

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
September 11, 2017

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:05 PM at Case House by Mrs. Danielle Black, Chair. In attendance were Mr. Alex Cobb, Dr. Ed Heller, Mr. John Henry, and Dr. Sanjay Saini of the School Committee; Mrs. Elizabeth Nagarajah, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Mrs. Pamela Bator, Assistant Superintendent of District Advancement; Dr. Abbie Lareau, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; and Mrs. Cynthia Mahr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Also in attendance were Mrs. Cheryl Antoine, Alternate METCO Representative to the School Committee, and Ms. LaToya Rivers, Weston METCO Director.

Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda. She noted that a student representative had not yet been elected and that Dr. Saini would be leaving the meeting early

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mrs. Black thanked members of the community for the nice 9/11 ceremony on the Town Green. She noted the upcoming PTO and WestonPAC meetings, the WEEFC banner displayed in the center of town, and the generous Booster gifts to be presented later in the evening.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly welcomed everyone back to a new school year, indicated that schools are alive and great to have students in the buildings. She reported that the new Field School traffic seems to be working and expressed appreciation to all for making it work. Dr. Connolly noted the administrative team is preparing for the state Coordinated Program Review visit after Thanksgiving break.

Dr. Connolly spoke about Mrs. Bator's new position as Assistant Superintendent of District Advancement and reported on the formation of two committees, a Homework Policy Committee and Strategic Planning for Success Committee. She indicated that a communication regarding the committees with a request for volunteers to serve would go out later in the week. She noted that Mrs. Bator would be looking at school culture and over the next couple of months would be running a program for new district administrators.

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that two exchange students were at Weston High School this year, Pierre Di Blas from Rombas France and Guilherme (Gui) Sperb Pereira from Porto Alegre, Brazil. She acknowledged the Theater Company's nomination for the 14<sup>th</sup> time in 14 years to represent American high school theater at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. She noted they would not actively pursue the nomination due to the expense of the program, which would be more than a quarter of a million dollars to take a show to the festival, but, as advisor John Minigan said, "it's an honor just to be nominated."

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – none presented.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

II.A. Enrollment and Staffing Updates

Mrs. Mahr shared enrollment data as of September 11, noting classes are within the class size guidelines. She reported a total enrollment of 2,100, two students below projection. She informed the Committee that a new section of Grade 6 Reading/Writing had been created to address class size, noting it did not require scheduling adjustments. She reported an additional .3 FTE at the Middle School for the reading/writing addition and physical education. No action taken.

II.B. Superintendent's Goals 2017-2018

Dr. Connolly updated the Committee on her Superintendent Entry Plan and noted the positive effect of starting in the position of Superintendent in April. She indicated she has completed 90%

of scheduled initial meetings with individuals and groups in the schools and town. She reported that the analysis of the survey she conducted is nearly complete and is yielding great information.

Dr. Connolly indicated she anticipates the goal of greater communication will take place through new website communication tools. She reported that Case House Cabinet members have scheduled meetings in the schools throughout the year to meet with faculty and staff. She reported the Administrative team held a two-day retreat at Babson College this past summer, noting it is critical to have a strong team. She reported she will shadow a high school student for a day and plans to meet with more students. Dr. Connolly said she has written her goals for the year, has been working with consultant Lori Likis, and will write final draft of Entry Plan

Dr. Connolly shared her proposed goals for the 2017-18 school year, noting they were developed as part of the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education evaluation guidelines and include two professional practice goals and two student learning goals. She reported she is participating in an intensive induction program for new superintendents and is meeting regularly with Jim Marini, former Winchester Superintendent, who is serving as her coach. Dr. Connolly noted the importance of having a collaborative administrative team and the goal of supporting effective institutional practices. Mr. Cobb asked about the inclusion of hiring a permanent Field School Principal. Dr. Connolly agreed to include that under key action under Goal 3. She noted it is a living document that can be added to and built upon during the year. The Committee discussed. Dr. Saini noted the importance of having measurable goals, specific things to quantify. Dr. Connolly noted these will be reflected in Planning for Success. Mr. Cobb mentioned the website roll out needs to be successful and indicated he would prefer to see some tangible, short-term goals. Mrs. Black explained the superintendent evaluation process, noting she would be meeting with Dr. Connolly's direct reports.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent's District Goals for 2017-18.

#### II.C. Policy Review/Discussion

Mr. Henry reported that he is embarking on the project of reviewing all Committee policies and is reviewing Section J Students first. He presented proposed revisions to 11 policies: JA Goals of Student Policies, JB Equal Educational Opportunities, JBA Harassment and/or Bullying, JCA Assignment of Students to Schools, JEB Entrance Age, JF/JFA/JFAB/JFABB Admission of Students to the Weston Public Schools, JFABD Homeless Students – Enrollment Rights and Services, JFBB School Choice, JFBBA Admission of Interdistrict Transfer Students (METCO), JH Student Absences and Excuses, JHCB Religious Absence, and JHD Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance. It was noted that these proposed revisions represent Mr. Henry's work and are not the result of work of the Committee as a whole, but is resulting from his review of MASC recommended policies and those of other districts, and that he is bringing forward for discussion. The Committee discussed proposed revisions, with some requiring further work and revision. Much discussion ensued regarding wording for Policy JEB and wording in JFBBA. Mr. Henry indicated he would bring forth for the next meeting some of this group for approval, some requiring a second revision, and will present a new batch of policies for review. He said he hoped to have Section J completed by Thanksgiving. Mrs. Attia Linnard asked about the impact of children of faculty and staff on class size. Mrs. Black noted attendance of staff children is a contract negotiated item, not a School Committee policy. No action taken.

Dr. Saini left the meeting.

#### II.D. Budget Guidelines

The Committee began the process of establishing next year's Budget Guidelines by reviewing FY18 Budget Guidelines. Mrs. Black noted the guidelines serve as the basis for the administration in its development of the budget.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the FY19 Budget Guidelines.

II.E. Facility Projects Update (Proctor Field, Case House, Case Complex) – Proctor Field/HS Track – Mr. Cobb reported Field 1 is essentially complete, and noted it is having steady use and activity with good reports on its surface. He said the sports wall has been poured, looks good, and is in a good location. He reported that the building foundation has been poured, but noted the contractor has not shown up. He said the field surface is on schedule. Mrs. Black indicated that she has asked Fields Coordinator Ben Polimer for pre-qualification packet and expects the company manager at the PBC meeting on Wednesday.

II.F. Case House Schematic Design

Mrs. Black indicated there was not a School Committee quorum at the recent PBC meeting to approve the schematic design for Case House renovations, so indicated Committee approval should be done at this meeting. She noted the PBC voted to accept. She said the design team thought it critical to conserve the stairway and had to create design to allow addition of handicap accessible bathrooms, second stairway to code, and elevator. They determined current second floor offices were larger than necessary due to being former bedrooms and kept most frequently visited offices on the first floor. She noted the staff meeting room on the second floor, would not be a public space or designated as office space due to its limitations in being made accessible.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to accept the schematic design and authorize McKinley Kaslow to proceed with the next phase of Case House design work, with the understanding that any future decision regarding construction will be subject to a forthcoming budget review.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve minutes of August 28, 2017.

III.B. Business Actions – 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 Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$4,228,632.51 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Acceptance of Gifts Boosters

Mrs. Mahr reviewed list of items given to the schools by Weston Boosters. She noted two items on the list, salary for JV Coach and weight room coverage, are personnel related and need to go through payroll, so were being tabled for tonight. Mrs. Mahr indicated she would make sure that the Athletic Director and Gary Jarobski, Facilities Director, were in communication regarding the new scoreboard and that there is parity and similar look to the other scoreboards. Boosters President Dana Markmann noted the upcoming Booster Bash on November 4. She reported these gifts were allocated from last year's funds. The Committee expressed appreciation to Boosters for their contributions to the support of the athletic programs.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to accept the Boosters gifts as presented.

Donation of Piano

Mrs. Mahr informed the Committee that the Williams family would like to donate a Baldwin Baby Grand piano to be used in the high school chorus room. She indicated Mr. Chris Memoli, Director of Music, was supportive of the donation. She indicated it would require approximately \$350 in moving costs. Mrs. Black requested the piano this would replace be used somewhere else rather than just stored in the middle school basement.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to accept the Williams' family gift as presented.

Exception to Policy BCB, Committee Member Conflict of Interest

Mrs. Mahr informed the Committee of a request to hire Lindsay Gibbons, daughter of Middle School Principal John Gibbons, as a Field School learning assistant. It was noted she is the child of an administrator and requires the Committee waive its policy.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to allow an exception to Policy BCB for the hiring of Lindsay Gibbons.

Memorandum of Understanding with WEA

Mrs. Mahr presented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the WEA for Schedule C stipends, to swap the stipends in year 2 and 3 of the WEA contract for HS Bookstore Advisor and HS DECA Business Club to better align the roles. She noted the same employee serves as both.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to allow the Chair to sign the proposed MOU.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, at 9:58 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.