

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN □ PAXTON □ PRINCETON □ RUTLAND □ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1353

Tuesday, October 13, 2020
7:00 PM

MEETING CONDUCTED REMOTELY, VIA GOOGLE MEET

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Megan Weeks, Chair	Kenneth Mills (7:45 PM)
Melissa Ayala	Benjamin Mitchel
Krista Bennett	Karl Ottmar
Scott Brown	Deidre Shapiro
Maleah Gustafson	Asima Silva
Sherrie Haber	Christina Smith
Laura Kirshenbaum	Kelly Williamson
Matthew Lavoie	Linda Woodland
Linda Long-Bellil	Adam Young

Committee Members Absent:

Michael Dennis, Vice-chair	Robert Imber
Nicole Amos	

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 7:05 PM. Chair Weeks announced the meeting was being conducted remotely, via Google Meet, and was being broadcast live on Channel 194 and holdentv.com. 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.

I. Public Hearing

Chair Weeks read aloud a public comment submitted electronically.

Mary Lampron-Shepherd, WREA President (attachment 1)

II. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Weeks asked members to turn on their cameras if able, and she also noted that two minutes per member per topic will be adhered to.

Chair Weeks requested that District administration keep the lines of communication open and is hoping information from the Central Office will be forthcoming on a more regular basis.

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

Student Representative Mangus reported high school sports are underway, some students have returned to the buildings, SATs and PSATs exams are being administered, and a pumpkin decorating event is underway.

Student Representative Gomi had questions about mandatory flu shots and he asked when and where required paperwork will be turned in. He asked if all students, remote and/or hybrid, will be required to have a flu shot, which was confirmed.

IV. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent McCall reported that almost 200 students returned to schools on October 5th, and he further reported that more students will be transitioning back to in-person in the next couple of weeks.

Superintendent McCall reported on recent negotiations/meetings with the WREA.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Member Williamson asked if Director Keenan had background/information on why families chose to homeschool this school year. Director Keenan explained that new, and some veteran, homeschool families have taken advantage of the opportunity to receive District information/SchoolMessengers in order to be kept informed on happenings in the District, which they seem to appreciate.

Member Woodland asked when additional students will be returning in-person at ECC, which Administrator Smith reported that would be October 26, 2020. She also asked when parents are required to inform the District about the need for transportation, which Superintendent McCall explained that deadline is the same as the deadline to choose between hybrid and remote, which is October 23, 2020. Superintendent McCall took the opportunity speak about how remote is working at the different levels, elementary/middle school/high school.

Member Ayala asked if Superintendent McCall could provide an update on talks he has had with educational consultants. Superintendent McCall explained he has had good conversations with individuals/firms and he is hoping to be able to bring his recommendations to the Committee by the end of the week.

Member Brown reported on negotiations with WREA members about a hybrid MOA.

Member Gustafson had a follow-up question about the educational consultant and a timeline. Superintendent McCall confirmed he will update the Committee about this matter by the end of this week. Superintendent McCall explained the details that need to be addressed when bringing on such a position/consultant, and that doing so can take some time. Administrator of Special Education Smith answered some of Member Gustafson's questions about the various phases for bringing special education students back into the buildings. Director Keenan spoke about October 1 numbers and student enrollment numbers, explaining the accurate gathering of this information, especially where students attend, can take some time, but should be available sometime the end of October.

Member Lavoie voiced his confusion and concern about October 1 numbers and Director Keenan's explanation about enrollment, and he also asked about the lack of a response to his earlier request for information about students who are attending private schools, are being homeschooled, are school choosing out of the District.

7:45 PM Member Mills joined the meeting.

Chair Weeks requested of Superintendent McCall the sharing of enrollment/October 1 numbers by the October 15th deadline.

Member Haber reported the WRSD Reopening Task Force is reconvening, with a meeting scheduled for October 14, 2020. Member Haber expressed her dismay that information about the meeting topics/meeting agenda had not been shared. Director Keenan explained that the meeting information was included in the Google Meet invitation.

Member Kirshenbaum asked if the District has the resources and personnel to address transitioning to hybrid on November 18th, and when information will be available. Member Kirshenbaum also has questions about enrollment and students who were unenrolled, due to homeschooling, attending a private school, or school choosing to another District, for this school year. She would appreciate information about students who are now attending private schools and if families intend for this to be long-term, or will these students be returning to Wachusett schools following the pandemic.

Supervisor of Information Service Sclar explained how October 1 numbers are submitted to the state, which is now done electronically. Certification is on the state, and October 29, 2020 is the final deadline.

Member Kirshenbaum asked the Superintendent what the School Committee can do to help advocate for assistance from the state, when it comes to declining enrollment due to COVID-19. Superintendent McCall reported on a conference call with the state which he participated in on October 9, 2020. Superintendent McCall agreed a letter to the state from the School Committee could be beneficial.

Member Lavoie was disappointed in the lack of information included in the October 9, 2020 Superintendent's Report about Superintendent McCall's talks with educational consulting firms/individuals. Member Lavoie asked if the vote of the School Committee about an educational consultant was shared with these individuals, which Superintendent McCall confirmed. Member Lavoie requested that the chart with enrollment numbers that was in past Superintendent Reports be included in upcoming Reports with updated data. Member Lavoie re-voiced his request for information about professional development to be offered on Wednesday afternoons.

Chair Weeks is compiling members' requests for information and she asked that members forward these requests to her by October 16, 2020, and she will forward to the Superintendent one document listing the requests from the members.

Member Long-Bellil asked for a report on how students, especially elementary students, are dealing with remote teaching/learning. Both Superintendent McCall and Deputy Superintendent Berlo spoke to her questions.

8:13 PM Member Smith left the meeting

Member Mills has major concerns about the lack of information parents might be provided in the next weeks as the deadline for parents to make the decision between remote v hybrid approaches. He strongly encouraged both the Committee and District administration to be available to answer parent questions about this transition. Superintendent McCall agreed with Member Mills about giving parents the opportunity to get feedback about and answers to their questions and concerns, and he mentioned scheduling such during the week of October 19, 2020.

Member Ottmar expressed his concern about enrollment numbers and the financial impact.

Member Shapiro asked about transportation and the option for students to be picked up and dropped off at locations other than their homes. Superintendent McCall explained the limited number of available seats on the buses and due to the need to social distance on the buses, student pick up and drop off locations will not have the flexibility as in the past.

Member Silva asked for specific details about what information will be offered to and provided to parents to assist with making their decision about remote v

hybrid. Member Silva also asked about switching between hybrid and remote, if circumstances change after the start of hybrid on November 18, 2020.

8:29 PM Member Lavoie left the meeting.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Motion: To accept the FY19 Annual Financial Statements, FY19 Audited End of the Year Report (EOYR), FY19 Single Audit, and FY19 Student Activities Audit as well as the Management Letter prepared by District Auditors Melanson CPAs for fiscal year ended June 30, 2019.

(S. Brown)

(S. Haber)

At Chair Weeks' invitation, Director Deedy reported the Audit Advisory Board and the Business/Finance Subcommittee had been provided with the FY19 audit for review. Director Deedy gave a brief overview of the FY19 audit. AAB Chair Mitchel agreed with Director Deedy's report. Business/Finance Subcommittee Vice-chair Mills spoke about that subcommittee's overview of the audit documents. Issues with Student Activities have been raised by the auditors, and will be addressed by the Business Office.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Weeks read aloud for the record, as well as projecting the language on the screen for members to view, the following motion:

Motion: To approve the Sale of the District's \$4,145,000 General Obligation State Qualified Refunding Bonds, and the execution of related closing documents prepared by Bond Counsel to the District.

Voted: That in order to reduce interest costs, the District Treasurer is authorized to issue refunding bonds, at one time or from time to time, pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 21A of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority, to refund a portion of the District's (i) \$6,100,000 General Obligation School Bonds, Unlimited Tax dated August 21, 2008 maturing in the years 2021 through 2028 (inclusive), (ii) \$2,134,000 General Obligation Municipal Purpose Loan of 2009 Bonds dated October 15, 2009 maturing in the years 2021 through 2026 (inclusive), and (iii) \$3,094,000 General Obligation School Bonds dated January 27, 2011 maturing in the years 2022 through 2030 (inclusive) (collectively, the "Refunded Bonds") and that the proceeds of any refunding bonds issued pursuant to this vote shall be used to pay the principal, redemption premium and interest on the Refunded Bonds and costs of issuance of the refunding bonds.

Further Voted: that the sale of the \$4,145,000 General Obligation State Qualified Refunding Bonds of the District dated October 22, 2020 (the "Bonds"), to Roosevelt & Cross, Inc. at the price of \$4,720,524.70 is hereby approved and confirmed. The Bonds shall be payable on September 1 of the years and in the principal amounts and bear interest at the respective rates, as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>
2021	\$550,000	4.00%	2026	\$510,000	4.00%
2022	545,000	4.00	2027	410,000	4.00
2023	545,000	4.00	2028	410,000	4.00
2024	525,000	4.00	2029	135,000	4.00
2025	515,000	4.00			

Further Voted: that in connection with the marketing and sale of the Bonds, the preparation and distribution of a Notice of Sale and Preliminary Official Statement dated September 23, 2020, and a final Official Statement dated September 30, 2020 (the "Official Statement"), each in such form as may be approved by the District Treasurer, be and hereby are ratified, confirmed, approved and adopted.

Further Voted: to authorize the execution and delivery of a Refunding Escrow Agreement to be dated October 22, 2020, among the District, U.S. Bank National Association as Refunding Escrow Agent and the Treasurer and Receiver-General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as Paying Agent.

Further Voted: that the District Treasurer and the Chair of the Committee be, and hereby are, authorized to execute and deliver a continuing disclosure undertaking in compliance with SEC Rule 15c2-12 in such form as may be approved by bond

counsel to the District, which undertaking shall be incorporated by reference in the Bonds for the benefit of the holders of the Bonds from time to time.

Further Voted: that we authorize and direct the District Treasurer to establish post issuance federal tax compliance procedures in such form as the District Treasurer and bond counsel deem sufficient, or if such procedures are currently in place, to review and update said procedures, in order to monitor and maintain the tax-exempt status of the Bonds.

Further Voted: that any certificates or documents relating to the Bonds (collectively, the "Documents"), may be executed in several counterparts, each of which shall be regarded as an original and all of which shall constitute one and the same document; delivery of an executed counterpart of a signature page to a Document by electronic mail in a ".pdf" file or by other electronic transmission shall be as effective as delivery of a manually executed counterpart signature page to such Document; and electronic signatures on any of the Documents shall be deemed original signatures for the purposes of the Documents and all matters relating thereto, having the same legal effect as original signatures.

Further Voted: that each member of the Committee, the District Secretary and the District Treasurer be and hereby are, authorized to take any and all such actions, and execute and deliver such certificates, receipts or other documents as may be determined by them, or any of them, to be necessary or convenient to carry into effect the provisions of the foregoing votes.

(S. Brown)

(S. Haber)

Chair Weeks reported she had sat in on the meetings when this refinancing was discussed. Business/Finance Vice-chair Mills reported the Business/Finance Subcommittee discussed this refinancing at the October 5, 2020 meeting and are in support of this action. Director Deedy extended thanks to Treasurer Dunbar.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
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 Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on August 24, 2020

Deferred

- B. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on September 14, 2020

Deferred

- C. Approval of #326 Special Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District held on September 29, 2020

(A. Young)
(K. Mills)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The minutes were unanimously approved.

- D. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on September 29, 2020

Deferred

- E. Approval of #1352 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on September 29, 2020

(S. Haber)

(S. Brown)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Asima Silva
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Deidre Shapiro

The minutes were approved 15-0-1.

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 October 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)

In Subcommittee Chair Smith's absence, Vice-chair Long-Bellil reported the meeting this date was cancelled due to lack of quorum, and the subcommittee will meet next on November 9, 2020.

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

In Subcommittee Chair Dennis' absence, Vice-chair Mills reported on the October 5, 2020 meeting of this subcommittee, and reported the next meeting will be on October 26, 2020.

Motion: To approve the first reading of Amended Policy 4323.2 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bidding Requirements**, waiving the reading.

(B. Mitchel)

(S. Brown)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

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

Subcommittee Chair Brown reported on the September 30, 2020 meeting at which time District Counsel was discussed. Subcommittee Chair Brown explained that Attorney Stonberg will be retiring and the subcommittee will solicit interest from other legal firms to fill this void. He reported the intent of the subcommittee to recommend continuation of the appointments of Fletcher Tilton and Nuttall, MacAvoy & Joyce, P.C. as District Counsel.

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

Subcommittee Chair Mills reported this subcommittee met on October 7, 2020 and will meet next on October 28, 2020.

- F. Facilities and Security Subcommittee (A. Young, Chair, L. Woodland)

Subcommittee Chair Young reported this subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting. He reported that Member Lavoie has been appointed to this subcommittee, bringing membership to three.

Superintendent McCall reported the final report of HVAC evaluations should be completed by the end of October.

- 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 October 8, 2020 meeting of this subcommittee, and that the subcommittee will meet next on October 29, 2020.

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

AAB Vice-chair Mitchel reported the AAB has not met since the last School Committee meeting. He expects to schedule a meeting of the AAB in November.

- 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 – SEPAC Recently elected Co-chairs - Rachel Bullock, Melissa Martin, Tammy Tod

IX. Public Hearing

Ryan Zamagi (attachment 2)

Kristina Naiman (attachment 3)

Erin Ottmar, Paxton resident (attachment 4)

X. New Business

Member Mills reminded that the Regional Agreement is due for review.

Member Gustafson asked if District administration needs anything from the Committee to meet the October 16, 2020 deadline for comments about MLC and Chapter 70. Superintendent McCall will provide a template to School Committee members who might be interested and willing to contact local legislators. Member Long-Bellil asked that this template be shared with members by Thursday morning, October 15th.

Member Young asked that a document of some form be developed to track requests for information.

XI. Executive Session

The full Committee did not adjourn to executive session.

XII. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(L. Long-Bellil)
(L. Woodland)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil

Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Public comment by WREA President Mary Lampron-Shepherd
- Attachment 2 – Public comment by Ryan Zagami
- Attachment 3 – Public comment by Kristina Naiman
- Attachment 4 – Public comment by Erin Ottmar



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Public Comments

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 7:18 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: **President WREA** <presidentwrea@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 6:38 PM

Subject: Public Comments

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Good Evening, my name is Mary Shepherd, president of the Wachusett Regional Education Association, 1320 Wachusett Street, Jefferson. Teachers want to be heard, students want to be heard, administrators want to be heard, and school committee members want to be heard, but no one is listening. In education leadership classes I learned to enter a leadership role observing. In this pandemic environment I hit the ground running, with time just to extinguish fires. Making the time to step back and observe from my new role has opened my eyes wider, letting me connect my observations with prior knowledge.

When I started in public education as an ESP just over a decade ago, one afternoon faculty meeting still resonates with me. The new superintendent was sharing with her staff how to reach a common goal. She showed two pictures, each picture had the goal represented by a dot at the top center of the page. Below the dot, were more dots representing the individuals who would carry out the goal. In the first picture the dots were scattered, there was no clear direction, like kids on a

playground. In the second picture the dots were moving towards the direction of the goal, like students on their way to lunch from different hallways. We as educators would be remiss if we didn't have a method to get our students to the objective, however our administration has neglected to provide a clear objective to teachers, nor the path to get there, and no one is listening.

Two summers ago, I experienced a life altering diversity lesson for professional development in ELL. In this workshop, I learned about individual centered cultures and community centered cultures. We live in an individual centered culture, we are asked from a young age what are YOU going to be when you grow up, how are YOU going to make a difference in this world. Never how are WE going to make a difference. We perform parallel responsibilities in our day to day lives with many in our community never intersecting, never learning about each other, because no one is listening.

Taking this new knowledge, we see it here in school committee meetings. Meeting after meeting with the individual centered culture views, the school committee members get stuck. Some say it's a personal agenda of individual members, but I think like systemic racism, individualist centered culture is systemic. It pits us against one another and we lose sight of moving forward towards the betterment of our community. Each member speaks their part, but others may be rarely listening, or they are listening to respond, VERSUS listening to UNDERSTAND, in reality no one is listening.

With individual centered culture thinking comes a lot of anger, "It's my way or the highway!" attitude. The anger in our school district is years deep. Anger is like a hot coal, you carry this burning feeling with you everywhere you go. In mindfulness training, anger is just the tip of the iceberg. Under the water are the true feelings of shame, embarrassment, and hurt. We the educators are feeling this shame and embarrassment, yet we cover it well with smiles since the success of our students is

paramount. Always putting off our personal needs to care for our own stress, because the fact is no one is listening.

Let me reiterate here, my vision of sharing more kindness for a better community. As I develop and deepen the vision of kindness, I realize educator morale must be the priority. Educators are on the frontlines for the sole purpose of a better community. Each educator has a symbiotic relationship with their students. Their students have a symbiotic relationship with their parents/guardians. Their parents/guardians have a symbiotic relationship with our elected school committee members. School committee members have a symbiotic relationship with our superintendent. Our superintendent through the principals have a symbiotic relationship with us educators. It is a circle, a large circle representing all of us! When one link is weak we all feel it, as educators on the front lines we know and listen to our students, we are the first to go above and beyond. We share our ideas with administration, but no one is listening.

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: comment 10/13

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 8:14 AM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

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

From: **Hinson, Ryan** <rhinson@worcester.edu>
Date: Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 8:14 PM
Subject: comment 10/13
To: <questions@wrsd.net>

My name is Ryan Zagami and I am teacher, parent, resident, and alum of the Wachusett District. I am sitting here for the 8th month in a row, haven't missed a meeting, wondering how how how are we here. I was one of the teachers who was part of the 10/6 meeting last week and while the one hour of talking and sharing was helpful, there has been no follow up with us (from Central Office or my building) about the direction the district is planning to take the next phase of the hybrid model into. It was an hour long meeting of sharing in small groups, then sharing out to that small group. Fast forward a week: Principals are sending information out to families about possible hybrid models coming up. We are already in a hybrid model and trying to make this up as we go is dangerous.

Please please please get teachers information about hybrid scheduling. There are teachers and students who are hybrid right now and the remote students are having a very different experience than those in the classroom because teachers are not being supported in how to give the attention needed to both the in person and remote students. Has anyone reached out to the families who are in hybrid now to know what is working and what is not? There needs to be time in teacher schedules day to check in with remote students EVERYDAY.

I am happy to have anyone from administration to come observe my remote lessons, it is hard work. From taking attendance to the follow up after the independent work completion piece. How can the plan be to have teachers do both a hybrid model of teaching and have a remote cohort with the schedule we are currently using (being live 6 times a day, no time discussed built in for remote only check in)?

Thank you to School Committee for asking the questions about future impact (home schooling, etc.) and asking for deadlines, updated Q and A for parents/teachers, etc. I'll end with teachers need some direction NOW, especially those already back in the building working with our neediest populations. Please talk to the teachers.

Thank you.

--

Mrs. Ryan Zagami

rhinson@worchester.edu

"Treat others as you would like to be treated"

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Public comment

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 8:14 AM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

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

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

Date: Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 8:31 PM

Subject: Public comment

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

As a teacher, parent of two first graders, and a community member, I urge the administration to provide a hybrid plan where students keep their same teachers (whether they go hybrid or stay remote).

It takes 6-8 weeks to get to know young students' academic needs, social/emotional needs, and learning styles. Restarting this process come November 18th is a detriment to student learning, growth potential, and social/emotional health. Switching teachers may stifle the robust curriculum and learning til upwards of January for many students. Students can not afford this loss.

Given the many changes that ARE unavoidable, this is one item, keeping the same teacher whether staying remote or going hybrid, has the ability to REMAIN constant for students- provided the hybrid plan is well thought out.

Thank you,
Kristina Naiman



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: statement- Erin Ottmar 232 West Street

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 8:14 AM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

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

From: **Erin Ottmar** <erin.ottmar@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Oct 13, 2020 at 8:57 PM

Subject: statement- Erin Ottmar 232 West Street

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Thank you all for your time and helping to work through so many of these complicated issues.

I have two children at Paxton Center (K and 2nd grad) and their teachers have been beyond wonderful and have done so much to ensure that remote learning is working as well as it can. While we wish that these were normal times and all students could safely return to school, we have been thrilled with how well our children and their teachers have been working together. Thank you to all the teachers who are working so hard to make this work.

While more information about hybrid will be provided later this week, my concerns surround the lack of discussions about two issues: the wellbeing of the teachers and discussions about what fully remote will look like once hybrid begins. Due to risk in our family, our children will need to stay fully remote. While remote will be working well for many, it has not been clearly discussed that remote instruction will look extremely different to what it is now once hybrid begins on Nov 18. While it is our preference to have our children remain with their wonderful teachers, I have a few concerns about what this means for these K-5 children who chose fully remote and the health and wellbeing of their teachers. I understand that the administration is trying to keep fully remote students with their peers and teachers come Nov 18. As was described, if the teachers are working with the in classroom students, how will they possibly be able to provide small group instruction to the remote students? Will a full time paraprofessional or co-teacher be in each classroom to work with the in person students to allow teachers to work with remote students? If not, it is inevitable that once students go back to the classroom, the

amount of in person instruction, as well as remote instruction will drop significantly. Even if teachers spend divide the classroom into 3 groups (hybrid in person, hybrid remote, and fully remote) then each child will only get 1/3 of the teachers attention. If the students in person get the majority of the attention of the teachers, then students who are 100% will be significantly neglected, by no fault of their teacher. It appears that the full remote children would have only Wednesday mornings with their teachers and peers and the remainder of the days would be asynchronous. If that is the case, it is unclear whether the benefits of remaining with their same teacher and students would be worth the challenges of spending the remainder of the school year with no instruction or peer interaction. Many other districts who are doing hybrid, have fully remote students and in separate classes with fully remote teachers and their daily schedules look much like they do in Wachusett now. Will these children be provided with a second fully remote teacher and other peers in a consistent classroom for any time in the remaining 4 days? If not, how will the district ensure that the fully remote students will continue to get significant support from teachers? Our students and our teachers deserve a plan that maximizes the support for both hybrid and remote options. Teachers are working around the clock and doing all they can to support each student. Asking them to manage in person, hybrid remote, and hybrid without additional support is asking them to do the impossible. Without consistent support for fully remote students, more families will choose to homeschool or leave the district. I hope that as the plans for remote and hybrid this week are established, the administration will keep the wellbeing of the teachers and students and quality of instruction provided to childrens at the forefront, no matter what plan families choose. Thank you again for your efforts to ensure the safe return to school.

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