

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN □ PAXTON □ PRINCETON □ RUTLAND □ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1355

Monday, December 7, 2020
7:00 PM

MEETING CONDUCTED REMOTELY, VIA GOOGLE MEET

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Megan Weeks, Chair	Linda Long-Bellil (8:14 PM)
Michael Dennis, Vice-chair	Kenneth Mills
Melissa Ayala	Karl Ottmar
Krista Bennett	Michael Pantos, Jr.
Scott Brown	Deidre Shapiro
Maleah Gustafson (8:17 PM)	Asima Silva (7:03 PM)
Sherrie Haber	Christina Smith
Robert Imber	Jeffrey Sullivan
Laura Kirshenbaum	Kelly Williamson
Matthew Lavoie	Linda Woodland

Committee Members Absent:

Benjamin Mitchel	Adam Young
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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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Others:

Joseph Bartulis, District Counsel

Chair Weeks called the meeting to order at 7:01 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. Executive session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with bargaining unit (Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals)), to report on progress of negotiations with the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc. (WREA) on 2020-2021 school reopening, and to provide an update and to discuss potential litigation, as the Chair deems discussions in public session would have an adverse effect on the District's bargaining position, to return to public session.

Motion: To enter executive session to discuss strategy for contract negotiations with bargaining unit (Teamsters Union Local 170 (paraprofessionals)), to report on progress of negotiations with the Wachusett Regional Education Association, Inc. (WREA) on 2020-2021 school reopening, and to provide an update and to discuss potential litigation, as the Chair deems discussions in public session would have an adverse effect on the District's bargaining position, to return to public session.

(S. Brown)

(S. Haber)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Michael Pantos, Jr.
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Jeffrey Sullivan
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

The School Committee adjourned to executive session at 7:04 PM.

The School Committee reconvened at 8:15 PM.

- II. Public Hearing

Chair Weeks read aloud public comments submitted electronically.

Robert Remillard, Rutland resident (attachment 1)

Kristin Turner, Holden resident (attachment 2)

Mary Lampron-Shepherd, WREA President (attachment 3)

III. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Weeks welcomed new Rutland representatives, Michael Pantos, Jr., and Jeffrey Sullivan.

Chair Weeks spoke about the meeting agenda and items included on it.

Chair Weeks asked that for the next regular meeting, members send their requests for information/agenda items to her by the end of the day on December 18, 2020 and she will compile the requests in a single email which she will share with the Superintendent.

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

Student Representative Mangus complimented staff for their efforts since September. She spoke about a toy drive underway, that the Guidance Department is offering mindfulness clinics, there is extra help offered for students, high school announcements are being posted/published on the high school website and other social media. Lastly Student Representative Mangus spoke about a survey sent out to students about MCAS, which Chair Weeks asked if the results of the survey could be shared and presented at the next School Committee meeting. Student Representative Gomi also expressed his thanks to teachers for making remote teaching/learning successful. He also spoke about the survey Superintendent McCall sent to parents and that High School Principal Beando will send one something similar out to students.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent McCall welcomed Member Pantos and Member Sullivan to the Committee.

Superintendent McCall thanked the Student Representatives for their reports, and for the information they have shared with him.

Superintendent McCall read a prepared statement in response to the WREA statement read during Public Hearing (attachment 4).

Superintendent McCall introduced Educational Consultant Mary Meade-Montague, who presented to the Committee (attachment 5). Dr. Meade-

Montaque's presentation concluded at 9:20 PM and the floor was opened to questions/comments from members.

Member Imber asked for specifics needed to reopen the schools (i.e. technology, staff, etc.). Member Imber is looking for the when and how about reopening.

Member Haber is looking for a plan in place that is structured, and would like to see this information sooner than later, in advance of reopening in the hybrid model.

Member Gustafson asked if Superintendent McCall and Dr. Meade-Montaque could share with members a timeline for reopening and plans to implement. Member Gustafson requested more frequent updates from the Superintendent about plans to reopen.

Member Mills expressed concern that the schedules for middle and high school still seem to contain much asynchronous learning. Member Mills asked that the Committee be provided with operational plans for the reopening. Chair Weeks asked Member Mills to put his requests for information in an email to her for inclusion in a single email about requests for information.

Member Dennis asked the vision for instructing both in-person students and remote students. Dr. Meade-Montaque said there should not be one method to address the "I dos." Member Dennis also asked what might be anticipated that teachers will need for professional development in preparation for reopening.

9:54 PM Member Shapiro left the meeting.

Motion: To extend the meeting for 30 minutes, until 10:30 PM.

(K. Ottmar)
(L. Long-Bellil)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Michael Pantos, Jr.

Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Jeffrey Sullivan
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland

Opposed:
None

The motion passed unanimously.

Member Ayala raised a question about use of cameras, which Superintendent McCall spoke to, explaining that cameras and microphones have been ordered and are in the classrooms. Member Ayala also asked about student projects and other assignments, and Dr. Meade-Montaque explained.

Member Lavoie spoke about the negative SEL impact on children due to remote learning, citing Dr. Sandra Nelson and Dr. Lloyd Fisher, and he asked again for measureable data to determine the quality of education provided to date, while in remote. Dr. Meade-Montaque referenced the reports of the Student Representatives, who reported remote instruction has been successful, but she also acknowledged that remote teaching and learning is not beneficial for all students. Dr. Meade-Montaque agreed that meeting the needs of all students is vital.

Member Pantos spoke about students who need additional attention and instruction, for special needs students and others who require the additional services. Dr. Meade-Montaque agreed with the need to have these services in place.

Member Long-Bellil reinforced the point that teachers need to have the ability to see and integrate their remote students into the classrooms.

Member Gustafson followed up on the comments by Member Pantos, and she asked if either Dr. McCall or Dr. Meade-Montaque would be having a similar discussion/presentation with SEPAC, which is meeting on December 8, 2020. Superintendent McCall invited Administrator Smith to answer the question and request.

Student Representative Mangus had questions about student screen time and how a plan for reopening will move away from the amount of screen time. Dr. Meade-Montaque said that teachers would be encouraged to not have students online for the full school day, incorporating reading, projects, and independent lessons into the day.

Member Woodland spoke about special education students, who are not yet back in-person, who might opt to stay remote-only once hybrid is implemented but are not having their needs met, and in some cases these needs are being minimized by principals. Superintendent McCall thanked Member Woodland for raising these

points, and Administrator of Special Education Smith asked that parents be sure to reach out to school principals or building liaisons if they do not feel their child's needs are being met.

Member Williamson asked about hiring an individual to coordinate professional development. Superintendent McCall acknowledged this lack of support in the District and he agreed administration should look at developing a job description for such a position.

Member Haber will put in a formal request for a clear picture of the District budget and where the District stands, fiscally, at this point, and where the District will be on January 19, 2021.

Discussion of Dr. Meade-Montaque's presentation concluded.

Chair Weeks explained that on December 9, 2020, at a posted special meeting, the rest of the agenda will be addressed.

Member Lavoie asked if the two members of the public who were in attendance could have their agenda items moved ahead on the agenda for the special meeting on December 9, 2020, which Chair Weeks agreed to.

Chair Weeks asked if anyone would want to make a motion to extend the meeting. No motion to extend was made. Upon a motion and vote to adjourn, Chair weeks explained the remaining agenda items will be addressed at the meeting on December 9, 2020, 7:00 PM, via Google Meet.

- Discussion of metrics for reopening for hybrid learning
- Discussion of school plans for hybrid students with remote, and for fully remote students, and comprehensive return to school planning status
- Discussion regarding the state of education within the school district
- DESE audit risk and potential cost due to not being hybrid

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. Motion: Upon the recommendation of the Legal Affairs Subcommittee, the WRSDC accept the agreement between AA Transportation and the WRSD, as written.
2. To accept the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, Revised 12/1/2020
3. To support a Resolution – MCAS and High Stakes Testing
4. To support a Resolution – Reopening of Schools for In-Person Instruction

VI. Unfinished Business

VII. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District held on August 24, 2020
- B. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on September 14, 2020
- C. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on September 29, 2020
- D. Approval of #1353 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on October 13,
- E. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on November 9, 2020
- F. Approval of #1354 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on November 9, 2020
- G. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on November 17, 2020
- H. Approval of #327 Special Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on November 17, 2020

VIII. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

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

F. Facilities and Security Subcommittee (A. Young, Chair, K. Bennett, M. Pantos, L. Woodland)

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

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

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)

X. Public Hearing

XI. New Business

- Motion: To support the WRSD Covid-19 Community Volunteer Task Force of licensed medical personnel to work with the existing COVID re-opening task force on focused efforts including, but not limited to: 1) contact tracing with the local board of health resources and/or assisting the District as overflow resources; 2) supporting school nursing staff as substitutes or as administration sees the need; and 3) support existing and ongoing efforts in conjunction with the re-opening task force.
- Reopening WRSD for hybrid learning for grades K – 2 no later than December 14, 2020
- Public comment process by WRSDC and the use/purpose of questions@wrsd.net
- Use of straw polls by WRSDC

XII. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(R. Imber)
(L. Long-Bellil)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Michael Dennis
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Michael Pantos, Jr.
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Jeffrey Sullivan
Kelly Williamson

Opposed:

Megan Weeks
Maleah Gustafson
Matthew Lavoie
Kenenth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Linda Woodland

The motion passed 13-6.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Public comment by Robert Remillard
- Attachment 2 – Public comment by Kristin Turner
- Attachment 3 – Public comment by Mary Lampron-Shepherd
- Attachment 4 – Prepared statement by Superintendent McCall
- Attachment 5 – Presentation: Teaching and Learning Plan: WRSD Transition to Hybrid Planning



Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Tonight's Meeting

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 8:49 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

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

From: **Robert Remillard** <RRemillard@wcu.com>

Date: Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 12:20 PM

Subject: Tonight's Meeting

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

Cc: sherrie_haber@wrsd.net <sherrie_haber@wrsd.net>, matthew_lavoie@wrsd.net <matthew_lavoie@wrsd.net>, jeffrey_sullivan@wrsd.net <jeffrey_sullivan@wrsd.net>, michael_pantos@wrsd.net <michael_pantos@wrsd.net>, michael_dennis@wrsd.net <michael_dennis@wrsd.net>

Good afternoon Megan,

Below is my statement I would like read to the Public Hearing at tonight's meeting.

To the members of the Wachusett Regional School Committee, I write you again in the hope that you will come up with a solid plan to get our kids back into school as quickly as possible. I have thanked you all in the past for your work on this committee but I have to speak straight tonight and tell you very loud and very clear, you, along with this administration, is failing our students. Where do I even begin. The kids in this district have not been physically in the school since March 12th. When they left that day, there was no plan in place on how to educate the students for the remainder of the school year. None! There was scrambling, ideas made on the fly, frustrations from students, parents and teachers because of the lack of direction and most importantly, a failure to

educate our children in a way they deserve. This is not an opinion, this is a fact. There was no plan by administration, because, quite frankly, they never bothered to develop one in the case that any type of situation came along like the one we are presently in. In the private sector, we call this a Disaster Recovery Plan. You had nothing and scrambled to piece something together. And again, this is the education you think the students in the district deserve?

Fast forward to two days before Hybrid is going to begin for students who **wanted and needed** to get back into school. Actually, to be truthful, not even 48 hours before it was scheduled to start, you pull the plug. In less than 48 hours! Not all, and I want to make that clear, but not all committee members agreed with the decision. Some wanted to hear from the public, you know, the people you work for. I thank those individuals still today for wanting to do the right thing. For the majority, who seem to rubber stamp any and all that comes from administration, the message to all of us in the community was "we don't care what you think, want, or have to say, we are moving forward with what the administration has instructed us to do." The thing is, you do not work for the Superintendent, he works for you. Again, fact not opinion.

I have seen other districts get their students back in school. When the Covid numbers were lower in August and September this administration, this Superintendent, kept them home because having almost six months to plan their return, let's be honest, there was no plan. Nothing. All we got were excuses, plain and simple. The Superintendent is afraid to put a solid plan in place for students, faculty and staff and a leader who leads in fear for his job is no leader at all. For the first time in the 16 plus years I have lived in Rutland I walked away from your last meeting and the only word that came to mind was ashamed. I was ashamed of my district, something I thought would never be the case. I am also not one to throw around blame without taking some myself. I was on the School Committee for 5 years and I was a member who voted for the current Superintendent. I thought he would be a good leader, take this district to new levels and communicate well with students, parents and faculty. I was wrong and that's on me. You still have time to do the right thing. This is not over but the kids in this district need your help. Not tomorrow, or next week, or after Christmas break, now! Put a plan in place, stick with it and move forward. Give the faculty the support they need so we can move forward without excuses. As a famous football coach likes to say, quite simply, "Do your job." Please do it, before it's too late.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Remillard

Rutland

Robert Remillard,

VP, Consumer Loan Manager

📍 603 Massachusetts Ave., Lunenburg, MA 01462

📞 978-353-7051 ✉️ RRemillard@wcu.com



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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Let's get ready for fall 2021!

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 8:49 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

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

From: **Kristin Turner** <kristinsturner@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Nov 18, 2020 at 10:57 AM

Subject: Let's get ready for fall 2021!

To:

Dear Members of the Wachusett Regional School Committee and District Administration,

First, thank you for your continued service to our towns and school district during this difficult time. You have accepted a thankless position and it seems like, especially now, there are no answers or actions that will satisfy all of our community members. Tensions are high and in the end people are just really angry that there is a pandemic - something over which you have no control.

I am sure you are going to get many emails over the course of the next few days and weeks - and I hope that won't distract from the concerns and questions I have regarding the reopening of our schools.

As of today, November 18, 2020, ***our district has had 250 days to prepare*** to safely get kids into buildings. I have heard over and over again during this time that our schools are not ready. I think it's important we don't return staff and students to unsafe buildings that are not ready. We have a big, unique, regional school district with many obstacles that other districts don't have.

To ensure we are ready in the future I have two categories of questions and concerns - **what we have done** and **what we need to still do**.

I think these are important things that we must proactively consider so that we can safely reopen our schools next September. In September 2021, no matter the stage of vaccine rollout and hopefully a post-summer decrease in cases, we will still need to implement mitigation techniques and safety measures to

open our schools. Other districts didn't need 250 days to be ready. In fact many of our surrounding districts needed only 10 additional days after a summer of diligent hard work to prepare staff with cleaning techniques, safety trainings, and professional development in new kinds of instruction to open their schools in September. ***This however, is our reality so I want to know what needs to be done to prepare. I think that is reasonable. We have 281 days until September 1, 2021. Let's get ready!***

What has been done?

- What were the dates and where are the notes from the district reopening committee meetings? Who was on the committee? Why have they stopped meeting if we have yet to open?
- Specifically, what district led professional development has been run for staff (this includes pedagogy and safety trainings)? How many hours of the 10 pre-school days and the weekly half days has this time taken up? Can the schedule for each of the approved professional development days be shared?
- How many live, open, meetings were held for staff to ask questions of the district and get their concerns heard by the district admin and district medical staff?
- How many live, open, meetings were held for community members to ask questions of the district and get their concerns heard by the district admin and district medical staff?
- How many outside resources and presenters have been brought in to support our staff in new pedagogical methods and safe school trainings?
- What partnerships have been built between the district and local businesses, colleges, and hospitals to ensure testing for our staff and students?
- What instruction has the staff been given on cleaning?
- What materials have the staff been given to clean?
- What materials have the staff been supplied with to teach online and in person effectively?
- What training has the staff been offered in how to use those materials?
- How was the schedule carefully and thoughtfully designed to include three cohorts?
- How have self selected all remote students and families and all remote teachers been matched together to build strong relationships knowing that they will not meet in person due to health concerns and family preferences?
- How have staff in the district been supported who have children? What specific supports have been provided to them so that they can effectively teach online while their children learn online?
- How many districts who have opened successfully have you met with? When? Which ones? What questions have you asked?

What needs to be done?

- How many more days do we need to prepare? This is a real question that demands an answer. 250 wasn't enough. How many more are needed?
- What staff, supplies, and space are needed to space students and teachers at the recommended and safe 6 feet of distance? What stickers/tape/signage are needed to mark those distances? What staff is needed to apply those markings?
- What cleaning supplies need to be ordered and organized within the buildings? What staff needs to be hired to clean?
- How many people need to be hired to contact trace? What is the cost?
- How many RNs need to be hired to support our staff within the schools and to support contact tracing?
- What materials need to be purchased to allow teachers to teach in new ways effectively? What trainings need to be provided to use those new methods?

- What mindful, careful, thoughtful, scheduling needs to be done so that students' and teachers' schedules make sense for their situations?
- What outside spaces need to be prepared for classes? What supplies and staff are needed for the preparation of those spaces?
- How many room air purifiers are needed for classrooms without adequate ventilation or for students and staff who need them?
- If our current administration cannot complete the tasks for reopening, who will take over? When?

I implore you to consider these questions and concerns so that our schools can safely open in the fall. I think our window has closed for this year but we will need these safeguards and careful plans in place so that our students don't lose another year of in person instruction and support from the excellent educators in our district.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kristin Turner
469 Shrewsbury Street
Holden, MA 01520

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Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

Fwd: Public Comment 12.07.2020

1 message

Megan Weeks <megan_weeks@wrsd.net>

Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 8:49 PM

To: Rebecca Petersen <rebecca_petersen@wrsd.net>

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

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

From: **President WREA** <presidentwrea@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 3:12 PM

Subject: Public Comment 12.07.2020

To: <questions@wrsd.net>

Good evening, my name is Mary Shepherd, president of the Wachusett Regional Education Association, with a message to share on behalf of our union's membership.

The WREA has lost confidence in the leadership of Superintendent Darryll McCall. Last week, I supplied the committee with a copy of the statement of no confidence unanimously endorsed by the WREA's Executive Board. The statement represents the majority opinion of WREA members.

Superintendent McCall's inability to collaborate with educators and coordinate best practices across the district is ultimately a disservice to students.

I credit the educators in the district for creating and sustaining a high-quality education for Wachusett students, and our association believes that our schools could be even stronger if the central administration worked with educators in a truly collaborative way.

These problems are not new but have been exacerbated by the challenges of teaching during the pandemic. From professional development to personal protective equipment, our educators are feeling a terrible lack of support from the superintendent. The superintendent's lack of support for crucial student services is even more troubling.

Our students deserve a safe learning environment and the resources necessary to succeed. And despite our belief that Wachusett is a district capable of ensuring adequate resources and safe learning environments, not every student has them under Superintendent McCall's leadership.

I urge you all to read the statement that outlines our concerns in detail, and I thank you for addressing this important matter.

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12/7/2020 statement to the WRSDC by Superintendent Darryll McCall:

In these unprecedented times, the uncertainty and inability to control the environment in which we live and work has created anxiety and frustration for administrators, teachers, parents, and students. The pandemic has taken a toll on all of us in very different ways. This is not a unique situation to Wachusett as several districts have had concerns brought forth by the MTA through this manner since the fall. I will be meeting with WREA leadership this coming Thursday and then weekly for the foreseeable future in order to keep lines of communication open and transparent between both parties.

As I have made the committee and the public aware continuously over the past 6 years, our District continues to be near the bottom of per pupil spending in Massachusetts. Of the 405 school districts and Charter Schools, Wachusett ranks 381st in per pupil spending in 2019 with an annual per pupil expenditure of \$13,000. While this has allowed the District to maintain many of the programs and supports we have in place for students and staff, we still are well behind the average per pupil expenditure of \$16,495.

I would like to address how I have worked within each standard to help our district remain educationally strong:

Instructional Leadership

After two years of working without a deputy superintendent in order to save money for the District, I brought on board a Deputy Superintendent in charge of curriculum for the specific purpose of developing a strong and more cohesive professional development program for our teachers and support staff. I created a tuition free full day kindergarten for our students in order to provide an equal playing field for children to start their educational careers. With the creation of a 10 year textbook plan, until this past spring when the pandemic struck, our textbook line had increased to \$800,000 to provide updated materials and support for our teachers and students. Our new literacy program is comprehensive and includes Professional Development that is supported by our only curriculum support person. Decisions on textbook adoption have to include staff input as they are the ones who use them. A technology plan was developed so that we could begin to move into the 21st century like some many districts had already done. The fact that our District now has a 1:1 program at our high school helped us to deal with the current remote learning situation that we have been experiencing since March. This year, we have added over 2,400 chromebooks for students. For staff, they have access to not only Chromebooks or computers, but also extra cameras, microphones, and monitors for distance learning.

Management and Operations

A vast majority of our budget goes into personnel that are so vital for a school district to provide support and education for our students. We have a large district with 13 buildings that require continual upkeep and support. We have worked through the past five years to continuously update our aging systems and I have worked closely with our towns to keep them informed on the status of our schools. Our HVAC team has spent months working on our air handling systems in order to provide a safe working and learning environment. I contracted with an outside environmental specialist to test the air quality in our buildings. We have also developed a reopening plan and reopening guidelines that have been shared with the public since September. The plan outlines safety protocols and procedures for our staff and students. Finally, we have also purchased hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of Personal Protective Equipment for our staff and students to remain safe in our buildings.

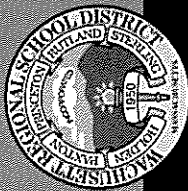
Family and Community Engagement

During the past several years while being superintendent, I have the opportunity to present the school committees proposed budget to select boards and finance committees in our five towns. I have met with our local town administrators monthly to discuss our budget and how we can work together to support one another. I have developed strong working relationships with these groups. We have now had a budget passed for three consecutive years, which was not a common occurrence only a few years ago. I wholeheartedly believe that working with each community, listening to their concerns and financial constraints, has allowed us to become a better school district. Engaging the community in the process, especially when the District represents five unique communities, is a vital part of what I do in my role.

Professional Culture

Moving from an in-person model of learning in March to fully remote learning overnight was a difficult transition for all families, staff, students and community members. Since that time, we have learned to work together through online platforms, meeting remotely to discuss and define how learning will work in this unprecedented time. I have listened to our teachers speak about the challenges that they and their families are dealing with during this pandemic. When teachers voiced their concerns about coming back into schools while teaching remotely, I listened to them and allowed them to teach from home or from their classroom.

Our entire administrative team is committed to working to ensure the success of all students, and I will continue to work with our teachers, staff, school committee, and families toward that end.



Teaching & Learning Plan

WRSD Transition to Hybrid Planning

Teaching both In-person & Remote Students

“Our New Normal”

Attachment 5

WRSD Instructional Goal

It is the intent of the Wachusett Regional School District to provide all students independent of their mode of instruction (in-person or remote) with daily high quality effective instruction aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework Standards and focused on depth of understanding, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

Adapted from the [WRSD Strategic Plan](#)



What will remote learning look like?

What will learning look like?

Additional Needs In a Learning Model

- Allows for as seamless a transition as possible to ensure continuity of learning for students
- Has flexibility for learners to easily move between in-person and remote learning as well as to 100% remote if needed for health and safety
- Equitable time from the teacher for in-person and remote learners to ensure that all students are supported in their learning
- Differentiates learning to meet the needs of the variety of learners in the class
- Engages students in active and creative ways prioritizing collaboration to keep them motivated and provide much needed opportunities for them to socialize with classmates

Recommendation

Implement an instructional model that focuses on the learner

Where in-person or remote students:

- Engage synchronously and asynchronously on the same lesson
- Work collaboratively, frequently interacting together
- Participate in more project-based learning



Structure of the School Day

- Google Classroom and Seesaw remain the platforms for instruction
- Course content would be delivered in modules/larger blocks
- Design learning to give students more control over their time and their learning pace
- Student to student communication & collaboration would be prioritized
- Teachers act as facilitators of the learning

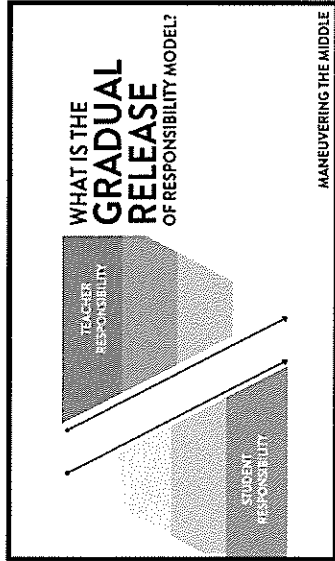
In Planning Lessons

Teachers Prioritize

- Learner to instructor interactions
- Learner to learner interactions
- Learner to content interactions

[Learn more about Three Types of Interactions](#)

Gradual Release of Responsibility



Concept
Over the progression of a lesson the teacher becomes less and less involved and the student takes more and more ownership over the content and the teacher is involved.

Components
I Do - Focused Instruction
We Do - Guided Practice
You Do it Together - Collaborative Learning
You Do It - Independent Practice

[Learn more about the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model](#)

Example of a Day in a Departmentalized Class

Time	Non-Project Day	Project Day
8:00 - 8:05	Attendance & Bell Work	Attendance & Bell Work
8:05 - 8:15	Overview of the lesson	Direct Instruction Guidance
8:15 - 8:25	Small Group/Independent Work	Project work
8:25 - 8:35	Small Group/Independent Work	
8:35 - 8:40	Completion of Independent work	
8:40 - 8:45	Lesson wrap up	
		Lesson wrap - next step instructions

Example of a Day in a Self-Contained Class

Beginning School/Work/Morning Meeting				
8:30 - 8:45				
8:45 - 10:15 Block One (English)	Mini Lesson Station Rotation (area, guided reading, independent work, interactive writing)	Flipped Classroom/Small group instruction (front loading of instruction)	Mini Lesson Individual or Group Project Work (Thematic unit)	Mini Lesson Choice Boards (Skill/Content development, assessment)
10:15-10:30	Mask/Movement Break			
10:30-11:45 Block Two (Math)		independent (small group instruction/independent or group project Lesson wrap-up	Mini Lesson - Direct Instruction	
11:45-12:30	Lunch & Recess			
12:30-1:15 Block Three (Science)	Mini Lesson Station Rotation (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate)	Flipped Classroom/Small group instruction (front loading of instruction)	Mini Lesson Individual or Group Project Work (Thematic unit)	Mini Lesson Choice Boards (Skill/Content development, assessment)
1:15-2:30 Block Four (Social Studies)		independent (small group instruction/independent or group project Lesson wrap-up	Mini Lesson - Direct Instruction	
2:15-2:30	Day Wrap-up and Next Day Planning			

Hybrid Flexible Course Design Approach - HyFlex

What is HyFlex?

HyFlex is a course design model that presents the components of hybrid learning (which combines face-to-face with online learning) in a flexible course structure that gives students the option of attending sessions in the classroom, participating online, or doing both.

This model which was originally designed at the university level for students who needed a flexible course structure due to work/family responsibilities is now being adapted by K-12 educators to support hybrid and remote learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

[Learn more about Hybrid Flexible Course Design](#)

Advantages

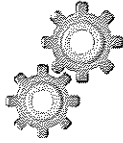
- Course design supports in-person, hybrid remote, and 100% remote students
- The course design flexibility allows for instruction to continue in spite of the ever changing conditions of the pandemic
- Teachers can give more support to students who need it whether in-person or remote
- Students can have more control over their learning experiences

Challenges

- Teachers have to keep track of all student groups
- Requires more teacher planning than a traditional course design
- Students need to take greater responsibility in completing tasks, therefore teachers/families have to be proactive in preparing students for success

Key Levers Currently in Place that Support this Model

- Teachers knowledge and use of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model
- Current use of Google classroom as a medium for instruction
- District currently has purchased a variety of new tools to support both in-person & remote teaching and learning (Lexia, InSync, MobyMax, Mathspace, Science2go, Pivot Interactives, Book Widgets, Tumblebooks, Screencastify, Pear Deck, edpuzzle, etc.)
- Teacher/student relationships have been established
- Both staff and students experience with remote learning
- Family and community support of student learning
- Desire by all stakeholders for increased social interaction and collaboration among students that can contribute to the social-emotional health of students



Next Steps

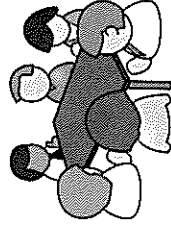
To Ensure Student Success

- Ongoing Professional Learning for Staff
- Student Support and Intervention
- Build upon the district's technology infrastructure

Professional Learning

Ongoing Professional Learning for Staff

- Survey staff to determine what professional learning would be most beneficial
- Hire a staff member whose role is dedicated to the coordination and implementation of professional learning and staff support of digital resources and tools
- Stipend a staff member at each building who can work with each building principal and the district based person in the planning and delivery of professional development



Targeted Support and Intervention

Student Support and Intervention

- Use data to identify students who are in need of targeted academic and non-academic support
- Develop student-specific support plans to address the various needs of students
- Provide targeted interventions and supports to students and monitoring for effectiveness
- Ongoing assessment & monitoring of students





Technology Infrastructure

Build upon the district's technology infrastructure by continuing to:

- Analyze and strengthen Wi-Fi capacity and internet bandwidth in school buildings where needed
- Purchase headphones for students do to small group work and independent work while in-person
- Purchase additional devices so that all students have access to technology both at home and at school
- Purchase digital resources and apps that support teaching & learning



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