

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
November 21, 2016

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:01 PM at Case House by Mrs. Danielle Black, Chair. In attendance were Mr. Alex Cobb and Mr. John Henry of the School Committee; Mrs. Elizabeth Nagarajah, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent; Mrs. Pamela Bator, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; and Mrs. Cynthia Mahr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. Not present: Dr. Ed Heller, Dr. Sanjay Saini. Dr. Sanjay joined the meeting at 7:07 PM.

Also in attendance were Mr. Anthony Parker, Weston High School Principal; Ms. Kelly Flynn, Weston High School Assistant Principal; Ms. Marla Schay, Guidance Department Head, Grades 6-12; Dr. Kerry Dunne, Grade 6-12 History Department Head, and several members of the History Department and English Department faculty; and Mr. Nick Pezzote, Student Activities Advisor.

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced members of the School Committee and Administration. She noted Dr. Heller's absence due to traveling and the absence of student member Veronica Rigobon. Mrs. Black reviewed the evening's agenda and noted the upcoming Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, November 29.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Tremblay reported on recent activities in the district, highlighting the past weekend's Tour de Case bike event, the "phenomenal" High School Theater Company production of *As You Like It*, and WestonPAC's evening program event for parents. He reported that Weston High School sent a team of six students to the Harvard/MIT Math Tournament and, freshman Andrew Yao finished in fourth place out of 800 students competing from all high school grades. Dr. Tremblay reported that 34 Weston High School students were selected to participate in the Eastern Massachusetts Senior District Music Festival and will perform in the Senior District Concert Band, Jazz Band, Orchestra and Chorus at Boston Latin School in January. He noted that of the 34 students, 24 were recommended to All-States.

Dr. Tremblay informed the Committee that Weston High School is the recipient of the National Athletic Trainers' Association Safe Sports School Award for a three-year period, valid from November 17, 2016 through November 16, 2019, noting that the award champions safety and recognizes secondary schools that provide safe environments for student athletes and reinforces the importance of providing the best level of care, injury prevention and treatment.

Dr. Tremblay reported he has been in discussion with Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries, and others on the proposed High School Learning Commons, and that proposals for a down-scaled project are being considered. Mrs. Black indicated the Committee would like to have any implications for budget consideration prior to the budget process and suggested Dr. McCanne and Mr. Parker update the Committee prior to budget presentation.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – None.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

MAJOR BUSINESS

II.A. High School Report
Guidance Report on the Class of 2016, Student Performance & Achievement Report,
Advanced Placement Program

Mr. Parker, Ms. Flynn, Ms. Schay, and Mr. Pezzote presented the annual high school student academic performance and participation report based on data from the 2015-2016 school year. Mr. Parker indicated Weston High School is strong and offers many opportunities other

districts are unable to provide. He shared the school demographic statistics, noting Weston High School is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse with an increase in Asian population. Ms. Flynn shared student data on student attendance and discipline and commended Data Coordinator Nick Blank for his help. She shared MCAS data, noting a decline in Science scores. Mr. Nick Pezzote, Student Activities Advisor, reported on extra-curricular activities, noting there are 72 active clubs this year, with students actively involved in multiple clubs. He highlighted some of the clubs' achievements. Mr. Parker commended Mr. Pezzote for his work this year. Regarding athletic participation, Mr. Parker reports that a strong athletic program is in place.

Ms. Schay reported on statistics on the Class of 2016, noting that 181 students attended 112 different institutions of higher learning including 100% of METCO students. She reviewed Advanced Placement test data, indicating that 85% of students scored 3 or higher. The Committee discussed the report. In response to Committee questions, Ms. Flynn discussed anti-bullying efforts, noting a concentration on kindness as well as anti-bullying.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to accept the High School Report.

II.B. June Academy Update

Mr. Parker updated the Committee on plans underway for June Academy. He said 70 courses have been proposed thus far and all will be reviewed. He highlighted some courses proposed thus far: Ted Talks, Salt Marsh Study, Babysitting Certification, Sign Language, History of Antarctica, Hidden Figures, Nation Building, Chick Lit, Behind the Making of *Hamilton*, History of Boston through College Tours, Boston Archeology Program, Self-Defense for Women, and Cuba Experience. It was noted that 24 students have been accepted for the trip to Cuba, and a wait list has been established. He invited the School Committee to have a representative on the committee that will review proposals for the two-week June Academy 2017, due by November 30 and noted that the application process must include expectations, learning goals, teaching methodologies, cost and budget, technology needs, time constraints, and class size. He said there will be a course handbook with the offerings. Mr. Parker noted the symmetry between the High School June Academy and the Middle School Project Based Learning plans this year.

Audience member Brenda DeVito asked if seniors would have opportunity to take the courses, post-graduation. Mr. Parker said he would welcome the return of seniors and indicated perhaps it would also provide opportunity to internship with the teachers. Mrs. Black thanked Mr. Parker for the update on this exciting opportunity. No action taken.

II.C. 2017-2018 Grade 6-12 Program of Studies

Pamela Bator reported on the process of proposed changes for the 2017-2018 Grade 6-12 Program of Studies. She presented Middle School changes needed should language year of decision (Grade 5 vs. Grade 6) be approved, noting there would be addition of Grade 6 Mandarin, Grade 6 French, and Grade 6 Latin. She noted that was the only proposed change at the Middle School.

Mr. Parker and Dr. Dunne presented proposed changes in the History Department, including new AP Psychology and Asian American Studies electives and a change in Senior Sociology and Contemporary World Issues to become semester courses rather than full year ones. Dr. Dunne proposed the elimination of the Debate Issues semester course and renaming Microeconomics to Introduction to Economics. She reviewed a restructuring of when students could take different courses. Mr. Parker noted that there were no FTE ramifications with these proposals and existing staff would teach the new courses, with some cost for professional development training and mentoring. Mr. Henry commended Dr. Dunne and the department but expressed concern that a gap exists with just Advanced Placement and College Prep levels and concern that there are students who are not intellectually engaged with just two levels. He noted the gap occurs in Math as well as History. Mr. Henry said he would like the Committee

to discuss the issue of two levels and its not being a Committee policy to have only two levels. Mr. Cobb voiced that the Committee may want to discuss options for all students, especially as enrollment declines. Dr. Saini suggested exploring more online options. Dr. Dunne expressed concern that having a third level would have a lower level with all students on IEPs. Mrs. Black said she would prefer the Committee wait to have a discussion regarding a policy on levels until Dr. Heller was in attendance. Ms. Attia Lennard expressed appreciation to Mr. Henry for his comments. Mr. Parker spoke about a change in the Guidance Department course for seniors, a new course entitled Senior Transitions to replace Senior Internship. He also noted he would present an additional proposal for a new art course.

Mrs. Black indicated the Committee would continue its discussion of the proposed changes to the Program of Studies as well as a discussion on policy regarding levels at its next meeting. No action taken.

II.D. Town Report – Initial Discussion

Mrs. Black outlined the process on preparation for this year's Town Report, noting the report was due to the Town in February. The Committee discussed. Mr. Henry offered to review last year's School Committee portion of the Town Report and divide up assignments. Mrs. Bator offered to work with Mr. Henry. No action taken.

II.E. Weston Education Association Memorandum of Understanding

Mrs. Bator presented details of the MOU reached with the Weston Education Association regarding Department Head and Director Leadership Evaluation and requested the School Committee vote to approve. Mrs. Black indicated she would sign on behalf of the Committee after its approval.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Weston School Committee and the Weston Education Association.

II.F. Facility Project Updates

Case House – Mrs. Black said they are in the process of selecting a project manager. She noted the Historical Commission would request additional design funds at the upcoming Special Town Meeting and that the PBC is comfortable with the goals the commission has put forward.

Proctor Field – Mr. Cobb said the working group would meet in the morning to review preliminary designs. He asked if the Committee would like the designer to come to a School Committee meeting or if Committee members would like to attend a posted meeting of the group. Committee consensus was that updates are sufficient at this point.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve minutes of November 7, 2016.

III.B. Business Actions

Acceptance of Gift

Mrs. Mahr requested the Committee accept a gift totaling \$4,571.70 from the Class of 2016, to be used as follows: \$1,351.29 to the Gina Fried Memorial Scholarship Fund; \$2,206.94 to METCO; and \$1,013.47 to the High School Principal Discretionary Fund.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry the School Committee voted unanimously to accept gift of \$4,571.70 from the Class of 2016.

Certificate of Warrant

Mrs. Mahr presented a Certificate of the Secretary, approval of warrants for payment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$1,846,006.56 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Exception to Policy BCB, Conflict of Interest

Mrs. Mahr requested the Committee grant an exception to Policy BCB to allow the hiring of Ms. Kayla Jarobski, daughter of Mr. Gary Jarobski, Assistant Director of Facilities (also currently serving as Acting Director of Facilities), as a Country School Learning Assistant. She assured the Committee that Mr. Jarobski would not have supervisory responsibility over Kayla.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve an exception to Policy BCB to allow the hiring of Ms. Jarobski.

IV. Executive Session

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, at 10:03 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of discussion of Collective Bargaining, with the intent to not return to Open Session, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mr. Henry voting aye, Dr. Saini voting aye, and Mrs. Black voting aye.

No action taken during Executive Session.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Saini, at 10:23 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn from Executive Session with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mr. Henry voting aye, Dr. Saini voting aye; and Mrs. Black voting aye.