

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Special Meeting #325

Wednesday, September 23, 2020
7:00 PM

MEETING CONDUCTED REMOTELY, VIA GOOGLE MEET

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Megan Weeks, Chair	Matthew Lavoie
Michael Dennis, Vice-chair	Kenneth Mills
Melissa Ayala	Benjamin Mitchel
Nicole Amos	Karl Ottmar
Krista Bennett	Deidre Shapiro
Scott Brown	Asima Silva
Maleah Gustafson	Christina Smith
Sherrie Haber	Kelly Williamson
Robert Imber	Linda Woodland
Laura Kirshenbaum	Adam Young

Committee Members Absent:

Linda Long-Bellil

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

I. Call to Order

Chair Weeks called the special meeting to order at 7:00 PM. She announced the meeting was being broadcast live on HCTV and was also available for viewing on YouTube. Chair Weeks gave an overview of how the special meeting would proceed. She explained Superintendent McCall would be making a presentation to address questions and concerns of parents and students regarding transitioning to the hybrid model.

II. Chair's Opening Remarks

With no objection from the members, Chair Weeks moved agenda item IV up on the agenda.

Chair Weeks made her opening remarks, thanking many - teachers, students, parents, fellow School Committee members - for their efforts during the opening of schools, in the remote model.

Chair Weeks spoke about meeting norms. Members were asked to have cameras on during meetings.

III. Public Hearing

Chair Weeks read comments/questions submitted by the public via questions@wrsd.net (attachment 1):

1. Jana Brennan
2. Jennifer Paolilli
3. Melissa Feller
4. Angela Daigle
5. Kim Mailloux
6. Crystal Roy
7. Crystal Roy
8. Jamie Goodall
9. Marlene Thebeau
10. Leah and Kyle Wickman
11. Corey Burnham-Howard and Mike Howard
12. Mary Pickering
13. Cate Potenza
14. Michelle Hendrickx
15. The Sidhoms
16. Meghan Hreschuk
17. Leslie Mason
18. Tiffany Sidhom
19. Marci Driscoll
20. Caroline Willman
21. Nancy Terlato
22. Julie Hurley
23. Will Briggs
24. Theresa Reilly
25. Jennifer Scalise-Mullett
26. Deb Barakian
27. Sarah Lefebvre
28. Hank Leftwich
29. Christine Tivnan
30. Sara Kruger
31. Karen and Michael Ackerman

32. Megan Marshall
33. Ryan Caneen
34. Anna Kusterski
35. Liz and Joe Parker Gagne
36. Kim Arum
37. Kim Arum

7:56 PM Chair Weeks concluded reading the statements submitted by members of the public.

IV. Discussion of School Year 2020-2021 Transition Plans from Remote to Hybrid

7:59 PM Chair Weeks left the meeting.

8:01 PM Chair Weeks returned to the meeting.

Superintendent McCall began his presentation (attachment 2). Superintendent McCall spoke to the information in the presentation, with other members of District administration adding to the discussion.

8:18 PM Member Young left the meeting.

8:20 PM Member Young returned to the meeting.

8:45 PM Superintendent McCall concluded his presentation.

Chair Weeks thanked Superintendent McCall for his presentation and members of the public for sharing their comments and questions. At Chair Weeks' inquiry, Superintendent McCall stated a FAQ sheet is being developed and will be shared/sent out at the end of the following week.

Member Lavoie had left the meeting.

V. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(R. Imber)
(S. Brown)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber

Laura Kirshenbaum
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Opposed:

Kenneth Mills
Linda Woodland

The motion was approved 17-2.

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Public Comments
- Attachment 2 – Presentation – Update on School Reopening



Attachment 1

Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Questions in order to answer remote vs hybrid

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:05 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: **Jana Brennan** <janabrennan@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Sep 19, 2020 at 11:18 AM

Subject: Fwd: Questions in order to answer remote vs hybrid

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hi,

Below are questions I sent to Darryl after the request to choose hybrid vs remote and transportation.

I'd also like to add for buses, if we are not able to obtain monitors for each bus, will the bus still be running?

Thanks!
Jana Brennan

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jana Brennan <janabrennan@gmail.com>

Date: September 18, 2020 at 5:16:15 PM EDT

To: Darryll McCall <darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>

Subject: Questions in order to answer remote vs hybrid

Dear Dr McCall,

I have a few questions that I am hoping you can answer to help our family better decide hybrid/remote and whether to use the bus.

If we choose remote but want to switch to hybrid after 11/17, is that possible and if so, what is the waiting period? Same for the reverse.

For busing, will the elementary and middle schools return to staggered schedules? I would prefer to drive, but I can't be at 2 schools at the same time.

Lunch. There are not a lot of details in the opening plan. Will the kids be facing one direction? Will talking be aloud? How many kids will be in one room at a time while eating/masks are off? I have some health issues, so learning the full risk of sending the kids back is important to our family. I would prefer to send the kids back hybrid, and feel comfortable with masks on, but it is the extended time without masks while eating in a large group/room that I am having issues with. I hope to not have to keep my kids remote solely due to lunch. Any further details you can provide would be incredibly helpful.

I understand how difficult all of this is and appreciate all the efforts by you, the administration and staff.

Thank you very much for your time and help,
Jana Brennan

Sent from my iPhone

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: School Day

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:06 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: **Jennifer Paolilli** <jenpaolilli@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Sep 19, 2020 at 11:43 AM
Subject: School Day
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hello,

Can you provide details on the School Day times? This question comes from a middle school parent.

- Will Remote be similar to current remote schedules (synchronous ending at 11:55).
- Will the 2 days in school during Hybrid end at 11:55, or later in the afternoon?
- Students attending Hybrid: On their remote days, does the synchronous learning end at 11:55?

Thank you,
Jennifer Paolilli
99 Pleasant St, Holden, MA 01520

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: In regards to reopening and parent survey due 9/25

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:06 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: **Melissa Feller- home** <melissafellerslp@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Sep 19, 2020 at 2:38 PM

Subject: In regards to reopening and parent survey due 9/25

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Questions for the 9/22 special meeting of the school committee:

- How are teacher-student assignments being handled? Will these assignments be changed when the in-person hybrid learning model begins?
- In the hybrid path, are the 3 remote days 100% asynchronous?
- If a family selects the hybrid path and then decides they need to switch to remote-only, how will this be handled?
- In the remote-only path, will the schedule remain the same as it is now with a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences 5 days per week with the same teacher?
- Is the percentage of "live instruction" the same for both the hybrid and the remote-only learning paths?

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Feller
(Princeton MA)

Melissa Feller, MS, CCC-SLP

Speech-Language Pathologist & Reading Specialist

Doctoral Research Fellow | MGH Institute of Health Professions



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Questions for 9/23 special meeting

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:06 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: **Angella Daigle** <angella.daigle@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Sep 19, 2020 at 7:35 PM

Subject: Questions for 9/23 special meeting

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

1. Will elementary school hybrid students remain with their current teacher? Will middle school hybrid students remain assigned to their current homeroom? Who are the "WRSD educators" that are teaching the remote-only students?
2. For hybrid learning, how will sick days be handled? If a student is unable to go to school on an in-person day due to potentially contagious symptoms (cough/cold), but is healthy enough for at-home learning (no fever, etc.), will that student be counted as absent or will they have the option to participate remotely? Along the same lines, if a hybrid student has to quarantine, will they have to switch to the remote learning path for the duration of quarantine?
3. What will K-4 hybrid students really be doing on remote learning days? The current system of fully remote learning is keeping kids engaged in school 5 days/week. Hybrid sounds like a step backwards.
4. Will school start times during hybrid learning be different than they are now? Will hybrid students need to remotely report to homeroom for attendance on their remote days?
5. Will snow days during hybrid learning need to be made up or will students report to school remotely?



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Survey

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:06 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: **Kim Mailloux** <knewsham3@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Sep 19, 2020 at 7:56 PM
Subject: Survey
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Good evening.

I am just wondering why after 2.5 days of online learning we are being asked to complete a survey about hybrid learning and it needs to be completed after only 7.5 days. This is not enough time to make a decision based on how online learning is actually going in my opinion. I think we would need at least a few weeks in order for a good decision to be made. I realize that many parents have made the decision already based on the virus, the online learning in the Spring, their schedules, etc. For me, the decision lies on how well my son is doing now. Is he emotionally healthy, is he organized, keeping up with everything, does he need more, etc. These are my questions and 7.5 days does not seem like enough time to make an educated decision. I don't know yet what I will do when the time comes for hybrid learning. I also don't know if he will take the bus or not, if he goes back to school. Our circumstances could change and whatever we decide to do might have to change. Then what? I hope by next Friday, I will have a better idea of how this is going for my son so that I can complete that survey with confidence.

With this being said, I appreciate everything you all are doing to try to make this a successful school year for all of our children.

I will support whatever decision you make. I know that all of you, like most of us, are doing the best that you can in this situation.

Sincerely,
Kim Mailloux

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Questions for School Committe Meeting

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:06 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: **Crystal Roy** <casavant220@charter.net>

Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2020 at 8:16 AM

Subject: Questions for School Committe Meeting

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Many families across the district are experiencing technology challenges. What is required to allow for smooth connectivity? What is the recommended internet speed? What is the min. Operating System of each device? Recommended WIFI setup in each house?

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Questions to the school committee for Meeting

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:06 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: **Crystal Roy** <casavant220@charter.net>

Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2020 at 7:48 AM

Subject: Questions to the school committee for Meeting

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Q1) My middle school children are required to be online from 845 to 3PM with a short break for lunch. This is an extremely long day. With technology challenges and lack of understanding of what happened in class can we ask that no additional work be assigned out of class during this full remote period? They are being asked to manage 10 google classrooms, email and teacher websites. As parents we also need to help and understand what they are doing – how to make a slide, video, use google drive. #1 - Where is our training ? #2) For the mental health of all involved I would like you to consider eliminating extra work during this period.

Q2) There are many school systems across new England that are going back full time. What needs to happen to return our children to in school as soon as possible?

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Remote VS Hybrid

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 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: **Jamie Goodall** <JamieGoodall21@wrsdk12.net>
Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2020 at 10:37 AM
Subject: Remote VS Hybrid
To: questions@wrsd.net <questions@wrsd.net>

I have a few questions regarding the options that we have and the decision that we must make. They are as follows:

1. In the case that a class is taught by one teacher (Ex: AP Art), will students be unable to take the class depending on their decision? Will other teachers be readily available to teach a course that they have not taught before? Will a students schedules and teachers change if they choose remote? If they chose hybrid?
2. If a student is remote and their clubs decide to meet in person, is this student now unable to attend their extracurricular activities?
3. If a student reports that they do not need a bus but some event occurs (ex: their car won't start), is that student unable to use the bus due to their previous response?
4. Is there a policy or plan in place for sick days? If a student shows symptoms, will they be allowed back in school after a certain number of days? Will they need a test? Can they merely come back when they feel better?
5. Can seniors be reassured that they will have help from their guidance counselor during the college application process? Will the counselors have a way to keep track of all of their students regardless of their decision to be hybrid or remote? How will guidance presentations be presented? Will remote students be less involved in these presentations due to their decision?

6. Will hybrid students have an overall advantage over remote remote students?

~Senior at WRHS

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: School committee question

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 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: **MARLENE THEBEAU** <snoopym00@msn.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 8:52 AM

Subject: School committee question

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

It looks like the kids will not be able to keep their same teachers if they remain fully remote when the transition to hybrid occurs. Will they be keeping their same teachers/schedules when they transition to hybrid or if they elect to go into school?

Thank you,
Marlene Thebeau

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S9+, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd:

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 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: **Leah Wickman** <leahsc95@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2020 at 8:35 PM

Subject:

To: <darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>, Melissa Wallace <melissa_wallace@wrsd.net>, <questions@wrsd.net>

Good Evening Dr. McCall,
cc: Melissa Wallace, WRSD SC

First off, let me start by saying thank you to you, and all the WRSD staff for working so hard to ensure the safety of students and school staff getting our kids to for school. I feel the first few days of remote learning went very well. I have a 3rd and 5th grade student at Dawson. We were provided detailed schedules and clear expectations ahead of the first day. This allowed both kids to transition into school very easily. I particularly liked they were not left to self directed learning for too long of a period; while also being afforded sufficient screen breaks throughout their day.

I am emailing this evening as I have some questions before I can make a decision on which learning model my children will participate in. I understand there will be a special school committee meeting Wednesday evening. Below is a list of questions I would greatly appreciate if you could address:

- A more detailed daily and weekly schedule for each learning model. I am specifically concerned with synchronous vs asynchronous learning time during the remote portion of hybrid.
- Sounds like teachers and classmates will change if students choose remote for the year. Will teachers, classmates, schedules, etc. change if choosing hybrid?

- What will be the daily start and end times for in person learning days for our Elementary schools?
- Will there be an opportunity to transition back to taking the bus, if the original survey answer is your child will NOT ride the bus?

Finally, I feel the September 25th deadline for families to respond is pretty aggressive. It would serve the district well if you extended the deadline until Friday October 2nd.

Thank you for your time and dedication to the WRSD students and families.

Leah and Kyle Wickman
Dawson Elementary Parents

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Deadline for Learning Path Choice

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 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: **Corey Burnham-Howard** <cburnhamhoward@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Sep 19, 2020 at 9:33 AM

Subject: Deadline for Learning Path Choice

To: Darryll McCall <darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>, Robert Berlo <robert_berlo@wrsd.net>, Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Cc: <questions@wrsd.net>

Dear Dr. McCall, Deputy Superintendent Berlo, Chair Weeks, and School Committee Members,

We are writing with concern about the sudden deadline requested of families to select the learning path of their students and to make transportation commitments for the remainder of the school year.

First, however, we want to start by thanking all of the very many individuals who have committed extraordinary amounts of time and efforts to get us to where we are today in the District. We are in unprecedented times that have required unprecedented actions and coordination to ensure the continued successful education of our children. Our family's remote start to the academic year has been successful and appreciated.

Unfortunately, just two days into our "new normal," as our anxieties about the unknown and unexpected were just beginning to ease, and we were just settling into this new routine and learning model, we received an email from Dr. McCall, requesting within the week our decision on choice of learning model and our commitment to transportation for the remainder of the year.

We infer the need for timely decisions so that buildings, transportation, and schedules for the different learning paths can be prepared for the remainder of the school year.

However, the lack of information and detail provided with regard to the remote-only and hybrid learning path options was disconcerting. The general descriptions and summary of information provided in the WRSD "Description of Remote and Hybrid Learning Paths" is lacking details needed for parents and guardians to make informed decisions on learning path options and transportation commitments. After reading the descriptions provided, we found we were left with more questions than answers, which is unacceptable given the consequential decisions we are being asked to quickly make. Notably, we have been following School Committee meetings and Dr. McCall's presentations, and despite that background of knowledge and information, we were left confused and wanting. We can only assume that those who have not been following those meetings may be left that much more perplexed.

We respectfully request parents and guardians be given a reasonable extension of time from the current September 25, 2020 deadline to choose one of two learning paths for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year until such time as more specific information and key logistical and educational details have been provided. If a reasonable extension of time cannot be granted, we would appreciate a clear explanation as to why.

There are many details that we believe should be provided before informed decisions can be made by families, including but not limited to provision of the following:

- proposed/model daily/weekly schedules for each learning path (including synchronous and asynchronous learning times);
- specific school building and remote daily start and end times for live learning;
- information on whether in each or either learning path, students will retain or lose their current teachers, and, if lose, the process for transferring grades-to-date;
- information on whether on a remote-only path high school students will be able to continue classes at varied academic levels (e.g., CPA, Honors, AP);
- information on school bus protocols, numbers of students per bus, and monitoring, if any, by adults on busses;
- information on how class transition/hallway passing will be safely handled in each building;
- information on the health metrics under which the WRSD will return to remote-only learning;
- building and classroom protocols for COVID-19-positive cases;
- information on the ability of families who choose the hybrid learning path to change their decision and move to a remote-only learning path based on desire and/or a change in health metrics and/or a change in, or increased provision of, information/details with regard to the learning path options.

The ability of families to make an informed decision on the future learning path of their students, and the ability of families to commit to transportation choices, demands this information among other and more details.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, your consideration of future actions and information sharing and communication, and your continued efforts.

Best regards,

Corey Burnham-Howard and Mike Howard

11 Osgood Rd.

Princeton, MA

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Learning Plans questions

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 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: **Mary Pickering** <pickerim@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 11:00 AM
Subject: Learning Plans questions
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Good morning,

I know you must be inundated with questions after the ill-thought-out, vague email from the Superintendent on Friday. I have all the same questions as the people on the social media platforms, but two additional questions I have that I respectfully ask to be addressed are:

1. Under the hybrid plan, how are push in services going to be provided for students on an IEP who have 5 days/week on their grid? Asynchronous learning does NOT satisfy these requirements.
2. Should a vaccine become available or the virus infection levels plummet by Spring and it be possible for inperson learning, will the students be reverting back to the teachers they currently have (for first quarter) even if we choose full-remote (and have a subsequent change in teacher/ professionals for IEP services) after the first quarter?

Thank you,
Mary Pickering

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Parent feedback for Madelyn (grade 4 Houghton) and Vincent Potenza (grade 1 Houghton)

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 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: **Cate Downey Potenza** <catepotenza@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2020 at 9:18 AM

Subject: Parent feedback for Madelyn (grade 4 Houghton) and Vincent Potenza (grade 1 Houghton)

To: Jennifer Halloran <jennifer_halloran@wrsd.net>, Lindsey Asquith <lindsey_asquith@wrsd.net>, Tony Cipro <tony_cipro@wrsd.net>, questions@wrsd.net <questions@wrsd.net>

I'm starting to have lots of questions and I have a few comments. After reading the models that will be our 2 options moving forward with a decision needed by next Friday, I'm not feeling too great about either option.

Thoughts of what we are doing now:

9-3 chromeschool is too much screen time. I know it's only been a few days and I'm sure the work will increase but I feel like I could be using the kids time better with more challenging work in a condensed time. Vinny and Maddie have enjoyed school so far and they appreciate being part of something, and feeling like they are connected to their peers. They are creating a connection to you, their teachers that have been assigned to them. I worry that with a potential shuffling of teachers and kids we may lose those connections. That will add to the disjointed feeling that this school year is going to leave the kids with.

Thoughts on full-remote:

If we are going to chose this option it would need to be a condensed elementary school day, 9-12 with more learning in a shorter amount of time, maybe with some homework. I can't imagine that a hybrid "full day" is going to provide more that 3 hours of actual instruction either. Switching teachers after creating a connection with the teacher they

have been assigned to is not ideal. I wish that we had opportunity to start this option at the beginning of the year, with the teacher and kids that they would be have been with for the year.

Thoughts on hybrid:

It sounds as if our 2 off days will not be synchronous, with 2 days of in person instruction in a lab like setting, not conducive to learning, that will be cloaked in fear. I can't see how this is the ideal learning environment that we are striving for. I understand the push from the top from DESE and from Gov. Bakers office but that doesn't mean we sacrifice all the important stuff just to get bodies in the building. Also, what happens when they shut it all down and go back to full remote? Because ultimately I think we will be there eventually. I worry that this is the least learning friendly option.

We need MORE communication. From the district, from our leadership at Houghton and from everyone working on this issue. I would like to see a breakdown of what factors and metrics are driving decisions. I would like to see a breakdown of why they are offering the option they are offering and what the benefit to the children each option offers. Not benefit to the parents, or benefit for their reporting to DESE, but benefit to the children and their learning potential. That should be leading these conversations. I did not see any language in the descriptions of our options that even remotely resembled that.

We are considering pulling the kids and either homeschooling or enrolling them in Truro Public school where we spend the summer and have residency. Truro is going back full time and will be conducting class outside under tents as much as possible. I have feelers out for how this is going and it will remain an option on the table for us.

Lastly, I am so impressed with the dance that the teachers are doing trying to follow the lead of this massive district. I am so thankful for teachers and everything they have done and I know they will continue to strive to make the kids have the best year possible.

Thank you!
Cate Potenza

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Remote/Hybrid Plan Questions

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:08 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 Hendrickx** <mhendrickx89@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Sep 19, 2020 at 1:16 PM

Subject: Remote/Hybrid Plan Questions

To: <nicole_amos@wrsd.net>, <melissa_ayala@wrsd.net>, <krista_bennett@wrsd.net>, <scott_brown@wrsd.net>, <michael_dennis@wrsd.net>, <maleah_gustafson@wrsd.net>, <sherrie_haber@wrsd.net>, <robert_imber@wrsd.net>, <laura_kirshenbaum@wrsd.net>, <linda_longbellil@wrsd.net>, <kenneth_mills@wrsd.net>, <benjamin_mitchel@wrsd.net>, <matthew_lavoie@wrsd.net>, <karl_ottmar@wrsd.net>, <asima_silva@wrsd.net>, <christina_smithSC@wrsd.net>, <deidre_shapiro@wrsd.net>, <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>, <kelly_williamson@wrsd.net>, <linda_woodland@wrsd.net>, <adam_young@wrsd.net>
Cc: <Questions@wrsd.net>, <darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>

To the school committee-

First of all, thank you for the incredible amount of time and energy you have been putting into this year. It is evident that you are all committed to making this year as successful as possible for our children. With that, I really appreciate you taking the time to hold a special meeting related to selecting remote vs. hybrid for our children for the remainder of the year. I do have a number of questions, as I don't feel we have sufficient information to make an informed decision about what is best for our family.

1. For hybrid, what happens during the two "remote" days where the opposite cohort is in person? I would really like this to be *much more detailed* than it currently is.
 - a. It sounds as though those days will be entirely independent, with no synchronous learning at all. This sounds uncomfortably similar to what occurred in the spring, and essentially gives less instructional time than what kids are getting now with full remote. Currently they have 4.5 days, hybrid is lowering it to 2.5.
 - b. If these days will be independent, how does that realistically work for the younger grades, especially those that can't even read for themselves yet?

- c. What will these assignments be like, and how much work should be anticipated? Will the assignments for these days be graded? What about for the younger kids that will require adult supervision to accomplish any work?
2. Once we switch to a hybrid model, what is the purpose of the PD days on Wednesdays?
 - a. If the teachers will only be teaching one day remote and the rest will be in person as it's always been, it would be helpful to understand what this time will be used for since it's taking more time away from the kids.
 3. How does Special Education work with the hybrid model?
 - a. My child has an IEP for 5 days of 45min pull out for Special Ed instruction and 5 days of para support. Presumably the Special Ed pull out would continue remotely on these days (hopefully?) but what about the para support? Will we have access to a para to help complete assignments remotely?
 - b. It's important to note, I did not get my child's remote plan until the day after school started, and only after I reached out to request it. I'm trying to be patient, but the special education planning thus far has been lacking in communication, with mixed messages, incorrect information, and a lack of communication with parents in general, so I'm struggling to be optimistic about further changes.
 4. In the hybrid plan, how will specials work? If children will only receive instruction 2.5 days per week, will they have specials on the in person days?
 - a. Does this mean less time for specials in general, or will they also attend specials virtually on their remote days?
 - b. If the two home days truly are entirely independent, I would much prefer to see specials remain remote only on these days in order to maximize in person learning time (and learning time in general).
 5. In the hybrid plan, why can't the home cohort watch the in person cohort virtually, so that half the class is always live and half is always virtual?
 - a. I have asked around and this is **in practice and working** in other districts. It's on us to be creative to make the best out of a bad situation.
 - b. If the above is not feasible, can we consider the teacher working with the in person cohort in the morning and then switching to work with the remote cohort in the afternoon, so all children get some face time with the teacher every day? Children could use their "free" time to complete assignments, go to specials, etc.
 - c. How can we better utilize para's to help make this work?
 6. If we choose to remain remote, how will the new teacher be selected?
 - a. Will the grades be mixed, and if so, please elaborate on how that is going to work.
 - b. Since different classrooms move at different paces, how will the remote teacher ensure continuity with the material they have been learning as the kids switch over?
 - c. Teachers spent a good deal of their time this week getting to know the students, and working on activities for the students to get to know each other. Will this time be replicated as they switch to a new teacher and class? It's important that students are comfortable in their learning environment in order to be successful academically.

Answers to the above are essential for parents to select the best path forward, and given the lack of information and tight timing currently on the table, our family has started making inquiries into alternative options for education outside the district. I would prefer not to pull my children from the district, especially given that the year has already begun, but I am worried it will be our only viable option. Assuming this decision is made prior to October 1, I understand this may increase the negative budget implications we already face, but I'm concerned that the administration may leave us with no choice.

In addition to more information, I also think we need more time to make this decision. We will only have 1.5 weeks to understand how well remote is working before making a year long commitment. Every kid is different and it's going to take some time to understand what's going to work best for each of them.

As I said before, it is on us as a district to ***be creative*** to make the best out of a bad situation for the sake of our students. The plan that has been laid out leaves a lot of questions and lacks creativity and flexibility. Teachers have been incredibly flexible thus far, parents have been incredibly flexible thus far, it's time for the administration to step up and be flexible too.

Respectfully,

Michelle Hendrickx
18 Forbes Rd, Rutland

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: comments for 9/23 school committee meeting

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:08 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: **The Sidhoms** <thesidhoms@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 2:18 PM

Subject: comments for 9/23 school committee meeting

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hello,

We just have comments to be shared with the school committee for the 9/23 special meeting.

We have a first grader and a second grader in our house. One parent has already had to reduce hours at work to stay home and facilitate remote learning, which has hurt us financially.

Despite our best efforts, our now first grader is struggling with reading because she missed so much of kindergarten last year.

Both our children are in tears daily, frustrated with technology that fails to work more often than not, and overwhelmed by clicking between websites, missing instructions when video cuts out and overall, just feeling like they don't understand what is happening in their class.

We have done our best to protect our childrens' mental health since March; the last four days of remote learning has caused such steep declines that we hesitate to even have them log in any more.

We understand and appreciate the Herculean efforts made by teachers and administrators but this is simply not how young children learn. In just a short time our

young children who used to love school and learning have grown to despise it and fight to even have to sit in front of a computer.

One parent in our family is immune-compromised and still, the downward spiral that we have seen our children go through is MORE CONCERNING than the potential of this parent becoming sick with COVID-19. We understand that not everyone can return to school, but we beg that those that can and are willing be allowed to as soon as possible. Many other towns and cities where there are far more cases (Framingham, Ashland) have already returned hybrid without incident.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
A Paxton Center School Family

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd:

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:08 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: **Meghan Hreschuk** <paisan32877@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 2:27 PM

Subject:

To: <darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>, Melissa Wallace <melissa_wallace@wrsd.net>, <questions@wrsd.net>

Dear Dr. Mccall, Mrs. Wallace and school committee,

I am writing because I am very concerned about the current status of school. I am a nurse and have been working throughout the pandemic. My husband is a middle school principal and has been working many long hours as I'm sure you have. I don't have a problem with the children starting remote. But I don't understand why the kids are not returning to school until November. I am sure that older kids can navigate this online school but the younger kids are struggling. I have a 4th grade son and 2nd grade daughter. They loved school up until this year. They are disengaged and it is breaking my heart. If I wasn't at home helping them, I'm not sure where they would be. I know that the teachers are doing the best they can. These kids belong in school and there are going to be many repercussions if it doesn't happen soon. I know everyone is scared. The sooner kids get back, the sooner everyone will feel more comfortable with it. I am hoping that you reevaluate the back to school plan and reconsider getting the kids back sooner. I am a nurse and willing to help out to do whatever I can to get these kids back. If other school districts and private schools can make it happen, I know that Wachusett can.

Also in regards to the survey sent about transportation, i think that there should have been something on it asking parents if they would be willing to drive their kids instead of taking the bus. I know you are concerned about budget and don't want that to be a deal breaker.

Sincerely,

Meghan Hreschuk

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Hybrid Details and Concern

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:08 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: **Leslie** <lam22ct@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 10:39 AM
Subject: Fwd: Hybrid Details and Concern
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Another thought to add on to my statement.

For hybrid, many districts are utilizing technology in the classrooms and cameras etc. so that the kids that are in the class AND kids that are remote are hearing and learning from the same lessons and allowing for those remote days to still have live teaching. It is just in the classroom and the teachers are monitoring the computer for hands raised and questions the same way they are managing the classroom. This way children have live synchronous learning all 5 days vs, just 2 days a week. This seems like a MUCH better approach than what is currently proposed by WRSD and I think we should learn and implement from other districts that have already gone down the hybrid route and take advantage of those lessons learned.

Thanks
Leslie Mason

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

From: **Leslie** <lam22ct@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 2:47 PM
Subject: Hybrid Details and Concern
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Dear WRSDSC Members,

I am very concerned regarding the hybrid details that were listed in the superintendents email on Friday 9/18.

When looking at this model and the details it appears that the children will only receive actual synchronous teaching on the two days that they are in school and that the three days are 100% asynchronous. According to the details of the plan, the asynchronous days will be meant for independent work and preparing for the next in school day. That means that a child will only be taught math once a week in this proposed model. How is that possible? And how is that doing right for the education of our students?

How are students supposed to learn new material in an asynchronous time during the other three days? Why is that acceptable? And why is it acceptable for children to be swapped into different classes across the district with different teachers? This seems far too disruptive to an already stressful time of schooling? How will they be properly prepared for MCAS or even meeting the standards of the teaching if they are only in synchronous learning two days?

We need a better plan, one that puts our children's education and best interests at the forefront of the discussion. This seems like, yet again, another tactic of the superintendent and administration to make returning to school in person next to impossible. It seems like this administration has worked against the best interest of our children's education from the beginning. And we are here again, fighting for our children to get the education that they deserve.

I respectfully ask the school committee to really push back on this hybrid model, this does not seem to be in the best interest of our children. I ask the school committee to request more synchronous time during the remote days vs. 100% individual learning.

Sincerely,
Leslie Mason
Sandy Ridge Sterling

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: For 9/23 meeting - pods, more worksheets

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:08 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: **Tiffany Sidhom** <tjsidhom@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 4:47 PM

Subject: For 9/23 meeting - pods, more worksheets

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hello,

Two questions for the 9/23 school committee meeting:

1) Is it possible for the younger kids to have more worksheet-based work? My first and second grader are complaining of eye pain and headaches from staring at the screen all day.

2) I understand that we are trying to make remote seem like school but could we focus more on the teacher being the only one on video? My children are distracted by seeing themselves on camera but also are struggling with the fact that other children are together in "pods" or at child care facilities that often look like school. I understand that this is necessary for many families but it's making an already very difficult situation worse for children who feel that they are being left out.

Thank you

Sent from my iPhone

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Thoughts on the start of remote learning

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:09 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: **Marci Driscoll** <marcimsmithdriscoll@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 9:55 PM

Subject: Thoughts on the start of remote learning

To: <krista_bennett@wrsd.net>, Scott Brown <scott_brown@wrsd.net>, <michael_dennis@wrsd.net>, <maleah_gustafson@wrsd.net>, <laura_kirshenbaum@wrsd.net>, <linda_longbellil@wrsd.net>, Kenneth Mills <kenneth_mills@wrsd.net>, <asima_silva@wrsd.net>, <christina_smithSC@wrsd.net>, <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>, <adam_young@wrsd.net>

Dear School Committee Members,

I wanted to write and share some thoughts as the parent of a first grader at Dawson. I am so very, very impressed and pleased with the level of communication, and with the amount of thought, creativity, and planning that has gone into the remote program being offered by the Dawson community. Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Bischoff have kept parents informed throughout the summer and fall, offered opportunities for questions and answers, and kept families updated. The academic program offered by my son's first grade teacher and team is well planned, and provides opportunities for movement breaks, student participation, and opportunities to complete work at different times as needed based on home schedules. It's a big change to adjust to this for everyone, but my son has been engaged and excited, and is eager to see his teachers and fellow class members each day.

I want to thank the members of the school committee for supporting the process of researching the HVAC and air quality of the buildings prior to bringing children and staff back into the schools. This is a big concern of mine as a parent; proper air circulation and ventilation is essential in preventing the spread of Covid via aerosols, in addition to wearing masks and handwashing.

I am, as a parent, greatly concerned with the communication that has come from District Office itself. Like many parents I was caught by surprise with the email sent last Friday indicating the need to choose a desired program for the rest of the school year after less than two weeks of remote school. I was also disappointed to learn that building administrators and teachers were unaware that this email was being sent, and therefore were put in a very awkward position of having to answer questions they were not prepared for, when they are all working so very, very hard to start remote learning off in a positive light. I'm fortunate to be home on an unpaid leave right now (from my District position), and we have the flexibility to support our son in either a remote or hybrid model, but it is still hard to think about making this type of decision so quickly. I also found it unfair to my colleagues for this email to go out without any previous communication to teachers and administrators. Thank you for setting up the meeting on Wednesday, I am hoping for more information and clarification to come from there.

Thank you for your time and efforts to support the children, parents, and staff of the District during these challenging times.

Sincerely,
Marci Driscoll

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: transportation question.

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:09 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: <carsul@aol.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 9:44 PM
Subject: transportation question.
To: questions@wrsd.net <questions@wrsd.net>

Hello.

My daughter is a junior and would drive herself (and 2 siblings if the juniors and freshman were in the same cohort) if she was guaranteed a parking pass. How would you like us to answer the questions on the survey? If she can't obtain a parking permit then all three would take the bus or if juniors and freshman cohort were on diff days then my youngest two would at least be on the bus. I want to give the most accurate information that would help, but am not sure how to answer.

Thank you
Caroline Willman

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Special Meeting questions

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:09 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: **Nancy Terlato** <nterlato@comcast.net>
Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 10:12 AM
Subject: Special Meeting questions
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hi,

I have many questions regarding the survey and our 2 options.

1. If one chooses remote, who is teaching these students? Please be more specific than WRSD educators. Is it their current teachers? They are getting into a routine at home now with their homeroom and the teachers. I'm trying to understand how this will work once the remote/hybrid options start. On that day when this starts do they all of the sudden start off with a whole new group of teachers and kids? Are you putting kids from different schools together into remote classrooms?
2. If we choose hybrid, do they stay with their current teachers? Again, trying to figure out who is teaching the kids?
3. How will the 2 cohorts be made? Alphabetically? It would be very helpful in making a decision if we knew which days our kids would be attending school in person? Parents are working and leaving the house and most do not feel comfortable having their kids take the bus so this may make a difference on which model we choose.
4. For the hybrid students, please explain in detail how the 3 other days will go. Are there any live classes? Teaching of new material? Interaction with teachers? Or is it all independent work?

5. We need to make this decision for the rest of the year. Is there any reassessment of the situation? What if things are looking really good? Or there is a vaccine come late fall (I know unlikely)?

Thanks for all you do!

Thanks,
Nancy Terlato
Sterling, MA

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: School Re-Opening

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:09 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: **Julie Hurley** <jhurley1204@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 10:18 AM

Subject: School Re-Opening

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hello,

1. Explain to the Wachusett Community why we have still not been prepared to open our schools? It has been since March 2020 that my children have not been in school.
2. No one can answer how assessments will be made?
3. Where is the prioritization and sense of urgency to have special education and elementary grades back to in person learning?
4. How are my children supposed to build virtual friendships?
5. How are my children teachers supposed to build a relationship with my children? Evaluate their needs? Can't be done via a computer.
6. Is the district prepared to manage the mental health of all members of the family children, parents and grandparents that are all trying to manage this awful environment for learning?
7. Why have other districts made it happen some level of a Hybrid model? And Wachusett has not still after more than 6 months.

Extremely disappointed in this District and members involved to take action in making my children education possible.

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Remote Learning Feedback

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:09 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: **Will Briggs** <willrudd33@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 10:34 AM

Subject: Remote Learning Feedback

To: Darryll McCall <darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>

Cc: Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>, michael_dennis@wrsd.net <michael_dennis@wrsd.net>, nicole_amos@wrsd.net <nicole_amos@wrsd.net>, melissa_ayala@wrsd.net <melissa_ayala@wrsd.net>, krista_bennett@wrsd.net <krista_bennett@wrsd.net>, scott_brown@wrsd.net <scott_brown@wrsd.net>, Maleah Gustafson <maleah_gustafson@wrsd.net>, sherrie_haber@wrsd.net <sherrie_haber@wrsd.net>, jeffrey_haynes@wrsd.net <jeffrey_haynes@wrsd.net>, robert_imber@wrsd.net <robert_imber@wrsd.net>, laura_kirshenbaum@wrsd.net <laura_kirshenbaum@wrsd.net>, Matthew Lavoie <matthew_lavoie@wrsd.net>, linda_longbellil@wrsd.net <linda_longbellil@wrsd.net>, kenneth_mills@wrsd.net <kenneth_mills@wrsd.net>, benjamin_mitchel@wrsd.net <benjamin_mitchel@wrsd.net>, karl_ottmar@wrsd.net <karl_ottmar@wrsd.net>, asima_silva@wrsd.net <asima_silva@wrsd.net>, christina_smithsc@wrsd.net <christina_smithsc@wrsd.net>, deidre_shapiro@wrsd.net <deidre_shapiro@wrsd.net>, kelly_allyn@wrsd.net <kelly_allyn@wrsd.net>, linda_woodland@wrsd.net <linda_woodland@wrsd.net>, adam_young@wrsd.net <adam_young@wrsd.net>, Crystal Briggs <crystalb7206@yahoo.com>

Hello,

Once again we would like to thank you and all the rest of your team for the efforts you have put in these last weeks and months in a effort to help our children. I do not envy any of your positions in these times.

However, we need to give some honest feedback here. We were going to wait until Friday, once a full week and a half had passed, before we commented...if we did at all. It cannot wait. I am currently shopping for a heavy bag and boxing gloves to put in our basement where the kids do their "remote learning", so my son does not smash his fist through the wall. Normally he is the most calm and easy going child. This has brought him to his knees. He has breakdowns multiple times a day, and is forced to do extra work on the computer...after several hours already...because the system

has crashed so many times and he didn't get to finish his work in the normal time period. He is in 6th grade. We purchased brand new Chromebooks for this and have also have a new Macbook and the latest Ipad pro, so we are up to date technology wise. There are many flaws with this way of learning for these young kids, but first off several hours of screen time is not healthy mentally or physically.

My daughter in 3rd, who normally loves everything school, is miserable as well. My son has anxiety every night knowing that he has to repeat this awful process the next day. It is not healthy in any way. I cannot imagine how this is from the teachers' end as well...I feel for them. This needs to be eliminated or changed drastically as soon as possible, as there is no way it is sustainable. After a few days my wife is considering withdrawing them and home schooling, which has its own negative ramifications from our viewpoint...those of which may be the lesser of two evils.

This is coming from a family in which my wife, with a masters degree in Guidance, and a full education back ground, is home full time with them. I cannot imagine what other children are going through that don't have this support. I am guessing they are simply not getting anything done, as it is very difficult for us. 90% of our children will be left in the dust if this continues.

I plead with you, for the sake of this generation of children, do whatever you can to eliminate this program and get the kids back in school. I understand you are at the mercy of state guidelines, and it is much easier said than done, but if you have the kids best intentions at heart, which we know you do, they need to be in a classroom. It is to the point where the (supposed)cure is worse than the disease in our humble opinions. I say supposed cure because we do not believe keeping them out of school will be any more dangerous than being in school under a regulated and supervised environment...but that is a completely different discussion.

Sorry to be and sound so negative, when we do need positivity more than ever....but we felt we had to give our honest feedback on the current state of things.

Thank you all once again. If there is anything at all we can do from our ends to help, please let us know. We would love to help in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Will Briggs

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Virtual learning

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:10 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: **theresa reilly** <reillytheresa31@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 12:42 PM

Subject: Virtual learning

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

Hi all!

Firstly I would like to say what a wonderful
Job the teachers and administrators are doing at PCS! We have a first grader in Mrs
Norton's class.

My questions is about the longevity of the day. I feel that if you can homeschool for no
more than 2 hours a day why can't we also do that with virtual learning? It is a very long
day for a younger child to be on the computer and our first grader has a hard time with it.
Is there anyway we can shorten the day? I feel it's too much and my husband and I are
talking about homeschooling.

Best,
Theresa Reilly

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subject to the Public Records Law, M.G.L. c.66, § 10.*



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Public Comment Question

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:10 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: **Jennifer Scalise-Mullett** <jscalisemullett@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 4:03 PM

Subject: Public Comment Question

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

The way hybrid is going to look in our district is of paramount importance to parents - as is the continuity of the educators that our kids are just starting to get to know. What I am most interested in is to understand IF we choose hybrid, what our remote days will look like. We receive good quality LIVE teaching with remote learning so far, but if we will get LESS with hybrid, parents should know. Parents should also know if their kids teacher will change no matter what selection they choose for their kid. Please be transparent. Please consider that every school in the district is not the same as every other school in terms of capacity and need and response to survey results. We need to be nimble, agile, and responsive. We are not all Holden.

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Masks break

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:10 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: **Deb Barakian** <dblackkitty@charter.net>

Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 3:27 PM

Subject: Masks break

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Good evening,

As a parent of a child in the wachusett school I have heard numerous that the district will be allowing masks breaks throughout the day of school is that correct? I ask why, aren't the kids suppose to wear them all the time? I understand they take them off for lunch. I just don't think it's a good idea for breaks we need to keep the kids in school so they can continue to learn for that they have missed so much.

Thank you,

Deb

Sent from my iPhone

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: 9/23 public comment

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:10 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: **Sarah Lefebvre** <sarahlefebvre@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 8:53 PM

Subject: 9/23 public comment

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

Chair Weeks –

I am a parent who lives in Paxton and a teacher who works at WRHS. I am writing to you to convey some of my thoughts on the reopening of WRSD so far.

My daughter just started kindergarten at PCS and she absolutely loves her teachers. They are kind, engaging and flexible. The curriculum is age appropriate and takes into account the limitations of the mode of instruction. The communication and feedback from teachers exceeds my expectations.

However before I am ready to commit to sending my five year old to school in person, I want to know what has been done to the physical plant ensure her safety. Will safety tests and any building upgrades or purchases be made public? I am also concerned about the lack of mask mandate in kindergarten. I think all students K-5 should be wearing masks to ensure the safety of students' peers and their teachers.

My students in my classes have been asking me this week about the survey in powerschool their parents have to fill out choosing whether they will be remote or hybrid for the rest of the year. They want to know: What will their education experience be if they are remote? Will their remote experience be sitting at home watching a screen while I talk to kids in my classroom and they try to follow along?

They want to know if they get to keep their teacher if they are remote? If they are hybrid? They have work schedules and want to know if their school schedule is going to change on Oct 5 or Nov 17?

Thank you for your time tonight.

Sarah Lefebvre

27 Lancelot Dr

Paxton MA

WRHS English Teacher

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Questions About Remote Learning and POD Classrooms

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:10 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: **Hank Leftwich** <hank.leftwich@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 6:21 PM

Subject: Questions About Remote Learning and POD Classrooms

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Good afternoon-

I am a parent of two elementary aged students (kindergarten and second grade) at Thomas Prince School in Princeton. My wife and I have partnered with three other families with children in the same grades at TPS to create a collaborative learning "pod" to help our children maximize their educational opportunities during this strange and challenging time. We consulted Principal Boyle prior to implementing this plan and received her endorsement and support of our efforts. This arrangement has been very beneficial for our children and has provided the opportunity for lots of inter-family connections as we share the load of helping to educate our children. As we consider which option to choose for the next phase of this journey, we have some questions we would like some clarification on.

1. If we choose the option of hybrid learning, will we be able to have our children (3 kindergarten students and 4 second graders) assigned to the same in person cohort? Our hope is that we would be able to continue to provide the same level of cooperative support to our students on the three days they will not be receiving in person instruction.

2. If we select the fully remote option, will we be able to have our

children in both kindergarten and second grade assigned to the same grade level teacher? Again, given that we are currently benefiting greatly from the cooperative approach we are employing, our hope is that having our children remain in the same virtual classroom will continue to foster a positive and productive learning environment in each of our homes. Having to juggle different requirements for multiple students in each grade level would be rather difficult under our current model.

3. Is there any information about the types of curriculum that will be provided to families who choose the hybrid model to utilize on the three asynchronous days of instruction?

4. Have there been any further developments in the timeline for an expected start to the proposed models?

Thank you very much for taking the time to address these questions. We have been impressed with the effort put forth by our classroom teachers and all involved in making this transition to remote learning as seamless and accessible as possible. We appreciate deeply the challenges faced by everyone involved and are thankful to be part of a school community that is as eager and diligent as ours.

Respectfully and gratefully,

Hank Leftwich

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Report

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:10 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: **Christine Tivnan** <christine.tivnan@verizon.net>

Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 9:49 AM

Subject: Fwd: Report

To: Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

See below for a revised one you can read with my name. Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Christine Tivnan <christine.tivnan@verizon.net>

Date: September 22, 2020 at 10:27:02 PM EDT

To: questions@wrsd.net

Subject: Re: Report

Hello,

Several parents have questions and comments relating to the remote/ hybrid survey:

- We are being asked to make the decision between hybrid or remote, without all of the information. It is not clear if this decision is for the calendar year 12/31/20, or for the entire school year. If the school year, then why are you making the decision in September, that the students will not be going back to school full time at all? I thought the plan was to move from remote to hybrid and then to full in class. The remote learning model is not working for many students. The Zoom meetings glitch in and out, and they are missing part of the lesson.

- You mentioned that families with students in K-8 will be in the same cohort, but what about families in the high school? If families have two or more students in high school will they be in the same cohort? For those parents who plan on driving their children to school, it would help a lot to be in the same cohort.

- The students are scheduled to return to school hybrid in November, but can this be moved up to October? What is preventing the school from moving to hybrid in October?

- How will the schedules work? Will the kids who picked hybrid remain in the same classes that they have for remote? Also, if they are in class two days a week, and remote on Wednesday, what exactly will they do on the other two days? Will they work independently on those two days and lose time with the teachers? Also, the kids who selected remote for the year, will they be placed in new classes? Will classes be combined? Will CPA and Honor classes combine? Will they be in remote classes 5 days a week? Or Will they also have those two extra days with no lecture/ classes similar to the hybrid students?

- If students select hybrid now, what is the likely hood that they will eventually move to school full time?

Thank you
Class of 2024

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 10, 2020, at 9:16 AM, Christine Tivnan <christine.tivnan@verizon.net> wrote:

Hello,

I'm not sure if you will be answering questions at tonight's meeting, and I hope this one isn't too late.

I wanted to know if the students will be receiving text books for this school year, and wanted to emphasize how important an actual text book is as opposed to online text books. I remember helping my junior study for her 9th grade honors history midterm, and the amount of history covered in that exam was enormous! Together we made close to 90 flash cards for studying, and she relied heavily on the text book. There is no way the students can receive an effective history education with online books. Also, other classes like math physics chemistry... if the teachers are not going to be handing out learning materials, then a book will be needed as a learning tool. Given the fact that classroom time has been reduced to only 40% of the regular class time, the students will be required to be motivated students who teach them selves a lot of the material. They will need a book for this. The students will have the books with them until next June. At that point the books can be returned in a plastic bag and kept there until any potential virus has gone away. Enough of the "what if" scenarios, the risk that corona would end up on a book and cause someone to get sick is slim to none. The students need text books, and I was wondering if the teachers have considered how they will be distributed.

Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 31, 2020, at 5:55 PM, Christine Tivnan
<christine.tivnan@verizon.net> wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Christine Tivnan <christine.tivnan@verizon.net>
Date: July 31, 2020 at 5:22:23 PM EDT
To: question@wrsd.net
Subject: Fwd: Report

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Christine Tivnan <christine.tivnan@verizon.net>
Date: July 31, 2020 at 5:13:02 PM EDT
To: megan_weeks@wrsd.net, Darryll McCall
<darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>
Subject: Fwd: Report

Hi

I just received a school committee report:

Does this mean that they haven't decided between hybrid and remote yet? I will have two students in the high school and I think they should start hybrid. Here are some things to consider, please share this with the committee;

- seniors should all start the year remote, to help with the situation. By the time they've entered their senior year, many have an idea where they want to apply to college and will apply either in the fall or early 2021. At this point, there is very little they can do academically to change their GPA very much. Some seniors don't take a full 7 period schedule since they've met most graduation requirements. Therefore, being the most independent grade, they would do fine with remote until requirements are eased up and the school can open.

- Junior year is a difficult and challenging year, and many consider it to be the students last chance to get grades up before applying to colleges. With classes like pre calc and chemistry, I believe it is imperative that

students take these more challenging classes in person if possible.

- Freshman, for obvious reasons I believe Freshman should also go at least 2-3 days in person, and if possible take the math and science classes in school. It seems like history and LA would be classes that are easier to do remote. Please read the CDC guidelines for returning to school.

That leads me to another idea I've been thinking about. How about teaching in class or remote based on the CLASS.

For example:

Say my daughter is in school Mon and Tue as Group A. While in school let's say the math science, and another class are the only ones taught to all students in the school at that time, along with remote students in Group A. Meanwhile on Mon and Tue the LA, History, Health classes are ALL taught via video to the Remote kids in Group B, and the hybrid group B who are home on Monday and Tuesday. This way, an LA class / teacher, can cover many students at one time. Then on Thur and Fri: Group B remote and Hybrid will have math and science, and Group A remote and hybrid will have LA, history, Health via video.. again those teachers can cover a large group of students.. this will cut down on the number of teachers trying to do remote and hybrid at the same time as LA history and health teachers would teach all via video. Group B on Mon and Tue and group A on Thur and Fri, and will also allow them to take the difficult classes while in school.

Thanks
Christine

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 31, 2020, at 4:39 PM,
Kathryn Mangus
<KathrynMangus21@wrsdk12.net>
wrote:

 WRSDC July 29 2020

On Fri, Jul 31, 2020 at 4:38 PM

Christine Tivnan

<christine.tivnan@verizon.net>

wrote:

Hello

I received this email, but I don't see any report attached. Where can I locate a report? I'll follow on Instagram too.

Sent from my iPhone

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Fwd: Public Comment/Questions

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

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

From: **Sara Kruger** <sara.r.kruger@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 3:43 PM

Subject: Public Comment/Questions

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Cc: <darryll_mccall@wrsd.net>, Linda Woodland <linda_woodland@wrsd.net>, Deidre Shapiro <deidre_shapiro@wrsd.net>, <melissa_ayres@wrsd.net>, <kelly_williamson@wrsd.net>

Do all of the various unions have to agree to the learning plans before they are enacted? What are the specific health metrics under which the school will begin learning or prevent a transition to begin hybrid learning on 11/18? What are the outlined building and classroom protocols for COVID-19-positive symptoms and severity of symptoms that will trigger evaluation by the school nurse and what are they; how will students be isolated and how will they be isolated at each school at any given time; what will happen when the maximum isolation capacity is reached? Will parents be provided with the need to be taken for any signs or symptoms of COVID and for any student or family exposures to positive COVID individuals, making it very difficult to take a child home from school, for how long, and how they are cleared to return to school? Will parents be provided with proposed/model daily and weekly schedules specifically outlining synchronous and asynchronous learning times and what those entail for each learning plan? Will we be provided with information on the learning path, students will retain or lose their current teachers, and, if they lose them, what is the process for transferring grades-to-date? If we transition from a hybrid model, back to a remote-only platform, will student schedules change again or will they follow the hybrid schedule? Will we have synchronous instruction (split class), 1 day of the entire classroom receiving remote instruction and 2 days of independent learning? How will we handle a need to quarantine individual students, a pod of students, or teachers due to a positive case or exposure to COVID, for a 10-14 days and not participate in any instruction at all, even if they are asymptomatic? Will they have access to remote instruction during quarantine, and what would their schedule be? What is the process for families who choose the hybrid learning path to change their decision or vice versa (remote to hybrid)? What happens if a family does not complete the survey to indicate which learning platform their child will be automatically assigned to one of the options?

I look forward to hearing more about each learning model, so we can be fully informed as we make our decision as a family.

Thanks for your time,
Sara Kruger
80 Meetinghouse Hill Road
Sterling
Good Evening,

First and foremost, I want to take the time to thank and commend all of the teachers, staff and administration. Our family's experience with this first week of remote instruction has been very positive. We spent a lot of time and effort preparing for this new learning platform. Everyone has gone above and beyond and our children are fully engaged, excited to learn, and happy to be "back at school" and peers again and there is a lot of laughter, smiles, and joy in our home at the end of each school day. Our experience has improved leaps and bounds compared to this past spring and fall.

I also want to thank Dr. McCall for extending the deadline for families to make a decision about a learning platform for our children moving forward. It is encouraging that he has acknowledged our concerns. I have some more specific and detailed questions I am hoping can be addressed before our decision is needed on 10/9.

Were teachers and building principals involved in developing the learning platform definitions provided with the survey? If not, will they be involved with further development of plans that will be provided with the survey?

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: IMPORTANT: Hybrid Learning & Transportation Selections

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:11 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: **Karen Ackerman** <karenackermanma@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 4:07 PM

Subject: Fwd: IMPORTANT: Hybrid Learning & Transportation Selections

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Thank you to the school committee for convening a special meeting. The following is an email sent to Dr. McCall on Friday, September 18th. We appreciate the opportunity for more information.

Dear Dr. McCall,

With all due respect and consideration of your difficult position as the superintendent, while we appreciate the information given during school committee meetings (which we have watched in their entirety since March), and through the emails provided, we cannot give you a response with notice of barely a week of remote learning as to what our family's participation will be for the remainder of the year. Until you empower our family to make that decision by providing detailed information about hybrid and remote learning once the buildings reopen, we will not be responding to your survey. We need to know more about: what in-school learning will look like at TPS for my child, what the actual physical space will look like in grade 7 classes at TPS, can we expect our child's schedule to be the same with the same teachers for in-person and remote days for the hybrid model and if not then please provide more facts on how that will be done, how our child's health will be protected in a safe and humane and kind way, whether recess (necessary for children as supported by physicians) will be allowed with expected limitations, what in-school socialization is going to look like (as that's a part of why we as parents want hybrid), the criteria for determining and the specific plan of action for when an in-school case of COVID is identified, if our child is exposed or exhibits symptoms

while participating in in-school learning will testing be arranged/available through the school/district or will we need to handle on our own, and will we be able to change our choice if remote-only or hybrid is not working as expected and needed. As an example of specifics needed, our child's current remote only schedule provides for what amounts to be two days of live instruction for each class. If we choose to participate in hybrid instead of remote only, does that mean our child will then have a full two days of in-person live training for each class as well as what would amount to be one day of remote live training per class? If so, that would be a large factor in our decision along with all other factors of the hybrid learning model as it would mean for classes where our child received five live days of learning per class pre-pandemic, we could expect three live days (hybrid) instead of two (remote).

When you can provide us more details then we can provide you an answer to your question about whether our child will be remote only or hybrid for the remainder of the year. I am able to say we will not be using the bus regardless of the learning model we choose.

The one question our family is currently trying to answer is if we will be continuing in WRSD or looking at options outside of the district. We don't think we can even answer that question for you by 9/25 with just over a week of remote completed. We are trying and want this to work, but it's up to you to provide the information for us to all be successful.

We'd also like to convey that we love and appreciate the TEACHERS and the effort they have put forth - they have risen above expectations and are the greatest asset of this school district in our opinion, they have our family's utmost respect, admiration, and appreciation.

Respectfully,
Karen Ackerman
Michael Ackerman
2 Burpee Rd
Sterling
Thomas Prince School

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Public Comment - 9/23/2020 School Committee Meeting

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:11 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: **Megan Marshall** <megan.marshall@guidehouse.com>

Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 4:09 PM

Subject: Public Comment - 9/23/2020 School Committee Meeting

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

Cc: megan_weeks@wrsd.net <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Megan Marshall

Tanglewood Road, Sterling

Hello,

I am submitting my public comment in response to the learning plan that was sent out to families in the district last Friday.

Before I discuss the learning plan, I wanted to start with some positive feedback about the first week of school. Understanding that all families are unique and have different perspectives and experiences, for our family, week 1 of remote learning has gone very well. Houghton School and Chocksett School teachers and administration are hitting it out of the park. My kids are engaged and focused and learning. Yes, of course this is far more screen time than any family would want for their children, but we are in the middle of a pandemic. If 6 hours of screen time per day is how we have to deliver education for the next year, I am more than thankful that this is the biggest issue I have to worry about for my children this year. I am not worried about screen time. I am worried about their education.

The main reason I am writing this evening is out of concern for the lack of detail provided in the learning plan sent out to families on Friday. It is impossible for any family to make an informed decision on the best learning option for their child without having a detailed understanding of what each plan looks like in practice. By way of example, before I received the learning plan I never once considered choosing a fully remote model for my children. After reviewing the plan and seeing that hybrid seems to involve two days of independent learning, I am at a loss. It seems as though remote learning is the only way that kids will actually have access to their teacher every day of the school week. So now I have more questions.

It is important for the district to understand that a lot of families aren't choosing a plan based solely on the risks of their children contracting COVID. A lot of families are also considering which plan best meets the educational needs of their children. The information provided in last Friday's email is not adequate.

Listed below are the questions I need answered in order to make an informed decision for my children.

1. Under the hybrid model on the days my children are home, will anyone from the school be checking in with them? I did not see any reference in the material to there being teacher-led instruction on the two at home days (not including Wednesdays), even though it says that new material will be introduced. How will that happen? Understanding their assigned teacher will be in the classroom with the other cohort, what is the plan to have the children at home engaged with an educator on those days? Is the district not planning to have them watch live video from the classroom? Is this due to lack of technology? What is the reason? If there is no plan for this to happen, at the very least there needs to be a video check in and exit ticket process for each class during those 2 days at home, whether it's done by the teacher or support staff. This cannot look like the Spring. We can do better than this. We have had time to do better than this. When I posted on Facebook asking for feedback on both options I immediately received text messages and private messages from friends who selected hybrid in other schools and in other states with this "independent learning time for 2 days" and every single person told me they regretted the decision and that their children were on a 4 day weekend each week. Wachusett MUST do better than this. We cannot allow this to happen in our district.
2. If a family chooses the full-time remote option will this look and feel just like it does today at home? Will the children be engaged in teacher-led synchronous learning all day for 4.5 days per week? Or will the schedule change? Who will teach the remote learning children – a subset of existing teachers in the district, newly hired teachers? I have heard rumors that in certain circumstances grade levels will be combined where you could have, for example, Grade 1 learners with Grade 2 learners. Is this accurate? If it is accurate how will that work?

3. In both the hybrid and remote learning models – could the children be reassigned to new teachers in November, or would they only get new teacher(s) if they choose the remote model?

No amount of information is too much at this point for the district to share with families. It is imperative that we receive side-by-side schedules of both learning plans. We need to understand who is educating our children in both plans. We need to understand how much teacher-led instruction there will be in both plans. We need the details. Families have been patient. Our patience has run out.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these concerns.

MEGAN MARSHALL

Associate General Counsel, Healthcare

617-823-1585 Mobile | megan.marshall@guidehouse.com
guidehouse.com



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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Return to school

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:11 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: **Ryan Caneen** <rcaneen@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 4:59 PM

Subject: Return to school

To: <nicole_amos@wrsd.net>, <melissa_ayala@wrsd.net>, <krista_bennett@wrsd.net>, <scott_brown@wrsd.net>, <michael_dennis@wrsd.net>, <maleah_gustafson@wrsd.net>, <sherrie_haber@wrsd.net>, <robert_imber@wrsd.net>, <laura_kirshenbaum@wrsd.net>, <matthew_lavoie@wrsd.net>, <linda_longbellil@wrsd.net>, <kenneth_mills@wrsd.net>, <benjamin_mitchel@wrsd.net>, <karl_ottmar@wrsd.net>, <asima_silva@wrsd.net>, <christina_smithSC@wrsd.net>, <deidre_shapiro@wrsd.net>, <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>, <kelly_williamson@wrsd.net>, <linda_woodland@wrsd.net>, <adam_young@wrsd.net>, <jeffrey_haynes@wrsd.net>

Members of the WRSD School Committee,

At tonight's meeting I would like to see a vote take place to get students back to a physical classroom as soon as possible. The remote learning is not working for my children. They have been out of school for far too long and their education is suffering. I want my children back in school!

Respectfully,

Ryan Caneen
1174 Wachusett Street
Jefferson, MA 01522

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Remote learning observation and concerns

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:11 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: **Anna Kusterski** <annakusterski@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 3:56 PM

Subject: Remote learning observation and concerns

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hello,

My name is Anna Kusterski. I live at 97 Joel Scott Drive in Holden. Both my sons attend Dawson Elementary grades 2 and 4. I would like to begin my saying that I am very thankful to my sons teachers for going above and beyond to ensure kids have a good remote learning experience. I have been dredging start of the school year and am happy to say its going better than I anticipated. With that said one of my sons teacher is unable to access remote teaching from her home and has been going into the school in order for kids to be able to hear her. If she works from home with her school issued laptop the connection is so bad that the kids are unable to understand anything that she is trying to say. This leaves everyone very frustrated!! This has been the case on the first day of school, few times after that and today. No fault of hers. Each time the teacher is working from home using the equipment that was provided to her she is unable to do her job effectively. As the school is preparing to transition to a hybrid system what has or can be been done to correct remote access issues teachers are reporting and students are seeing? We have noticed that when the teacher goes into the school building the connection works, kids can hear her, she can hear the kids which is great however, what will happen is she is unable to go into the building?

As mentioned above I am pleasantly surprised as I think remote learning is going much better than I anticipated but it's not a replacement for in person learning. My family, we are all looking forward to in person and hybrid. As some of our kids will transition to the hybrid model and some will continue remote connectivity issues need to be resolved for all to continue to have a good learning experience.

Additionally, my understanding is that kids may be assigned to different teachers. Can

you please clarify that for me? As well as expectation regarding what work will be done by those attending hybrid model on the two days kids will be home. Will the kids still continue to log into morning meetings and some specials? I guess I would like more information about the two days kids will be at home and how that will look.

Thank you,
Anna Kusterski

Sent from my iPhone

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: for tonight's mtg re: hybrid/remote plans

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:11 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: **Liz Parker Gagne** <lizparkergagne@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 5:57 PM
Subject: for tonight's mtg re: hybrid/remote plans
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Dear School Committee Members,

We have significant concerns about the plans for hybrid and remote learning as they were laid out in a message from the School District last Friday. Unfortunately, the communication and the plans didn't seem to be quite as thoughtfully nor thoroughly laid out as the plan that had been presented to the School Committee during the August meetings.

If we are interpreting the plans correctly, they both options would result in upheaval for our students.

It sounds as though the hybrid plan includes 2 full days of asynchronous learning which was shown in the spring of 2020 to be less than optimal. And the classes (at least for elementary schools) have been carefully crafted by teachers and school administrators with the strengths and needs of each individual student and each class group in mind. Changing teachers at this point seems inadvisable.

We wonder why it is not possible for classes to remain intact and why teachers cannot split current classes into 2 hybrid cohorts and teach them simultaneously. If it is a budget issue, perhaps we can raise the funds.

Regardless, in either case, we absolutely need more specific information on the plans. And plans should/can be different at different age levels rather than one-size not fitting

anyone.

Thank you for your advocacy and dedication.

Sincerely,
Liz & Joe Parker Gagne
249 Chapel Street
Holden

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: School committee meeting question

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:11 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: **Kim Arum** <kim.arum@hotmail.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 4:19 PM
Subject: School committee meeting question
To: questions@wrsd.net <questions@wrsd.net>

My daughter is a sophomore at Wachusett who is in all honors and AP classes. After being on the computer for nearly 7 hours a day, her eyes are dry from staring at the screen on top of the headache caused by the amount of time concentrating on the computer. She then had 4 hours of homework on top of that. That's almost 11 hours of sitting in front of a screen. Not socializing where she can turn away at times but having to be alert and vigilant. If we opt for a full year of remote learning, will this continue to be the case? As of right now, I'm not ok with this. Teachers need to realize the health and well being of the kids and more time at the computer is detrimental not only to their social emotional well being, but their physical well being as well.

Sent from my iPhone

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Questions about remote versus hybrid learning

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

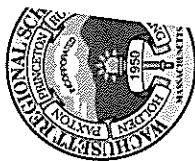
----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kim Arum** <kim.arum@hotmail.com>
Date: Sun, Sep 20, 2020 at 1:24 PM
Subject: Questions about remote versus hybrid learning
To: questions@wrsd.net <questions@wrsd.net>

1. How will mask breaks work?
2. Will there be different teachers for cohorts A and B?
3. Will their teachers and schedules change regardless of which option they choose?
4. Will kids in Singers (honors chorus) be in the same cohort since it's one class?
5. If we choose remote and there is a spring theater production, can children still participate in person if they want to since it's not wearing a mask all day and exposure to the same group of kids?
6. Do the remote students have different teachers than the hybrid students?

Thank you,
Kim Arum
Sent from my iPhone

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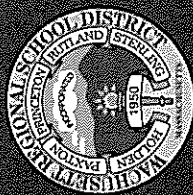
We hope to be able to answer many of the questions through this presentation this evening. We will continue to work on providing information to our families and community as frequently as possible.

2

School Schedules - Hybrid

- Students will most likely be divided into cohorts based on their address
- To increase student success and to make effective use of the relationships being built during first quarter, every effort will be made to keep students with their current teacher of record (with very few exceptions), however additional support may be provided by other staff
- Schedules will follow a pattern of two days in-person and three days remote for each cohort
- Wednesday mornings are remote and synchronous for all students
 - Exceptions could occur on weeks with a holiday

4



WRSDC Special Meeting

Update on School Reopening
September 23, 2020

1

Remote to Hybrid

Plan timeline:

Hybrid Phase 1 Begins October 5th - no change

- Most vulnerable populations move to hybrid model

Hybrid Phase 2 Begins October 26th - no change

- Increase in hybrid hours with some additional students beginning

Hybrid Phase 3 Begins November 18th - change in date

- Students who opt to transition from remote to hybrid model begin hybrid on November 18th

3

School Schedules - Remote Only

- To increase consistency and success for our students, students will be kept with their current teacher of record (with very few exceptions), however additional support may be provided
- To maintain rigor students will receive synchronous, online instruction with their in-person classmates as well as asynchronous learning opportunities and instruction
- Students participating in the hybrid and Remote-Only Plan will follow the same daily time schedule

5

Choosing Hybrid or Remote

If a family chooses to have their child(ren) participate in the Remote Only Plan but then decide to move to the hybrid model at a later date, please be aware that this will not be able to occur immediately.

This switch could take a few days or longer to occur as available, socially distanced classroom spaces are examined and a schedule is developed, especially at the upper grade levels.

6

School Schedules - Overall Hybrid Model

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday*	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A	In-Person	In-Person	AM: all remote; teacher-directed instruction PM: Teacher training and meetings	Remote	Remote
Cohort B	Remote	Remote		In-Person	In-Person

* Holiday weeks: In the event, there is a Monday holiday, the Wednesday will take the place of Monday.

7

Elementary Sample Morning Schedule

9:00-9:15 AM	Morning Meeting (in-person and remote students)
9:15-10:45 AM	ELA Block (first 15 minutes dedicated to mini-lesson for both in-person and remote students; teacher works with in-person students for the rest of the time; remote students work asynchronously on assignments, activities, or Lexia including 15 minute break)
10:45-11:00 AM	Break (in-person) or math mini-lesson (remote)
11:00-12:00 AM	Math Block (in-person: math mini lesson and practice; remote: practice; teacher answers questions)

8

Elementary Sample Afternoon Schedule

12:00 - 12:30 PM Lunch
 12:30 - 1:15 PM Special #1 (Art/Music or PE)
 1:15 - 1:30 PM Mask Break (in-person; science or history mini-lesson for remote)
 1:30 - 2:15 PM Afternoon Block 1 (in-person science or history mini-lesson and practice; break and practice for remote)
 2:15 - 3:00 PM Afternoon Block 2 (Math, ELA, SEL, or individual time for in-person and remote)

9

Middle Grades Sample Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday*	Thursday	Friday
8:10-8:20	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
8:20-9:10	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5
9:10-10:00	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
10:00-10:50	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7
10:50-11:38	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 1
11:38-1:12	Period 5 and Lunch	Period 6 and Lunch	Staff Professional Development No Classes	Period 1 and Lunch	Period 2 and Lunch
1:12-2:00	Period 6	Period 7		Period 2	Period 3
2:00-2:45	Period 7	Period 1		Period 3	Period 4

*Periods on Wednesday will rotate week to week

10

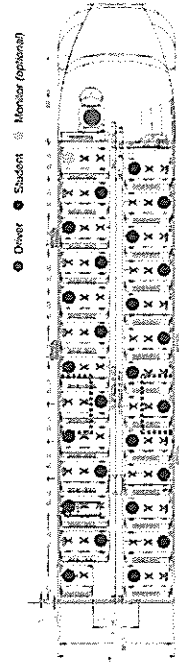
High School Sample Schedule

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
7:35-9:23 AM	A	G	F	E	D	C	B
8:28-9:16 AM	B	A	G	F	E	D	C
9:21-10:14 AM	C	B	A	G	F	E	D
10:19-11:30 AM	D	C	B	A	G	F	E
11:30-12:30	Lunch/Dismissal Remote Support	Lunch/Dismissal Remote Support	Lunch/Dismissal Remote Support	Lunch/Dismissal Remote Support	Lunch/Dismissal Remote Support	Lunch/Dismissal Remote Support	Lunch/Dismissal Remote Support
12:30-1:18 (Online)	E	D	C	B	A	G	F
1:23-2:10 (Online)	F	E	D	C	B	A	G

11

Busing

Each bus is able to hold 1/3 of typical ridership



12

Busing

- Each bus can accommodate about 1/3rd of the bus capacity for ridership - 4 seats will be reserved for later use
- Students will be socially distanced and will be required to wear masks on the bus
- Students will be assigned specific seats
- Students from the same household may sit together
- Due to capacity restrictions and contact tracing requirements, students will only be picked up and dropped off at their regular home bus stops
- Social distancing and masks must be in use at the bus stops that include students from multiple families

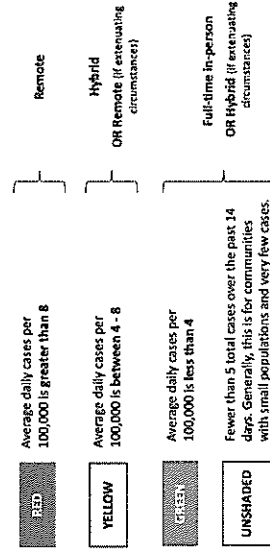
13

Lunch

- Lunches will be held in large open spaces ie. cafeterias and gymnasiums.
- All students will be facing the same direction and will have at least 6 feet of separation between them
- Talking will be allowed during this time
- Students will have assigned lunch seats at some grade levels

14

Health Metrics



*Measured as a 14 day rolling average and will be reported weekly as part of the online DPH dashboard

15

Health Metrics

- DESE Initial Fall Reopening Guidelines
- DESE Open/Close Metrics
- State and Local Public Health Guidelines and Directives
- Current 5 town and surrounding communities health data

16

Schools - Updates Toward Opening

- The District has contracted with ATC Group from Woburn, MA, to assess the air handling systems throughout our schools.
- A sample of HVAC systems, by school, will be taken and will be assessed by ATC.
- Work will begin on this process this week with a final report shared in approximately 3 weeks.
- The District will make necessary modifications/corrections to systems found to be not working properly.

17

Mask Protocols

- All staff and all students grades 2 through 12+ are required to wear masks. Pre-K and grade 1 students are highly encouraged to do so
- Schools will schedule mask breaks during the day for students
- Students may take their masks off during a mask break or during lunch
- Mask breaks will require at least 6 feet of social distancing between students

18

Special Education- SEPAC

A more detailed Slideshow was presented to SEPAC on August 13th and is posted on the WRSD website.

- [Special Education Video and Slideshow from August 2020 Meeting](#)
- The next SEPAC meeting is scheduled for October 5th

19

Special Education- IEP Services

Each student has a Parent Engagement/Special Education Learning Plan that describes how services are being provided in the remote model. This is a fluid document that is expected to change as the models of schooling change from remote to hybrid.

All services on the IEP are expected to be provided to the fullest extent. Given the model of remote or hybrid we expect that **how** some of the services are delivered may be different. These changes must be communicated clearly through the Plan.

20

Special Education- Inclusion and Pull-out

Special Education services are being provided in the general education classes and in pull-out special education classes.

Special ed teachers and related service providers are co-teachers in some general classes on seesaw and on google.

Our focus in special education is to provide services identified in the IEP to the fullest extent which includes rigorous in-person sessions, remote participation in live classes, and using minimal asynchronous services as appropriate.

21

Special Education- Hybrid or Remote Only

As families of students with special needs choose hybrid or remote only plans, please consider that:

We expect to provide services that align with the plan chosen, however, we will engage in a conversation to determine how to best meet the individual child's services while respecting the choices and needs of the family. For example, some remote only children may have in-person services for special education.

22

Attestation, Attendance and Illness

- The district is very concerned about the health and safety of the students and staff. Parents will be expected to conduct a daily check for any symptoms of COVID and to keep their student home if the student has any symptoms.
- Students who remain home due to illness, may participate from home remotely if they are able to do so. This will not be considered a missed school day.
- Details on when to stay home can be found in the WRSD Reopening Guidelines and Protocols document.

- [WRSD Reopening Guidelines and Protocols](#)

23

School Nurse

- The School Nurse will continue to provide support to students and families during this time, including the administration of medications and also epi-pens. The School Nurse will use precaution when dealing with suspected cases of Covid-19 and will be donning and doffing PPE before and after dealing with such a case.
- More nursing details can be found in the WRSD Reopening Guidelines and Protocols document.

- [WRSD Reopening Guidelines and Protocols](#)

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. DESE does now have a remote testing team who will be deployed to a school(s) if an outbreak is suspected.

25

Extra-curricular activities

- Extra-curricular activities may take place this year remotely or in person depending upon the activity.
- Students participating in remote learning may choose to attend an extra-curricular activity in-person.

26

On behalf of District and school administration, I wish to thank our students, our teachers, our staff, and our parents for all the hard work, effort, dedication, and understanding shown during these challenging and unprecedented times. Together we can make this school year a success!



Thank you!

27