

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE ONLINE MEETING
June 1, 2020

Webinar ID: 814 3048 3369

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mr. John Henry, Chair. Participating were Mrs. Danielle Black, Mr. Alex Cobb, Ms. Anita Raman, and Mrs. Rachel Stewart of the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; and Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Mr. Henry thanked people for their participation in the meeting and acknowledged those participating. He reviewed the agenda, referenced the remote meeting statement posted in the agenda, noted the meeting was being recorded, and indicated members of the public could email questions or comments to be addressed during the meeting to Mrs. Black at blackd@weston.org or Ms. Raman at ramanr@weston.org.

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mr. Henry proposed scheduling two additional School Committee meetings, June 29 and July 20 and requested Committee members confirm their availability. He indicated the Superintendent Evaluation would be scheduled for June 29 and noted he would be sending materials to Committee members for their input in the review.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly read the following statement:

The recent, tragic deaths of Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd that have triggered peaceful and violent protests across America and have left many including myself outraged. We in the Weston Schools are deeply saddened by these tragedies and are committed as a school system to denounce words or actions of hate in any form and make a commitment to each other and to our students that we embrace and celebrate diversity in all its configurations and that there is only room for respect and acceptance for all -- no matter one's race, religious beliefs, political ideology, sexuality or gender identification. Weston Public Schools must remain a safe haven for all who cross the thresholds of our schools, in any capacity.

Dr. Connolly reported that Field School Grade 4 student Sophie Sichani was the state-wide elementary school winner in the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association annual poster contest to raise students' awareness of the role that world languages play in our lives and Aimi Lee (Grade 4), Millie Clark (Country School Grade 2) and Elise Sichani (Country School Grade 1) received honorable mentions

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee of plans to celebrate its High School Class of 2020 with a car parade and graduation on Sunday June 7 beginning at 4 pm. She said the entire town is encouraged to socially distance and cheer the graduates along the parade route. She noted that, due to current Dept. of Education regulations, the graduation at the High School is for graduates and their families only and that graduates will remain in their cars throughout the ceremony which will include traditional events such as bagpipes, the National Anthem, student and key-note speeches and the awarding of the diplomas. Dr. Connolly said Weston Media will be filming the event to be aired at a later date and expressed appreciation to the Board of Health for their assistance. She noted that a Celebration of the METCO graduates was also being held in Boston during the week. She extended best wishes to all of Weston's seniors in the class of 2020.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – none presented.

II.A. School from Home Update

Dr. Connolly expressed appreciation to faculty, parents and students for being so engaged in their work these past months. She said that planning for the Fall has begun, noting that

DESE guidelines are expected later in the month but that some planning is necessary now due to contractual obligations. She reported that if COVID cases continue to decline and schools can open in the fall, there will be matters to address. Dr. Connolly reported that 725 parents responded immediately to a survey to gather data to help inform decision making for the fall. She indicated the survey will remain open all week and a follow up survey would go out later in the process as well as one for faculty. Dr. Connolly said the survey data would be shared at the next School Committee meeting. Dr. Carter spoke about the planning that is currently underway for three scenarios, one for enhanced distance learning, one with modified open campus, and a hybrid model, dependent on the public health situation and how to address cleaning, transporting, and feeding students, as well as addressing curriculum and gaps in learning from this spring, student assessment, integration of technology, and SEL for transition back to school. He indicated that professional development this summer would focus on these. Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that she is working with the Town regarding funding from the CARES grant and would keep the Committee informed if anything additional might be needed. No action taken.

II.B. MS/HS Sectioning Discussion

Dr. Connolly reported no changes since the prior presentation but indicated some may be forthcoming. Mr. Henry requested an update during the summer. Mrs. Black suggested the Committee vote on approving classes with enrollments fewer than 15 students at its next meeting. Dr. Connolly noted that Director of Music Chris Memoli was exploring alternatives in the event traditional music courses may not be allowed. No action taken.

II.C. Technology Annual Report

Dr. McCanne presented an update on the year's work prior to school closure. He discussed the challenges of maintaining student data privacy and ensuring online resources used meet all guidelines. He talked about the need to update infrastructure, town-wide, noting there is article going to Town Meeting, library activities, author visit program, and Weston website analytics. Dr. McCanne spoke about Technology's response to COVID, including work on the March 13 professional development day, School from Home platform, device and AV checkout, video conferencing, faculty Toolkit site, online resources, and the work of Technology staff. He noted Internet safety and security ongoing. Dr. McCanne reported that 15 3-D printers have been loaned out to assist in the production of face masks and WHS junior Caroline Schuckel and the Art Department created an illustration of instructions that has been produced.

Dr. McCanne discussed planning for the fall and the need to develop digital flexibility. He commended the administration and staff for their work this year. The Committee discussed and talked about student engagement during SfH, Internet access for all students, student assessments, and consideration of different platforms for remote learning. Mr. Henry thanked Dr. McCanne for the report. No action taken.

II.D. Discussion of Changes to 2020-2021 School Calendar

Dr. Connolly proposed revising next year's school calendar to add two professional development days to before school begins rather than in January and March, giving faculty four days to prepare for school opening. She said she would provide a draft calendar prior to the next meeting at which time the Committee could discuss and vote. No action taken.

II.E. Approval of School Improvement Plans (SIPs)

Mr. Henry said this year's SIPs are more "living" documents than in the pasts and anticipates they will be updated during the year. He requested the Committee approve the School Improvement Plans as presented on May 28.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Ms. Raman, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve proposed School Improvement Plans for Country School, Woodland School, Field School, and Weston Middle School, with Mr. Cobb

voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

Mr. Henry made motion, seconded by Mrs. Stewart, to approve Weston High School's SIP but withdrew the motion. Dr. Connolly indicated that incoming principal Paul Peri's Entry Plan will include development of a School Improvement Plan to be brought forward by October. She noted that the current high school SIP was a two-year plan that had been approved last year.

II.F. EDCO Update and Discussion

Mr. Henry reported that some districts have withdrawn, due to financial difficulties at EDCO, from participation in the Collaborative, which provides districts with Special Education Services as well as Professional Development opportunities. He indicated he would like more data and a better understanding of the implications of withdrawal before a decision to withdraw is made, so postponed discussion until the next meeting. No action taken.

II.G. Discussion of School Committee Reorganization

Mr. Henry suggested the Committee wait until September, following Town Election and Town Meeting, to conduct the annual School Committee Reorganization. Committee members agreed to have the Reorganization at the first meeting after the September election. No action taken.

II.H. Facility Projects Update

(Case House, Town of Weston Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee)

Case House – Mrs. Black said Facilities Director Gary Jarobski is gathering information to place an order for clocks, coat racks and cork boards and is winding down with contractor.
Proctor Field – Mr. Cobb reported they are closing out the contract regarding installation of doors. He indicated that Weston Facilities Department has the capacity to handle the installation, and the bonding company will pay the Town.

RMPSC – Mr. Cobb said the PBC has reviewed the warrant article and will not conduct a vote on it. He noted the Steering Committee has reviewed it as well.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Ms. Raman, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve minutes of May 18, 2020, with one change (name correction) with Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye, Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

III.B. Business Actions –
Certificate of Warrant

Ms. Matthews presented a Certificate of the Secretary, approval of warrants for payment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$1,551,636.47 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, with Mr. Henry voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Ms. Raman voting aye and Mr. Cobb voting aye.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:39 PM, with Ms. Raman voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

Documents used by Committee:

- [Technology Update](#)

Recording of Meeting provided by Weston Media:

Approved by Weston School Committee 6.15.20