

Wachusett Regional School District

Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

September 25, 2020

To: *Wachusett Regional School District Committee*

Megan Weeks, Chair	Linda Long-Bellil
Michael Dennis, Vice-chair	Kenneth Mills
Nicole Amos	Benjamin Mitchel
Melissa Ayala	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
Matthew Lavoie	

From: Darryll McCall, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools 

SUBJECT: Superintendent's Report

School Committee Roster and Meeting Posting

As I previously reported, Jeff Haynes of Rutland has resigned from the School Committee, effective September 15, 2020 (attachment 1). I appreciate the time Jeff served on the Committee and his service to the students of Wachusett. Attached are the updated School Committee roster and subcommittee assignment listing (attachment 2 & 3).

Eight members of the Committee have requested a special meeting of the School Committee to be held at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, September 29th. Attached is the updated posting of the School Committee, subcommittee, and SEPAC meetings scheduled for the coming months (attachment 4). Please be reminded that next week's meetings will be on **TUESDAY**, September 29th, via Google Meet. At the start of Tuesday's regular meeting, the Committee will adjourn to executive session to be updated on the negotiations with the WREA for a Memorandum of Agreement as we look to transition to hybrid teaching/learning. The full Committee will also be updated on contract negotiations with the District's Speech Language Pathology Assistants (SPLA), Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTA), and the Physical Therapy Assistants (PTA), referred to as Unit B. Municipal Representative Peter Bogren has been invited to the executive session representing the Member Towns, to be brought up to date on contract negotiations with Unit B (attachment 5).

As has been the practice, Tuesday evening's regular School Committee meeting will be by remote participation via Google Meet. An invitation to the meeting has been sent/shared with members of the School Committee, the Student Representatives, Central Office executive staff, Senator Gobi and Representative Ferguson, and the president of the WREA. If you have not yet done so, please "accept" the invitation if you are intending to participate in the meeting. Using a laptop with the Meet connection is preferable, though calling in by cell phone is also an option, though not the preferred way to participate.

Tuesday's School Committee meeting will be streamed for the public through YouTube Live. A link to the stream will be posted on the WRSD homepage Tuesday afternoon. The meeting will also be broadcast live on HCTV.

Members of the public will have the opportunity to have their questions asked/comments made by emailing them to questions@wrsd.net, and these comments and/or questions will be read aloud for the record. The remainder of the agenda will proceed from there.

For planning and quorum purposes, please advise if you are unable to participate in Tuesday evening's meeting

Reopening of Schools

- The Start of the 2020-2021 School Year

As you know, the start of the 2020-2021 school year began remotely on September 16th, with students in pre- k through grade 12 learning from home. I am so impressed with the attitudes of our teachers and students as they reimagine how education is occurring this fall. Principals have shared with me stories about the creative activities and learning that teachers are bringing forward in their remote classrooms. There are going to be bumps in the road ahead, but we must continue to focus on how we can take this challenge on together.

- FY21 Budget Update

Director Deedy has shared an update with me on the FY21 budget (attachment 6). Please know that the Business/Finance Subcommittee will have a more in-depth discussion of the budget at their meeting on October 5, 2020.

- Technology Update

Google Meet Statistics: Over the first week of remote learning, WRSD teachers and staff conducted over 2,000 Google Meet sessions per day with an average duration of 55 minutes. According to Google's Meet Quality Tool, network congestion was experienced during 2% of the overall meeting time.

Chromebook Performance Problems: A known issue with recent versions of the Chrome operating system has caused certain models of Chromebooks to experience unusually

poor performance in Google Meet and Zoom. Unfortunately, this affects approximately 1,600 district-owned devices. We have received many reports of frequent disconnections from meetings as well as audio and video glitches. Google engineers are planning to release a software update on Monday, September 28th, that they hope will resolve the issue. Once the update is available, district IT staff will conduct testing and advise users accordingly.

Tech Help Center: Parents have submitted almost 200 questions or requests for support through the District's Tech Help Center website (<https://www.wrsd.net/techhelp>). IT staff has responded to all inquiries within the same day - usually in less than an hour. Many parents have also requested help through email, either to a teacher or administrator, or directly to the IT staff. These requests have also been promptly addressed.

- Update on Enrollment Numbers - three year comparison.

If the current enrollment numbers hold true through October 1, Chapter 70 funding could be almost \$3 million less for FY22. We are working with our local legislators, MASS, and MARS, on advocating now for more financial support from the state for FY22 as all districts across Massachusetts are dealing with reduced student enrollment.

	Homeschool	Private School	School Choice out	Out-of-District
2018-2019	124	386	381	75
2019-2020	115	385	360	67
2020-2021	248 (as of 9/10/20)	542 (as of 8/28/20)	366 (as of 8/28/20)	65 (as of 8/28/20)

- Building Updates

This week, the testing of our HVAC systems by ATC of Woburn commenced in schools throughout the District. ATC will be sampling indoor ventilation in all 13 schools to assess air quality and circulation. We anticipate that the final report will be shared with us in the next three weeks.

Building preparedness continues at a good pace as heating and ventilation systems are being readied for the return to in-person learning. Our facilities support staff have been preparing bathrooms that require dividers between sinks and/or urinals so that we do not have to tape off these areas/items in order to provide proper social distancing. I am confident that we are on target for an October 5th return to in-person for certain students,

and also for our November date for all students. In my Report from two weeks ago, I shared information with the Committee on the status of the buildings, and I will be updating the Facilities and Security Subcommittee once the next meeting is scheduled.

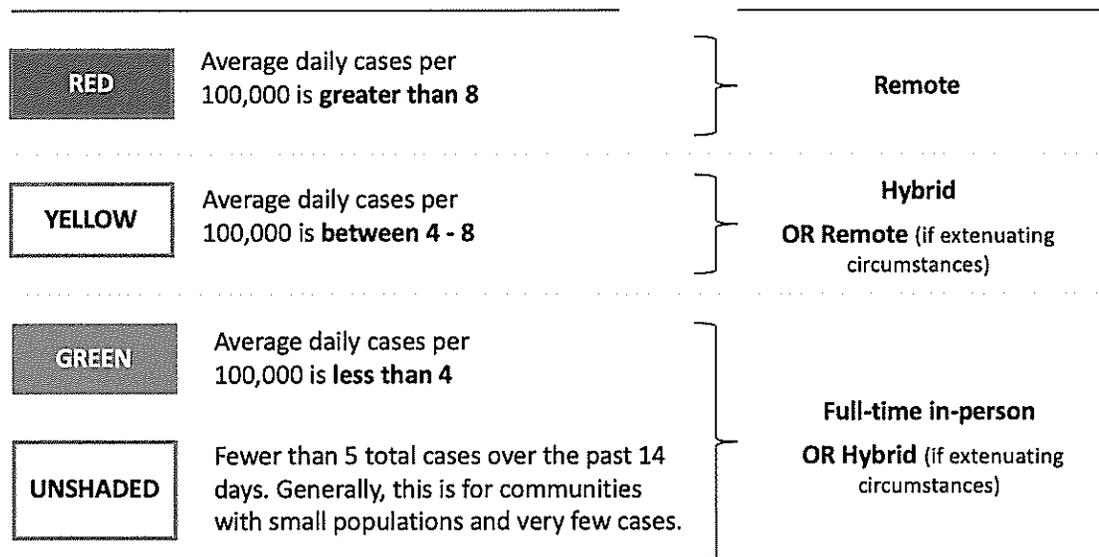
More PPE has arrived and we began delivery of it to schools this week. Items such as masks, gowns, gloves, and sanitizer are among the items being distributed for staff use.

- Status of Health Metrics

The most recent metrics released by the state show that two of our Member Towns, Holden and Rutland, are now in the yellow zone. These two communities represent almost 70% of the District pupil population:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/community-level-covid-19-data-reporting>

A week ago Monday, I again met with our local Boards of Health to discuss the metrics associated with the return to in-person learning. We will be using data collected from DPH and will be reviewing guidelines proposed by DESE/DPH around moving from one model of learning to another. The following information has been shared with the Boards of Health for their feedback in order to define consistency across all five towns:



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

As Wachusett comprises five towns, per DESE Holden has been determined to be the town that will represent the school district based upon overall student population. I discussed this with our Boards of Health and how we incorporate the other four communities into our decision making process, and these discussions will continue when we meet again as a group on Monday, September 28th. Another topic we will discuss on Monday is the newly adopted WRSDC Policy 6612.3 *Face Coverings*. I very much appreciate the support, interest, and guidance these town representatives have shown and

shared at our meetings, which have taken place on an every other week basis for the past several months.

As I discussed at our special meeting this past week, if a particular school has cases of COVID-19 while in-person learning is happening, but other schools do not have cases, DESE has given districts permission to move individual schools or towns to remote learning.

- DESE Letter

On September 18, 2020 Commissioner Riley shared a letter with 16 school districts across the state requesting more information around their status of starting the year remotely. The WRSD did not receive such a letter as we continue to have towns remain in the yellow zone in reference to COVID cases in our communities. The letter that was shared is an example of what was sent to the 16 school districts, which the WRSD was not part of (attachment 7). I will share any communication I receive from DESE regarding reopening with the School Committee.

- Athletics

Sports at the high school are underway. In the past week, tryouts for soccer, field hockey, and golf have concluded; games and matches will begin as soon October 1st, with several team competitions getting underway the week of October 5th. Wachusett is in a POD with Leominster, Shrewsbury, Westboro, and Algonquin. There are restrictions that need to be followed, such as only two spectators per student-athletic will be allowed at home athletic events.

Beginning Monday, October 5th, Fall Sports II teams, including football, girls' volleyball and cheering, may begin taking part in out-of-season conditioning practices. Each student-athlete will be allowed to take part in 10 practice sessions total. The sessions must be 90 minutes max. Equipment will not be issued, and the sessions must take place outside the school building.

Though these are small steps and certainly are not what we usually think of when talking about high school fall sports, we are happy that some semblance of "normal" is starting to be seen at our schools and in our lives.

- School Illness Protocols

The following information will be shared with parents by building principals early next week:

To help families prepare for the eventual return to in-person learning, it is important that the following information pertaining to student illness is reviewed before students start school. As the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the medical community learn more

about COVID-19, it is possible that this guidance will change. The information below is based on the most recent, reliable medical guidance.

Parents whose child has one or more of the following signs/symptoms of illness, that are also associated with COVID-19, should keep their child home from school. It is also recommended that parents contact their primary care physician for further evaluation:

- Fever of 100.0° F or higher accompanied by chills
- Persistent cough that is not due to another known cause such as chronic cough
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache in combination with other symptoms listed here
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue in combination with other symptoms listed here
- Nasal congestion or runny nose that is not due to other known causes such as allergies and is in combination with other symptoms listed here

[Click here for the CDC's COVID-19 Information Page](#)

The following information, related to when child(ren) may return to school, is based on the WRSD School Reopening Plan and Department of Health guidance:

1. If a student is referred for further medical evaluation for symptoms of illness, they may only return to school with a note from their doctor or following a 10-day quarantine IF symptoms have improved AND they are fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.
2. Close contact is defined by the CDC as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic clients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.
If a student is considered to be a close contact, they may only return to school following a 14-day quarantine period, even if a negative COVID-19 test result is received.
It is recommended that anyone who is considered close contact gets tested for COVID-19 four to five days following exposure.
3. If a student has tested positive for COVID-19, they may return to school 10 days following documentation of the start of symptoms *if they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication AND if their symptoms have improved.*
4. Important: All documentation must be faxed or emailed to the health office prior to returning to school.

As the District refines and finalizes school reopening plans, it is understood that there may be situations unique for families that require further discussion. Your child's school nurse is available to discuss these situations, as well as to provide further explanation for

the protocols outlined in this message. Please be aware that the WRSD school nurses have been integral in shaping the District's protocols and procedures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and they are a valuable resource for parents and guardians.

Transportation Settlement Agreements

Director Deedy has had conversations with our two transportation providers, AA Transportation Van Pool Transportation, to discuss both this school year when our students will be returning to in-person schooling, as well as continuing to address the proposed settlement agreements in an attempt to come to a mutually agreed upon conclusion to these unsettled matters. The Legal Affairs Subcommittee has the settlement agreements on its agenda for the September 30th meeting, which District Counsel Bartulis will participate in to provide legal advice. The full Committee will be kept informed as these discussions continue.

Audit Update

District auditors Melanson CPAs have started the FY20 audit, and representatives from that firm are scheduled to be at the Central Office for the better part of next week to work on this audit.

Update on Negotiations

The full Committee will be updated on ongoing negotiations when in executive session Tuesday evening.

Assessment Letters

District Treasurer Dunbar has issued second payment assessment billing notices to the towns of Paxton and Princeton (attachment 8).

District Treasurer

Attached is the fully executed annual contract with District Treasurer James Dunbar (attachment 9).

WRSDC Policies

The two School Committee policies recently acted on by the Committee have been shared with principals and the towns, and can be found on the District website (attachment 10).

Conflict of Interest Training

Every two years School Committee members, as municipal representatives, are required to complete Conflict of Interest online training. Below is the link to the site to complete this training. When completed, please share a copy of the Certificate of Completion with Rebecca Petersen (rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net) and with the Town Clerk in your hometown.

Conflict of Interest

Executive Staff Report

- Deputy Superintendent Robert Berlo's Report to the Superintendent, dated September 24, 2020 (attachment A)
- Administrator of Special Education Christine Smith's Report to the Superintendent, dated September 23, 2020 (attachment B)

Subcommittee Minutes

- Minutes of the May 4, 2020 meeting of the Legal Affairs Subcommittee (Subcommittee Minutes 1)
- Minutes of the May 12, 2020 meeting of the Management Subcommittee (Subcommittee Minutes 2)
- Minutes of the June 22, 2020 meeting of the Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee (Subcommittee Minutes 3)
- Minutes of the September 8, 2020 meeting of the Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee (Subcommittee Minutes 4)

Should you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience.

cc: Executive Staff
DM:rlp

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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CORRECTED Agenda

Special Meeting #326

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

6:30 PM

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

- I. Call to Order
 - II. Motion: We, the members of the Wachusett Regional School District School Committee, express no confidence in Superintendent McCall's management of the district's return to school plans for FY2021. We call upon the district administration to solicit and hire a competent educational consulting firm, within the next 10 (ten) business days, for the purpose of:
 - Assessing the district's current remote educational plans through targeted feedback from parents, teachers, students, and administrators.
 - Providing recommendations for improvements and adjustments that are within the district's reasonable capability and resources.
 - Leveraging district analysis to date and peer district plans, developing a comprehensive return to school plan which is inclusive of but not limited to:
 - Entry criteria for successful return to school models, blending on-site and remote learning, by using specific actions and/or metrics
 - Development of a backlog of actions needed, with associated timelines and resource plan, in order to facilitate successful entry criteria which are within the district's control
 - A plan for moving through different modalities of learning (e.g., fully remote, hybrid or blended, etc.) as environmental and health conditions warrant
 - A communication plan for parents, teachers, students, and School Committee members
 - Regular monitoring of the district's implementation of the plan including feedback and retrospective of parents, teachers, students, administrators, and School Committee members, and recommendations for improvements
 - Weekly reporting to the School Committee, either written or in-person, of the progress, risks, and issues in the development of this plan and regular monitoring.
- The selection of the educational consulting company shall be subject to the approval of the School Committee.
- III. Adjournment

If you cannot attend the September 29,, 2020 Wachusett Regional School District Committee special meeting, please contact Rebecca Petersen at (508) 829-1670 Ext. 230.

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

REVISED Agenda

Regular Meeting #1352

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

7:00 PM

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

- I. Executive Session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with three bargaining units (SEIU Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants; Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals); Wachusett Administrators’ Association), to provide an update on negotiations with Unit B, and to report on progress of negotiations with the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc. (WREA) on 2020-2021 school reopening, as the Chair deems a discussion in public session would have an adverse effect on the District’s bargaining position, to return to public session.
- II. Ratification of Collectively Bargained Contract

Motion: To ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between Wachusett School District and Unit B (Speech Language Pathologist Assistants, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants, Physical Therapy Assistants), as presented
- III. Public Hearing
- IV. Chair’s Opening Remarks
- V. Student Representatives’ Reports (K. Gomi, K. Mangus)
- VI. Superintendent’s Report
 - A. Discussion of Report
 - B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee
- VII. Unfinished Business
- VIII. Secretary’s Report
 - A. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District held on August 24, 2020
 - B. Approval of #1351 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on September 14, 2020 – enclosed
 - C. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on September 14, 2020
 - D. Approval of #325 Special Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District held on September 23, 2020 - enclosed
- IX. Treasurer’s Report/Financial Statements

X. Committee Reports

- A. Management Subcommittee (M. Weeks, Chair, M. Dennis, Vice-chair, S. Brown, K. Mills, A. Silva, C. Smith, A. Young)
- B. Education Subcommittee (C. Smith, Chair, L. Long-Bellil, Vice-chair, N. Amos, K. Bennett, S. Haber, R. Imber, L. Kirshenbaum, D. Shapiro)
- C. Business/Finance Subcommittee (M. Dennis, Chair, K Mills, Vice-chair, M. Gustafson, B. Mitchel, K. Ottmar)
- D. Legal Affairs Subcommittee (S. Brown, Chair, K. Ottmar, Vice-chair, R. Imber, M. Weeks)
- E. Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee (K. Mills, Chair, L. Kirshenbaum, Vice-chair, K. Williamson, L. Woodland)
- F. Facilities and Security Subcommittee (A. Young, Chair, Vice-chair, L. Woodland)
- G. Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee (A. Silva, Chair, L. Woodland, Vice-chair, N. Amos, M. Ayala, K. Bennett, S. Brown, M. Gustafson, L. Kirshenbaum, L. Long-Bellil)
- H. Audit Advisory Board (B. Mitchel, Chair, A. Young, Vice-chair)
- I. Ad Hoc Subcommittees
- I. Building Committees
- J. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (M. Lavoie), Chocksett Middle School (K. Williamson), Davis Hill Elementary School (K. Williamson), Dawson Elementary School (L. Kirshenbaum), Glenwood Elementary School (N. Amos), Houghton Elementary School (D. Shapiro), Mayo Elementary School (A. Young), Mountview Middle School (S. Brown), Naquag Elementary School (S. Haber), Paxton Center School (K. Ottmar), Thomas Prince School (A. Silva), Wachusett Regional High School (K. Mills), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (M. Gustafson), Early Childhood Center (L. Woodland)

XI. Public Hearing

XII. New Business

XIII. Adjournment

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN □ PAXTON □ PRINCETON □ RUTLAND □ STERLING

DRAFT Minutes

Regular Meeting #1351

Monday, September 14, 2020
7:00 PM

MEETING CONDUCTED REMOTELY, VIA GOOGLE MEET

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Megan Weeks, Chair	Laura Kirshenbaum
Michael Dennis, Vice-chair	Matthew Lavoie
Melissa Ayala (7:22 PM)	Linda Long-Bellil
Nicole Amos (7:07 PM)	Kenneth Mills
Krista Bennett	Karl Ottmar
Scott Brown	Asima Silva (7:08 PM)
Maleah Gustafson	Christina Smith
Sherrie Haber	Kelly Williamson
Jeffrey Haynes	Linda Woodland (7:40 PM)
Robert Imber	Adam Young (7:05 PM)

Committee Members Absent:

Benjamin Mitchel	Deidre Shapiro
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Administration Present:

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

Student Representatives Present:

Kenichi Gomi	Kathryn Mangus
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Chair Weeks called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Chair Weeks announced the meeting was being conducted remotely, via Google Meet, and will be broadcast on Channel 194 but not streamed live, due to a conflict with the Holden Selectboard meeting the same date and time. Members of the public could access the meeting via YouTube. Chair Weeks also spoke about members of the public submitting comments to questions@wrsd.net, and she also mentioned there will be a second Public Hearing towards the end of the meeting.

I. Public Hearing

Chair Weeks read aloud public comments submitted electronically.

Julie Reno (attachment 1)

Tammy Tod, resident of Rutland (attachment 2)

7:05 PM Member Young joined the meeting

Isabella LeBlanc, WRSD junior and resident of Holden (attachment 3)

7:07 PM Member Amos joined the meeting.

7:08 PM Member Silva joined the meeting.

Student Rep intro and remarks shared by students (attachment 4)

7:22 PM Member Ayala joined the meeting.

II. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Weeks opened the floor to the Student Representatives.

III. Student Representatives (K. Gomi, K. Mangus)

Student Representative Mangus explained that the comments read by Chair Weeks were collected in a Google Form by the Student Representatives. She explained that the 50 comments were shared with the Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee. Student Representative Mangus reported on Chromebook distribution, textbook distribution, that college admission representatives have been available, freshmen orientation was conducted virtually, Student Council has started to plan events. There are Instagram and Facebook Group options where the Student Representatives are posting information and tips for parents and students. Chair Weeks presented a website developed by the Student Representatives, which Student Representative Gomi had shared and spoke to.

IV. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent McCall addressed the comments shared under Public Hearing and under the Student Representatives' reports.

7:40 PM Member Woodland joined the meeting.

Superintendent McCall spoke about meetings with the District's two transportation providers, AA Transportation and Van Pool Transportation,

explaining that District administration is recommending support of the two motions on the agenda to approve the settlement agreements with the two vendors.

At Superintendent McCall's request, Director of SEL Keenan spoke about the September 10th webinar, *Caring for Your Child During COVID*, hosted by the District and coordinated by Director Keenan.

Superintendent McCall reported on the Facilities and Security Subcommittee that took place immediately before this meeting, noting that work on HVAC/air circulation in the buildings is being addressed and work is progressing.

Chair Weeks opened the floor to questions and comments, asking that members limit their comments to two minutes.

Member Imber asked the Superintendent about the October 1st deadline (SIMs), which Superintendent McCall reported is not going to change per DESE. The District, the state, state legislators, are keeping on top of Chapter 70 funding, which could be impacted due to the number of students who have unenrolled for the 2020-2021 school year.

Member Kirshenbaum expressed her appreciation for what District administration is doing in planning for remote learning and transitioning to hybrid.

Member Lavoie voiced his concern that Superintendent McCall did not respond to emails from parents who reached out about educating the highest needs special education students. Member Lavoie also asked what the holdup is for getting students back in school/what metrics are being followed. Superintendent McCall spoke about his meeting with representatives from the Member Town Boards of Health this date, and a question that was asked was what will happen if one town of the five have increased cases of COVID, which Superintendent McCall will address with DESE.

Member Long-Bellil had a similar concern as Member Lavoie about emails received from parents of special education parents who have questions about the plans for their children returning to school. Administrator of Special Education Smith spoke about the plans for the October 5th return of highest needs students and what District staff have done to reach out to and connect with these families.

Member Mills stressed the importance of knowing which metrics will be followed, information that has been requested previously. He also stressed the importance that when polling parents about transitioning to hybrid, it is important that parents know what hybrid will look like so informed decisions can be made. He also had questions about the use of substitutes when teachers are sick and unable to provide remote teaching. Superintendent McCall explained that paraprofessionals may be called upon to fill in for the teacher when out sick.

Member Ottmar thanked the students for their comments during Public Hearing and he also expressed thanks to the Student Representatives for their efforts. For the next meeting, Member Ottmar would appreciate a report on what some districts are experiencing when operating under a hybrid model.

Member Silva reiterated previous comments about a metric to be used and what will be looked at and used when transitioning to hybrid, and the importance of keeping all student safe and healthy. She also repeated the need to know, as a parent, what hybrid will look like before being asked in a survey to make a decision about the rest of the school year. She noted that COVID numbers that are published are dated, usually two weeks old, which Superintendent McCall acknowledged.

Member Smith expressed her gratitude to the five Member Towns for all supporting the FY21 budget. She also commented on the webinar that was hosted by WRSD on September 10, 2020.

Member Williamson wished staff, teachers, and administration the best with the opening of schools. Member Williamson asked if it would be possible to have Dr. Forkey provide teachers with some strategies to address this year's teaching and learning models.

Member Woodland reported she has not received parent emails that were mentioned earlier in this meeting. Member Woodland asked about the one and a half custodial positions that were cut and not filled. She asked about communication with the hardest to reach students (special education, elementary, etc.). Superintendent McCall spoke about the vacant custodial positions, which principals are comfortable with these positions being unfilled and feeling confident the cleaning and sanitizing work can be addressed by current custodial staff.

Member Young reported the listing of HVAC issues included in the Superintendent's Report is appreciated, and he will report more on this during his report on the Facilities and Security Subcommittee meeting. Member Young expressed the importance of getting students who have difficulty/cannot access education remotely back into the classrooms, and he is hoping the effort is made to have this happen on October 5th.

Member Amos passed.

Member Ayala repeated the importance of communication and contacting parents.

Member Bennett was personally called and received emails about her child returning to school.

Member Brown thanked the administration for the information included in the Superintendent's Report and he too thanked the five towns for supporting the FY21 budget. He voiced his opinion that he feels the Committee should support

the settlement agreement with AA Transportation. He spoke about his son who will be returning to school on October 5th, and reported that he has received calls and communication from the Special Education Department.

Vice-chair Dennis mentioned that many members asked about metrics to be used to transition to hybrid, and he is looking for the criteria that will be used for returning “no sooner than” October 5th. Vice-chair Dennis asked if the District is on track for opening Phase 1 on October 5th, which Superintendent McCall spoke to and confirmed. Vice-chair Dennis spoke about the 300 students who have left the District and he encouraged administration to collect information on why students are being unenrolled and that Superintendent McCall keep the Committee updated on this information.

Member Gustafson appreciated the details shared in the Superintendent’s Report. Member Gustafson asked about the hiring of paraprofessionals and if these new hires are new positions or if they are to fill vacancies. Administrator Smith explained that posted positions are replacing paraprofessionals who have left the employ of the District. Member Gustafson asked if there are spaces ready in some of the schools for students, then why are the highest needs students not being brought back to school in-person now rather than waiting until October or November. Administrator Smith addressed Member Gustafson’s question about students returning to in-person education sooner than October, explaining the many layers of planning and coordinating that is taking place on a daily basis.

Member Haber reported she spoke with Jennifer Lynch about sub-varsity level play, which will take place. Member Haber asked if the number of kindergarteners being homeschooled can be shared. Parents and teachers are looking for information about the hybrid model, times and the daily schedules, how will the cohorts be arranged, and information about hybrid is essential in order for parents to be able to answer a poll accurately.

Member Imber asked Superintendent McCall about the needs of the District in terms of hiring, even short term in the areas of nursing and custodial. Superintendent McCall agreed that nursing hires would be beneficial, but without a state budget finalized the District is being very careful about spending. And the same holds true with custodial hires.

Member Ayala clarified her comment about communication and special education, stating she understands the most vulnerable students will be in-person for October 5th, but for students who will be beginning the school year on September 16th the communication not been as helpful or as consistent as it could be.

Member Gustafson asked that additional information about the budget, what was cut and why, what revenues were lost, and what is currently available be provided to the Committee.

Member Long-Bellil asked for an explanation about the afternoon schedules for the three levels (elementary, middle, high). Deputy Superintendent Berlo reported on the plans for the afternoons to be used for pull-out services, a second opportunity for students to check in with teachers about ELA and/or math, which is reflected in all schedules that were shared.

Student Representative Mangus asked what assessment will be used to know if the remote model is working and if students are learning. Superintendent McCall reported assessments will be used to go along with the power standards to determine what students are learning.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. Motion: To accept the settlement agreement between AA Transportation for Home to School Transportation, Special Education In-District, and Special Education Out-of-District and the Wachusett Regional School District whereby invoices for the total closure days of 62 days are pro-rated with a payment to the vendor of 75% of total invoice, with the District realizing a savings of 25%.

(S. Brown)
(J. Haynes)

At Superintendent McCall's request, Director Deedy spoke to the motion, giving an update and also providing some history about the District's relationship with AA Transportation.

Chair Weeks opened the floor to questions and comments.

Vice-chair Dennis spoke about this matter, providing the background of this motion. Member Gustafson, a member of the Business/Finance Subcommittee, commented that the 75%/25% split has not changed since the start of discussions about a settlement agreement. She commented that the President of AA Transportation fell short of sharing information requested by the District, to justify the 75%/25% option. Member Young asked a question of Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Dennis about the 75%/25% offer, which Subcommittee Chair Dennis explained it is what came out of negotiations Director Deedy and a colleague had with AA Transportation. Member Long-Bellil asked Director Deedy how the relationship between the District and AA Transportation would be impacted if this motion is not supported. Director Deedy cannot speak for Mr. Ernenwein, but he feels Mr. Ernenwein wants to work with the District to come to a settlement. Mr. Ernenwein is willing to freeze rates for the 2020-2021 school year, as well as some of the special education transportation costs. Member Haynes asked if there were any other vendors or service providers who did not receive payment for services not rendered during the spring, to which Director Deedy answered yes. Member Haber stated she could support making a payment to AA Transportation to cover expenses, but she does not believe the District should be responsible for making a payment to make the company whole.

Member Brown spoke in support of AA Transportation, providing some history of the relationship between the District and AA Transportation. Vice-chair Dennis responded to Member Haynes comment about not paying other vendors, noting that AA Transportation has held firm on the 75%/25% split. Member Lavoie noted that if the Business/Finance Subcommittee cannot support the 75%/25% option, he can support that subcommittee's recommendation. Member Ayala asked if the District will know if AA Transportation's PPP is forgiven and if other options, beside the 75%/25% option, were considered. Director Deedy does not know if the PPP loan has been forgiven, and he reported that other options other than 75%/25% were not accepted by AA Transportation. Member Imber cannot support the motion as presented. Member Ottmar noted that as the motion stands, there are still many questions. Member Amos asked if the motion is not supported, based on the information provided, what will the next steps be. Director Deedy would need to discuss with the Superintendent to find out if the matter will be dropped or if they will dig down deeper. Member Brown too appreciates the Business/Finance Subcommittee's work on this matter.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

None

Opposed:

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

The motion failed unanimously.

2. Motion: To accept the settlement agreement between Van Pool Transportation for Special Education Out-of-District Transportation and the

Wachusett Regional School District whereby invoices for the total closure days of 62 days are pro-rated with a payment to the vendor of 75% of total invoice, with the District realizing a savings of 25%.

Per Director Deedy, administration withdraws the motion.

3. Motion: To extend the contract with Melanson CPAs to continue to serve as the District's auditing firm for the 2020-2021 (FY21) school year and in doing so, exercise the first of two (2) option years of said contract.

(A. Young)

(K. Mills)

Vice-chair Dennis asked if either the Chair or Vice-chair of the AAB could speak to this motion or to the quality of the work of this auditing firm. Vice-chair Dennis asked if this motion is time sensitive, which Director Deedy responded no.

Motion: To table the motion on the floor to a time certain, September 29, 2020

(M. Dennis)

(K. Mills)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the subcommittee.

VI. Secretary's Report

A. Approval of #1350 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on August 24, 2020

(K. Mills)
(A. Young)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:

None

The minutes were unanimously approved.

B. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on August 24, 2020

Deferred

C. Approval of #324 Special Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on August 31, 2020

(S. Haber)
(S. Brown)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Linda Long-Bellil
Asima Silva
Kelly Williamson

The minutes were approved 17-0-3.

VII. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Weeks reminded the Committee that if there were questions regarding the Director of Business and Finance's report that Members should contact the Superintendent; if there were questions regarding the Treasurer's Report, Members should contact the Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair.

VIII. Committee Reports

- A. Management Subcommittee (M. Weeks, Chair, M. Dennis, Vice-chair, S. Brown, K. Mills, C. Smith, A. Young)

Chair Weeks reported this subcommittee will meet on September 21, 2020.

- B. Education Subcommittee (C. Smith, Chair, L. Long-Bellil, Vice-chair, N. Amos, K. Bennett, S. Haber, R. Imber, L. Kirshenbaum, D. Shapiro)

Subcommittee Chair Smith reported this subcommittee met immediately before this meeting.

Motion: To approve the second reading of Amended Policy 3813 *Policy Relating to Education Audio, Video and/or Stenographic Recordings of Parent Teacher Conference and Team Meetings* ~~*Audio, Video and/or Stenographic Recording of Meetings*~~, waiving the reading.

(C. Smith)
(L. Kirshenbaum)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

- C. Business/Finance Subcommittee (M. Dennis, Chair, K. Mills, Vice-chair, M. Gustafson, B. Mitchel, K. Ottmar)

Subcommittee Chair Dennis reported on the September 8, 2020 meeting of this subcommittee. He reported the FY20 fiscal year was closed out. He also reported that the District is currently operating under FY20 budget levels, and the administration has been asked to provide an updated report on the budget at the next regular School Committee meeting.

- D. Legal Affairs Subcommittee (S. Brown, Chair, K. Ottmar, Vice-chair, R. Imber, K. Mills)

Subcommittee Chair Brown reported this subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting and that the full Committee will be updated on the MOA with the WREA during executive session, at the conclusion of the regular School Committee meeting.

- E. Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee (K. Mills, Chair, L. Kirshenbaum, K. Williamson, L. Woodland)

Subcommittee Chair Mills reported this subcommittee will meet on September 21, 2020.

- F. Facilities and Security Subcommittee (A. Young, Chair, J. Haynes, Vice-chair, L. Woodland)

Subcommittee Chair Young reported this subcommittee met immediately before this School Committee meeting, as well as on September 1, 2020.

Motion: To approve the second reading of Draft Policy 6612.3 **Policy Relating to Pupil Services Face Covering**, waiving the reading.

(A. Young)
(S. Haber)

Member Gustafson asked if this draft policy had been reviewed by the Boards of Health, which Subcommittee Chair Young does not believe had been done. Discussion ensued about process, if the second reading is deferred, or if the draft policy is amended it would need to go before the subcommittee first before two readings of the amended draft motion. Member Young will keep the motion on the floor.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Jeffrey Haynes
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson

Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion was unanimously approved.

G. Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee (A. Silva, Chair, L. Woodland, Vice-chair, N. Amos, M. Ayala, K. Bennett, S. Brown, M. Gustafson, J. Haynes, L. Kirshenbaum, L. Long-Bellil)

Subcommittee Chair Silva reported on the September 8, 2020 meeting of this subcommittee.

Motion: To extend the meeting to 10:30 PM.

(K. Ottmar)
(S. Haber)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Jeffrey Haynes
Robert Imber
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie

The motion was approved 18-2.

H. Audit Advisory Board (B. Mitchel, Chair, A. Young, Vice-chair)

AAB Vice-chair Young reported the AAB has not met since the last School Committee meeting and is waiting for feedback from administration before scheduling the next meeting

- I. Ad Hoc Subcommittees
- J. Building Committees
- K. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (M. Lavoie), Chocksett Middle School (K. Williamson), Davis Hill Elementary School (K. Williamson), Dawson Elementary School (L. Kirshenbaum), Glenwood Elementary School (N. Amos), Houghton Elementary School (D. Shapiro), Mayo Elementary School (A. Young), Mountview Middle School (S. Brown), Naquag Elementary School (S. Haber), Paxton Center School (K. Ottmar), Thomas Prince School (A. Silva), Wachusett Regional High School (K. Mills), Early Childhood Center (L. Woodland), Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC) (M. Gustafson)

Member Gustafson – Reported on the SEPAC meeting of September 9, 2020 and reported the next meeting will be October 5, 2020

IX. Public Hearing

Emily Miller (attachment 5)

X. New Business

Chair Weeks asked members who have requests for information to send it to her and she will share it with District administration.

Member Lavoie would like a discussion about student population for the 2020-2021 school year and how it will impact the FY22 budget.

- XI. Executive Session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc. (WREA) on 2020-2021 school reopening, as the Chair deems a discussion in public session would have an adverse effect on the District's bargaining position, not to return to public session.

Motion: To enter executive session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc. (WREA) on 2020-2021 school reopening, as the Chair deems a discussion in public session would have an adverse effect on the District's bargaining position, not to return to public session.

(S. Brown)
(L. Long-Bellil)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:
None

The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 10:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Julie Reno Public Comment
- Attachment 2 – Tammy Tod Public Comment
- Attachment 3 – Isabella LeBlanc Public Comment
- Attachment 4 – Student Public Comments
- Attachment 5 – Ellen Miller Public Comment



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Bullying - no action and curriculum updates

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 10:08 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: **Julie R** <juliebdulie@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Sep 10, 2020 at 6:41 PM

Subject: Bullying - no action and curriculum updates

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hi,
Twice in my daughter's time in this district from K-8 we have either met with the team (first grade Davis Hill meeting with VP, teacher, school psych) about bullying or submitted a formal bully complaint (MTV last year). The end of the DH meeting was Jay (VP at the time) saying well it is good she will be at a new school next year. We had just moved to Mayo region. This should NEVER be the resolution. These kids would be reunited in Middle School.

In 5th grade, my daughter was called a slut several times by a 5th grade boy. Nothing happened with this. In 6th grade on the 3rd day of school same boy said the same thing and Mrs. Hughes addressed it and it never happened again.

However, several days on the bus she heard the same boy call a classmate a nigger. She knew this was bad and stood up for this classmate. It continued.

Then, in 8th grade last year she was so bullied by a troubled kid that she became suicidal and she was hospitalized. I made a report and requested an investigation, again, nothing came out of it. Nothing. And now my daughter is, thankfully, out of this district and at Monty Tech. And again, the comment was made to me by one of the administrators "well, it will be a good thing for her to be in a different school next year." Why is this the go to response in this district?

While I am thrilled my daughter is out of WRSD, I have a child still in 2nd grade who has special needs and I am ready to do whatever it takes to protect him.

Regarding curriculum ideas...

Perhaps it might be a good time to revisit celebrations in the classroom. By not having Birthday parties and not recognizing religious holidays instead of making kids feel welcome it is backfiring and creating very limited exposure to anything outside of what each students' family celebrates.

Why not do the opposite? Poll the families at the beginning of each school year and ask what they would like to share about their family celebrations. And maybe you will have family volunteers who would be willing to come in and share what their cultures and religions do to celebrate a birth, a death, a holiday, etc. It's a great opportunity to include everyone and to open the conversation for kids who maybe feel they don't have anything in common with their opposite sex, different race, different religion, etc peers.

This would build so many learning opportunities.

The time is now to review how education is happening. Clearly our district is failing at many levels.

Let's try something different. Maybe be proactive instead of reactive.

Thanks for your time,
Julie Reno

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Public Session Letter

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>
To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 10:08 PM

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

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Thomas Tod** <thomasetod@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 6:58 PM
Subject: Public Session Letter
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

September 14, 2020

After watching the last four meetings I felt compelled to write this letter to you all. As a lifelong resident of this school district, a former school committee member I am saddened to see the behavior of this present school committee and your treatment of one another.

Member Lavoie, after consulting with Chair Weeks and not getting a satisfactory response from her, filed a grievance regarding what he perceived as a violation of the Open Meeting Law. This was not an attack against anyone's character, but his perception of an act which he perceived as a violation of Open Meeting Law.

Proper protocol was followed and a determination was made by the district's attorney. The school committee then had to vote whether they agreed with the determination of the attorney or if they wanted to pursue this complaint any further. The person who the grievance was filed against spoke, then Member Lavoie explained why he filed.

What happened next was inexcusable by Chair Weeks and Member Haynes. The motion on the table was to discuss whether to take the attorney's determination or to investigate further. Member Haynes launched a verbal attack against Member Lavoie. This is in direct violation of the district's Bullying Policy which you are all obligated to follow. Member Haynes was not speaking to the motion and the Chair of this committee should have asked Member Haynes to stop and speak to the motion, but she did not. It took another school committee member to stop the verbal attack. I feel both Chair Weeks and Member Haynes owe Member Lavoie a public apology.

Also, Chair Weeks please try to be fair in giving school committee members the same amount of time when it is their turn to speak. If two minutes is the limited amount of time to speak, then try to make that a rule

for all members not some members. Several times you cut off Member Gustafson and Member Lavoie, and yet you allow other committee members to ramble on.

Please keep in mind any resident of the WRSD can place a grievance with the Attorney General regarding a breach of the Open Meeting Law. Also, any resident of the WRSD can place a complaint with the State Ethics Commission if they feel there has been an ethics violation.

This committee keeps preaching to the public, imploring us to have patience and show kindness. I think you should look within your own group and practice what you are asking of your constituents.

Thank you for your time,

Tammy Tod
3 Orchard Hill Dr.
Rutland, MA 01543

The contents of this e-mail, and any attachments, are the property of the Wachusett Regional School District, and subject to the Public Records Law, M.G.L. c.66, § 10.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts regarding the urgent need to retire the current image of the Wachusett Regional High School mascot and the need to increase education on differences through an actively anti-racist curriculum. My name is Isabella LeBlanc and I live in Holden. I have attended schools in the Wachusett Regional School district since kindergarten. I began my educational career at Dr. Leroy E. Mayo Elementary School, went to Mountview Middle School, and am a current junior at Wachusett Regional High School. I have had very positive experiences in each of my schools, unlike some of my peers of various minority groups. I have never been silenced or faced prejudice by teachers or peers.

The absence of understanding racial and cultural divides is an immense problem. Education is paramount to truly expose the systematic hatred within our nation and own community. Our current mascot does not represent the current student body or the ideas we share with the changing world around us.

The current image of the mountaineer, is of a man who wears the clothing of a farmer with a rifle in his hand. The weapon is extended in a position as if ready to be fired and the man is in a defensive stance. At Wachusett, visitors are welcome as students learn about a myriad of different subjects and cultures. It seems ironic that Wachusett has the word welcome written in several languages on a wall near the auditorium entrance, yet by the entrance to the driveway we have the image of a threatening man with a weapon as if ready to intimidate any incoming visitors. There are countless talented students who can participate and collaborate to design a new improved image for the mascot.

To acknowledge a counter-argument, the Second Amendment Rights in the United States Constitution describes the individual right to keep and bear arms, which is irrelevant to the alteration of the Wachusett mascot. By removing the man's weapon the school in no way is changing its support and alignment with the Constitution and American ideals. Rather, realigning the mascot to the morale of the school and its students is crucial at this time.

A symbol should unify a body of people. A symbol unites one group of people and divides that group from outsiders. For example, the United States flag unites citizens from the fifty states, yet does not include citizens from other nations. The Wachusett mascot should unite all of the students, teachers, staff, and residents within the five towns. Through the past months, we learned that school is more than just what occurs between walls of a building, it transfers to homes and is found within students as they continue to enrich themselves from a distance. Change is never an easy task, yet tradition or heritage is never a strong enough excuse to remain in the habits or practices of our ancestors.

Wachusett's mountaineer mascot first appeared in 1955, the same year Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to change seats on a bus due to the color of her skin. The mountaineer appeared before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended segregation and it was printed before the famous "I Have a Dream" speech was delivered. The mountaineer, imposed in 1955, was not created by or voted on by students at that time. The current mascot image represents only one type of person.

Injustices happen far too often in our country and recent attention has been called to these issues. Changing the mascot will not end racism and bigotry in the country, but every small adjustment contributes to a greater change for the better.

Section two of article twenty-six in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial

or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.” Teachers and students at Wachusett strive to develop understanding and compassion for all individuals.

If just one student feels uncomfortable in or excluded from the Wachusett community, that is one student too many.

If we do nothing and do not make conscious changes, we support those who are opposed to inclusion and acceptance in the world. It is essential that immediate and productive action is taken to address racism.

We must ponder the following questions:

- Does the current image represent the diversity of Wachusett and does the image represent the cultural diversity in which our school wishes to embrace and celebrate?
- Will Wachusett address xenophobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism, and racism?
- To create change we must call upon experts to share insight and understanding with our community. How will we uphold professional suggestions for reform and have ongoing recognition of injustices in our school and community?
- Is white privilege recognized by the Wachusett community and are the discriminatory events that unfold every day understood?

Just because something always was or always has been does not make it right. An understanding of an abstract concept like anti-racism, tolerance, and the appreciation for diversity, without visible change is ultimately meaningless. When the mountaineer is rightfully changed, our work for the fight to equality is not done.

The paradox of administrators speaking about core values of Wachusett such as acceptance, kindness, and tolerance from a podium with the image of a man holding a weapon must be addressed. One cannot believe that all students will internalize rhetoric when it is not backed with action.

The majority of American public school systems, including ours, have fostered racist thought and have inadvertently raised racist young adults. These students unintentionally share racist messages and do not recognize the malice behind their words. For example, one Wachusett student said, “All I have to say about our mascot is there is nothing wrong with it... There is nothing to fight for at Wachusett.” This student does not understand the hate-filled dialogue that occurs every day at Wachusett Regional High School and the unequal challenges students of minority backgrounds face each time they attempt to be heard, enter a classroom discussion, or in social discourse. Education is paramount. It is the only way to break from the cycle of learning history from one side. From an early age, students must be taught how to question events and view situations from a variety of perspectives.

The current educational system and our mascot assist white-male students and alumni. Asking beneficiaries to speak for the oppressed will rarely work. We cannot expect the majority to stand up for the minority. Surveys are excellent tools to collect data, however, it is only logical that students in the racial majority will be indifferent to change. We are currently in a global pandemic, the nation is divided, and every endeavor is placed politically on either the left or right. Continuous education and the mascot change must occur simultaneously.

Through researching psychological and sociological patterns, studies demonstrate that teenagers are psychologically proven to be apathetic. Studies have shown that adults are able to have a deeper understanding of how others may feel in a situation, while teenagers’ responses are often self-focused. It is

unrealistic to propose that students will be able to unite to fight for a minority group of students without a solid anti-racist educational background. We cannot expect the students to rise above their biological instincts and patterns of behavior. Images one views on a daily basis subconsciously register in the mind and the subconscious brain is where decisions are made. An executive decision to retire the mascot is necessary. A consensus will not be reached by apathetic students with white privilege who are conditioned to the current image.

There are individuals who state that taking down an image erases history and we may be ignoring our past. In taking down images we are in no form erasing or rewriting history, instead, we are recognizing it, facing it head-on, and making an informed change for the present. In fact, by taking down monuments and old images each person who sees the change will be able to truly rethink history and his/her perspective. By removing the image that promotes only one group, we are honoring the work of the groups that have gone for years unrecognized and undervalued.

At Wachusett, if we truly wish to remember our history, we must first remember the land our school is built upon is the land of the Nipmuck tribe. The name of the school is "Wachusett," an Algonquian word, meaning "near the mountain" or "mountain place". To recognize our history we need to acknowledge that our ancestors have actually devastated the land of Native Americans and we rarely speak of this horrific invasion. Only two native tribes are recognized by the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs in the state of Massachusetts today.

Our current mascot holds a pointed gun and although it will physically not damage a student, it mentally is degrading to our school's mission and individual mental clarity. The mascot promotes a patriarchal society which clearly does not represent the way the Wachusett Regional School District wishes to empower young women and minority groups. Those attached to an image cannot be ruled by nostalgia. Sentimental thought is entrenching and the reminiscent thoughts lack intention.

We make immediate change when it is necessary. We did not go to school for the last quarter of the 2019-2020 school year to keep others safe. Although it was a challenge for each student in a unique way, administrators did not question the idea as health consequences were known. We can retire the mascot image and reform the curriculum if it is prioritized in the same way as mitigating COVID-19 and keeping students healthy physically and mentally.

We admirably remember historical figures who did the unexpected, who made drastic change, and were persistent in the pursuit of equal rights for humanity. Avoiding confrontation, staying apathetic, and not diligently looking for ways to assist others significantly degrade one's reputation, particularly when future generations look back upon the past and are dismayed by the lack of action. Strong leaders take responsibility for inequalities and issues that were not recognized. Individuals in leadership roles must make difficult, yet politically, ethically and morally correct decisions to which not everyone will agree.

In a conversation I had with Dr. McCall, he posed the question "Who owns the mascot?"

I now request that the school committee express its dissatisfaction with the current racist, sexist, and violent mascot image and call for a change.

I asked current Wachusett Regional High School students and alumni three questions:

1. How do you see Wachusett students reflected in the mountaineer?
2. What does being a mountaineer mean to you?

3. What qualities of a mountaineer are important for students to gain in their time at Wachusett?

I have anonymously included responses from individuals who agree and disagree with the notion of changing a mascot. I intended to ask unbiased and non-leading questions as to allow for the honest thoughts of each individual. In responses, I noted patterns of students and alumni recognizing how the current mountaineer does not encompass all members of the Wachusett Regional High School community, the need for reform in the educational system, and the need to address racism and other forms of discrimination.

Below are some articulate and pertinent responses to three questions pertaining to important qualities of Wachusett Regional High School students and the mascot's representation of the qualities and students:

1. How do you see Wachusett students reflected in the mountaineer?

- "As the diversity in Wachusett's student body grows I continue to see many students of color and minority students isolated by the image of the mountaineer. As a member of the LGBT community I feel that many students who are minorities due to their sexuality or race have seen their communities experience gun violence throughout history up until modern day. The image of the white mountaineer with a gun simply serves to recall this violent history to mind and ultimately isolated students."
- "Wachusett students reflect the mountaineer through their determination and endurance. It takes a lot to climb mountains and in each of our lives we have our own mountains. Wachusett students climb each of their mountains to the best of their ability and don't stop til they reach the top."

2. What does being a mountaineer mean to you?

- "Being one in a school of thousands... integrity, honesty, being a well-rounded student, and putting one's best effort forth."
- "Being determined and strong willed but it also means teamwork. Mountaineers don't climb mountains alone very often since it can be dangerous...to be part of something greater than yourself."
- "Being independent in my beliefs and having strength in will to stand by them, but also being open minded to discuss other viewpoints. It means being educated, unbiased, and understanding"

3. What qualities of a mountaineer are important for students to gain in their time at Wachusett?

- "The ability to work through conflicts peacefully, accept and care for others, and take responsibility of their own learning. Wachusett must do its best to prepare adults for the future, as citizens and voters. This should include teaching against bias and hatred."
- "I hope that Wachusett teaches students to expand their world views. Coming from the small town of Rutland, Wachusett was one of the first places I got the chance to experience different viewpoints and cultures. I think learning to respect and include all people is the most important thing to learn"
- "Respect for other people and to accept other people. To have confidence in themselves and to believe that they can do anything and that we should learn to be open minded."

General responses which did not directly answer one of the three questions, valuable thoughts to be considered:

- "I think that the logo and mascot don't represent the values that our school claims to support. The mountaineer is a gun toting hick, there's no other way to say it. He is shoeless, has a long beard and unkempt hair, and a shotgun. Our school claims to be modern and accepting, but when strangers drive into our parking lot, they're greeted by the mountaineer, and is that the face that our community wants to put forward?"
- "Being educated means not only having an extensive amount of knowledge about the world, its people, its past, and its numerous cultures, but also being aware and understanding of every individual."
- "[The mascot] is vaguely shaped like a swastika"

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts regarding the urgent need to retire the current image of the Wachusett Regional High School mascot and the need to increase education on differences through an actively anti-racist curriculum.

I will begin by introducing myself to you. My name is Isabella LeBlanc and I live in Holden. I have attended schools in the Wachusett Regional School district since kindergarten. I began my educational career at Dr. Leroy E. Mayo Elementary School, went to Mountview Middle School, and am a current junior at Wachusett Regional High School. I have had very positive experiences in each of my schools, unlike some of my peers who are in various minority groups. I have never been silenced or faced prejudice by teachers or peers. Recently, I have begun to see and understand the disparities between racial groups in the criminal justice and educational systems across the United States. Through reading, I have learned of the horrific experiences, and nearly impossible challenges individuals face growing up without the privileges I have.

I am writing today to express my extreme concern about the current issues echoing around the United States and the lack of action on the behalf of students and administration at Wachusett Regional High School. The absence of understanding racial and cultural divides is an immense problem. Education is paramount to truly expose the systematic hatred within our nation and own community. One aspect I would like to concentrate on is the Wachusett mountaineer mascot. Our current mascot does not represent the current student body or the ideas we share with the changing world around us.

The current image of the mountaineer, which is mounted on a rock by the entrance to the high school and on many pieces of school spirit wear is of a man who wears the clothing of a farmer with a rifle in his hand. The weapon is extended in a position as if ready to be fired and the man is in a defensive stance. In my experience, Wachusett has a welcoming atmosphere, and visitors are welcome as students learn about a myriad of different subjects and cultures. It seems ironic that Wachusett has the word welcome written in several languages on a wall near the auditorium entrance, yet by the entrance to the driveway we have the image of a threatening man with a weapon as if ready to intimidate any incoming visitors.

To acknowledge a counter-argument, the Second Amendment Rights in the United States Constitution describes the individual right to keep and bear arms, which is irrelevant to the alteration of the Wachusett mascot. By removing the man's weapon the school in no way is changing its support and alignment with the Constitution and American ideals. Rather, realigning the mascot to the morale of the school and its students is crucial at this time.

A symbol should unify a body of people. A symbol unites one group of people and divides that group from outsiders. For example, the United States flag unites citizens from the fifty states, yet does not include citizens from other nations. The Wachusett mascot should unite all of the students, teachers, staff, and residents within the five towns. Through the past months, we learned that school is more than just what occurs between walls of a building, it transfers to homes and is found within students as they continue to enrich themselves from a distance. Change is never an easy task, yet tradition or heritage is never a strong enough excuse to remain in the habits or practices of our ancestors.

Wachusett's mountaineer mascot first appeared in 1955, the same year Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to change seats on a bus due to the color of her skin. The mountaineer appeared before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended segregation and it was printed before the famous "I Have a Dream" speech was delivered.

The mountaineer, imposed in 1955, was not created by or voted on by students at that time. Through contacting local historians and the Gale Free and Worcester Public Libraries I have found only anecdotal evidence of the mountaineer's origins. The current mascot image represents only one type of person. A mascot should bring together all of the diverse aspects of the student body. Women are extremely underrepresented around the world. For instance, in the United States, on average, a woman is paid only 79% of a man's salary in an equivalent role (Li). Likewise, black men are about 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police than white men. When arrested on average, black men receive sentences that are 19.1% longer than those of white men convicted for the same crimes. In the 2015-2016 school year, nationally, African-American students represented only 15% of total high-school students, yet made up 44% of students suspended more than one time, and were 36% of the students expelled (Niederberger). Our mascot appears to be a male caucasian which does not represent all students and staff of minority groups who attend and contribute to Wachusett Regional High School. We must be sensitive to include and value every individual.

Injustices happen far too often in our country and recent attention has been called to these issues as they have been recorded on video. Changing the mascot will not end racism and bigotry in the country, but every small adjustment contributes to a greater change for the better. Mother Teresa once said, "Small things done with great love will change the world." Every action that we do has a ripple effect and it is critical that the image that represents over two thousand students represents each and every student.

Section two of article twenty-six in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace." Teachers and students at Wachusett strive to develop understanding and compassion for all individuals. Students are ready to make adjustments and changes if it is morally necessary.

If just one student feels uncomfortable in or excluded from the Wachusett community, that is one student too many.

We must remember a symbol is a representation of a place, not the place itself. Wachusett's mascot should be welcoming and inclusionary not intimidating. There are countless talented students who can participate and collaborate to design a new improved image for the mascot. Symbols are powerful tools which evoke strong opinions and emotions. For example, if a confederate or nazi flag were to be hung, a strong response may erupt. Statues of Christopher Columbus and Robert E. Lee have been removed in many cities as they no longer represent citizens' ideals in their respective regions. Images one views on a daily basis subconsciously register in the mind and the subconscious brain is where decisions are made.

Mahatma Gandhi stated, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." If we do nothing and do not make conscious changes, we support those who are opposed to inclusion and acceptance in the world. It is essential that immediate and productive action is taken to address racism.

I understand the issue of anti-racism is controversial and surveys were administered last year for a mascot change, however, due to the circumstances in our nation, it is imperative that a change is made with urgency. We must ponder the following questions:

- Does the current image represent the diversity of Wachusett and does the image represent the cultural diversity in which our school wishes to embrace and celebrate?
- Will Wachusett address xenophobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia, sexism, and racism?

- To create change we must call upon experts to share insight and understanding with our community. How will we uphold professional suggestions for reform and have ongoing recognition of injustices in our school and community?
- Is white privilege recognized by the Wachusett community and are the discriminatory events that unfold every day understood?

When the mountaineer is rightfully changed, our work for the fight to equality is not done.

The image of the current mountaineer does not reflect Wachusett students in the twenty-first century. Just because something always was or always has been does not make it right. An understanding of an abstract concept like anti-racism, tolerance, and the appreciation for diversity, without visible change is ultimately meaningless.

I asked current Wachusett Regional High School students and alumni three questions:

1. How do you see Wachusett students reflected in the mountaineer?
2. What does being a mountaineer mean to you?
3. What qualities of a mountaineer are important for students to gain in their time at Wachusett?

The responses I have included at the bottom of this letter are recorded anonymously. I have included responses from individuals who agree and disagree with the notion of changing a mascot. In writing to my peers and recent alumni I intended to ask unbiased and non-leading questions as to allow for the honest thoughts of each individual.

Students feel passionately about the mountaineer mascot and have countless words, both of approval and disapproval for the image. Students wish to be heard and in hearing all students we must acknowledge the silent message from the mountaineer he subconsciously shouts to every passerby, "this school was founded by and made for people who reflect in my image." He is the negative stereotype of a Wachusett student from the 1950s, which no longer represents the 2020 students, alumni, or community members accurately.

In responses I received, I noted patterns of students and alumni recognizing how the current mountaineer does not encompass all members of the Wachusett Regional High School community. Students mentioned the need for reform in Wachusett's educational system and the need to address racism and other forms of discrimination among students. Students and alumni stated the mountaineer is representative as it demonstrates perseverance, determination, and camaraderie. These are skills students have and will gain throughout their time spent in high school as they prepare for the world beyond the Wachusett region.

The paradox of administrators speaking about core values of Wachusett such as acceptance, kindness, and tolerance from a podium with the image of a man holding a weapon must be addressed. One cannot believe that all students will internalize rhetoric when it is not backed with action.

A mountaineer is defined as a person who takes part in mountaineering (the act of climbing a mountain). Our current mascot does not look ready to climb a mountain as he is without any form of hydration and proper footwear.

The majority of American public school systems, including ours, have fostered racist thought and have inadvertently raised racist young adults. These students unintentionally share racist messages and do not

recognize the malice behind their words. For example, one Wachusett student said, "All I have to say about our mascot is there is nothing wrong with it... There is nothing to fight for at Wachusett." This student does not understand the hate-filled dialogue that occurs every day at Wachusett Regional High School and the unequal challenges students of minority backgrounds face each time they attempt to be heard, enter a classroom discussion, or in social discourse. Education is paramount. It is the only way to break from the cycle of learning history from one side. From an early age, students must be taught how to question events and view situations from a variety of perspectives.

Not all students see the ideological issues within the current mountaineer. When changed, some may initially be dismayed. The current educational system and our mascot assist white-male students and alumni. Asking beneficiaries to speak for the oppressed will rarely work. We can equate asking Wachusett students about the mountaineer to asking men of the twentieth century if women should have the right to vote or slave owners if slaves should be set free. We cannot expect the majority of students to stand up for the 11% of minority students at Wachusett Regional High School. Surveys are excellent tools to collect data, however, it is only logical that 89% of students in the racial majority will be indifferent to change (Wachusett). It is unrealistic to hope for a "groundswell" of students demanding this change. For the same reason that statues have been taken down without authorization, our mascot will not be changed unless minority groups and their allies are able to be clearly heard. We are currently in a global pandemic, the nation is divided, and every endeavor is placed politically on either the left or right. Continuous education and the mascot change must occur simultaneously.

Through researching psychological and sociological patterns, studies demonstrate that teenagers are psychologically proven to be apathetic. The medial prefrontal cortex, a region at the front of the brain, is still developing in teenagers. This region is responsible for higher-level thinking, empathy, and guilt. Studies have shown that adults are able to have a deeper understanding of how others may feel in a situation, while teenagers' responses are often self-focused. Over time, brain activity shifts from the back to the front and connections are made (Goudarzi). It is unrealistic to propose that over two thousand students will be able to unite to fight for a minority group of students without a solid anti-racist educational background. One Wachusett student said, "I'm just there to finish high school. I don't really care that much about that whole thing. We need to be diverse but at the end of the day we're just there to get through high school." Unfortunately, apathy is often one of the first reactions students will have. We cannot expect the students to rise above their biological instincts and patterns of behavior. An executive decision to retire the mascot is necessary. A consensus will not be reached by apathetic students with white privilege.

There are individuals who state that taking down an image erases history and we may be ignoring our past. In taking down these images we are in no form erasing or rewriting history, instead, we are recognizing it, facing it head-on, and making an informed change for the present. In fact, by taking down monuments and old images each person who sees the change will be able to truly rethink history and his/her perspective. By removing the image that promotes only one group, we are honoring the work of the groups that have gone for years unrecognized and undervalued.

At Wachusett, if we truly wish to remember our history, we must first remember the land our school is built upon is the land of the Nipmuck tribe. The name of the school is "Wachusett," an Algonquian word, meaning "near the mountain" or "mountain place". Our school sits upon land where the Nipmuc tribe once lived (Brooks). To recognize our history we need to acknowledge that our ancestors have actually devastated the land of Native Americans and we rarely speak of this horrific invasion. Only two native tribes are recognized by

the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs in the state of Massachusetts today. Those attached to an image cannot be ruled by nostalgia. Sentimental thought is entrenching and the reminiscent thoughts lack intention.

According to Child Trends, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center based in Maryland, and the nation's leading child research organization, suicide is the second-leading cause of death among teenagers in the United States. It is alarming that the percentage of high school students considering suicide has increased by 25% and suicide rates have increased by 33% since 2009. Additionally, multi-racial students are the most likely to consider suicide as about one-quarter of students reported having considered it one year before being surveyed. Female students consider suicide about twice as often as racial male equivalents (Pane).

Our current mascot holds a pointed gun and although it will physically not damage a student, it mentally is degrading to our school's mission and individual mental clarity. The mascot promotes a patriarchal society which clearly does not represent the way the Wachusett Regional School District wishes to empower girls and young women and minority groups.

We make immediate change when it is necessary. We did not go to school for the last quarter of the 2019-2020 school year to keep others safe. Although it was a challenge for each student in a unique way, administrators did not question the idea as it was known that students and their families could potentially need severe hospital care. We can retire the mascot image and reform the curriculum if it is prioritized in the same way as mitigating COVID-19 and keeping students healthy physically and mentally.

We admirably remember historical figures who did the unexpected, who made drastic change, and were persistent in the pursuit of equal rights for humanity. Avoiding confrontation, staying apathetic, and not diligently looking for ways to assist others significantly degrade one's reputation, particularly when future generations look back upon the past and are dismayed by the lack of action.

Strong leaders take responsibility for inequalities and issues that were not recognized. Individuals in leadership roles must make difficult, yet politically, ethically and morally correct decisions to which not everyone will agree.

To summarize progress regarding the mascot change up to this point in time:

First, I spoke with Mr. Beando on July 1, he stated he would prefer to focus on student perspectives and transferred a decision on the mascot to Superintendent McCall. Mr. Beando invited me as the first member of a new Principal's Advisory Committee. Since this time, I have sent my ideas for the committee to Mr. Beando who continues to look for qualified student members for the committee.

I had a conversation with Dr. McCall on July 9, he agreed the mascot is not representative of all Wachusett students and requested I further develop my argument for changing the mascot. I sent this additional letter to him on July 15. Currently, Dr. McCall is clearly busy with developing plans for school reopening and will respond with steps moving forward once a decision has been made in regard to school this fall. The contents of this letter is a combination of my two letters previously sent to Dr. McCall.

In my conversation, Dr. McCall posed the question of "Who owns the mascot?"

I now request that the school committee express its dissatisfaction with the current racist, sexist, and violent mascot image and call for a change.

Responses to three questions pertaining to important qualities of Wachusett Regional High School students and the mascot's representation of the qualities and students:

1. How do you see Wachusett students reflected in the mountaineer?

- "I think the mountaineer makes us look less intelligent. We have a very smart student body but our mascot is a hillbilly with a gun that honestly looks homeless. I think it makes our school look foolish."
- "I am not really sure that it does. The mascot has been a tradition for many years, a representation of some people's high school spirit and identity. That being said, I do not feel that its portrayal of an armed white male represents me or my peers."
- "As the diversity in Wachusett's student body grows I continue to see many students of color and minority students isolated by the image of the mountaineer. As a member of the LGBT community I feel that many students who are minorities due to their sexuality or race have seen their communities experience gun violence throughout history up until modern day. The image of the white mountaineer with a gun simply serves to recall this violent history to mind and ultimately isolated students."
- "Wachusett students reflect the mountaineer through their determination and endurance. It takes a lot to climb mountains and in each of our lives we have our own mountains. Wachusett students climb each of their mountains to the best of their ability and don't stop til they reach the top."
- "It represents the perseverance of the students."
- "The mountaineer is our mascot, but I do not see students identify with it often, they instead associate with the school's name. At times, I cannot even remember what the mascot is, it isn't very prevalent at all, so it is hard to see anything reflected in the mountaineer."
- "The mountaineer reflects diligence and determination, as well as humble beginnings"
- "I don't see students reflected in the mountaineer"
- "I see Wachusett students as exemplifying the work ethic and individualism of the mountaineer, but also being lost and stuck in their ways without proper guidance."
- "Being a mountaineer to me means following what the school stands for, being responsible and open to all and working hard to achieve what you want. And I think those are the qualities students should learn from wachusett, because I think being hardworking and able to communicate and open to all ideas is important in life."
- "I don't feel that the Wachusett students are represented by the mascot at all."
- "The mountaineer resents our students perfectly because mountaineers were strong resourceful and smart people which is exactly what we should strive to be."
- "I suppose that I see a common theme of perseverance in both the mountaineer and the Wachusett students. Both are working hard to reach a goal, or multiple goals, and they will be rewarded for their hard work and effort."

2. What does being a mountaineer mean to you?

- "I've never really associated myself with that label. I'm a student that went to that school but I'm not really a mountaineer."
- "Being a mountaineer means being one in a school of thousands. Ideally, it symbolizes integrity, honesty, being a well-rounded student, and putting one's best effort forth."
- "Being a mountaineer means pioneering inclusivity, progress and change. The entirety of Wachusett emphasizes empathy and diversity and sadly I do not see this reflected in the current mascot."
- "It means being determined and strong willed but it also means teamwork. Mountaineers don't climb mountains alone very often since it can be dangerous. To be a mountaineer means to be part of something greater than yourself."

- “Being a mountaineer to me means that I am able to get over obstacles that I am faced with. I also think being a mountaineer is important because it means I am part of this great community.”
- “Being a mountaineer means that you work hard no matter the circumstance”
- “In the symbolic sense, I’d like to think it represents working through adversity.”
- “Being a mountaineer means that I’m a part of the Wachusett community and have a responsibility to do good.”
- “Being a mountaineer means that I am part of the Wachusett community and I must work hard to uphold the values of said community.”
- “It doesn’t really mean anything to me, it’s just a mascot”
- “Being a mountaineer to me means being independent in my beliefs and having strength in will to stand by them, but also being open minded to discuss other viewpoints. It means being educated, unbiased, and understanding”
- “Being a mountaineer means being a part of a community that is full of people from different backgrounds.”

3. What qualities of a mountaineer are important for students to gain in their time at Wachusett?

- “A good education, compassion, empathy, and a greater understanding of the world at large”
- “It is important for students to gain the ability to work through conflicts peacefully, accept and care for others, and take responsibility of their own learning. Wachusett must do its best to prepare adults for the future, as citizens and voters. This should include teaching against bias and hatred.”
- “I hope that Wachusett teaches students to expand their world views. Coming from the small town of Rutland, Wachusett was one of the first places I got the chance to experience different viewpoints and cultures. I think learning to respect and include all people is the most important thing to learn at Wachusett”
- “I would say determination to face everything life throws at us is important for students to take with them after they leave Wachusett.”
- “The important qualities of a mountaineer that the students should gain at their time at Wachusett are respect for other people and to accept other people. To have confidence in themselves and to believe that they can do anything and that we should learn to be open minded.”
- “Perseverance and a sense of confidence. I think Wachusett sets up the students very well for life beyond high school. In addition, I think the high school allows students to become comfortable asking for help when they feel that they need to do so.”
- “Definitely perseverance throw all the hard trials, and individuality because at Wachusett it may seem hard to be an individual when a lot of people act and look the same”
- “Hardworking, friendly”
- “Resilience, determination, and the ability to work hard.”
- “Clearly, being educated is the main goal, since it is a learning institution. This means that mountaineers should gain the skills necessary to remain honest and knowledgeable. Which means recognizing the past as a tool to learn from, not something to hide.”
- “Independence, responsibility, etc. things necessary for growth into the adult world to be a functional human that contributes to society”
- “It is important for students to learn the work ethic, self-confidence, practicality, and being a part of nature and the community from the mountaineer.”
- “Perseverance, courage, accountability, independence, problem solving skills, and critical thinking skills.”
- “Kindness and respect for others”

- “We come to be educated. To formulate our own opinions about the world based on clear analytical thinking. It is where we come to learn the history of the cultures in the world, and to accept and learn from their failures and to celebrate their successes.”
- “The mountaineer is a symbol of tenacity. It is important for students to learn to be tenacious, especially in times like these”

More general responses which did not directly answer one of the three questions, but are valuable thoughts and need to be considered:

- “[One issue is] the racist students that walk the halls without consequences. We need to worry about the uneducated white teenagers yelling the n-word.”
- “I think that the logo and mascot don’t represent the values that our school claims to support. The mountaineer is a gun toting hick, there’s no other way to say it. He is shoeless, has a long beard and unkempt hair, and a shotgun. Our school claims to be modern and accepting, but when strangers drive into our parking lot, they’re greeted by the mountaineer, and is that the face that our community wants to put forward?”
- “It’s literally just an ugly mascot that our school probably paid some terrible designer 70 years ago”
- “It paints us white people as country hicks”
- “[The mascot] is vaguely shaped like a swastika”
- “My mascot may not be ‘as up to date’ with current beliefs and ethical beliefs, but he represents not only my current peers and the administrators of this school, but past generations as well. Being a mountaineer means being able to think about things with a clear head .”
- “It should be viewed as a reminder of past mistakes and successes, and a symbol of how far the student body has come and how it accepts and understands how things have become the way they are”
- “The stereotype of a poorer, southern person is offensive and the gun opposes the welcoming message”
- “Being educated means not only having an extensive amount of knowledge about the world, its people, its past, and its numerous cultures, but also being aware and understanding of every individual... Instead use rational thinking and logical reasoning to discuss things in a democratic and equal way using peaceful communication. It means understanding all aspects and perspectives and being able to empathize with numerous situations.”

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Student Rep intro

Kathryn Mangus Senior

Hello everyone, I want to begin by thanking you all for your time. When the Diversity, equity and anti-racism subcommittee was formed several students asked to share their thoughts with the subcommittee. Due to subcommittee laws and the current remote situation having all the students speak was impossible. However, their voices still deserved to be heard- so as a student rep I created a google form where students could write in their thoughts about racism in the wachusett district. Many students also emailed or direct messaged me to have conversations on racism and how it affects children in our schools. Students in grades from 5th- post grad all wrote in about their experiences. Fifty students wrote in for their thoughts that were read to the subcommittee on the 8th however Chair Weeks asked that I select a few to share with the entire committee. The entire document of all responses should be shared with the committee but, if it is not please email me and I would be happy to send it to you. I thank you all again for working to make our district Anti-racist and hope we can make Wachusett a better community for our students of color. Please email me with comments and concerns at kathrynmangus21@wrsdk12.net.

Anonymous

8th Grade Chocksett

I attend Chocksett Middle School. I am white, however I noticed instances of racism and it hurts me to see that and has motivated me to try to make a difference. At Chocksett there are “core values” and these are constantly talked about in school and pushed on students. I feel as though none of these core values talk about equality. It may help if they did or if equality was a core value in itself so that more awareness about anti-racism is spread. Even if equality isn’t made a core value at Chocksett, I still feel that anti-racism needs to be talked about more. It also should be taught and practiced in classrooms. Equality is a belief that doesn’t just affect school, it affects the rest of students lives and should be taught at a young age.

Anonymous

Senior Wachusett

I think that teachers should be more aware of what they're saying to students. They're teachers who are supposed to teach students how to be good people so it's especially harmful when they say ignorant things. There's one thing especially that sticks out in my mind. I clearly remember because it was so blatantly ignorant even though it happened over a year ago. Last year there was a student in one of my classes who had Hispanic heritage. This teacher was especially problematic, she even slut shamed celebrities in front of the class so honestly i'm not surprised, she would also get extremely irritated and be rude to students over the smallest things. Once in class she gave really confusing instructions so we kept asking her to repeat it. When this student asked her to repeat instructions that were unclear still and she said something along the lines of “How many times do I have to say it for you to understand? Do you need me to say it in Spanish for you??” It was honestly shocking and the whole class was literally silent. The student was

obviously uncomfortable. I'm not sure if it was her intention to be racist but as I said, teachers should hold themselves to a greater level of responsibility. Their position is teaching the future of America. I literally couldn't believe a teacher would say that to a student and humiliate them in front of the whole class. Anyways my point is like after that experience teachers need to understand the consequences of things they say.

I have faced so many microaggressions and witnessed other poc experience them as well. If necessary teachers should be educated on what microaggressions are because it is hard to understand them sometimes if you have never experienced them yourself! Not only teachers but also students. Once in my homeroom I was asking another student in my class questions about the different Chinese empires. Another girl overheard and said, "Shouldn't you know that??? You're chinese." Which again to her maybe it didn't seem offensive but microaggressions are not always obviously racist. Not all Asians are Chinese, and just because I have heritage from another country doesn't mean I know the entire history of that country. I was literally born in America and have gone to that country twice in my whole life. But just because I don't look "white" the student just assumed I knew everything about my "other country" which really threw me off guard and I really didn't know how to respond.

Anonymous

Senior, Wachusett

Racism and racist language is far too common at Wachusett. As a white student, I have been told to "put some pants on the n-word" by a group of laughing boys when I quietly walked on the school sidewalk wearing shorts. I've heard my classmates scream the n-word in the cafeteria and receive no discipline, despite the multiple adults within earshot. One of my friends immigrated to America when she was in Elementary school. Within her first week at Wachusett, she heard the boy next to her joking suggest that they should line up all of the immigrants - legal or illegal - and shoot them in the head. Imagine a person you just met, suggesting that you and your family should be murdered. This conversation happened directly in front of the teacher. No one said anything. There needs to be an emphasis on teaching the origin of certain racial slurs and their place in dehumanizing others. Teach why they are wrong. Teach students the hard and horrifying truth of these words - history can not be ignored or else it will be repeated. We need to eliminate the ignorance and disregard for others that's so common in this sheltered school. There needs to be a stated emphasis on reporting these incidents and a verbal outline of what happens if these incidents occur. Have students hold each other accountable. Speak on the importance of coming to administration and normalize it, many students never report things for fear of retaliation. Others don't believe the system works or cares. I'm glad the school has formed an anti-racism committee and hope it brings real change.

Anonymous

Senior, Wachusett

As a white student at Wachusett, I might see racism less than a student who isn't white. The main thing that I have seen at the high school is the use of the N-word by primarily white students. I

think that this is highly inappropriate, especially hearing it being screamed across a room or out loud for "fun" when no administration does anything to stop the use of this language. Other racial slurs aren't uncommon at the school. These mainly come from the same students who like to use the N-word, thinking that it makes them cool or funny. At WRHS and maybe even starting before, we should be taught about the divides that have been caused by race and learn to be sensitive to others and not use language or actions that specifically targets one student or group of students. Many white students are allies who stand with their non-white peers in reprimanding this behavior, but it does scare me the amount of hatred that some other students possess (towards a certain race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc). We should be taught against hate and to work together as one species rather than many different races and other subcategories, along with learning of the oppression that minority races and other groups have faced throughout history (and, of course, why these actions are wrong). Personally, I only know of one black teacher at the high school. I know that the school has to hire whoever they can find to teach the positions needed, but many underclassmen of color that I have talked to wish that they had more teachers like them that they can go to for support in a high school where the majority of students are white. I think that WRHS wanting to form a club or committee of students of color to check in and make sure that they are taking better actions at the school against racism is a wonderful idea. I will stand up to hate and bigotry at the high school whenever I see it and try my best to actively stop these incidents from happening with the knowledge that I currently have (most of it from social media and reading outside of school, which I think says a lot in itself).

Elise

Senior Wachusett

Each year in English class, I have read a book that includes racial slurs (examples include "Of Mice and Men" and Huckleberry Finn). When we read this book aloud, I have seen students say the slurs out loud. I have also seen teachers brush this off and not talk about the history of this word. I think it's important that teachers talk about the history of racial slurs and how saying them is harmful to black students. I think that if students learn this in class, they also understand how it is wrong to use racial slurs in and outside of school. I believe teachers need to also be aware by only including readings by white males the message they are subconsciously sending to students. The message is that females of POC cannot make great works of literature. I also think this limits the perspective students receive and therefore, limits student education

Anonymous

Post Grad

Hello, I am an alumna of Wachusett Regional High School and want to share my experiences and observations with the many different social issues here at the high school. First and foremost: racism. Wachusett is 92% white and therefore, even if people don't realize, caters

to this white majority. As a white woman myself, I had the privilege of not being directly affected by this, but I know plenty of people who have and would like to speak on behalf of them so that their stories can be heard. As I moved up through the high school, I noticed these microaggressions more and more: students would drive in with Confederate flags tied to their trucks and face no consequences, everyone would turn and glance at the one or two black people in the room whenever we talked about slavery and civil rights during history class, posters hung up on the wall that say "Shoot 'em up Wachusett," and black people would get stopped in the hallway way more than white people. Furthermore, there is only one black teacher in the entire school, and people always tell her she looks like Michelle Obama simply because she is black and shares her name, which perpetuates the stereotype that "all black people look the same." During my senior year, one issue in particular took place that I'm sure everyone has heard about because of how bad it was and how bad the administration handled it, but a girl in my graduating class sent some very racist comments to another girl in my class, saying she looked like a "proboscis monkey," with a "nose being the shape of a legit penis and having eyes that don't open," and adding that she'll "drop my cat off later as a peace offering and so you don't starve tonight." She also posted a photo on social media of a cat in a paper bag with the caption "chinese take out?" which she and her friends proceeded to kick. This year, with everything going on with the Black Lives Matter Movement, the racism at this school has become even more clear. A student, in answering a question about how we can solve police brutality, said "Well having a black male dead is a[s] normal as most black people are the ones to commit the crime. They have given themselves tha and that is their fault. They can change their ways of being who they are." Administration has proven to be horrible in dealing with these issues as well. In the whole situation my senior year, administration did barely anything to punish the girl who said all the racist comments and they also still punished the girl who received the comments who was trying to stand up for herself since she knew administration wouldn't help at all. A student who is a couple years older than me also remembers that she and her friends, while just sitting at a table in the cafeteria, would often get passed by the police officer on duty, who would stare at them, grab her taser, then let go once she walked by. One of her friends would also get stopped repeatedly in the hallway when he was doing nothing wrong, just because he was black and "looked suspicious." In fact, administration has been so bad about choosing who they stop in the hallway based on looks that I learned throughout my four years that, had I wanted to, I could have easily left the building at any time in broad daylight and nobody would stop or question me simply because of the way that I looked and carried myself. Finally, I myself felt very uncomfortable having police officers at the school in the first place, especially now that they carry guns, and I know I'm not the only one. The Holden Police Station is right across the street, if there is an actual problem that needs police they can get there pretty fast, so students should not have to feel threatened by a man walking around with a gun at all times, judging them based on the color of their skin, how they dress, etc.

Beyond racism, Wachusett has many other social justice issues. For instance, sexism is also a huge problem at the school. I have experienced it by Wachusett students twice this summer alone, and I have graduated and therefore don't spend much time with a lot of Wachusett

students anymore, and I know that many other girls, past and present, at Wachusett faced similar problems and have constantly been objectified by men. In my class, I heard about a “nude collection” that some of the boys had in which they shared girls’ nudes with each other and ranked them from “common” to “rare.” I don’t know if the administration knew about it, but if they did they didn’t do anything. Other than the way students treat each other, however, the way administration deals with it and talks about it isn’t great either. While some points of the dress code do make sense such as wearing pants, shirts, shoes, etc and not hiding your face, some parts are very pointed towards girls such as “tops without straps or that reveal midriffs” and “backless shirts.” These rules imply that it is okay to objectify women based on the way that they dress. I have seen boys show up to school events not wearing a shirt and not facing any consequences for it, so why should girls be prohibited from wearing a crop top, a strapless shirt, or a backless shirt on a hot day if they feel like it? Furthermore, while I certainly agree that the Self Defense for Women class is needed and I appreciate it being offered by the school, the school shouldn’t just be teaching girls how to defend ourselves; they should also be teaching boys how to respect women. It’s not enough to just treat the symptom of the problem, it will only be solved once we get to the root.



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Indigenous Peoples Day

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 10:07 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: **Emily Miller** <emilycorday@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 14, 2020 at 7:10 PM

Subject: Indigenous Peoples Day

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Hello,

As a parent of a second grader in the district, I am writing to express my support for changing the name of Columbus Day. We should not be glorifying a murderer. Students in this district still learn that this man "discovered" America and see him as a hero. We need to stop teaching inaccurate history. Changing the name of this holiday is a move in the right direction.

Thank you,

Emily Miller

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WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

DRAFT 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>
To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:07 PM

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>
To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:08 PM

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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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** <sahrlefebvre@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>
To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:10 PM

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. If 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_ay@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 t learning or prevent a transition to begin hybrid learning on 11/18? What are the outlined building and classroom protocols for COVID-19-pos symptoms and severity of symptoms that will trigger evaluation by the school nurse and what are they; how will students be isolated and hc isolated at each school at any given time; what will happen when the maximum isolation capacity is reached? Will parents be provided with need to be taken for any signs or symptoms of COVID and for any student or family exposures to positive COVID individuals, making it ver home from school, for how long, and how they are cleared to return to school? Will parents be provided with proposed/model daily and weel specifically outlining synchronous and asynchronous learning times and what those entail for each learning plan? Will we be provided with i 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 transitions from a hybrid model, back to a remote-only platform, will student schedules change again or will they follow the hybrid schedule synchronous instruction (split class), 1 day of the entire classroom receiving remote instruction and 2 days of independent learning? How wi there is 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 d days" and not participate in any instruction at all, even if they are asymptomatic? Will they have access to remote instruction during quaran instruction, and what would their schedule be? What is the process for families who choose the hybrid learning path to change their decisio path or vice versa (remote to hybrid)? What happens if a family does not complete the survey to indicate which learning platform their child v automatically be 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 I 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 sch 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 fo

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 acknowledge 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 th 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>
To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 8:11 PM

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.



WRSDC Special Meeting

Update on School Reopening
September 23, 2020

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

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

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	Period 1 and Lunch	Period 2 and Lunch
1:12-2:00	Period 6	Period 7	No Classes	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

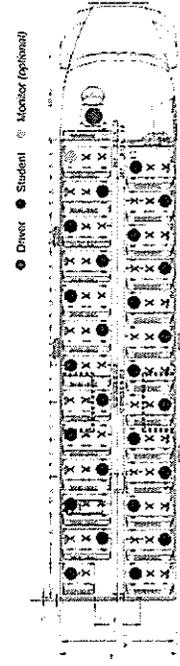
High School Sample Schedule

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
7:35-8:23 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/Physical 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

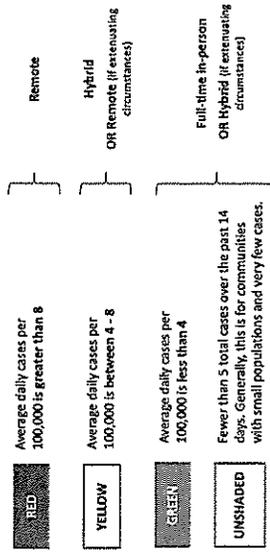
13

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



TOWN OF RUTLAND
250 MAIN STREET
RUTLAND, MA 01543

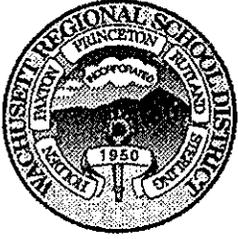
NOTICE OF RESIGNATION FILED WITH TOWN CLERK

TO: Wachusett Regional School District School Committee	
Elected Office <i>(Appointing authority)</i>	WRSD School Committee <i>(Remaining members of board or comm.)</i>
Person Resigned: Jeffrey Haynes	Office Resigned From: Committee Member
Date Resignation Filed: September 15, 2020	Effective Date: September 15, 2020
Date of Term Expiration: 2021	Period of Full Term: 3

Chapter 41, Section 109, General Laws

"No resignation of a town or district officer shall be deemed effective unless and until such resignation is filed with the town or district clerk or such later time certain as may be specified in such resignation. Upon receipt of a resignation the clerk shall notify the remaining members, if the resignation is received from a board of two or more members, and he shall further notify the executive officers of the town or district and such notification shall include the effective date of the resignation..."

Date of notice: Sept. 16, 2020 ATTEST: Brita K. Carlson
Town Clerk



Wachusett Regional School District
Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

September 15, 2020

Mr. Jeffrey Haynes
4 William Circle
Rutland, MA 01543

Dear Jeff:

On behalf of our students and staff, District administration, and the WRSDC I wish to thank you for your service on the School Committee representing the town of Rutland.

I wish you and your family the best.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Darryll McCall".

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Wachusett Regional School District Committee
DM:rlp

WACHUSETT REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
June 2020 – May 2021

Attachment 2
September 25, 2020

<u>Name</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Home Address & Phone</u>
Nicole Amos	2021	58 Bushy Lane Rutland, MA 01543 (508) 308-0882 nicole_amos@wrsd.net
Melissa Ayala	2021	8 Sterling Avenue Sterling 01564 melissa_ayala@wrsd.net
Krista Bennett	2023	8 Boyden Road Holden 01520 (408) 771-4279 krista_bennett@wrsd.net
Scott Brown	2023	151 Highland Street Holden 01520 (508) 789-0711 scott_brown@wrsd.net
Michael Dennis	2023	15 Cypress Circle Holden 01520 (978) 853-1278 michael_dennis@wrsd.net
Maleah Gustafson	2022	63 Heather Circle Jefferson 01522 maleah_gustafson@wrsd.net
Sherrie Haber	2022	1 Olivia Lane Rutland 01543 sherrie_haber@wrsd.net
Robert Imber	2021	1 Clearings Way Princeton 01541 (978) 481-6999 robert_imber@wrsd.net
Laura Kirshenbaum	2023	41 Britney Drive Holden 01520 laura_kirshenbaum@wrsd.net
Matthew Lavoie	2022	28 Grizzly Drive Rutland 01543 (857) 891-6164 matthew_lavoie@wrsd.net
Linda Long-Bellil	2021	35 Brentwood Drive Holden 01520 (508) 304-1920 linda_longbellil@wrsd.net
Kenneth Mills	2022	22 Flagler Drive Holden 01520 (774) 230-4712 kenneth_mills@wrsd.net
Benjamin Mitchel	2021	7 Colony Lane Paxton 01612 (508) 208-7728 benjamin_mitchel@wrsd.net

9/15/2020

WACHUSETT REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

June 2020 – May 2021

Karl Ottmar	2023	232 West Street Paxton 01612 (434) 242-7042 karl_ottmar@wrsd.net
Deidre Shapiro	2023	3 Pinewood Lane Sterling, MA 01564232-4957 deidre_shapiro@wrsd.net
Asima Silva	2021	75 Nelson Street Holden 01520 (508) 852-1246 asima_silva@wrsd.net
Christina Smith	2022	362 Sterling Road Jefferson 01522 (508) 468-7929 christina_smithSC@wrsd.net
Megan Weeks	2022	137 Wheeler Road Princeton 01541 (860) 841-4809 megan_weeks@wrsd.net
Kelly Williamson	2023	17 Redstone Hill Road Sterling, MA 01564 (774) 232-4957 kelly_williamson@wrsd.net
Linda Woodland	2022	4 Deborah Lane Sterling 01564 linda.woodland@wrsd.net
Adam Young	2021	434 Shrewsbury Street Holden 01520 (774) 272-0182 adam_young@wrsd.net

**Wachusett Regional School District Committee
Subcommittee Assignments
2020-2021**

<u>Business/Finance</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Legal Affairs</u>	<u>Management</u>
Michael Dennis, Chair	Christina Smith, Chair	Scott Brown, Chair	Megan Weeks, Chair
Kenneth Mills, Vice-chair	Linda Long-Bellil, Vice-chair	Karl Ottmar, Vice-chair	Michael Dennis, Vice-chair
Maleah Gustafson	Nicole Amos	Robert Imber	Scott Brown
Benjamin Mitchel	Krista Bennett	Megan Weeks	Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar	Sherrie Haber		Asima Silva
	Robert Imber		Christina Smith
	Laura Kirshenbaum		Adam Young
	Deidre Shapiro		

Superintendent Goals and Evaluation

Kenneth Mills, Chair
Laura Kirshenbaum
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland

Facilities and Security

Adam Young, Chair
Linda Woodland

Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Subcommittee

Asima Silva, Chair
Linda Woodland, Vice-chair
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil

WRSD By-Laws specify the Chair of the School Committee is an ex-officio member of all standing subcommittees.

Audit Advisory Board

Benjamin Mitchel, Chair
Adam Young, Vice-chair

School Council Liaisons

Central Tree Middle School – Matthew Lavoie	Mountview Middle School – Scott Brown
Chocksett Middle School – Kelly Williamson	Naquag Elementary School – Sherrie Haber
Davis Hill Elementary School – Kelly Williamson	Paxton Center School – Karl Ottmar
Dawson Elementary School – Laura Kirshenbaum	Thomas Prince School – Asima Silva
Glenwood Elementary School – Nicole Amos	WRHS – Kenneth Mills
Houghton Elementary School – Deidre Shapiro	Special Ed. Parent Advisory Council – Maleah Gustafson
Mayo Elementary School – Adam Young	ECC – Linda Woodland

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Tuesday, September 29, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Special Meeting

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

AGENDA:

I Call to Order

II Motion: We, the members of the Wachusett Regional School District School Committee, express no confidence in Superintendent McCall's management of the district's return to school plans for FY2021. We call upon the district administration to solicit and hire a competent educational consulting firm, within the next 10 (ten) business days, for the purpose of:

- Assessing the district's current remote educational plans through targeted feedback from parents, teachers, students, and administrators.
- Providing recommendations for improvements and adjustments that are within the district's reasonable capability and resources.
- Leveraging district analysis to date and peer district plans, developing a comprehensive return to school plan which is inclusive of but not limited to:
 - Entry criteria for successful return to school models, blending on-site and remote learning, by using specific actions and/or metrics
 - Development of a backlog of actions needed, with associated timelines and resource plan, in order to facilitate successful entry criteria which are within the district's control
 - A plan for moving through different modalities of learning (e.g., fully remote, hybrid or blended, etc.) as environmental and health conditions warrant
 - A communication plan for parents, teachers, students, and School Committee members
 - Regular monitoring of the district's implementation of the plan including feedback and retrospective of parents, teachers, students, administrators, and School Committee members, and recommendations for improvements
 - Weekly reporting to the School Committee, either written or in-person, of the progress, risks, and issues in the development of this plan and regular monitoring.

The selection of the educational consulting company shall be subject to the approval of the School Committee.

III Adjournment

The above agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Tuesday, September 29, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

AGENDA:

Executive Session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with three bargaining units (SEIU Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants; Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals); Wachusett Administrators' Association), to provide an update on negotiations with Unit B, and to report on progress of negotiations with the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc. (WREA) on 2020-2021 school reopening, as the Chair deems a discussion in public session would have an adverse effect on the District's bargaining position, to return to public session.

Ratification of Collectively Bargained Contract

Motion: To ratify the Memorandum of Agreement between Wachusett School District and Unit B (Speech Language Pathologist Assistants, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants, Physical Therapy Assistants), as presented

Public Hearing

Chair's Opening Remarks

Student Representatives' Reports

Superintendent's Report

- Discussion of Report
- Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Unfinished Business

Secretary's Report

- Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of the WRSDC held on 8/24/2020
- Approval of the #1351st Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSDC held on 9/14/2020
- Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of the WRSDC held on 9/14/2020
- Approval of the #325 Special Meeting Minutes of the WRSDC held on 9/23/2020

Treasurer’s Report/Financial Statements

Committee Reports

- Management Subcommittee
- Education Subcommittee
- Business/Finance Subcommittee
- Legal Affairs Subcommittee
- Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee
- Facilities and Security Subcommittee
- Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee
- Audit Advisory Board
- Ad-Hoc Subcommittee
- Building Committees

School Council Reports

Public Hearing

New Business

The above agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

Legal Affairs Subcommittee

Wednesday, September 30, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

AGENDA:

- I Call to Order
- II Approval of Minutes
- III Negotiation Schedule and Conducting Negotiations Virtually
- IV Legal Counsel for FY21
- V Settlement Agreements with Transportation Providers
- VI Update on Turf Field
- VII Review of Legal Bills
- VIII Next Meeting
- IX Executive Session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with three bargaining units (SEIU Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants; Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals); Wachusett Administrators’ Association), to provide an update on negotiations with Unit B, and to report on progress of negotiations with the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc. (WREA) on 2020-2021 school reopening, as the Chair deems a discussion in public session would have an adverse effect on the District’s bargaining position, not to return to public session.
- X Adjournment

The above agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

Business/Finance Subcommittee

Monday, October 5, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

AGENDA:

- I Call to Order
- II FY19 Audit Update
- III FY20 Update
- IV FY21 Update
- V Transportation Settlement Update
- VI FY21 Enrollment Trends and Impact on Budget
- VII Policy Review
 - Policy 4323.2 *Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bidding Requirements*
- VIII Contract Extension with District Auditors Melanson CPAs
- IX Director of Business and Finance Contract
- X Approval of Minutes
- XI Next Meeting
- XII Adjournment

The above agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council)

Monday, October 5, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, via Zoom

Elections and General Meeting

Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee

Tuesday, October 6, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

AGENDA:

- I Call to Order
- II Approval of Minutes
- III Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
- IV Policy Review
 - o Policy 3240 *School Ceremonies and Observances*
 - o Policy 6436 *Appreciation of Diversity*
 - o Policy 6437 *Promoting Civil Rights and Prohibiting Harassment, Discrimination and Hate Crimes*
- V School Attendance on Religious Holidays
- VI Comments Submitted by Members of the Student Body
- VII Next Meeting
- VIII Adjournment

The above agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee

Wednesday, October 7, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

AGENDA:

- I Call to Order
- II Approval of Minutes
- III Discussion of 360° Feedback Process
- IV Superintendent's Proposed Goals
- V Discussion of Indicators
- VI Next Meeting
- VII Adjournment

The above agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

Education Subcommittee

Tuesday, October 13, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Tuesday, October 13, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

Management Subcommittee

Wednesday, October 21, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

Education Subcommittee

Monday, November 9, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Meeting location and format TBD

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Monday, November 9, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Meeting location and format TBD

Education Subcommittee

Monday, December 7, 2020
6:00 p.m.

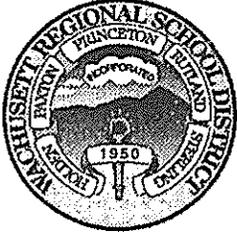
Meeting location and format TBD

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Monday, December 7, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Meeting location and format TBD

Attachment 5
September 25, 2020



Wachusett Regional School District
Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

Sent electronically
coachbogey@aol.com

September 22, 2020

Mr. Peter Bogren
c/o Paxton Town Hall
697 Pleasant Street
Paxton, MA 01612

Dear Mr. Bogren:

Please be advised that at the beginning of the regular School Committee meeting on **Tuesday**, September 29, 2020, the Wachusett Regional School District Committee will adjourn to executive session for the purpose of discussing strategies for negotiations. This executive session should begin at approximately 7:00 PM and upon conclusion of the executive session, the Committee will reconvene for the regular School Committee meeting.

As the Municipal Representative, please attend this executive session if you are able. School Committee meetings are being held virtually and the Google Meet link to the executive session will be sent to you in advance of September 29th.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Darryll McCall".

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Wachusett Regional School District Committee

DM:rlp

FY21 Budget Update

Chairwoman Weeks requested a brief update on the FY21. Below is a synopsis of the Expense and Revenue budgets along with additional information regarding Medicaid and the FY21 State Budget.

Expense Budget Review:

- ✓ **Salaries and Stipends:** There is currently an Available Budget of \$4,570,842.05. Of this balance, approximately \$166,000 remains unencumbered for coaches, \$406,439 remains unencumbered for day to day subs, and \$1.6 million reflects the Tier II cuts. Also included in this balance is \$565,000 for new positions that were included in the Tier I cuts as well as the COLA for three (3) bargaining units. Finally, the Human Resources Department is in the process of backfilling several positions. This listing includes but is not limited to a school psychologist, a Spanish teacher, and a number of paras.
- ✓ **Benefits and Insurance:** As previously reported to Business/Finance at the September 8, 2020 meeting, Blue Cross/Blue Shield will be administering a credit dating back to May 2020. That credit will be issued in October 2020. The District is awaiting confirmation of the value of the credit from its health advisor.
- ✓ **Instructional Support:** Principals and directors remain limited to 50% purchasing of their FY21 budget for the indefinite future given the ongoing uncertainty with the State budget. Of the \$1,994,134.68 listed under Available Budget, approximately \$237,000 remains available in General Supplies. Textbooks remain unencumbered at \$780,000. Of that value, \$400,000 was in the Tier I cuts.
- ✓ **Operations and Maintenance:** There are a number of lines that have not yet been fully encumbered. Some of the highlighted lines include Building Heat @ \$663,434, Maintenance of Grounds @ \$117,533 and Building Maintenance @ \$373,694.
- ✓ **Pupil Services:** There is an Available Budget of \$28,306. Of that balance, \$21,449 is available under Medical and Health Services, specifically Supplies and Materials.
- ✓ **Special Education Tuitions:** Adjustments were made between the General Fund and the FY21 IDEA grant (240 grant) and FY20 Circuit Breaker Carry Forward funds. The negative balance of \$1.4 million in the General Fund will be re-allocated to FY21 Circuit Breaker funds when those funds become available later this fall.
- ✓ **Other Operating Costs:** This Appropriation reflects Assessments for School Choice Out and Charter Schools. Charges are fully encumbered given year to date activity. These figures may change once the State budget is finalized for FY21.
- ✓ **Transportation:** Administration recently met with both AA Transportation and Van Pool to discuss transportation for the new school year. The value associated with home to school transportation and special education transportation – in district and out of district -- has not been encumbered yet. Special Education routes for In District Special Education transportation are currently being finalized. Once that activity is complete, Administration

will encumber funds. With respect to home to school transportation, Administration is finalizing the routes as well as any associated costs for cleaning the buses with its provider, AA Transportation. Once that work is finalized, funds will be encumbered for the balance of the school year.

✓ **Debt Service:** Debt service payments have been fully encumbered.

Revenue Budget Review:

Payments from the member towns are based upon FY20 allocations because the FY21 State budget has not been finalized. Adjustments will be made in the next several months to reflect payments for FY21 once final figures are released regarding the State budget as well as the refinanced bonds.

Update on Debt Service:

Director Deedy, Treasurer Dunbar and Financial Advisor Carney met with a representative of Moody's Investor Services on Monday, September 21, 2020, to discuss the refinancing of three bonds issued in 2008, 2009 and 2011. The date of sale is Tuesday, October 6, 2020. This transaction will realize a savings on debt service. That savings will not be known until the transaction is complete.

Medicaid Payments:

Medicaid receipts for September 2020 are \$75,903.29. This is a confirmed figure via an email on September 22, 2020 from EOHHS.

Update on the FY21 State Budget:

- ***Circuit Breaker Reimbursements:*** DESE does not know yet what they have available for Circuit Breaker funds for FY21. DESE is committed to paying for instruction and tuitions first and transportation second. The Student Opportunity Act (SOA) requirement to reimburse transportation costs @ 25% may be nixed in FY21. (The SOA portion for Chapter 70 is on hold.) DESE has not released the Circuit Breaker reimbursement figures yet due to the State budget issue. If DESE does release any Circuit Breaker claim disbursement, it will be based on one quarter only and, if the DESE can, the disbursement will be based on 70% so that the payment is as close to the statute as possible. That disbursement will likely not include transportation. This payment may be delayed beyond September 30.
- ***Regional Transportation Disbursements:*** DESE has no additional information regarding the FY21 budget for Regional Transportation.

Created 9.24.20



Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

September 18, 2020

Based on the current COVID-19 public health data in your community, I am writing to request further information about your fall reopening plan for schools.

At a state level, Johns Hopkins University continues to report that Massachusetts is one of the states with sufficiently low test positivity rates to meet World Health Organization (WHO) standards for reopening. As of September 16, the two-week test positivity rate in Massachusetts as reported by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) is at 0.9%, well below the threshold of 5% established by WHO.

In addition, state officials also recognize that public health metrics must be further differentiated at the local level. To that end, last month, DPH began to report a color-coded COVID-19 health metric for each municipality, based on the average daily cases per 100,000 residents in the community. **Since the inception of the weekly DPH color-coded reports, your community has consistently received a designation of green or gray, which indicates very low COVID-19 transmission in your municipality.**

As you know, consistent with 603 CMR 27.08(2)¹, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has released school reopening guidance that prioritizes a return to in-person school for as many students as possible, safely. In our June 25th Initial Fall Reopening Guidance, we stated, "There is a clear consensus from both education and medical groups: we must keep in mind not only the risks associated with COVID-19 for in-person school programs, but also the known challenges and consequences of keeping students out of school." Indeed, the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics endorsed this guidance in a letter to DESE and noted the specific harms to students and families without access to in-person schooling. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reinforced this guidance in a lengthy statement issued on July 23 entitled The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall.

Given your community's designation of green or gray, I am concerned that the school committee has voted to keep most students learning remotely for the start of the 2020-21 school year. We have recommended remote learning only for those municipalities receiving a "red" designation three weeks in a row on the color-coded metric unless the district identifies other extenuating circumstances that prevent in-person instruction. (This is consistent with previous DESE

¹ 603 CMR 27.08(2) provides: "Upon such a declaration by the Governor or determination by the Board, the Commissioner shall require each district to develop and submit a plan that prioritizes providing in-person instruction to all students in a safe environment."

guidance that any change in learning model should be based on three weekly DPH color-coded reports.)

In light of the stark discrepancy between local public health data and your reopening plan, I am requesting a timeline by which you anticipate providing in-person instruction for the majority of your students including in-person instruction for vulnerable populations, such as students with disabilities, if these students have not already returned to in-person school. Please note that your response may trigger an audit to assess overall efforts to provide in-person instruction and to ensure your remote learning program is consistent with 603 CMR 27.08.

Please submit your written response within 10 calendar days to my attention via Helene Bettencourt, Associate Commissioner of Communication and Planning, at helene.h.bettencourt@mass.gov.

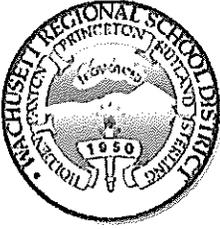
I know we share a goal of providing access to a high-quality education for all students. I look forward to working together to ensure as many students as possible can benefit from safe, in-person instruction this school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey C. Riley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeffrey" being the most prominent part.

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Attachment 8
September 25, 2020



Wachusett Regional School District
Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

Office of the Treasurer

September 8, 2020

Ms. Donna Couture, Treasurer
Town of Paxton
697 Pleasant Street
Paxton, MA 01612

RE: Second Payment Assessment Billing Notice – FY 2021

Dear Ms. Couture:

In accordance with the Wachusett Regional School District Regional Agreement, the receipt of the Town of Paxton's second of four installment payments of the FY 2021 assessment is due October 1, 2020. Because the status of the District's FY 2021 budget is still uncertain, the amount of the second payment will be the same as the FY 2020 payment, which is \$1,636,003. When the budget is approved for FY 2021, the amounts of the remaining assessments will be adjusted accordingly.

Payment is to be made by bank wire transfer to the EASTERN BANK account #10170363, ABA routing #011301798.

Pursuant to the Wachusett Regional School District Policy 4211, please notify me within 10 days of the date of this letter if there is an inability to make payment on time.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (978) 464-2105.

Sincerely,

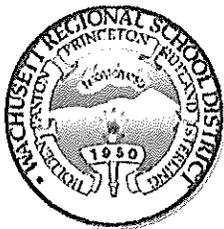
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James J. Dunbar".

James J. Dunbar
Treasurer

cc: Darryll McCall, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools
Daniel Deedy, Director of Business & Finance
Michelle White, Finance Manager

Jefferson School

1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522
Telephone: (508) 829-1670 Facsimile: (508) 829-1680
www.wrsd.net



Wachusett Regional School District
Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

Office of the Treasurer

September 8, 2020

Mr. James J. Dunbar, Treasurer
Town of Princeton
6 Town Hall Drive
Princeton, MA 01541

RE: Second Payment Assessment Billing Notice – FY 2021

Dear Mr. Dunbar:

In accordance with the Wachusett Regional School District Regional Agreement, the receipt of the Town of Princeton's second of four installment payments of the FY 2021 assessment is due October 1, 2020. Because the status of the District's FY 2021 budget is still uncertain, the amount of the second payment will be the same as the FY 2020 payment, which is \$1,238,458. When the budget is approved for FY 2021, the amounts of the remaining assessments will be adjusted accordingly.

Payment is to be made by bank wire transfer to the EASTERN BANK account #10170363, ABA routing #011301798.

Pursuant to the Wachusett Regional School District Policy 4211, please notify me within 10 days of the date of this letter if there is an inability to make payment on time.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (978) 464-2105.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James J. Dunbar".

James J. Dunbar
Treasurer

cc: Darryll McCall, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools
Daniel Deedy, Director of Business & Finance
Michelle White, Finance Manager

Jefferson School

1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522
Telephone: (508) 829-1670 Facsimile: (508) 829-1680
www.wrsd.net

**Wachusett Regional School District
District Treasurer
Employment Contract**

This Agreement, as authorized at the Wachusett Regional School District Committee meeting on July 27, 2020, is made effective as of July 1, 2020 by and between the Chairperson of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee on behalf of the **WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE** hereinafter referred to as the “Committee” and **James J. Dunbar** hereinafter referred to as the “District Treasurer” or “Treasurer.” In consideration of the promises herein contained, the parties hereto mutually agree as follows:

- 1.) **ENGAGEMENT:** The Committee hereby engages James J. Dunbar as District Treasurer and the Treasurer hereby accepts said engagement on the following terms and conditions:

- 2.) **TERM:** Subject to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 16A, the Treasurer shall be employed for a period of twelve months commencing as of July 1, 2020 and terminating June 30, 2021. This Contract may be renewed by mutual consent of the parties. If the Treasurer wishes to terminate this Contract during the term noted above, he must notify the Chairperson of the Committee thirty (30) days prior to the termination date. If the Committee wishes to terminate this Contract during the term noted above, the Chairperson will notify the Treasurer thirty (30) days prior to the termination date. If no notice is given or no successor Contract is executed prior to June 30, 2021, this Contract expires as of that date.

- 3.) **COMPENSATION:** The Treasurer shall be paid a monthly salary of \$1,301.18 effective July 1, 2020. The entire monthly salary shall be paid in the first regular payroll of each month.

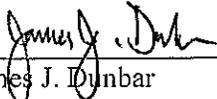
4.) **DUTIES:** The Treasurer shall faithfully and effectively perform the duties contained in the job description of Treasurer. Said job description may be altered, at the discretion of the School Committee, to address the educational or operational needs of the Committee.

The Treasurer recognizes that his responsibilities and conduct are not determined by prescribed hours and conditions and will perform the directed and implied duties of his position as determined by the School Committee and will expend the time and effort necessary to effectively achieve the goals and purposes of the Wachusett Regional School District.

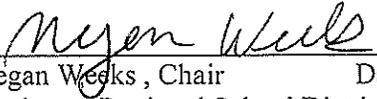
5.) **ENTIRE AGREEMENT:** This contract embodies the whole agreement between the Committee and the District Treasurer and there are no inducements, promises, terms, conditions, or obligations made or entered into by either party other than those contained herein.

6.) **INVALIDITY:** If any paragraph or part of this contract shall be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, it shall not affect the remainder of said agreement, but said remainder shall be binding and effective against all parties.

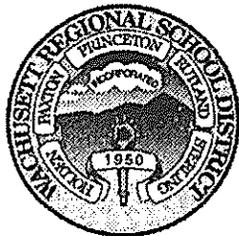
In witness whereof the parties have hereunto signed to be effective on the date set forth above.


James J. Dunbar
District Treasurer

8/20/2020
Date


Megan Weeks, Chair
Wachusett Regional School District
Committee

9/8/2020
Date



Wachusett Regional School District

Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

September 15, 2020

TO: *Wachusett Regional School District Committee*
Principals
Town Clerks
Town Libraries
School Libraries
Executive Staff
Wachusett Regional School District Treasurer

FROM: Darryll McCall, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

Attached you will find a recently adopted and a recently amended Wachusett Regional School District Committee policies:

Policy Relating to Education

P3813 Audio, Video, and/or Stenographic Recordings of Parent Teacher Conferences and Team Meetings

Policy Relating to Pupil Services

P6612.3 Face Coverings

These policies, as well as the updated Tables of Contents, should be placed in your Policy Book. All policies can also be accessed on the District website (www.wrsd.net).

DM:rlp
Enc.

POLICY RELATING TO EDUCATION***AUDIO, VIDEO, AND/OR STENOGRAPHIC RECORDINGS OF PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES AND TEAM MEETINGS***

The Wachusett Regional School Committee prohibits the audio, video and/or stenographic recording of parent/teacher conferences and/or Team meetings conducted in Wachusett Regional School District facilities. Exceptions to this policy will be made only where a parent/guardian or student is able to demonstrate that either the audio, video and/or stenographic recording of the meeting or conference is necessary to ensure the parent's/guardian's or student's full understanding of the proceedings or to otherwise accommodate a parent's/guardian's or student's documented disability.

Requests by a parent/guardian or student for authorization to audio, video and/or stenographic record a meeting or conference shall be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of the Wachusett Regional School District no less than three (3) business days prior to said meeting/conference. The Superintendent's decision on any such request shall be final.

First Reading: 11/08/04
Second Reading: 11/22/04

Amendment First Reading: 8/24/20
Amendment Second Reading: 9/14/20

WRSDC Policy 3813

POLICY RELATING TO PUPIL SERVICES

FACE COVERINGS

The Wachusett Regional School District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until the Superintendent has determined the policy is no longer required. The Superintendent will consult with the guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) when making this determination. The Superintendent may also decide to reengage this policy based on guidance from the aforementioned entities.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed. Exempted from this policy are students in Grade 1 and below. Nonetheless, the District encourages students in Grade 1 and below to wear masks, if possible.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- is incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will not be required when DESE guidelines for social distancing for the specific scenario is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes;
- while outside.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members are responsible for donning their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

POLICY RELATING TO PUPIL SERVICES

FACE COVERINGS (continued)

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

Exceptions to this policy for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Exceptions to this policy for staff with medical issues, who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the Director of Human Resources for the district in consultation with building administration and/or nursing staff. In cases where exceptions are granted, alternative measures or protocols may be required and agreed upon by relevant stakeholders.

LEGAL REF.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 -
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Wearing Masks -
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Reopening Guidelines -
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>
Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Mask Up MA! –
<https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

SOURCE: MASC – August 2020

First Reading: 8/24/20
Second Reading: 9/14/20

WRSDC Policy 6612.3

3000. EDUCATIONAL

- 3100. Organization
 - 3110. School Organization
 - 3111. Elementary Schools
 - 3112. Middle Schools
 - 3113. Senior High Schools
 - 3114. Magnet Schools
 - 3115. Alternative Schools
 - 3116. Feeder Patterns
 - 3118. Preschool Programs
 - 3120. School Reorganization
 - 3130. Time on Learning
- 3200. Schedule
 - 3210. School Year
 - 3211. Vacations and Holidays
 - 3212. Scheduled In-service Days
 - 3220. School Days
 - 3230. Emergencies
 - 3231. Inclement Weather
 - 3240. School Ceremonies and Observances
- 3300. Curriculum Content and Instructional Methods
 - 3310. Curriculum Content
 - 3311. Course Organization, Curriculum, and Course Credit
 - 3311.1. Graduation Requirements
 - 3311.11. Time Allocations and Credits
 - 3311.12. Competency Based Education Program
 - 3311.2. Elective
 - 3311.21. Time Allocations and Credits
 - 3311.3. Optional Courses
 - 3311.31. Online Education Policy
 - 3312. Goals and Objectives
 - 3313. Controversial Issues
 - 3313.1. Parent Notification of Human Sexuality Issues
 - 3313.2. Religious Beliefs and Customs
 - 3313.3. AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases
 - 3314. Ethics Policy
 - 3320. Instructional Methods
 - 3321. Field Trips
 - 3321.1. Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

3000. EDUCATIONAL (Continued)

- 4/25/05 3321.2. Travel and Study Abroad
- 3322. Educational Television and Radio
- 12/09/96 3323. Home Assignments
- 3330. District Curriculum Guides
- 3331. World Languages
- 3340. Curriculum Development
- 3/12/19 3341. Curriculum Adoption
- 3/26/07 3350. Experimental and Innovative Programs
- 3351. Computer Education
- 3352. Educational Options
- 3/24/97 3360. Independent Learning
- 3400. Materials Equipment and Supplies
- 3410. Textbooks and Workbooks
- 3411. Public Challenges of District
- 10/25/05 3420. Instructional Materials
- 3/1/06 3421. Library/Media Services
- 3430. Other Equipment
- 3431. Audio-Visual Materials – *policy deleted 4/30/2012*
- 3440. Supplies
- 3/12/19 3450. Instructional Materials
- 3500. Arrangements
- 3/8/04 3510. Class Size
- 3520. Grouping
- 3600. Support Services for Students
- 3610. Academic
- 3611. Individual Needs
- 3611.1. Remedial
- 3611.2. Accelerated
- 3611.3. Gifted
- 6/7/99 3611.4. Enrichment
- 3612. Tutoring
- 3613. Media Centers
- 3614. Learning Laboratories
- 3620. Mental and Emotional Health
- 4/26/99 3621. Counseling and Career Guidance
- 3/9/98 3622. Psychological Services
- 3623. Psychiatric Services
- 3624. Chemical Abuse
- 3/9/20 3625. Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs
- 3630. Physical Health
- 3700. Student Production of Goods and Services

EDUCATIONAL (Continued)

- 3710. Printing in School Shops
- 3720. Vehicle Repair in School Shops
- 3730. School Stores
- 3800. Accommodations or Extensions of the Instructional Program
- 3810. Special Educational Programs
- 4/27/98 3811. Special Needs
- 3812. Gifted
- 3812.1. Identification of Gifted Students
- 9/14/20 3813. Audio, Video and/or Stenographic Recordings of Meetings
- 11/10/09 3820. Observation of Education Programs for Special Needs Students
- 7/20/98 3830. Community Service
- 12/14/98 3840. Extracurricular Activities
- 3841. Interscholastic Athletics
- 3842. Intramural Activities
- 3850. School Assemblies
- 3860. Recreation
- 3870. Summer School
- 4/27/98 3880. Individual or School Organization Program Initiatives
- 9/11/95 3890. Home School Education
- 10/15/18 3895. English Language Learners
- 5/23/95 3900. Program Evaluation
- 3910. Testing
- 5/21/14 3911. Standardized Testing
- 3912. Reporting
- 3920. Accreditation

6000. PUPIL SERVICES

- 4/26/99 6100. Admission to the District
 - 6110. Entrance Age Policy
 - 6120. Other New Entry Students
 - 9/11/17 6121. Student Residency Policy
 - 9/17/18 6122. Homelessness
 - 4/8/19 6123. Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care
 - 3/25/19 6124. Educational Opportunities for Military Children
 - 5/21/14 6130. School Choice
 - 6140. Special Students
 - 6150. Enrollment Projections
 - 6160. Post-Graduate Students – Deleted 4/11/05
 - 6/7/99 6170. Foreign Students
- 7/15/96 6200. Assignment and Transfer within District
 - 6210. Districting of Schools and Programs
 - 6220. To Grade Levels
 - 6221. Granting Credit from Non-Accredited or Uncharted Schools
 - 6230. To Teachers
 - 6240. To Courses
 - 6250. To Sections
 - 1/22/07 6260. Assignment of Students to Classes
- 11/24/14 6300. Attendance
 - 6310. School
 - 6311. Ages of Students
 - 6312. Regular Attendance
 - 6313. Access to School Buildings
 - 6314. Early Dismissal
 - 6320. Class
 - 6321. Regular Attendance
 - 6322. Non-Attendance
 - 6330. Student Accounting Records
 - 6340. Census
 - 6350. Student Retention in School (Dropout Prevention)
- 10/9/07 6400. Behavior and Discipline
 - 4/12/06 6410. Student Handbook
 - 6411. Bicycle Helmet Usage
 - 6420. Dress and Grooming
 - 6430. Prohibitions
 - 3/9/20 6431. Tobacco (see Policy 5241.5)
 - 6431.1 Tobacco Products on School Premises Prohibited

6000. PUPIL SERVICES (Continued)

- 6432. Drug Abuse -- merged with P6433 12/09/96
- 6433.
 - 3/9/20 6433.1 Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use by Students Prohibited
- 8/29/00 6434. Sexual Harassment
- 10/9/07 6435. Weapons
- 10/9/07 6436. Appreciation of Diversity
- 2/28/11 6437 Promoting Civil Rights and Prohibiting Harassment, Discrimination and Hate Crimes
- 9/12/16 6438 Anti-Bullying
- 6450. Student Fines and Charges
- 6500. Activities
 - 6510. Social Life
 - 4/11/05 6515 Student Publications
 - 6520. School Photographs
 - 6530. Display of Student Work
 - 4/30/12 6531. Student Internet Access
 - 3/16/15 6531.1 Social Media
 - 11/24/14 6531.2 BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)
 - 3/16/15 6532 Videotaping and Photographing of District Students
 - 4/24/06 6540. Fundraising by Students
 - 6541. For District Activities
 - 6542. For Non-District Activities
 - 6550. Class Gifts to Schools
 - 6560. Parking -- merged with P6561 7/15/96
 - 7/15/96 6561. Driving and Parking
 - 4/11/05 6562. Alternate Student Transportation (was P7250)
 - 6570. Activism
 - 6580. Part-Time Employment
 - 6581. During School Hours
 - 6582. Outside of School Hours
 - 4/7/14 6590. Athletic Participation and Other Extracurricular Participation
- 6600. Welfare
 - 9/26/94 6610. Health
 - 3/16/15 6611. Student Immunizations
 - 6612. Illness
 - 6612.1. Communicable Disease Control
 - 6612.2. Control of AIDS
 - 9/14/20 6612.3 Face Coverings
 - 6613. Accidents

6000. PUPIL SERVICES (Continued)

4/11/05	6613.1. Eye Protection
3/12/18	6613.2. Athletic Head Injury and Concussion Policy
7/20/98	6614. Child Abuse/Neglect
	6615. Examinations and Inoculations
4/11/05	6616. Insurance
1/8/07	6617. Administration of Medication
3/12/18	6618. Nutrition and Wellness Policy
8/10/15	6619. Life Threatening Allergies
	6620. Safety
10/22/07	6621. Transportation Safety and Security Procedures
	6630. Civil and Legal Rights
1/22/19	6631. Non-discrimination
	6632. Freedom of Speech
	6633. Search and Seizure
	6634. Questioning and Arrest
	6635. Education
	6636. Pledge of Allegiance
12/13/11	6637. Animals in Schools
	6640. Guardianship
4/11/05	6650. Confidentiality
	6700. Progress
	6710. Course Load
	6720. Grading
	6730. Student Promotion
	6740. Kindergarten Retention
	6750. Acceleration
5/15/02	6760. Recognition of Outstanding Achievement
	6800. Exit
	6810. Graduation
	6811. Requirements
3/25/03	6812. Diplomas for Veterans
5/15/02	6813. Scholarships
	6820. Withdrawal
	6900. Records and Reporting
3/8/10	6910. Student Records
	6911. Access
	6920. Reporting to Parents
	6921. Formal
	6921.1. Report Cards

6000. PUPIL SERVICES (Continued)

5/28/96	6921.2. Parent-Teacher Conferences
	6922. Informal
	6930. Transcripts
	6940. Adult
12/10/18	6950. School-Parent/Guardian Relations

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

LEGAL AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Monday, May 4, 2020
7:00 PM

Meeting conducted remotely, using Google Meet

Minutes

Subcommittee Members: Scott Brown, Chair, Matthew Lavoie, Vice-chair, Robert Imber, Amy Michalowski

Administration: Darryll McCall, Superintendent
Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources

Others: Naomi Stonberg, District Counsel
Christopher LaBreck, Principal, Chocksett Middle School
Jennifer Lee, WREA

I. Call to Order

Subcommittee Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 7:12 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the January 28, 2020 meeting of the Legal Affairs Subcommittee.

(R. Imber)
(A. Michalowski)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Scott Brown
Robert Imber
Amy Michalowski

Opposed:

Matthew Lavoie

The minutes were approved 3-1.

III. Negotiation Schedule

General discussion regarding the schedule for negotiations took place. Subcommittee Chair Brown announced the review of a MOA with the paraprofessionals will be moved to executive session.

IV. Next meeting

TBD

- V. Executive Session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with three bargaining units (SEIU Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants, Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals), Wachusett Administrators’ Association), as the Chair deems a discussion in public session would have an adverse effect on the District’s bargaining position, not to reconvene in public session

The motion to enter executive session was amended to include “review of all bargaining unit contracts” to the purpose of the executive session.

Motion: To enter executive session to review all bargaining unit contracts and to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with three bargaining units (SEIU Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants, Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals), Wachusett Administrators’ Association), as the Chair deems a discussion in public session would have an adverse effect on the District’s bargaining position, not to reconvene in public session

(R. Imber)
(A. Michalowski)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Scott Brown
Robert Imber
Amy Michalowski

Opposed:

Matthew Lavoie

The motion was approved 3-1.

The subcommittee entered executive session at 7:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Carlson
Director of Human Resources
JC:rlp

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND ANTI-RACISM SUBCOMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 8, 2020
7:00 PM

Minutes

MEETING CONDUCTED REMOTELY, VIA GOOGLE MEET

In Attendance: Asima Silva, Chair, L. Woodland, Vice-chair, N. Amos, M. Ayala, K. Bennett, J. Haynes, L. Long-Bellil

Absent: S. Brown, M. Gustafson, L. Kirshenbaum

Administration: Brendan Keenan, Director of Social Emotional Learning

Others: Student Representative Kathryn Mangus
Carolyn Beaumier, WREA
Chris LaBreck, Principal, Chocksett Middle School

I. Call to Order

Subcommittee Chair Silva called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the August 3, 2020 meeting of the Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee

(L. Woodland)
(J. Haynes)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Asima Silva
Linda Woodland
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Jeffrey Haynes
Linda Long-Bellil

Opposed:

None

The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Comments Submitted by Members of the Student Body

Prior to the meeting, members were provided with a statement by WRHS student Isabella LeBlanc. A new version of this document was shared with Subcommittee Chair Silva by Student Representative Mangus shortly before the meeting, and this new document was read aloud. Discussion ensued regarding the student testimonials. Concern was raised by Vice-chair Woodland about students describing administration witnessing events happening and not intervening. There was a call for training of administrators to be able to recognize discriminatory behavior and respond appropriately.

School Committee Chair Weeks wants to have certain students present at a full School Committee meeting, and she spoke about curriculum K-12 education includes anti-racist, multicultural texts. She hopes to have more input from students about their experiences with racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.

Subcommittee Chair Silva requested an overview of the bullying reporting procedure, curriculum audit in all grade levels specifically related to multicultural education, if it exists in our curriculum.

School Committee Chair Weeks requested information about discipline referrals by ethnicity.

A student slideshow shared with the subcommittee about the Mountaineer mascot was projected and discussed. Discussion ensued, including the suggestion about art students to come up with a new mascot for the high school. It was noted that this topic, the high school mascot, was raised and considered a few years ago, and that the community did not want the mascot to be changed.

Motion: That the Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee will meet bi-weekly during the school year.

(K. Bennett)

Motion died due to lack of a second.

Motion: That the Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Subcommittee will meet in two weeks (September 22, 2020), and will discuss the schedule for subcommittee meetings moving forward.

(L. Woodland)

(N. Amos)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Asima Silva
L. Long-Bellil
Linda Woodland
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Jeffrey Haynes

Linda Long-Bellil

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. Prioritize Next Steps for the Subcommittee

Deferred.

V. Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 7:00 PM, via Google Meet.

VI. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(J. Haynes)
(L. Woodland)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Asima Silva
Linda Woodland
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Jeffrey Haynes
Linda Long-Bellil

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brendan Keenan
Director of SEL

BK:rlp

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

SUPERINTENDENT GOALS AND EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE

MINUTES

Monday, June 22, 2020
7:00 PM

Meeting conducted remotely, using Google Meet

In Attendance: Matthew Lavoie, Chair, Amy Michalowski, Vice-chair, Kenneth Mills, Megan Weeks

Others: Mary Shepherd, WREA

I. Call to Order

Subcommittee Chair Lavoie called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.
Subcommittee Chair Lavoie announced the meeting would be recorded and posted on the District website.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the June 3, 2020 meeting of the Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee.)

(K. Mills)

(A. Michalowski)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Matthew Lavoie
Amy Michalowski
Kenneth Mills

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Megan Weeks

The minutes were approved 3-0-1.

III. Review of WRSDC Member Feedback/Input – Superintendent’s Annual Evaluation

Subcommittee Chair Lavoie thanked everyone for their hard work and ability to collaborate effectively.

Discussion of process through the year:

Many School Committee members commented in the online evaluation tool that the provided materials did not address the Indicators as well as they should. It was agreed that we must work with the Superintendent to ensure alignment.

Discussion ensued on mechanisms of how to improve the narrative; perhaps show some exemplars from other Superintendents (if available) of what we are looking for in the Superintendent’s narrative, perhaps using a checklist that outlines the evidence we need in order to fully complete the evaluation. The committee also wants the Superintendent to include a section within the Superintendent’s report that outlines the progress towards goals.

IV. Development/Review of Draft Composite Evaluation

School Committee Chair Mills shared the draft composite with the subcommittee. Discussion ensued regarding areas of focus for the final report.

V. Next Meeting

The subcommittee will meet next on June 22, 2020, 7:00 PM, likely a virtual meeting via Google Meet.

VI. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(A. Michalowski)
(K. Mills)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Matthew Lavoie
Amy Michalowski
Kenneth Mills
Megan Weeks

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Weeks
Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee
MW:rlp

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

MINUTES

Management Subcommittee

Tuesday, May 12, 2020
7:00 PM

Meeting to be conducted remotely, using Google Meet

In Attendance: Kenneth Mills, Chair, Christina Smith, Vice-chair, Scott Brown,
Michael Dennis, Robert Imber, Matthew Lavoie, Adam Young

Administration: Darryll McCall, Superintendent of Schools

Others: Heidi Lahey, WREA

I. Call to Order

Chair Mills called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

II. Motion: To approve the minutes of the March 10, 2020 meeting.

(S. Brown)

(A. Young)

The minutes were approved by consensus, with Members Dennis and Imber abstaining.

III. Subcommittee Reports

Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Dennis reported that the next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 20, 2020. Superintendent McCall said that for this meeting he plans to bring options to the subcommittee. Chair Mills asked for “granularity” to these plans. Chair Mills shared that he spoke with Attorney Stonberg about deadlines for letting the towns know about the budgets.

Legal Affairs Subcommittee Chair Brown reported bargaining sessions with two of the unions (ABA PAs and Paraprofessionals) are scheduled.

Education Subcommittee Chair Imber reported this subcommittee will be meeting on May 26, 2020 and there will be discussions of remote learning, the class size policy, and looking at the District indicators for quality.

Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee Chair Lavoie reported that on June 8, 2020, at the regular School Committee meeting, the

subcommittee will bring before the full School Committee information about and have a presentation on the Superintendent's evaluation tool. At the full School Committee meeting on June 30, 2020, the evaluation composite narrative will be reviewed and action by the full Committee on accepting the Superintendent's 2019-2020 evaluation will be on the agenda.

Facilities and Security Subcommittee Chair Young spoke about the need to create a timeline and look at what needs to be concentrated on in preparation for the opening of the school year. He also mentioned this subcommittee will be reviewing some older policies that need updating.

Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Negotiate the Superintendent's Contract Chair Mills reported there is a need for a discussion by the full Committee about the Superintendent's job description.

IV. COVID-19/School Closures – next steps and plans for 2020-2021 school year

There was general discussion about planning for the future. The Superintendent shared that the District is working on what they might have in place to get the school year closed out (i.e. students retrieving their belongings).

Superintendent McCall reported there is a task force set up to look at the social emotional needs of students and families, as well as what needs to be done to open schools. Representation on this task force includes faculty, parents, school nurses, School Committee, administrative staff, high school students. This task force will help guide the planning. There is a strong desire/expectation to have contingency plans to address various scenarios.

Member Dennis asked what support would be in place for Director Keenan as the head of the task group. Superintendent McCall stated that he and other administrators would be available.

There was general discussion about possible hybrid models and scenarios when thinking about schools reopening. Members expressed concern that the safety and well-being of our school community be at the forefront.

V. Student Opportunity Act (SOA)

The Superintendent stated that DESE Commissioner Riley has informed superintendents to hold off on submitting information related to SOA at this time.

VI. Advocacy Updates

Chair Mills shared an advocacy document for a resolution/statement about additional stimulus funding. Member Imber volunteered to assist Chair Mills in writing one specific to Wachusett. WREA President Lahey offered to share some language with Chair Mills.

VII. Old Business

- Diversity Issues in District
- District Indicators
- Celebrating Academic Excellence (in addition to recognition of athletic achievements)
- Holden Pupil Population Task Force
- Policy 4713.1 *Audit Advisory Board*
- Draft Policy 5263.2 **Policy Relating to Personnel Management Stipend Positions**
- (Re)Numbering of WRSDC Policies

Deferred.

VIII. New Business

There was no new business brought before the subcommittee.

- IX. Executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining units (SEIU Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants, Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals), Wachusett Administrators' Association), as the Chair declares that discussion in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee, not to return to open session.

Motion: To adjourn to executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining units (SEIU Local 888 – ABA Program Assistants, Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals), Wachusett Administrators' Association), as the Chair declares that discussion in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee, not to return to open session.

(R. Imber)
(S. Brown)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Scott Brown
Michael Dennis
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

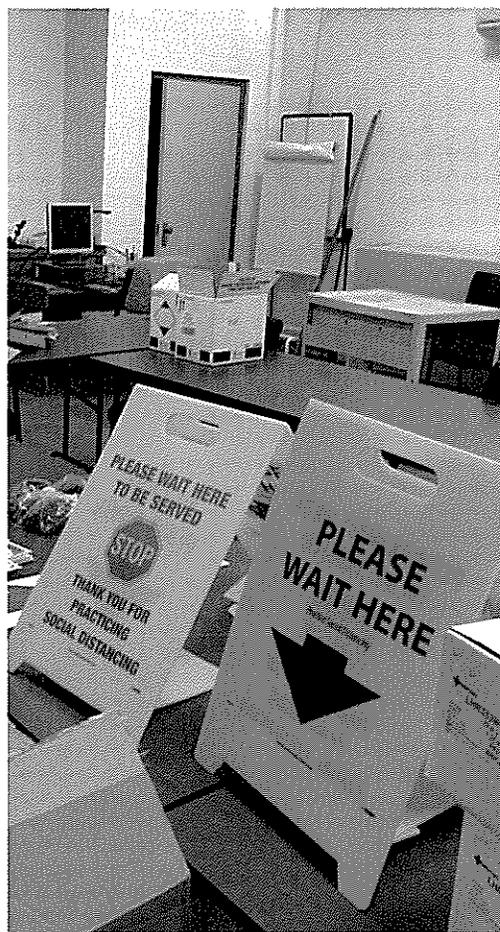
The subcommittee adjourned to executive session at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Smith, Vice-chair
Management Subcommittee
CS:rlp

Signage

The district has received most of the signage we need for reopening. The pictures below show the staging of signs. These will go out to all schools next week (week of Sept. 28th). Some of the signs will be posted on the outside of buildings and notify all of the need to wear masks prior to entry. Some signs are meant for bathrooms and show proper handwashing technique among other things. Other signs denote where to wait or stand so social distancing can be practiced. Still other signs are meant for the main office or for the nurse's office. These signs will be installed next week.



Feeding of Students

With a variety of times when students will be in our buildings beginning October 5th, and with only a few of our cafeterias actually up and running, developing a workable plan for providing students with breakfast and lunch proved to be quite an involved process. The good news is that we have a plan in place for October 5th, and are finalizing our plan for feeding the increased number of students beginning October 26th. The packaging needed to support grab and go lunches and breakfasts is being purchased, and funds from our School Reopening Grant will be used to help offset this cost. A final note is that all cafeterias will need to be reopened prior to the full reopening of schools on November 18th, and plans for this have already been formulated.

Training of Custodians

Custodians have already been trained on the proper use of all cleaning and sanitizing products that we will be using this year. The school nurses will be training the custodians next week on how to properly and safely put on and take off protective gowns, masks, face shields and gloves, as well as how to dispose of any contaminated PPE. This training is scheduled for next week. In addition, custodians will

be trained on cleaning expectations for the Medical Waiting Room, the location where students who exhibit any COVID-like symptoms will be kept until a parent or guardian can pick up the student.

Medical Waiting Room Monitor Training

Principals, Assistant Principals, and other staff who will be monitoring the Medical Waiting Room will be trained next week by our nursing staff on how to safely put on and take off protective gowns, gloves, face masks, and face shields before and after entering the Medical Waiting Room. Proper waste containers, labelled disposal bags, and air purifiers will be installed in these rooms next week as well.

Training on COVID-19

All staff have been trained on the dangers of the virus, safe practices, and identifying the symptoms.



Wachusett Regional School District

Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

From: Christine J. Smith, Administrator of Special Education

To: Darryll McCall, Superintendent of Schools

Date: September 23, 2020

Getting ready for in-person learning to begin on October 5th, 2020

As stated in the Re-Opening plan for WRSD, the District has made plans to re-open the buildings for in-person learning for a small group of students on October 5th. Today, we have officially notified the staff and teachers of the highest needs students that they are expected to return to the buildings on Oct. 5th pending a favorable report regarding our HVAC systems. A second communication will be sent to families and staff to confirm or delay our opening on Oct. 1st. We are excited about having our students back in person and have been making many changes to the routines and in our buildings in order to ensure that the safety and wellness of our students and staff are maintained as the highest priority.

PPE- Students (grade 2 and above) are expected to wear masks at all times. Students who are unable to do this will begin a program to increase the student's tolerance for wearing a mask. Staff will wear a mask at all times while in the buildings. Additionally, staff may wear a face shield or other PPE if they are unable to consistently maintain at least 3-6 feet of social distancing. All of this PPE has been distributed to the school buildings, and a replacement/restocking plan has been developed.

Classroom Arrangement- We are able to accommodate all of our highest-needs students in our classrooms. We have had to make changes to the number of small group sessions and impose more 1:1 teaching in order to ensure that we are maintaining social distancing requirements between peers and adults.

Transportation- As you might imagine, transporting our students poses a challenge as the Guidance from DESE regarding the social distancing on school vans limits the numbers of students per vehicle. On vans that had carried up to 8 students in the past, now, following the DESE Guidance, are only able to transport four students. We are in ongoing communication with our busing vendors as we finalize the routes and determine the start and end times for our program students who will be returning for shortened days on October 5th. Our goal remains to extend the students to full days as soon as possible.

Lunches- WRSD will be serving food to students at five locations. Our high needs students will be primarily located in these sites or other provisions will be made to ensure that all children who need access to food have been served. Some students in Rutland will take home a few days of lunches at one time via the school van. These students will then be able to pack their lunches from home for their daily lunch until all of the school cafeterias open.

Curriculum- The remote learning model is a challenging way to educate our neediest or even some of our moderate students with special needs. Our teachers continue to have high expectations for all students to not only recover the skills that may have been lost during the closure, but to begin with new content and new learning opportunities. We want to see our students successfully master this year of the new normal. All of the students in special education should have a Parent Engagement/Special Education Learning Plan that delineates how the students' specialized services will be provided during this time if they are different from what is described on the IEP.

Meetings and Testing- We are moving forward with in-person and remote meetings and testing where and when appropriate. All decisions regarding testing and meetings are made with the team chair and the students Team.