/Clancey/
Johnson/Kamara/Mailman
(May 12, 2022)

CURRENT ITEM - gb 2-18.7
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

1ST ITEM	gb 2-18	S.C.MTG. 1-20-22
2ND ITEM	gb 2-18.1	S.C.MTG. 2-3-22
3RD ITEM	gb 2-18.2	S.C.MTG. 2-17-22
4 TH ITEM	gb 2-18.3	S.C.MTG. 3-3-22
5 th ITEM	gb 2-18.4	S.C. MTG. 3-17-22
6 th ITEM	gb 2-18.5	S.C. MTG. 4-7-22
7 th ITEM	gb 2-18.6	S.C.MTG. 5-5-22
8 th ITEM	gb 2-18.7	S.C.MTG. 5-19-22

ITEM:

Response of the Administration to the request to update the community on the Worcester Public Schools and COVID.

ORIGINAL ITEM: Ms. Novick/Ms. Clancey/Mr. Johnson/Ms. Kamara/
Ms. Mailman (January 12, 2022)

Request administration update the community on the Worcester Public Schools and COVID.

PRIOR ACTION:

1-20-22 - Superintendent Binienda provided the updated COVID results as follows:
Week of January 14-January 20

Students

-936 positive cases

-36 quarantined

Staff

-142 positive cases

-1 quarantined

Test and Stay cases:

Students

-922

Staff

-42

Ms. Novick asked that the Administration continue to enforce mask wearing especially for staff.

She also asked the Administration to contact Honeywell in order to provide a report on the feasibility of moving the portable filters into cafeterias that do not currently run them.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was held for an update at each meeting.

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Provide an update and hold for the next meeting.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 2-3-22 - School Committee Member Novick asked if the Administration is planning for another vaccination clinic and urged it to communicate on a regular basis with families regarding the importance of vaccinations. She also asked if the Administration had heard from Honeywell regarding relocation of the portable ventilation units to cafeterias. Mr. Allen stated that Honeywell had supported the use of the portable units in the cafeterias. Superintendent Binienda stated that she would provide more information regarding vaccine clinics at the next School Committee meeting. Superintendent Binienda provided the updated COVID results as follows:
Week of January 28-February 3
Students
-243 positive cases
-20 quarantined
Staff
-48 positive cases
-0 quarantined
Test and Stay cases:
Students
-290
Staff
-25
School Committee Member McCullough made the following motion: Request that the Administration consider lifting the spectator restrictions at student sport events by Wednesday, February 9, 2022, pending the City Manager's decision. On a roll call of 7-0, the motion was approved. Hold for the next meeting.
- 2-17-22 - Superintendent Binienda provided an update on the COVID cases for February 11-17:
Students 68 positive
Staff 19 positive
Test and Stay 62 positive students and 5 positive staff
74% of staff are vaccinated
19% of students are vaccinated (two shots)
16,983 students have received one shot
(continued on Page 3)

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 2-17-22 - School Committee Member Mailman stated that she reviewed the data on the state website for the MIIS (Massachusetts Immunization Information System) which indicated that 5-11 year olds were 38.9% vaccinated and 12-15 year olds were 72% vaccinated. She requested that the Superintendent's weekly email update should also contain vaccine updates for students and staff.
School Committee Member Kamara requested that the update include graphs indicating the numbers by positive cases and vaccinations broken down by quadrants.
Hold for updates at the next meeting.
- 3-3-22 - Superintendent Binienda provided the updated COVID results as follows:
Week of February 18 through March 3
Students
-36 positive cases
-0 quarantined
Staff
-10 positive cases
-0 quarantined
Test and Stay cases:
Students
-24
Staff
-4
Superintendent Binienda stated that she would provide more information regarding vaccine clinics at the next School Committee meeting.
School Committee Member Mailman asked if there were any updates on the number of vaccinations.
Superintendent Binienda stated that she would be forwarding them to the School Committee members on Friday, March 4, 2022.
Vice-Chair Johnson asked if the vaccination numbers had changed.
Superintendent Binienda stated that the numbers come from the Department of Public Health who are the ones who provide the vaccination shots.
School Committee Member Kamara requested that the Administration invite Dr. Castiel to a School Committee Meeting to provide an updated report regarding vaccination clinics, the number of people who have received vaccinations and indicate what has been done throughout the city.
On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Ms. Novick), the item was held for the next meeting.

(continued on Page 4)

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 3-17-22 - Superintendent Binienda provided the COVID-19 numbers for the week of March 3 through March 11.

Students

13 positive

0 quarantined

22 Test and Stay

Staff

6 positive

0 quarantined

0 Test and Stay

Member O'Connell-Novick asked for the districtwide vaccination numbers. Superintendent Binienda reported the following DPH numbers from March 7, 2022:

Of the 23,829 WPS students, 2,722 have received one dose, 8,238 have received 2 doses and 815 have received a booster (3 doses).

The number of students in compliance is 9,049 or 37.97 percent. The total number of students who have received at least one dose is 11,860 or 49 percent.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the district is partnering with UMASS and DPH to provide vaccination clinics for staff and students.

She also stated that DESE provided extra test kits and that 19,100 tests were received last week and another 56,000 are expected within the next few days.

It was moved and voice voted to hold the item for updates at the next meeting.

- 4-7-22 - Superintendent Binienda provided the COVID-19 numbers for the week of April 1 through April 7.

Students

33 positive

1 quarantined

115 Test and Stay

Staff

24 positive

0 quarantined

13 Test and Stay

Mayor Petty asked if the number of cases per school could be provided to the parents.

Superintendent Binienda stated that she discussed this with the health professionals who have suggested that that information not be published.

Member Novick asked that the data on the website be updated weekly and inquired as to whether or not there are elevated levels of absences among students and staff.

Superintendent Binienda stated that there is a slightly elevated level of absences due to a stomach flu occurring in the schools.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was held for updates at the next meeting.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

5-5-22 - Superintendent Binienda provided the COVID-19 numbers for the week of April 29 through May 5th.

Students

131 positive

0 quarantined

304 Test and Stay

Staff

60 positive

0 quarantined

22 Test and Stay

She stated that the Commissioner of Education extended the Test and Stay until the end of the school year due to the increases in COVID cases. She also stated that the City Manager will be releasing a statement on May 15th regarding requirements for staff regarding the vaccinations and testing.

Ms. Novick stated that she would like her colleagues to remember that they are their own independent bargaining units when it comes to dealing with vaccinations and the staff. The City Manager sets policy for the City side not for the school side. She asked for an update on the vaccinations of students and staff.

Superintendent Binienda stated that the regular vaccinations for students are almost all up to date. A ConnectEd message will be sent out regarding the second set of COVID shots for students and staff.

The City has been running vaccination clinics and she will get the data from them to provide to the School Committee at a later date.

On a roll call of 7-0, the item was held for updates at the next meeting.

L. GENERAL BUSINESS
Administration/Novick
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb #2-118.1
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

Response of the Administration to provide an update to the School Committee on principal succession planning, including parent and educator voice in the process.

ORIGINAL ITEM: Novick (March 31, 2022)

Request administration update School Committee at the April 28 meeting on principal succession planning, including parent and educator voice in the process.

PRIOR ACTION:

4-7-22 - On a roll call of 7-0, the item was referred to the Administration for a report back on April 28, 2022.

BACKUP: Administrative positions are posted on SchoolSpring. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply. Candidates are screened by Human Resources for the appropriate DESE license. Licensed candidates are reviewed by an administrative team which selects candidates for the school-based committees to meet. The Site Council and the principal at each school identifies family and/or community members for the interview panel. Each committee consists of representatives from schools, central office administrators, the Chief Diversity Officer, members of the Superintendent's Advisory Committee, and school leaders. The committee meets the candidates, reviews resumes, asks questions and discusses the candidates responses. The Superintendent receives the interview committee's recommendations, meets with the candidates and makes the hiring decision.

Additionally, the district has developed a program with Worcester State University to support educators who are interested in obtaining an administrative license from DESE. The program includes coursework at WSU and a paid internship in a WPS school working under a licensed administrator. Candidates are also provided with support from WSU including assistance completing and submitting documentation required for DESE certification. Every two years, WPS staff are invited to apply to the program. The Chief Diversity Officer, current school and district leaders, and WSU leaders co-lead a team of administrators in reviewing the applicants and recommending applicants to the program.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Accept and file.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Mailman
(May 6, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-144
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

Request that the Administration provide the rules from the Human Resources Department regarding CORI background checks for school based volunteers, including PTOs.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to the Administration.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Mailman
(May 6, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-145
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

Request that the Administration provide a report, from January to present, regarding teacher shortages to include teacher absences by school and indicate the resources utilized to cover their classroom.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Novick
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-146
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To consider a proposed resolution regarding sanctuary laws for passage for formal consideration by the 2022 Massachusetts Association of School Committees Delegate Assembly.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP: Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the Resolution.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Pass the resolution.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.

WHEREAS

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a long history of standing for civil rights, including advocacy for a bill of rights in the U.S. Constitution, and

WHEREAS

Massachusetts codified gender identity as a protected class in the 2011 Act Relative to Gender Identity, and

WHEREAS

All children deserve a safe environment in which to grow up, and

WHEREAS

Some state governments are now criminalizing supportive medical care for trans individuals; moving to bar families from traveling to access such care; and otherwise violating the civil rights of trans children and their families, and

WHEREAS

The defense of the civil rights of the historically marginalized is contained within the first article of the Massachusetts Constitution right of “seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness,”

THEREFORE the Massachusetts Association of School Committees call on the Great and General Court to join with other states in the passage of so-called “sanctuary” laws to ensure such children and their families have “the power of enjoying, in safety and tranquility, their natural rights and the blessings of life,” as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Novick
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-147
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To review district policy ACAB to ensure alignment with the United States Department of Education August 2021 "Letter to Students, Educators, and other Stakeholders re: Victim Rights Law Center et al. v. Cardona," the United States Department of Education July 2021 "Questions and Answers on the Title IX Regulations Regarding Sexual Harrassment," and proposed rulemaking as released by the United States Department of Education.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP: Annex A (3 pages) contains a copy of the letter from Suzanne B. Goldberg, Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.
Annex B (3 pages) contains a copy of the WPS Policy ACAB.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.



**Letter to Students, Educators, and other
Stakeholders re
Victim Rights Law Center et al. v. Cardona Notice
of Language Assistance**

Notice of Language Assistance: If you have difficulty understanding English, you may, free of charge, request language assistance services for this Department information by calling 1-800- USA-LEARN (1800-872-5327) (TTY: 1-800-877-8339), or email us at: Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICE FOR
CIVIL RIGHTS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

August 24, 2021

Dear Students, Educators, and other Stakeholders,

I write with an important update regarding the Department of Education's regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended in 2020. On July 28, 2021, a federal district court in Massachusetts issued a decision in *Victim Rights Law Center et al. v. Cardona*, No. 1:20-cv-11104, 2021 WL 3185743 (D. Mass. July 28, 2021). This case was brought by several organizations and individuals challenging the 2020 amendments to the Title IX regulations.

The court upheld most of the provisions of the 2020 amendments that the plaintiffs challenged, but it found one part of 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(6)(i) (live hearing requirement for the Title IX grievance process at postsecondary institutions only) to be arbitrary and capricious, vacated that part of the provision, and remanded it to the Department for further consideration. In a subsequent order issued on August 10, 2021, the court clarified that its decision applied nationwide. The court vacated the part of 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(6)(i) that prohibits a decision-maker from relying on statements that are not subject to cross-examination during the hearing: "If a party or witness does not submit to cross-examination at the live hearing, the decision-maker(s) must not rely on any statement of that party or witness in reaching a determination regarding responsibility...." Please note that all other provisions in the 2020 amendments, including all other parts of 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(6)(i), remain in effect. The affected provision at 34 C.F.R. § 106.45(b)(6)(i) is only applicable to postsecondary institutions and does not apply to elementary or secondary schools, which are not required to provide for a live hearing with cross-examination.

In accordance with the court's order, the Department will immediately cease enforcement of the part of § 106.45(b)(6)(i) regarding the prohibition against statements not subject to cross-examination. Postsecondary institutions are no longer subject to this portion of the provision.

In practical terms, a decision-maker at a postsecondary institution may now consider statements made by parties or witnesses that are otherwise permitted under the regulations, even if those parties or witnesses do not participate in cross-examination at the live hearing, in reaching a determination regarding responsibility in a Title IX grievance process.

For example, a decision-maker at a postsecondary institution may now consider statements made by the parties and witnesses during the investigation, emails or text exchanges between the parties leading up to the alleged sexual harassment, and statements about the alleged sexual harassment that satisfy the regulation's relevance rules, regardless of whether the parties or witnesses submit to cross-examination at the live hearing. A decision-maker at a postsecondary institution may also consider police reports, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner documents, medical reports, and other

Page 2—Dear Students, Educators, and Other Stakeholders Letter re *Victim Rights Law Center et al. v. Cardona* documents even if those documents contain statements of a party or witness who is not crossexamined at the live hearing.

The Office for Civil Rights is in the process of identifying all documents on our website that discuss this vacated provision and will make updates to those documents as appropriate in the coming weeks. Any statements in an OCR document about the vacated part of § 106.45(b)(6)(i) should not be relied upon.

As OCR announced in an April 6, 2021, [letter to students, educators, and other stakeholders](#), OCR is undertaking a comprehensive review of the Department's existing Title IX regulations, orders, guidance, policies, and other similar agency actions to fulfill the policy set out in President Biden's [Executive Order](#), dated March 8, 2021, on *Guaranteeing an Educational Environment Free From Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, Including Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity*. This process is ongoing, and OCR anticipates publishing a notice of proposed rulemaking to amend the Department's Title IX regulations.

OCR also recently issued a [question-and-answer resource](#) to clarify how OCR interprets schools' obligations under the 2020 amendments and a related appendix, which provides examples of Title IX procedures that schools may find helpful in implementing the 2020 amendments. The resource will be updated to reflect the court's decision in *VRLC v. Cardona*, and we hope it will continue to be a valuable tool to assist schools in carrying out their obligations under Title IX.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure equal educational opportunities for all of our nation's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzanne B. Goldberg", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Suzanne B. Goldberg
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Worcester Public Schools policy ACAB - SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the Worcester Public Schools including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting, as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Since the Worcester School Committee takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action, where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and school environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or school conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a persons' employment or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a male toward a female, by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee or by a teacher toward a student. The Worcester Public Schools' view of sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- A. A man, as well as a woman, may be the victim of sexual harassment and a woman, as well as a man, may be the harasser.
- B. The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor. He/she may also be an agent of the employer, a supervisory employee who does not supervise the victim, a non-supervisory employee (co-worker), or in some circumstances even a non-employee (student, parent).
- C. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.
- D. The victim does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The victim may also be someone who is affected by such conduct when it is directed toward another person. For example, inappropriate attempts of humor or sexual harassment of one female/male employee may create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment for another female/male or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or educational performance.

E. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victim's having suffered a concrete economic injury as a result of the harasser's conduct. For example, improper sexual advances which do not result in the loss of a promotion by the victim or the discharge of the victim may, nonetheless, constitute sexual harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the victim's work or education or unreasonably create a harmful or offensive work or educational environment.

The Grievance Officers:

Chief Human Resource Officer (508) 799-3020
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

Instructional Support Personnel Director (508) 799-3027
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

The committee will annually appoint sexual harassment grievance officers who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure set out below:

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident (s) to one of the grievance officers. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.
2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
 - a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
 - b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his/her response to the complaint.
 - c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
 - d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation he/she may:
 - Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
 - Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.

After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings, the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Worcester Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

State and Federal Remedies

Nothing in this policy or procedure shall be deemed to affect a complainant's right to pursue other remedies at law, including administrative appeals or lawsuits. Administrative agencies with jurisdiction in these matters include:

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")

One Ashburton Place, Room 601

Boston, MA 02108

(617) 727-3990

The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

5 Post Office Square 8th Floor

Boston, MA 02109-3921

(617) 289-0111

Massachusetts Department of Education

75 Pleasant Street

Malden, MA 02148

(781) 388-3300

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")

One Congress Street - 10th Floor

Boston, MA 02114

(617) 565-3200

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45 Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission

Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX) Board of Education 603 CMR [26:00](#)

SOURCE: WPS

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Novick
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-148
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

Request administration review and report promptly back to the Committee before the close of the fiscal year district adherence to MGL Ch. 32, sec. 90 and 91, as operational under the waiver passed during the FY22 budget process.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to administration.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Novick
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-149
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

Request Superintendent, Superintendent's office, and all other employees of the district follow district policy GBEB and state ethics laws regarding fundraising.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP: Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the WPS Policy GBEB.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to administration.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.

Worcester Public Schools policy GBEB - GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts

The acceptance of gifts worth \$50 or more by school personnel in a calendar year when the gift is given because of the position they hold, or because of some action the recipient could take or has taken in his or her public role, violates the conflict of interest law. Acceptance of gifts worth less than \$50, while not prohibited by the conflict of interest law, may require a written public disclosure to be made.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the school district will accept a gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the employee's public position, or anything that the employee could do or has done in his or her public position. Gifts worth less than \$50 may be accepted, but a written disclosure to the employee's appointing authority must be made if the gift and the circumstances in which it was given could cause a reasonable person to think that the employee could be improperly influenced. The value of personal gifts accepted is aggregated over a calendar year (4 gifts of \$20 value is the same as 1 gift of \$80 if given in the same calendar year).

In general, homemade gifts without retail value are permissible because a reasonable person would not expect an employee would unduly show favor to the giver, so no disclosure is required. Such gifts could include homemade food items (cookies, candy, etc.), handpicked flowers, and handmade gifts worth less than \$10 (ten) dollars.

Class Gifts

There is a specific exception to the prohibition against accepting gifts worth \$50 or more, when the teacher knows only that the gift is from the class, not from specific donors. A single class gift per calendar year valued up to \$150 or several class gifts in a single year with a total value up to \$150 from parents and students in a class may be accepted provided the gift is identified only as being from the class and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. The recipient may not accept an individual gift from someone who contributed to the class gift. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that the individual offering such gift did not contribute to the class gift.

Gifts for School Use

Gifts given to a teacher solely for classroom use or to purchase classroom supplies are not considered gifts to an individual employee and are not subject to the \$50 limit. However, an employee who accepts such gifts must keep receipts documenting that money or gift cards were used for classroom supplies.

Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time is prohibited by the conflict of interest law. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes should be made among staff members. Staff members of course remain free to support charitable causes of their own selection.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Kamara
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-150
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

Request that the Administration provide a report, in the form of a chart, on all secondary schools specialized programs occurring in each quadrant.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to the Administration.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Kamara
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-151
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

Request that the Administration provide a report, in the form of a chart, on the relative ability of a child to get into a specialized program that is in a secondary school that is outside their home quadrant.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

Refer to the Administration.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

The Administration concurs with the maker.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Mayor Petty
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-152
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To set up a meeting among Adjustment Counselors, School Psychologists, Wraparound Coordinators, Dr. Castiel, the Department of Public Health and certain members of the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force to discuss Mental Health issues facing students in the WPS.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Refer to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports..

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Mayor Petty
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-153
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To vote to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Dr. Rachel H. Monárrez for the position of Superintendent of Schools for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Prerogative of the School Committee.

N. GENERAL BUSINESS
Mayor Petty
(May 11, 2022)

ITEM - gb 2-154
S.C. MEETING - 5-19-22

ITEM:

To vote to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Kay Seale for the position of Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025.

PRIOR ACTION:

BACKUP:

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Prerogative of the School Committee.