

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Special Meeting #324

Monday, August 31, 2020  
7:00 PM

MEETING CONDUCTED REMOTELY, VIA GOOGLE MEET

*Wachusett Regional School District Committee*

Megan Weeks, Chair	Laura Kirshenbaum
Michael Dennis, Vice-chair	Matthew Lavoie
Melissa Ayala	Linda Long-Bellil
Nicole Amos	Kenneth Mills
Krista Bennett	Karl Ottmar
Scott Brown	Deidre Shapiro
Maleah Gustafson	Christina Smith
Sherrie Haber	Linda Woodland
Jeffrey Haynes	Adam Young
Robert Imber	

*Committee Members Absent:*

Benjamin Mitchel	Kelly Williamson
Asima Silva	

*Administration Present:*

Darryll McCall, Superintendent of Schools  
Robert Berlo, Deputy Superintendent  
Daniel Deedy, Director of Business and Finance  
Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources  
Brendan Keenan, Director of Social Emotional Learning  
Barry Sclar, Supervisor of Information Technology  
Christine Smith, Administrator of Special Education  
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

*Student Representatives Present:*

Kenichi Gomi	Kathryn Mangus
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I. Call to Order

Chair Weeks called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. She announced the meeting was being broadcast live on HCTV Channel 194 and was also available for viewing on YouTube. Chair Weeks gave an overview of how the special meeting would proceed, assuring members they would have the opportunity to address the Committee, ask questions, and share comments and concerns at the conclusion of Superintendent McCall's presentation.

She also announced there would be one Public Hearing after the presentation, and asked that members of the public who submit questions and/or comments to include their address in their emails to questions@wrsd.net.

Chair Weeks asked members to observe a moment of silence in honor of former WRHS Principal Hal Lane.

## II. Presentation on 2020-2021 School Year

Chair Weeks turned the meeting over to Superintendent McCall. Superintendent McCall projected the presentation *COVID 2019 Pandemic: The Reopening of Schools for the 2020-2021 School Year* (attachment 1). Superintendent McCall, Deputy Superintendent Berlo, Supervisor of Information Technology Sclar, Administrator of Special Education Smith, Supervisor of School Nutrition Barton, Director of Business and Finance Deedy, Director of Human Resources Carlson spoke to the information in the presentation, speaking to and expanding on information on each slide.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Chair Weeks opened the floor to discussion, beginning with Member Shapiro.

At Member Shapiro's inquiry, it was confirmed that the current plan is that all students will transition to hybrid on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Member Shapiro also asked about classrooms at the high school that do not have windows.

Member Smith asked if the DESE health and safety guidelines can be put in an easier to read format for staff, students, and parents.

Member Woodland asked about air quality and how it is determined what is safe and adequate. She also asked about PPE (i.e. wipes) which are on school classroom supply lists. Superintendent McCall assured all that there will be sufficient PPE available in the schools.

Member Young asked if when the final HVAC evaluation is done will it be available, which Superintendent McCall confirmed it will be.

Member Amos asked about afternoon schedules and when will parents be able to see what is scheduled for the afternoons in more detail. Deputy Superintendent Berlo reported that information will be available for the high school on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and for the other grades on September 9<sup>th</sup>.

Member Ayala asked about carpeting and what will be removed and what will be cleaned using a carpet extractor. She then asked about requests made by the WREA, and what will happen on November 18<sup>th</sup> if those requests are not met. Superintendent McCall explained the District is currently in negotiations with the WREA.

Member Bennett passed.

Member Brown asked about the schedule for special education students in Phase 1 and Phase 2, which Administrator Smith spoke to.

Vice-chair Dennis asked about “no sooner than” language and if that is still how the District is planning. Superintendent McCall spoke about the plans to transition to hybrid as well as Phase 1 and Phase 2, and he also spoke about metrics that will be looked at when planning to transition to hybrid and to implementing Phase 1 and Phase 2. Vice-chair Dennis also spoke about no curricular impacts, as noted in the presentation, and he requested an explanation. Deputy Superintendent Berlo explained priority standards, and holding students accountable to master certain priority standards.

Vice-chair Dennis asked how the District will address students who do not have devices in hand to access remote teaching. At Superintendent McCall’s request, Supervisor Sclar spoke about the ChromeBook loan program and that students in need will be provided with a ChromeBook to use.

Vice-chair Dennis also asked about the homeschooling, school choice (out), and out-of-District numbers, which Director of SEL Keenan explained the date should have read 8/28/2020, and not 7/28/2020, which is on the slide. Vice-chair Dennis asked that these numbers be updated on a regular basis and the Committee be kept apprised of these updated numbers.

Member Gustafson also spoke about the numbers provided about homeschool, out-of-District, etc. She also asked for an explanation why the highest needs special education students cannot begin in-person sooner than October 5<sup>th</sup>, if there are schools/spaces that are ready/will be ready for students and staff. She also had a question about tracking attendance if students access asynchronous lessons “off hours.” Other questions she has gotten from the public have to do with teachers being in classrooms during the professional development days and if textbooks will be used this year.

Member Haber expressed her appreciation that transitioning to the hybrid model being moved to November 18<sup>th</sup>. She asked if teachers will be in their classrooms, which Superintendent explained is their option. She asked about Food Service staff and why costs associated with these employees are included in the grant. Superintendent McCall explained that Food Service costs are not in the general budget. At Member Haber’s inquiry, Administrator Smith spoke about how Circuit Breaker funds may be used.

Member Haynes appreciated the information and follow-up about HVAC, and he asked about windows in classrooms.

Member Imber commended the I.T. Department and asked if this department’s staff might be increased during these times. He also asked about the cost of the HVAC independent evaluation.

Member Kirshenbaum expressed her thanks for the presentation, and she followed up on Member Imber’s comments about technology. She asked if laptops for teachers might be more applicable v ChromeBooks for teachers. Member Kirshenbaum had questions about class size, staff that was reduced and has not been recalled, and students who will not be returning to a Wachusett school for the coming school year. Member Kirshenbaum

specifically spoke about Grade 5 at Dawson and the large class size due to fifth grade teachers being reduced by one for the coming school year.

Member Lavoie asked what is the current FTE per student for the Foundation budget, which Director Deedy will provide. Member Lavoie spoke about the 249 students who have already unenrolled from the District for the 2020-2021 school year, and how this will impact the FY22 budget and Chapter 70 funding from the state. Member Lavoie also spoke about technology and support for parents and students. Member Lavoie commended the two Student Representatives for the information they have shared with students and the public.

Member Long-Bellil thanked the administration for the presentation and the plans to transition to hybrid sooner than January. She asked the Superintendent's rationale for not offering hybrid for at least some grade levels to be implemented sooner than November 18<sup>th</sup>. She also asked about what grade levels for student who are homeschool, out-of-District, school choice, private, etc.

Member Mills asked about the number of incoming kindergarten students. He also asked if District administration would let teachers know about plans for their professional development and he suggested getting meaningful assessments about this professional development. He asked for an update about transportation money and would appreciate an update at the Business/Finance Subcommittee meeting on September 8, 2020. Member Mills asked when parents and students would likely learn what hybrid will look like, so that parents/students can make an informed decision to transition to hybrid or staying remote. Lastly, Member Mills asked the status of music education at the middle schools and at the high school.

Member Ottmar thanked administration for the information and presentation. He about how the transition to hybrid will look, and he also asked about professional development for teachers/staff when making this transition.

Several members had follow-up questions.

Student Representative Mangus asked about the high school schedule once students are back in-person/hybrid, which Deputy Superintendent Berlo explained will change when transitioned to hybrid. She also asked about technology contact for students, which Supervisor Sclar advised students should continue to reach out to technology staff at the high school. Superintendent McCall spoke about attendance at the high school, at Student Representative Mangus' inquiry.

Student Representative Gomi asked what will be done if hotspots, provided to families, do not work. Supervisor Sclar spoke about hotspots and also low cost internet options. Student Representative Gomi asked about the costs associated with transportation and cleaning expenses. Superintendent McCall explained there is a meeting with the transportation provider(s) in the coming week. Superintendent McCall was asked to keep the Committee apprised after the meeting with the transportation providers.

Additional follow-up questions were asked.

Chair Weeks asked members to email her any additional requests for information they would like to make of the administration.

III. Public Hearing

Stacia Smith (attachment 2)

Michelle Lagana, Joel Scott Drive, Jefferson (attachment 3)

Nicole Scesny, 7 Karen Drive, Sterling (attachment 4).

Cathy Knowlton, 235 Mirick Road, Princeton (attachment 5)

Kristina Naiman, elementary school teacher (attachment 6)

Michelle Lagana, Joel Scott Drive, Jefferson (attachment 7)

Kerriann Kulesza (attachment 8)

IV. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(L. Long-Bellil)  
(L. Kirshenbaum)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Megan Weeks  
Michael Dennis  
Nicole Amos  
Melissa Ayala  
Krista Bennett  
Scott Brown  
Maleah Gustafson  
Sherri Haber  
Jeffrey Haynes  
Robert Imber  
Laura Kirshenbaum  
Matthew Lavoie  
Linda Long-Bellil  
Kenneth Mills  
Karl Ottmar  
Deidre Shapiro  
Christina Smith  
Linda Woodland  
Adam Young

*Opposed:*

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM.

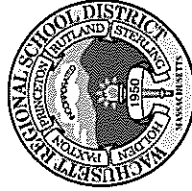
Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – *COVID 2019 Pandemic: The Reopening of Schools for the 2020-2021 School Year*
- Attachment 2 – email from Stacia Smith
- Attachment 3 – email from Michelle Lagana
- Attachment 4 – email from Nicole Scesny
- Attachment 5 – email from Cathy Knowlton
- Attachment 6 – email from Kristina Naiman
- Attachment 7 – email from Michelle Lagana
- Attachment 8 – email from Kerriann Kulesza



We hope to be able to answer many of the questions through this presentation this evening. We will continue to work on providing information to our families and community as frequently as possible.



# WRSDC Special Meeting

COVID-19 Pandemic: The reopening of schools for the  
2020-2021 school year  
August 31, 2020

## Remote to Hybrid

Remote Learning begins September 16th, 2020

### Updated Plan timeline:

Phase 1 - October 5th - no change

Phase 2 - October 26th - no change

Phase 3 - November 18th - NEW - All students move from remote to hybrid model in all schools

3

## Professional Development - 9/1 - 9/15

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Aug. 31	Sept. 1	Sept. 2	Sept. 3	Sept. 4
<b>Morning Session</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. McCall's Opening Remarks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School and District Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Software Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Software Training</li> </ul>
<b>Mid-morning Session</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reopening Plans and Safety Protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charlie Appelstein Keynote</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum Planning Staff Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum Planning</li> </ul>
<b>Afternoon Session</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Platform PD Choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Directed and Teacher Choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Directed Time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Directed Time</li> </ul>

4



## Professional Development - 9/1 - 9/15

	Sept. 7	Sept. 8	Sept. 9	Sept. 10	Sept. 11
Morning Session	Labor Day	• School Meeting	• School Directed	• Parent and Student Outreach	• Parent and Student Outreach
Mid-morning Session		• Mandated Trainings • Evaluation Training	• School Directed	• Priority Standards and Lesson Planning • Evaluation Meetings and Goal Setting	• Priority Standards and Lesson Planning • Evaluation Meetings and Goal Setting
Afternoon Session		• Teacher Directed	• School Directed		

5

## Professional Development - 9/1 - 9/15

	Sept. 14	Sept. 15
Morning Session	• Mandated Trainings	• School Meeting
Mid-morning Session	• Teacher Meetings	• Teacher Directed
Afternoon Session	• Teacher Directed	

9

## Day one Agenda for PD

### September 1 Agenda:

Morning Session: 8:30-9:00 AM: Dr. McCall's Opening Remarks

Mid-Morning Session: 9:00-11:00 AM: A review of the reopening plans and safety guidelines by building principals

- District Reopening Plans: [K-12 Reopening Plan](#), [PreK Reopening Plan](#) and [Safety Guidelines](#)

Lunch and Self-care: 11:00 AM-12:00 Time to eat and take care of yourself. Activities might include taking a brief walk break, enjoy some meditation, do some virtual group yoga, or enjoy a short read, for example. Link: [Adult SEL Strategy #1: Self-Care Practice for Educators](#)

Thought for the Day: "Teachers are stressed. Students are stressed. Parents are stressed. Take time out each day and definitely on the weekend to recharge and practice self care in whatever way is meaningful to you, whether that is watching Netflix, bike riding, meditation, seeing friends, watching the sun rise or anything else that brings you joy." - Jessica Hunter, *Teacher, Northport, New York*

Afternoon Session: 12:00-3:00 PM Learning Platform Training-Staff Choice

- Tutorials and Self-paced Training: [WRSD Training Guide for Online Learning](#), [Google Classroom Teacher Center](#), [Seesaw Training for Teachers](#), [Google Tools and Tutorials for Educators](#), [Google Tools for Parents and Students](#)
- [Eduzzle \(1:00 - 2:00 PM\)](#)

7

## Time-on-Learning and School Schedules

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education time-on-learning expectations and requirements are being met at all levels.

School Schedules - PowerSchool Parent Portal will open:

- High School - September 3rd
- Pre-k through 8 - September 9th

8

## Curriculum Impacts

- For the 2020-21 school year, we will use the same curriculum as in past years. To make this work under the challenging situation we now face, we will utilize priority standards to identify what we will hold students for mastery of.
  - The core content K-8 priority standards can be found at <http://www.wrsdonline.net/documents/WRSDPriorityStandards.pdf>
  - The 9-12 priority standards are contained within each course

9

## Technology Update

### Status of Chromebook Orders

The District has ordered a total of 2,400 Chromebooks in anticipation of overall remote learning demands. One order for 1,200 was submitted on June 10th and the second order for an additional 1,200 was submitted on July 27th - the day the Technology Essentials Grant purchasing window opened. Due to the chronic Chromebook supply shortages impacting all school districts, we still do not have an estimated ship date for either order. Needless to say, this has had a substantial impact on hardware planning for the start of school. The technology team is proceeding under the assumption that no new Chromebooks will be received prior to the start of school.

### 1:1 Program Impacts of Shipment Delays

Existing 1-year-old Chromebooks will be used to supply the incoming Freshmen with 1:1 devices before school begins. Those Chromebooks have been tested, cleaned, and prepared for distribution, which will be organized by WRHS administration.

The 1:1 expansion into grades 6-8 is on hold until the new devices are received.

10

## Technology Update

### Chromebook Loan Program

To date, we have received over 1,000 requests to borrow Chromebooks and the number continues to grow. This far exceeds our projections based on earlier survey results and has caused the technology staff to prioritize collection efforts in all schools. This heavy demand, combined with the delay of new Chromebook deliveries has put a tremendous strain on the district-wide supply. Chromebooks are being removed from carts in all K-8 schools in order to facilitate the loan requests. This will significantly impact classroom technology access when schools transition to hybrid learning.

11

## Technology Update

### Internet Access Assistance

Approximately 20 families have requested help with internet access. District technology staff are working with those families to determine the best solution for each case. Mobile hotspots will be issued to families for which a more robust solution is not available. However, mobile hotspot performance can vary greatly depending on cellular signal strength in the home. In some cases, a hotspot may not provide adequate speed and reliability. For this reason, it's important to explore all possible options for connectivity.

### Tech Support Website for Families

The development of this website is ongoing and will include options for parents to submit questions or request additional support. The site is planned to launch on September 8th.

12

## Special Education

A more detailed Slideshow was presented to SEPAC on August 13th and is posted on the WRSD website. Another public meeting with SEPAC and the Administrator of Special Education will be held sometime during the week of September 7th.

- [Special Education Slideshow August 2020](#)

13

## Special Education

### Parent Engagement Document and Remote Learning Plans

DESE has released specific directives to Special Education Directors. We are to intentionally engage parents and document this "conversation" (phone or email) and the content of the conversation regarding how specialized services and accommodations will be implemented during remote and hybrid plans. DESE provided a guiding document. The team chairs are reviewing the guidance and working with their school-based staff to develop a template that meets the needs of the individual buildings. When teachers return to school on Sept. 1-Sept. 15, they will be working on engaging with families to talk about any changes to how special education services will be delivered in the remote and hybrid settings.

14

## Special Education

### Remote to Hybrid

Students that are on Individualized Education Plans that require intensive and direct instruction throughout the entire school day will begin returning to school on Oct. 5th. The week of Oct. 5 will be 4-5 half-days. These are considered Phase one students. Their time in school will be increased during the weeks of Oct 13 and 19th so that they are then attending school in person for four full-days and one half-day on Wednesday.

Phase two students are students that attend most classes in Special Education (Grid C) but may have some classes in the inclusion setting too. These students will be transitioning into in-person learning during the weeks of October 19 and 26th. Individual schedules will be created to support the children when they are attending virtual inclusion classes and when they are engaged in direct in person special education services.

15

## Special Education Related Services

### Related Services in OT, PT, Speech and Counseling

Students that require these services may get these services virtually or in-person. This will be defined on the individual child's Remote Learning Plan through the Parent Engagement Document. The modality of the service may change over time, but these changes will be communicated to the family and documented on the Family Engagement/Remote Learning Plan.

16

## Special Education Testing

Professionals evaluate our students in formal and informal ways daily, annually and, in special education, tri-annually. These evaluations include standardized measures like the WISC or the WIAT, curriculum based assessments like the Benchmark Reading Assessment (BAS) and chapter reviews, and informally through observations and classroom work.

All of this information is used to determine how the student's area of disability is impacting their access to learning and what changes to instruction they require in order to allow the student full access to learning.

We should always use multiple sources of information and the info we gather should reflect the students best abilities. We should never gather conclusive information from a child in distress, in crisis, or in other stressful conditions.

17

## Special Education Evaluations and Meetings

Standardized evaluations should only be conducted if test validity can be maintained. Students must be able to be 100% compliant with PPE, including face masks, during evaluations. Curriculum based assessments, observations, file reviews and outside evaluations can be used to determine some aspects of the IEP development.

Team Meetings will begin on September 16th, 2020. Individual teams will determine if they will gather in-person or remotely. Some participants may be remote and others in-person

18

## Special Education COVID Compensatory Services

As directed by DESE, Special Education teams must determine if a student with special needs has made the expected progress on their goals and objectives during the COVID closure and remote learning time. The team must determine what changes to instruction or services needs to be put in place so that the student can make the expected progress outlined in the student's individualized education plan. This is called COVID Compensatory Service (CCS).

In order to make these determinations teachers must have time with students to determine the student's current level on each goal or objective. It is expected that these determinations should be made during the months of September and October and finalization of the CCS plan in place no later than November. These dates are generalized as some students will require these determinations to be made more quickly or to take more time.

19

## Homeschooling, Private School, School Choice (out), and Out-of-District Placements

	Homeschool	Private School	School Choice out	Out-of-District
2018-2019	124	386	381	75
2019-2020	115	385	360	67
2020-2021 (as of 7/28/20)	201	542	366	65

20



## COVID Related Grant support

### Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund - \$176,898

\$87,658 - Partial for PPE

\$89,240 - Lexia

### Remote Learning Technology Essentials Grant - \$146,004

Partial reimbursement for chromebooks and hotspots

### School Reopening Grant - \$1,572,300

Awaiting award

21

## COVID Related Grant support

### School Reopening Grant - \$1,572,300

- Labor for work on dividers, etc.
- Food Service/cafeteria workers once opened during remote
- Cost of packaging and what we are not being reimbursed for for food
- PD - professional and support
- Instructional Technology (Chromebooks and hotspots)
- Testing and assessment (STAR reading and math)
- Online licensing for online textbooks and related software media
- PPE - \$574,000
- Anticipated unemployment for first half of year - Through December
- Acrylic/dividers materials

22

## Food Service and Meal Distribution

As we 'Return to Remote' on September 16th, meals will again be served curbside at 5 district sites, with a few modifications from the previous curbside model. Meals will again be served using a drive-thru model, allowing for parent pick up. However, our required transition back to the National School Lunch Program will result in the following process impacts:

Curbside meal pick up will be available beginning Thursday, September 17th at the following locations:

- Wachusett Regional High School
- Glenwood Elementary
- Paxton Center School
- Thomas Prince School
- Chocksett/Houghton Schools

23

## Food Service and Meal Distribution

Curbside meal pickups will be from 4:30-5:30pm, on Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Three meals distributed on Tuesdays; two meals on Thursdays

- Confirmation of participation will be required! A survey for participation will be emailed shortly.
- Meals will be provided to WRSD enrolled students only and we will be required to obtain the students' and ID numbers. Students must be enrolled in a physical WRSD school during remote learning. Students' 20-21 class schedule or 20-21 F&R confirmation letter are also acceptable forms of ID.
- Students or parents must pick up meals in the town where they live.
- Meals to students approved for free meals are no cost. Reduced price meals will be charged to their students' account.
- Meals for students in a paid meal status will be charged at the regular meal price.

24

## High School Athletics

If the Mid-Wach approves sub-varsity play (JV and Freshman), we will be utilizing all of our outdoor facilities (turf, upper field 1, field inside the track, grass field hockey field and baseball outfield). All benches and/or chairs, scorer's table (game days), bleachers (game days), outdoor bathroom and equipment will have to be sanitized. No locker rooms will be used at this time.

The Mid-Wach ADs have been assigned to sub-committees to make recommendations that will be approved at the next league meeting on Wednesday, September 2, to address concerns regarding schedules and protocols along with regulations regarding transportation and spectators.

25

## DESE Attendance Requirements/Guidelines

According to the Department of Elementary and

Secondary Education's (DESE) preexisting attendance policy, a student must be at school, at a school related activity, or receiving academic instruction for at least half the school day to be counted as present. Students who are not physically present at school but who are receiving academic instruction from the district for at least half the school day should be counted as present. Examples of academic instruction include tutoring, online learning, or distance learning.

While this policy is not changing for the 2020-21 school year, this document provides guidance for taking and reporting attendance in hybrid and remote learning models.

### Daily Attendance

When taking attendance, schools should confirm that students participated in at least half of each day's scheduled structured learning time activities, defined as "time during which students are engaged in regularly scheduled instruction, learning activities, or learning assessments within the curriculum for study of the 'core subjects' and 'other subjects.' In addition to classroom time where both teachers and students are present, structured learning time may include directed study, independent study, technology-assisted learning, presentations by persons other than teachers, school-to-work programs, and statewide student performance assessments."

26

## DESE Attendance Requirements/Guidelines

### Daily Attendance

Periods of time when students are working remotely will look different across schools and districts, so the process for taking attendance and confirming student participation will also look different.

Below are some examples districts may consider when adopting or adapting an attendance policy for remote learning. These are applicable for students who are learning remotely full-time, as well as for students who are learning remotely as part of a hybrid model.

### Primarily Synchronous Schedule

If a student's remote schedule is mostly comprised of live, synchronous instruction, such as for schools and districts that are operating fully remote, teachers should take attendance for each instructional period and report it as they would in-person. An educator or other school staff member should be assigned to reach out to students who are absent for one or multiple classes to identify the reason for absence and provide support accordingly.

27

## DESE Attendance Requirements/Guidelines

### Primarily Asynchronous Schedule

If a student's remote schedule has a larger proportion of asynchronous, independent work, we strongly recommend schools assign educators or other school staff members to conduct a minimum of one check-in with each student every day to ensure the student is capable of participating that day. An educator or other school staff member should also have a way to monitor student engagement throughout the day, to confirm that he or she participated in at least half of the scheduled structured learning time activities.

This could include check-ins during each scheduled asynchronous block, completion of lessons or activities assigned through an LMS, submission of assignments, completion of activity logs, written reflections of work accomplished during the day, parent/caregiver attestations of work accomplished, etc. Every school/district should ensure the method of collecting and reporting attendance is consistent across classrooms and clearly communicated to students and families.

Students who cannot be reached, who convey they are unable to participate that day, or who demonstrate less than half of the day's scheduled structured learning time activities should be marked as absent.

28

## DESE Attendance Requirements/Guidelines

### SIMS reporting change for 2020-2021

This school year, in-person attendance and remote attendance will be collected separately in SIMS.

The existing Days in Attendance data element (DOE017) will be specific to in-person attendance. To collect data on remote attendance, two new fields have been added to the SIMS data collection: DOE054 (Days of Attendance Remote) and DOE055 (Days Absent Remote).

Districts will need to record daily student attendance and absences in the local SIS as either in-person or remote, to ensure that these distinct categories are transmitted to DESE in SIMS reporting in the appropriate data elements. If any portion of the school day is in-person, then the day of attendance should be categorized as in-person.

## Update on Air Circulation Systems

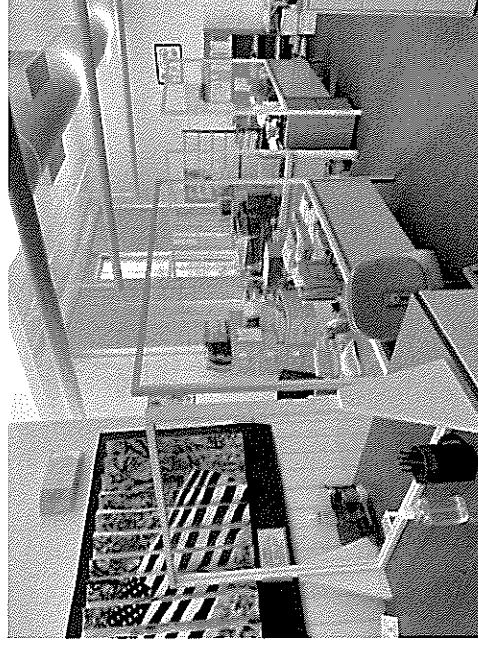
- Central Tree: Updating roof units
- Chocksett/Houghton: Some hallways and classrooms
- Davis Hill: Hallways/Cafeteria
- Dawson: Bathrooms only
- ECC: All classrooms-Thermostat Calibration
- Glenwood: Complete
- Mayo: Tech room
- Mountview: Replace heating wheel
- Naquag: 2-3 units
- Paxton: Running pneumatic lines that impact all rooms
- Thomas Prince: 3-4 units
- WRHS: 1 unit

## Schools - Updates Towards Opening

- All area rugs in schools have been removed or will be removed
- Carpet extractors will be purchased out of the School Reopening grant for areas where there is a great deal of carpeting such as at Houghton and Chocksett
- 20 HEPA Room Air Purifiers
- 13 Digital Carbon Dioxide Temperature and Humidity Handheld Monitors
- 13 Digital Air Flow Meters
- Cleaning protocols and procedures - including training for all custodians

31

## Office Protective Shielding



32

## PPE Supplies

- N95 - masks: 5,100 in stock
- Disposable masks: 110,000 in stock
- Student masks: 500 in stock
- Gowns: 1,750 in stock
- Desktop sanitizer: 720 in stock and 1,200 more on order
- Bulk sanitizer: 750 gallons in stock
- All staff will have access to masks, wipes, sanitizer and gloves
- \$574,000 dedicated to PPE from the School Reopening grant that we are awaiting approval of

33

## District Protocols

WRSD Reopening Guidelines and Protocols Fall 2020

24

## COVID-19 testing

Currently, there are no plans, by DESE to mandate medical COVID testing of students or staff. There has been discussion about this at the state level but no decision has been officially made.

35

## Reductions - Tier 1

	Reductions	Savings
FY21 Textbook Reduction		\$400,000
FY21 Operations & Maintenance		\$80,000
FY 21 Pupil Services		\$1,517
FY21 New Positions and Benefits		\$650,000
School Choice Carry Forward to Supplement FY21		\$370,000
Circuit Breaker Carry Forward to Supplement FY21		\$700,000
Contracted Services		\$100,000
Transportation Stabilization		\$150,000
Summer School Running Remotely		\$75,000
Copier Lease		\$16,700
Tier 1 Budget Reduction Total		\$2,543,217

36



## Reductions - Tier 2

	Pre-K-8 Reductions	Savings	HS Reductions	Savings	CO Reductions	Savings
	11.4 Teachers	\$766,781	4.0 Teachers	\$239,871	1.5 Admin	\$155,994
	17.0 Paraprof.	\$480,000	2.0 Paraprof.	\$60,000	1.0 Clerical	\$48,000
	0.5 Custodian	\$22,500	1.0 Custodian	\$56,631		
	0.5 Clerical	\$15,000	1.0 Clerical	\$45,710		
	MS Athletics	\$62,874				
	0.5 Asst. Princ.	\$64,003				
	0.9 SLPA	\$33,754				
	PK-8 Total	\$1,444,912	HS Total	\$402,212	CO Total	\$203,994
	PK-8 Budget Reduction*	\$1,122,195	HS Budget Reduction*	\$366,975	CO Budget Reduction*	\$151,996
	Total FY21 Budget Reduction Grand Total				\$1,641,166	
	*Taking unemployment costs into account					
Tier 2						

37



In this time of uncertainty, we appreciate the opportunity to work together to ensure that our faculty, staff, families, and students receive what they need to be successful in these unprecedented times.

*Thank you!*

38



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

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## Fwd: Elementary Students

1 message

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**Megan Weeks** <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:36 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

Megan K Weeks, M.Ed  
Chair WRSD School Committee  
Assistant Principal, Murdock High School

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Stacia Smith** <staciasmith98@yahoo.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 3:45 PM

Subject: Elementary Students

To: questions@wrsd.net <questions@wrsd.net>

I was wondering if the elementary age student would be given their math book to use at home? Will teachers be printing/providing work pages? Will student be lent books from teachers libraries? Don't want my 1st grader on a screen for 6 hours a day.

First example day sent from Houghton had the students engaged/working online all day with age appropriate breaks. Start at 8:55 am and end of day meeting at 2:45 to 3. First that it to much screen time for kids and would mean I have to be home from 8:55 to 3 everyday but Wednesday. I would prefer a similar day/structure as my middle school ages aged children. Instructions in AM and independent work in afternoon. Gives my family more flexibility.

Thanks for answering my questions

Stacia

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

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### **Are we doing what is best for children?**

Last March, teachers changed their entire way of teaching in a weekend, and they were working within never before seen situations. School Districts have had to develop extensive plans to accommodate what if's. There has been an enormous toll on all of us, and now that the numbers are decreasing, teachers and administrators will go back to work as usual. But when children go back to school, how will they cope being in a grade they are not prepared for?

Education is a fundamental right that our children need and deserve. Every child deserves a Free and Appropriate Public Education. The question now is, How do we educate our children in a Pandemic? The three models we have to choose from are in-person learning, hybrid-learning, and remote learning. Governor Baker reported that 70% of school districts either are doing a full return to in-person learning or a hybrid of remote and in-person learning. He also stated that 30% were pursuing a fully remote model. How much education is our children missing with these learning models?

Before the Pandemic, children received a full day of education for five days a week, totaling 180 days, proving the most effective learning environment. Children receiving an in-person education at the start of the 2020-2021 school year will be missing ten days of learning due to the mandated professional development (PD) for teachers. Children receiving a hybrid learning education will be missing three full days of education a week in addition to the ten days of PD. And remote learning will be missing five full days a week plus the ten days of PD.

Any way you look at it, children will be receiving less of education then they have received in the years past. Depending on where you live, the lack of education can be extensive. Districts choosing the remote learning plan are providing children with the least amount of education. Most of the district's remote-learning plan calls for three hours a day of instruction via Zoom or Google Meet and an option to email teachers in the afternoon with questions. However, instruction includes videos as an option or in addition to direct instruction during Zoom or Google Meet classes. Even with all the extensive work that teachers and districts have made to prepare for remote learning, it cannot substitute for in-person learning and, consequently, fail to educate children at the pace required to graduate to the next grade.

Where does that leave children receiving a remote-learning education? A year behind their peers who are receiving an in-person education? Possibly. While all children have to start the 2020-2021 School Year playing catch up from the 3.5 months of schooling they missed in the Spring, educators have a better chance of doing that with in-person

learning as they are instructing students for a full day or even a hybrid model as they are educating students for two full days as oppose to remote-learning providing five half-days of instruction. Children receiving remote learning will not only be able to learn the material they missed in the Spring, but they will also be unable to learn the material required for the Fall. Missing this much of education will negatively affect the projection of their education. Children on IEP's are the students who are hit the hardest with the remote-learning model. Districts cannot provide all of the services children need to access the curriculum, leaving children on IEP's without any education. How does this affect families? Families who are paying taxes for the schools operating budget for a full in-person learning model are only receiving services for a half learning model. Leaving families to spend additional money on hiring tutors or paying for private schools.

It is safe to say that a student's emotional well being will negatively be impacted through remote learning and other changes we can't yet understand by staying home all day on devices and not being in school. The long term effects of students being isolated will be enormous. With remote learning, children miss out on socialization, a structured school day, and human contact that is so important for their overall development. Not to mention how the stress of trying to catch up on their learning will affect children when they do eventually attend in-person learning.

With all of that being said, the question remains, How do we educate our children during a Pandemic? Do we wait until there is a vaccine or when there are zero cases reported to send children back to in-person learning? Also, how do we weigh the risks of in-person learning versus the dangers of missing education? We look at scientific data and listen to experts in the field and listen to their recommendations. Experts such as Pediatricians and the CDC, who, after analyzing the data, are currently stating that it is safe for in-person learning with the necessary safety precautions in place. We look to other professions who have already opened their doors and have had successes. Taking all of this under consideration, administrators of schools, principals, and teachers who are experts in the field of education, need to ethically determine what is in the best interest of children. 70% of districts are honestly looking at the long term effects for children and starting either in-person or hybrid learning for the start of the school year. Sadly for the other 30% of districts, by choosing the remote learning model, districts are not looking at the long term affects this will cause, and unfortunately, will never be able to replace the learning that was missed for their students.



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

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## Fwd: Meeting Tonight

1 message

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**Megan Weeks** <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:36 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

Megan K Weeks, M.Ed  
Chair WRSD School Committee  
Assistant Principal, Murdock High School

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michelle Lagana** <michelle@michellelaganaadvocates.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 4:17 PM

Subject: Meeting Tonight

To: Megan Weeks <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Hello Megan,  
I hope you can read my attachment tonight at the school committee meeting.

Thank you,  
Michelle





Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

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## Fwd: questions?

1 message

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**Megan Weeks** <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:36 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

Megan K Weeks, M.Ed  
Chair WRSD School Committee  
Assistant Principal, Murdock High School

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Nicole Scesny** <nicole.scesny@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 7:14 PM

Subject: questions?

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

To whom it may concern,

It is alarming to find out that the PTO of Houghton Elementary will have to use the majority of their funds towards website subscriptions of iXL, Lexi Core 5 and more because the district is not including all grades in these subscriptions. Why is the district creating such hardship on the schools PTOs to support these subscriptions?

Second it was noted that the example schedule for the elementary school students was a draft that was sent to DESE for approval, well Why is the Principal now telling us that it is the schedule and that everyone will be starting at 8:55 and the district determined this?

For Sterling that brings a concern of inconsistency in scheduling as a normal day starts at 9:15, this schedule that we received had a 20 minute differential in starting times and appears to be the same one sent to DESE. I would like to have confirmation that the district is NOT going to be changing school start times, and the remote portion of the school year and the hybride portion of the school year will all have the same consistent scheduled starting times with ending times adjusted to meet DESE requirements.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the school committee members for all the hard work and extra meetings you have had to hold this summer, it is not easy and I am thankful for you all.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Scesny  
7 Karen Drive  
Sterling Ma

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

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## Fwd: Clarification on DESI Guidance - COVID Metrics & Shared Districts

1 message

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**Megan Weeks** <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>  
To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:35 PM

Megan K Weeks, M.Ed  
Chair WRSD School Committee  
Assistant Principal, Murdock High School

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cathy Kellogg** <cathy.kellogg@gmail.com>  
Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 8:25 PM  
Subject: Clarification on DESI Guidance - COVID Metrics & Shared Districts  
To: <Questions@wrsd.net>

Hi,

Could you please clarify on the reference to DESI & using the rates of COVID infection for Holden to determine safety for all schools in the district. Is this a recommendation or a requirement?

If this is a recommendation is the district considering evaluating individual schools for varied re-opening plans based on individual town COVID metrics?

Regards,  
Cathy Knowlton  
235 Mirick Rd  
Princeton, MA

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

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## Fwd: Public comment

1 message

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**Megan Weeks** <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:35 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

Megan K Weeks, M.Ed  
Chair WRSD School Committee  
Assistant Principal, Murdock High School

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kristina Naiman** <krissy.naiman@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:15 PM

Subject: Public comment

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Cc: Ryan Hinson <rhinson@worchester.edu>, Jenn Halloran <jmdhalloran@gmail.com>

Hi there,

It appears elementary parents will not find out teachers' names for their children until 9/9. Outreach to families from teachers is scheduled to take place beginning the next day on 9/10 and 9/11.

This leaves less than 24 hours for teachers to connect with parents to schedule potential times for virtual outreach (if parents are even available with 24 hours notice).

I urge the district to consider releasing teacher names to elementary parents by Monday 9/7. This would allow two days for teachers to connect with parents to schedule potential virtual outreach. Parents may be able to open their schedules if they have more than 24 hrs notice.

Thank you,  
Kristina Naiman  
Elementary Teacher

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

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## Fwd: Special education

1 message

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**Megan Weeks** <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:35 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

Megan K Weeks, M.Ed  
Chair WRSD School Committee  
Assistant Principal, Murdock High School

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **S&M Lagana** <teamlagana@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 7:52 PM

Subject: Special education

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

My question is how can the Special Education Director incorrectly state the DESE guidelines for Special Education and consequently violate children's IEPs?

Families can request a TEAM meeting to discuss their child's remote learning plan. AN Amendment can be made to the IEP FOR NEW BENCHMARKS FOR SKILLS THAT Students lost due to covid and remote learning.

If a child has a PT, OT, SPL, or BCBA for direct services on their IEP those professional NEED TO PROVIDE THE REMOTE LEARNING instruction TO YOUR STUDENT AND NOT AN AIDE!

DESE also STATES that

Also DESE STATES THAT IF A CHILD CANNOT ACCESS REMOTE LEARNING

How will the district correctly educate our children on IEPs with a remote learning model that follows DESE GUIDELINES?

Michelle Lagana  
Joel Scott Drive

Sent from my iPhone

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**2 attachments**

Schools and districts must not communicate or implement any blanket policies that preclude team meetings or evaluations from occurring or altering the team process described in federal and state statutes and regulations, e.g. the district cannot have a policy or practice that suspends all annual review team meetings or evaluations until students return to school.

**image2.jpeg**  
97K

image2.jpeg is a screenshot of a document. The document contains text that is mostly illegible due to the low resolution of the image. The text appears to be a list of items, possibly a checklist or a set of instructions. The text is organized into several lines, with some lines starting with bullet points. The text is too small to read accurately, but it seems to be a list of items related to the team process described in the text above.

**image3.jpeg**  
159K



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

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## Fwd: To be read at SC meeting tonight. Thank you

1 message

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**Megan Weeks** <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:36 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca\_petersen@wrsd.net>

Megan K Weeks, M.Ed  
Chair WRSD School Committee  
Assistant Principal, Murdock High School

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kerriann Kulesza** <kakirish@yahoo.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 2:47 PM

Subject: To be read at SC meeting tonight. Thank you

To: Megan Weeks <megan\_weeks@wrsd.net>

Good evening,

I'm writing to express my concerns during the last SC meeting. I was taken back by the statement made by member Krista Bennett when she called member Matt Lavoie racist and sexist. Her alleging that Mr. Lavoie would file an Open meeting law complaint because she is a "person of color" and "female" is an outright attack on his character and integrity. I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Lavoie from Rutland and have always found him to be outspoken, passionate, honest, and committed to our children and the community that he serves. For her to make these statements about a man, whom I can only assume she hardly knows, as she is a new SC member is disgraceful, out of line, and wildly inappropriate. As a new SC member, I would have hoped that member Bennett would have taken the constructive criticism, learned from her mistake, and moved forward. Instead she chose to make a character attack on Mr Lavoie for voicing his concerns over a possible violation. Furthermore, statements made by member Jeffrey Haynes were equally out of line and personal in nature toward Mr Lavoie. I'm disappointed that it took member Michael Dennis having to step into stop the attack, as it should have never happened in the first place. I'd like to remind everyone on the SC that parents, teachers, and children are watching these meeting. I personally would like to request that all of you treat each other respectfully, professionally, and with kindness and

remember we need all of you, especially during these unprecedented times, to remain a united front. We are looking at our SC for solutions, now more than ever. We are not looking to see you attack each other, and take away precious time from figuring out how to safely and swiftly get our children back into school.

Respectfully,  
KerriAnn Kulesza  
Rutland

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

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