

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE ONLINE MEETING
May 28, 2020

Zoom Webinar ID: 830 5663 5327

Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 9:00AM by Mr. John Henry, Chair. Participating were Mrs. Danielle Black, Mr. Alex Cobb, Ms. Anita Raman, and Mrs. Rachel Stewart of the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; and Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning.

Also participating were Dr. Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries; Mr. Anthony Parker, Weston High School Principal; Mr. Ms. Kelly Flynn, High School Assistant Principal, John Gibbons, Weston Middle School Principal; Dr. Dan Green, Field School Principal; Ms. Jen Faber, Woodland School Principal; and Ms. Erin Maguire, Country School Principal.

Mr. Henry thanked people for their participation in the meeting, acknowledged those participating, and read the following statement required by the Town of Weston for remote meetings:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Weston will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. We will strive to provide access to such meetings via a link to call in, or other similar option. In the event we are unable to accommodate the same, despite best efforts, we will post recorded sessions of the meeting as soon as possible following the same. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings.

Mr. Henry asked members of the public to email Mrs. Black at blackd@weston.org or Ms. Raman at ramanr@weston.org with comments or questions.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly reported that 5th grade teachers found a way to move forward remotely with the fifth grade wax museum project this year and have posted students' presentations from home of their characters from the American Revolution, some in costume, some not. She congratulated WHS Chemistry teacher Leah Gordon for her selection as the recipient of the 2020 Theodore William Richards Award for Excellence in Teaching Secondary School Chemistry from the Northeast Section of the American Chemical Society

Dr. Connolly announced that the last day of school, required by the Department of Education, is June 19, 2020 which represents our 181st day of school. She indicated that graduation plans are set and that there are moving on celebrations planned to recognize milestone achievements of Grade 3, Grade 5, and Grade 8 students. Dr. Connolly expressed appreciation to the Town's Board of Health for assistance with the plans for the high school graduation event.

Dr. Connolly presented a brief COVID, School from Home update. She thanked teachers for their work in keeping students engaged and helping create a positive experience for students.
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Presentation of School Improvement Plans

Principals provided an update on their School Improvement Plans. Dr. Connolly indicated that the SIP's will likely need to be updated in the fall.

Country and Woodland Schools - Ms. Faber and Ms. Maguire spoke about their collaborative efforts, especially during School from Home. They discussed Data Teams and Learning Walkthroughs and shared examples of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) such as the Responsive Classroom and its benefits during remote learning. Ms. Maguire reported the instructional coaches have been especially helpful

during School from Home being able to offer small groups and troubleshoot. Dr. Green acknowledged the great work of all faculty and staff who have managed much change in a short period of time, have transformed education, took risks, and have been innovative and collaborative. He spoke about the benefits of SEL both before and during remote learning, the Math Workshop Model and differentiation, which will be a focus in the fall.

Field School - Dr. Green, noting the unusual structure of a Grade 4-5 school, spoke about the collaboration with families and the PTO to form a Field School community. He mentioned his plans to possibly utilize the amphitheater and outdoor areas as learning spaces in the fall. Mr. Gibbons shared Middle School highlights of the year, noting the continuing focus on SEL. He spoke about a culture of caring, including Student Advisory Model, which has continued during remote learning.

Middle School - Mr. Gibbons complimented the faculty for embracing the model and commended the work of Assistant Principal Phil Oates, faculty member Becky Kowalski, and Instructional Coach Liz Heichelbech. He said faculty have been phenomenal during SfH, students are engaged, parents supportive, and it has been a team effort. Mr. Gibbons noted that a goal going forward will be to support faculty in remote learning.

High School – Mr. Parker noted the high school SIP aligns with the district strategic plan and had not changed since last year. He reported on the success of Ms. Amy Kelly’s work on SEL, mentioned the goal of staggering assessments to relieve student stress, and noted the need to determine whether remote learning will be needed in the fall. Ms. Flynn said they will discuss how to improve SfH moving forward. Dr. Carter mentioned the work of two faculty teams that started up in January at the high school this year, an SEL Team led by Ms. Flynn and Ms. Kelly and a Data Team, led by Dr. Carter and Mr. Parker, which was focusing on instructional practices. He noted that incoming principal Mr. Paul Peri and Ms. Flynn will have the challenge of identifying the instructional practices that work best for students at Weston High School. Dr. Connolly indicated that Mr. Peri has been at recent administrative meetings and will continue to attend them moving forward.

Mr. Henry thanked all the administrators as well as faculty, students, and parents for their work in continuing to strengthen Weston’s School from Home program. He noted that they will plan on an update on SIPs in the Fall.

Ms. Raman read a question from resident Ms. Mary Ellen Sikes questioning the need for police officers in the schools. Dr. Connolly spoke about the positive assistance of the youth officer in planning a graduation celebration event. Mr. Parker noted that Officer Gibbons is a former educator who relates well to an educational setting. Ms. Raman indicated it would be beneficial to have a presentation by School Resource Officers as an agenda item.

Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Stewart, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:13 AM, with Mrs. Black voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Mr. Cobb voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

Documents used by Committee:
Proposed School Improvement Plans

Recording of Meeting provided by Weston Media: