

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE ONLINE MEETING

August 24, 2020

Webinar

<https://westonorg.zoom.us/j/94015330088>

Call to Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Mr. John Henry, Chair. Participating were Mrs. Danielle Black, Mrs. Rachel Stewart, Ms. Anita Raman, and Mr. Alex Cobb of the School Committee; Ms. Onika Jenkins METCO Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations;

Also present was Dr. Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries.

Mr. Henry reviewed the agenda for the school committee meeting and mentioned the brief Q&A session.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Henry reported that the negotiation subcommittee had met a number of times with the Weston Education Association and made some important progress, but that a number of issues remained to be resolved. He stated that he believed both the committee and the WEA were focused on returning students to school in a hybrid method. Mr. Henry noted that, even starting in a hybrid model, there are likely to be disruptions as the year progresses due to students or staff that may be symptomatic or test positive for COVID-19. Mr. Henry stated that protocols were in development to address various scenarios regarding possible exposure in schools and those protocols would be shared with WEA, the medical advisory group and ultimately parents.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Connolly thanked the medical advisory group that has been working with the administrative team. She listed the members and backgrounds of the medical advisory group which consists of medical doctors, registered nurses, an epidemiologist, faculty members, administrators and a school committee member. The members include Hanna Burnett, Dr. Joseph Grocela, Dr. Karen Sadler, Michele Shuckle, Denise Schwerzler, Jamy Gaynor and Kathleen Mortimer. Dr. Connolly reported that the administrative team has continued to look at staffing, leave requests, scheduling, and hiring in order to finalize the reopening of schools. Safety protocols such as hand sanitizer stations and arrows on the floor are underway as well.

Dr. Carter then described the work of the implementation teams, including an arrival and dismissal system, protocols for masks, snack, recess, lunch breaks, managing traffic in the hallways, and other areas. Dr. Carter acknowledged the hard work of the administrative team on developing the Remote Learning Academy (RLA) and the process of selection teachers for the RLA. The process is almost finished, and an implementation group will be created as well as special training for teachers. He hopes to share the 10-day professional schedule with faculty and staff in the next coming days. The main focus for RLA is best practices for remote learning and teaching. Also, administration has been looking at technology platforms and how to accommodate students' needs regarding remote learning and technology, including social emotional needs. He reported that the administration is working on providing a professional development calendar for the whole school year. Dr. Carter then stated that transportation

is another focus for administration, including ensuring that bus routes are set and cleaning protocols are in place.

Dr. McCanne described the technology implementation group, including researching third-party applications to assist with engagement and assessment. He reported that several tools have been secured and the team is working on providing tutorials, resources, and workshops for faculty in the coming weeks. Dr. McCanne also stated that hardware platforms are ready to be delivered to faculty.

Dr. Carter next discussed budget impacts of preparing for the hybrid model, RLA, and providing a safe learning environment. He acknowledged the effort and success of Ms. Matthews in meeting needs and managing the budget.

Dr. Connolly noted that student services has their own implementation team and the team has been working on how to bring students with disabilities back, what the schedule may look like, and how to meet the various needs of our students.

Mr. Cobb asked about a daily check-in app for health of the students and Dr. McCanne noted the complexity of the requirements. He stated that the district had identified one application, but noted that it was costly, therefore, the district would continue researching possible solutions and discussed interface with Infinite Campus.

Mr. Cobb asked if the committee is going to communicate their expectations to parents in the next coming weeks regarding precautions, they should take in order to have their children back in school. Dr. Connolly expressed that she has been working with Jamy Gaynor on communications to parents. She asked that parents begin having students wear masks at home, stay within family groups, and quarantine if returning from travel. In response to a question from Ms. Raman, Dr. Connolly noted that students will have to limit items brought to school, that certain items will stay in school, and that classroom materials will not be shared.

Mr. Henry moved on to the next agenda item, the school calendar, before the Q&A. Mr. Henry noted that the revised calendar sets the first day of classes on September 15th and the last day of school, barring no snow days, as June 18th. He reported that March 12th and January 15th are professional development days, and Dr. Carter pointed out the new calendar has built in professional development time every Wednesday for faculty. Mr. Henry reported that there are 2 extra days as the calendar provides for 172 days while the state only requires 170 days for the current school year. Dr. Carter explained how the calendar would shift to account for Monday holidays. He stated that if the holiday is on a Monday, the Wednesday would follow the Monday schedule. One group would come on Tuesday and Friday and the other would come on Wednesday and Thursday.

Approval of the School Calendar

The committee discussed the proposed school year calendar that requires approval.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Ms. Raman, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the revised school year calendar of 2020-2021, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

Mr. Henry then read and asked questions from the community. Dr. Carter answered questions regarding school hours, how to enroll or unroll your child in school, and updates on the remote learning academy and teachers.

Dr. Connolly addressed questions regarding teachers and the hybrid model; a specific medical advisory group member; whether children can see their upcoming classrooms; quarantine procedures for faculty and staff; if snow days would become remote days; kindergarten orientation; June academy; and childcare for Weston School teachers.

Dr. Carter answered questions about scheduling for the hybrid model; structure of the remote and in-person days in the hybrid model; how remote learning academy is structured; new teacher hires; and cohorts and Middle School house teachers.

Ms. Matthews answered a question about transportation and asked parents to email if they sought to change their busing selection.

Certificate of Warrant

Ms. Matthews presented a Certificate of the Secretary, approval of warrants for payment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded Ms. Raman, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$409,789.78 by the Assistant of Finance and Operations, to be signed by Ms. Matthews, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

Adjournment

Mr. Henry presented a motion for adjournment to executive session for the purpose of discussion of collective bargaining matters without returning to opening session.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee at 7:49 p.m. voted unanimously to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of discussion of collective bargaining matters without returning to opening session with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

During the executive session, no action was taken.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee at 8:36 p.m. voted unanimously to adjourn from executive session without returning to opening session with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

Documents used at the Meeting

- [School Calendar](#)