

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – March 7, 2016

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, March 7, 2016, 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair

Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair

Donna Bouchard (arrived at 7:06 p.m.)

Jeanne Downs

Kathie Steinberg

Also:

Paul Stein

Superintendent

Brad Crozier

Assistant Superintendent

Susan Botta,

Business Administrator

Marlene Dodyk

Director of Student Services

Also:

Allyson Mizoguchi, WHS Principal

Betsy Gavron, WMS Principal

Brian Jones, Loker School Principal

Jim Lee, Happy Hollow School Principal

Klara Sands, WMS Latin/Classical Studies Teacher & Curriculum Leader

Chiun-Fan Chang, WMS World Languages Teacher

Melissa Bryant, WHS World Languages Teacher & Department Head

Xiaohui Cao, WHS World Languages Teacher

Chair Ellen Grieco convened the regular session at 7:06 P.M. and announced that the meeting is being recorded by WayCAM.

1. **Comments & Written Statements from the Public:**

Alexia Obar asked the School Committee to clarify the middle school 0.6 FTEs that were originally cut from the budget. She is aware that 0.4 FTEs were added back, but given that a decision has not been made in terms of the 8th grade class, Alexia would like additional sections added. Alexia is of the opinion that some certified teachers are not teaching classes. *Ellen confirmed that 0.4 FTEs have been added back for the Middle School.*

2. **Special Matters:**

(a) Presentation regarding the Chinese Language Program:

Wayland High School and Middle School world language department heads and teachers, as noted in these minutes, presented the Chinese Language Programs at each school.

Middle School:

There are 26 7th and 8th grade students, most of whom have no Mandarin background, in the Mandarin Chinese Language Program. Level 1 addresses themes, such as greetings, numbers, nationality, school, family, colors, food, sports, and animals. The students acquire the basic skills of listening and speaking and reading and writing surrounding these themes.

When students reach high school, they enter Level 2 of this program. Level 2 focuses on themes, such as class schedules, professions, hobbies, home, campus, community, and social activities, while teaching students to listen, speak, read and write regarding these themes. However, more emphasis is placed on speaking the language at this level.

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Level 3 is for those high school students who want to continue learning the Mandarin language. Its themes cover emotions, doctor's office, daily routine, extracurricular activities, and film genres. Students are more confident at this level when presenting information on familiar topics using a series of simple sentences or writing about familiar topics using connected sentences.

The vision is to expand the Mandarin Chinese Program to Level 4 and plan to include the themes personalities, event planning, summer vacation, travel and tourism. The listening, speaking, reading and writing skills will become more in-depth in everyday situations at this level.

Included in the curriculum and to emphasize their skills, the Middle School students have an annual Chinese Food Festival in December, which includes creating a research poster, giving an oral presentation, developing a cooking video, singing Chinese songs, and performing Kung-Fu and a Chinese dance, all of which are judged. Other activities include a fashion show and World Languages Week. Whenever possible, guest teachers from Taiwan and Beijing work with the students. The 6th graders also participate in a Chinese Club.

To build on the Chinese culture, program extracurricular activities at the High School include Fall pumpkin paintings and calligraphy, a tea ceremony and moon cake tasting at the Moon Festival, poetry recitation and hosts at the New Year Lunar Celebration, speakers and presenters from the Confucius Institute, and a WeChat group communication with students in China. Other activities include silk fan brush painting, made possible by a Wayland Public Schools Foundation grant, and a Cultures Club.

The program's goal is to involve students linguistically and culturally. Melissa Bryant shared the World Language Mandarin vision going forward, which requires much collaboration by Wayland educators during the year and includes three other school districts. Massachusetts and national standards are always followed. A discussion followed between the School Committee and teachers.

Barb Fletcher commented that she will be traveling to China during part of the Exchange Trip, which she is funding on her own.

(b) Presentation regarding the Use of Surveys:

School principals, Allyson Mizoguchi, Betsy Gavron, Christie Harvey, Brian Jones, and Jim Lee, introduced and explained the parent and teacher school surveys being utilized annually as barometers of how well the schools are doing and, if necessary, how and where improvements can be made. Most elementary surveys are consistent with the three elementary schools. School Improvement Plans are also developed from, not only the Superintendent's goals, but the surveys.

Loker School – Face to Face Survey (30-50 families annually):

As a way to address personal communication between staff and families, during the months of March through May, many families meet with Brian for 15 minutes to discuss their child's experience at the school. Among other topics, the parents are asked to evaluate on a scale from 1-5 the following:

- their child's communication with the classroom teacher and, if applicable, other school staff with whom they interact
- their own communication with the main office staff and principal

The parents are also asked to describe their child's academic progress and their social and emotional growth throughout the year. Finally, the parents are asked to identify 3 strengths and 3 areas of improvement for Loker School. Some of the major feedback received includes frequency and style of communication, teacher websites, newsletters, before school fitness and the maker space lab. The elementary school principals are developing a graduating 5th grade student survey focusing on their academic, leadership and social experience throughout their educational experience. A Health and Wellness Stress Survey is also administered to 4th and 5th graders.

Happy Hollow School:

Jim Lee administers a School Community Survey to parents and students that serves as a school report card in areas of school safety, space issues, and staffing. Related more to students, they are asked if they feel challenged, do they feel that their teacher knows them, and is the principal leading the school in a positive direction. An annual graduating student survey is also given to 5th graders. Jim identified many areas in which

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feedback is given, all of which is analyzed by the staff and School Council for the purpose of identifying the school's focus in the upcoming school year and any special projects that the School Council might undertake.

Jim described the Staff Specific Surveys given to teachers that include questions related to teaching preference in terms of grade level, school preference, and preferred teaching position. Also included in this type of survey are Technology Surveys (Software/Subscription Survey and Tech In-Service Survey) and Explore Surveys.

Surveys are also administered to students' parents by classroom teachers, which is a constant vehicle to engage parents in communication. These surveys include a 5th Grade Model, a 4th Grade Pre-Spring Conference Questionnaire, a 2nd Grade Pre-Spring Conference Questionnaire and Exploration Surveys related to Full Day Kindergarten and World Languages.

Claypit Hill School:

When Christie Harvey began as principal of Claypit Hill during the summer of 2015, she administered in-person surveys to parents, staff, and community members to help her understand more about the strengths of the school, the areas that can be worked on and/or improved upon, and their expectations of Christie as the principal. She also invited the parents, staff and community members to make a 15-minute appointment with her to discuss these issues. Christie elaborated on the input that she received during these brief meetings.

The Claypit Hill School Council will administer an annual School Culture Online Survey of 4th and 5th Grade students at the end of March. The results will be analyzed and shared with the staff in order to work on improving students' experiences. They are now working on a Family Survey.

Christie also surveys staff regularly to gain feedback regarding Professional Development and other areas of interest to staff.

Middle School:

Betsy Gavron described how Google is used by the students and staff to develop presentations that are shared with the school community.

Student, Parent and Teacher Surveys are given strategically to gather feedback from these groups within the Middle School community, which help to inform the school's next steps.

Student Surveys are given at the classroom level regarding students' experiences in the classroom, cluster level regarding House Block days, grade level regarding the RTI Pilot, to all WMS students regarding homework experiences across all subjects, and to all Wayland secondary students regarding the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey. These are just some examples of areas surveyed; Betsy elaborated on other areas.

Parent Surveys include getting feedback about pilot programs, effectiveness of communication, and district-wide initiatives, and teachers are surveyed regarding Professional Development and the need for long-range planning.

Betsy noted that the WMS School Council administers a parent survey every two years to help focus the Council's efforts and guides the School Improvement Plan. Although very positive, last year's survey indicated concern about student social and academic stress, which led to ways in which to work with students and staff to address these concerns.

High School:

Allyson Mizoguchi commented that WHS uses surveys regularly to gather feedback on particular initiatives and efforts, or to establish a baseline upon which future work will build. They are both "homegrown" and developed by outside organizations.

The Advisory Survey, given to both staff and students, evaluates the content, format, and groupings of the Advisory Program, which is in its fourth year. This survey will help the staff determine how to reach the goals of the program, including evaluating the goals themselves, which are creating safe spaces, building relationships, and providing and improving communication between students and staff.

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Developed by the School Council, the Principal Survey evaluates the work of the Allyson, particularly how her work aligns with the mission of the school in areas of communication and decision-making.

Other surveys developed by experts in any given field and recently administered, include the Northeastern Sport in Society Survey that evaluated the WHS athletic program, the Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey that assesses at-risk behaviors of students and analyzes trends over the last 10+ years, and the School Technology Needs Assessment Survey that identifies areas for professional development and technology implementation and impact in the classroom.

Allyson elaborated on the benefits and uses that the Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey provides in assessing at-risk behaviors.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of over-surveying, the principals focus on what people care about and strive to keep the surveys short and concise. A discussion ensued regarding the aspects of the surveys, how information is shared between principals, anonymity or identification of participants, and the possibility of outliers and how the principals use them to their advantage.

3. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Discussion of Need for and Use of 0.6 FTE for Middle School Staffing (0.4 added back and 0.2 outstanding) in Connection with the 2017 Proposed Budget:

As a starting point to this discussion, Donna noted that she and many parents want the teaching position reinstated in the 8th grade class. Betsy explained her thought process in terms of the use of the 0.4 FTEs. Betsy Gavron commented that the needs of the social worker have expanded due to the increase in the number of students who have comprehensive needs; thus, the social worker's hours were increased this year. However, Betsy believes that a full-time social worker is necessary at the Middle School and the 0.4 FTE should be used for this purpose. Marlene Dodyk added that the need for a full-time social worker is across the grade levels and confirmed that a full-time social worker would be very helpful to building internal capacity to address students' needs.

A discussion ensued regarding the needs of the 8th grade class and Betsy confirmed that all teachers teaching math, science and social studies are certified. Betsy also confirmed that even if the 0.6 FTEs were reinstated, she would still choose to hire a full-time social worker.

Paul addressed the process by which he would have to follow if asked to add back the 0.6 FTE for a Middle School teacher and a 0.2 FTE for the Middle School social worker, taking into consideration the risks associated with using Circuit Breaker funds or staff turnover savings.

Related to this discussion, Ellen asked the Committee if there was interest in changing anything in the budget, still keeping the bottom line, before the Committee's vote for the FY17 school budget. The majority did not want to change the total dollar amount of the budget. Donna requested further discussion to address this matter before Town Meeting. It will be added to the March 21st agenda.

(b) Hear Superintendent's Report, including Curriculum Spotlight #11:

Paul attended a well-attended parent evening at Happy Hollow at which the focus was on the social emotional learning programs in the three elementary schools. Paul described the goal and format of the evening.

Paul informed the Committee of the recent Mary L. Johnson Travelship Award Ceremony. The award went to Laura O'Brien, a first grade teacher at Happy Hollow. Paul described this event as heart-warming and one at which a small group of high school students showcased their extraordinary musical talents.

Curriculum Spotlight #11 – Words Their Way (new spelling program):

Words Their Way is a developmental and differentiated spelling program, which is a striking contrast to the traditional approach of memorization and tests on common spelling lists. The program does not focus on spelling rules, but on the understanding of the language by using phonics, vocabulary and spelling hands-on activities. Students are being taught to recognize word patterns, while increasing a student's motivation and interest in words.

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A key component for Words Their Way includes 5 developmental stages, each with tasks that the students must know very well in order to consciously recognize the word patterns. Each stage contains a scope and sequence connected to the word patterns, e.g. short and long vowel sounds and common and less common long vowel patterns.

Another key component is Diagnostic Assessments. This involves giving the students at the beginning of the year a spelling inventory in which they spell words read to them by their teacher after which the teacher assesses the students' performance in order to determine each student's developmental level for spelling group placement. The groups focus on spelling and sound features within a set of word sorts. Paul explained further.

This program was implemented for the purpose of strengthening the spelling program, especially in the 2nd and 3rd grades. The program has been piloted in some grade levels at Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow Schools. This year, the program is being used in Grades 2 to 5 at all three elementary schools in conjunction with the reading program.

4. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Continued Discussion of FY1 Operating Budget and Possible Vote to Approve FY17 Operating Budget and FY17 Special Revenue Fund Budgets and Associated Fees/Tuitions:

Ellen, Barb, and Donna filed the appropriate State Ethics Form with the Town Clerk regarding the Committee's vote on fees and tuitions. Barb confirmed that the School Committee will vote the special revenue fund budgets and associated fees in accordance with the Fee-Based Revenue policy.

A discussion ensued regarding the balances remaining in the WSCP special revenue accounts. According to policy, if the yearly balances exceed ten percent, the School Committee can discuss the use of the surplus funds. In terms of carryover balances, the WSCP can present recommendations to the Committee for ways in which to use these balances that are outside of the operating budget.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (4-1) to approve the FY17 operating budget of \$37,722,833. Donna opposed for the same reasons she cited at an earlier meeting, which is the 0.6 FTE cut at the Middle School and the addition of a 0.5 assistant principal at Claypit Hill School.

The associated fees and tuitions were not voted on by the Committee, as there was some discussion to possibly change the Indirect Cost Allocation Agreement before Town Meeting. This vote and discussion will be postponed to April 21st. Susan confirmed that food service will end up with a change in the amount of a \$6,100 surplus. Susan will ask Pat Keefe about the expected balance in the Enrichment account.

(b) Review FY16 Full Day Kindergarten Program financial Results and Possible Vote to Approve Changes to FY16 Tuition:

The School Committee reviewed an overview of the Full Day Kindergarten budget and actual expenses and based on six classrooms. Susan recommends a reduced tuition for this year from \$3,500 to \$3,400 based on a per pupil adjustment. She also recommends that the FDK tuition remain at \$3,400 for FY17.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the recommendation to reduce the FY16 tuition fee per student from \$3,500 to \$3,400 per student.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (4-1) to approve the tuition for FY17 at \$3,400 per student.

Kathie opposed because she does not agree that the cost of transportation and fringe benefits are program expenses.

(c) Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Use of Surplus Funds from Certain Wayland School Community Program Funds:

The School Committee reviewed the FY15 year-end balances and FY16 beginning balances for some WSCP funds. Susan named the programs and their balances remaining and based on a chart provided by Pat Keefe, Pat noted how she would like to spend some of the surplus funds now for Maker Space equipment, a security

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system, and for approved Happy Hollow playground equipment. A discussion ensued regarding the type of security system being purchased. The police department will be consulted in terms of the security system. This topic will be discussed further on March 21st as further information was requested.

(d) Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Additional Motion Language under Warrant Article related to Section 53E½ for Professional Development and Curriculum Revolving Accounts:

The School Committee reviewed the revised motion language for the Warrant Article related to Section 53E½ for Professional Development and the Curriculum Revolving Accounts. Barb noted that although there is a warrant article to establish these two accounts, the Department of Revenue recommends that there are motions to transfer funds into these accounts. Barb will follow up Dennis Berry in this regard.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to support the two motions as provided tonight that will be made under Article 8 for the 2016 spring Town Meeting related to the School Professional Development and School Curriculum Revolving Accounts that will be established under Section 53E½.

(e) Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Warrant Article related to OPEB Parity and Expense Payments for FY17:

The Committee will vote for the difference of \$277 in the OPEB annual payments, which is less than what was previously voted.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (4-1) to approve the FY17 OPEB annual payment totaling \$22,813 as presented tonight.

Kathie opposed and noted that if the OPEB annual payment was calculated to equal the number of employees, the contribution would be \$18,236.

(f) Discussion and Possible Vote to Appoint the Permanent Municipal Building Committee to Monitor and Advise on the Loker Windows and Doors Project:

Jeanne noted the Loker windows and doors project is approximately the same scale as the Claypit Hill windows and doors project and is eligible for MSBA funding.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to appoint the Permanent Municipal Building Committee to serve as the Building Committee for the Loker Windows and Doors Project.

(g) Update regarding the Possibility of John Ledwick of Edvocate Assisting with the Implementation of Recommendations Made in the Preliminary Custodial Assessment Report:

Susan commented that Mr. Ledwick would spend two days for a fee of \$1,700 with Ben Keefe and/or Pat Morris to support the creation of a facilities policy manual detailing times and duties for the evening custodial staff. He has provided a list of equipment by school building in preparation for capital budgets and would lend additional support and/or training as needed. The Committee supported this process.

(h) Approval of Payment for Invoices from CGKV Architects, Inc. and Pinck & Company for the Claypit Hill Windows Repair Project:

Jeanne noted that the Permanent Municipal Building Committee has approved these invoices.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the payments to CGKV Architects in the amounts of \$40,250 and \$6,000 and to Pinck & Co. in the amounts of \$5,432.17 and \$2,268.94.

5. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Review Superintendent's Suggested Key Evaluation Elements:

This agenda topic will be discussed at the March 21st meeting. The School Committee will review the information prepared by the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee in preparation for the next meeting.

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(b) Discussion of Outstanding Public Records Requests and Open Meeting Law Matters:

The School Committee discussed a public records request dated January 31, 2016 by George Harris and the Committee's responses to date, including Donna's conversation with him. Ellen read Mr. Harris's letter to the Supervisor of Public Records regarding his public records request. Next steps regarding additional documents to be provided by the School Committee was discussed, including consulting with school counsel concerning the documents. Paul gave Mr. Harris documents in response to his request. Donna will draft a letter to the Supervisor of Public Records outlining the School Committee's steps taken thus far to address this public records request.

Paul confirmed that the documents arrived from Adam Simms' office. An office copy will not be made at this time.

(c) Discussion of Preparation for Annual Town Meeting:

Ellen will prepare a draft Budget Message for Town Meeting. Other items were discussed in terms of preparing for Town Meeting.

(d) Distribution and Review of Updated Spring Meeting Schedule with Identified Topics and Outstanding Action Items:

This agenda topic will be discussed at the March 21st meeting.

6. **Policy Subcommittee Update:**

(a) Update on Status of Policies JJE (Student Fundraising), DGA (Authorized Signatures), and JKAA (Physical Restraint of Students):

This agenda item was passed over due to insufficient time.

(b) Review of and Possible Vote to Approve Changes to Policies KCD (Gift Policy), KJA (Relationship with Boosters), and Support Organization Guidelines:

This agenda item was passed over due to insufficient time.

7. **Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

None.

8. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated March 7, 2016, in the amount of \$407,350.27
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Student Activities Warrant, dated March 7, 2016, in the amount of \$5,904.19
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll Warrant, dated March 2, 2016, in the amount of \$1,338,075.38

(b) Approval of Minutes:

- Regular Session of January 14, 2016
- Regular Session of January 19, 2016
- Special Session of January 22, 2016

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda with the January 14, 2016 regular session minutes as amended, the January 19, 2016 regular session minutes as written, and the special session minutes of January 22, 2016 as written.

9. **Comments from the Public:**

Alexia Obar referred to the Staff Deployment Report and in terms of the size of the 7th and 8th grade classes, she noted that there are very small numbers of students taking Chinese; however, her son's Spanish class is almost double in size. Alexia asked the Committee and administrators to take this information regarding all class sizes into account when considering making cuts to the teaching staff at the Middle School, particularly in 8th Grade advanced science and math. She understands the School Committee's process in making some difficult decisions, but Alexia is in favor of going before Town Meeting to ask for additional funds to avoid middle school teaching cuts.

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10. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the School Committee voted unanimously 5-0) to convene in Executive Session at 11:00 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Custodians, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3), as such discussion in open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee and an Executive Session is necessary to protect the bargaining position of the School Committee, and to approve minutes from prior executive sessions, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §22, for the following meetings: February 22, 2016.

The School Committee will be joined by Paul Stein, Superintendent of Schools, Brad Crozier, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will reconvene in open session for adjournment purposes only.

11. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 11:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:
Alexia Obar

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. WSCP Recommended Uses for Surplus Funds
3. Memo from Susan Bottan regarding Financial Matters, including Information about WSCP Budgets, Full Day Kindergarten, and OPEB Parity and Annual Expenses for FY17
4. Invoices from CGKV Architects, Inc. and Pinck & Co. for the Claypit Hill Windows & Doors Project
5. Key Elements regarding Superintendent's Evaluation
6. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
7. Regular Session Minutes of January 14, 2016
8. Regular Session Minutes of January 19, 2016
9. Executive Session Motion