

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Westwood, Massachusetts

MEETING MINUTES
May 9th, 2024

Attendance and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31pm by Chair Tony Mullin. Also present were: Maya Khuri Plotkin, Dorothy Parmelee, Amanda Phillips; and JoAnna French. Superintendent Tim Piwowar, Assistant Superintendent Allison Borchers, and Director of Finance and Operations Lemma Jn-baptiste were present on behalf of the district.

Westwood Media Center was recognized for live streaming the meeting.

Harley Pease recorded the minutes.

Reorganization of the School Committee

MOTION made by Maya Plotkin to appoint Amanda Phillips Chair of the School Committee. Motion seconded by Dori Parmelee.

Roll-call vote:

Anthony Mullin: **Yes**
Amanda Phillips: **Yes**
Maya Plotkin: **Yes**
Dorothy Parmelee: **Yes**
JoAnna French: **Yes**

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

MOTION made by Dori Parmelee to appoint Maya Plotkin as Vice-Chair of the School Committee. Motion seconded by Amanda Phillips.

Roll-call vote:

Amanda Phillips: **Yes**
Maya Plotkin: **Yes**
Dorothy Parmelee: **Yes**
JoAnna French: **Yes**
Anthony Mullin: **Yes**

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

MOTION made by JoAnna French to appoint Dori Parmelee as Clerk of the School Committee. Motion seconded by Tony Mullin.

Roll-call vote:

Amanda Phillips: **Yes**
Maya Plotkin: **Yes**
Dorothy Parmelee: **Yes**
JoAnna French: **Yes**
Anthony Mullin: **Yes**

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

Superintendent's Report

Recognition of Academic Decathlon Team

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Westwood, Massachusetts

Superintendent Piowar recognized the Academic Decathlon Team and advisor Rebecca Weydt for their accomplishments this season, concluding with participation in the National competition.

Pine Hill Principal Search

Supt. Piowar announced that a decision will be announced imminently.

Facilities Study Update

Superintendent Piowar detailed the process and schedule for the Comprehensive Facilities Plan. Supt. Piowar announced that Dore & Whittier has been hired as the designer to develop this plan. Supt. Piowar noted that there are two components of the master plan: a capital improvement plan and master plan for future buildings.

Discussion Items

World Language Curriculum Review Report

Assistant Superintendent Allison Borchers and Department Chair Hillary Carpinella provided the Committee with the World Language Curriculum Report. The report included the process of review, members of the review team, as well as key findings. Key findings included expanding the middle school language program to grade 6, expanding Mandarin to grade 8, and adding French, Spanish, and mandarin to elementary grades in the late 2020's. Next steps including the beginning of curriculum mapping, piloting new curriculum resources, providing departmental PD focused on standard based grading, and writing new curriculum for new world language electives.

2025 Grammy Awards Music Educator Award

Superintendent Piowar read a press release announcing that Westwood High School teacher Rob Goldman has been selected as a quarterfinalist for the 2025 Grammy Awards Music Educator Award.

Public Participation

Chair Phillips opened public participation for residents to discuss school choice. There was no public participation to discuss school choice.

There was no public participation.

School Committee Chair Update/Liaison Reports

Chair Phillips reminded the community about the Deerfield Re-Use Advisory Committee. The form closes tomorrow.

Chair Phillips also reminded the community about the upcoming School Committee Roundtable on May 16th.

Student Representative Sean Tao provided the Committee an update on findings from Legislative Council from the 2023-2024 school year. The Council had three goals. First, the Council focused on: how do we make WHS a stronger community, where students feel a part of something larger. Second, how do we improve the student experience? Third, how do we uplift student voice and encourage social responsibility? Additionally, the food experience for students was a big focus on the Council.

JoAnna French provided the Committee with a special shoutout to the PTOs in the district for their work during teacher appreciation week, which was this week.

JoAnna French also highlighted a feature in Westwood Living on WHS teacher Rob Goldman and Caitlin Goldman.

Tony Mullin provided some reflections on his time as chair the past year. He shared that the budget will need careful consideration going forward. Maya Plotkin agreed, given how slim the vote margin was in the passing of the budget at Town Meeting.

Discussion Items

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Westwood, Massachusetts

Creation of Task Force on Cellphone Use in Schools

Superintendent Piowar announced the creation of the Task Force on Cellphone use in schools, as well as potential members of the task force. This work would get started in the Fall.

Outstanding Policies from Policy Manual Review (First Reading)

- o Policies EE/EE-R, EEAG, EEBA, GCRD, IJND

Superintendent Piowar provided his recommendations to the Committee on each policy.

EEAG: Supt. Piowar recommend to amend EEAG to mix the model MASC policy and Westwood's policy.

EEBA: Supt. Piowar recommend to eliminate EEBA.

EE/EE-R: Supt. Piowar recommend to amend EE/EE-R to reflect a mixture of the model MASC policy and Westwood's policy.

GCRD: Supt. Piowar recommend to adopt the MASC model policy language.

IJND: Supt. Piowar recommended to adopt the MASC model policy language.

Action Items

MOTION made by Dori Parmelee regarding school choice. It reads as follows:

WHEREAS the Educational Reform Act of 1993 requires that the enrollment of non-resident students under the School Choice provision unless the Committee votes by June 1 not to participate, and

WHEREAS the School Choice provision reallocates funds from the sending district and awards such funds to the receiving district, and

WHEREAS the maximum reimbursement allowed by the School Choice provision is less than Westwood's per pupil expenditure, which means Westwood Public Schools would be required to subsidize each choice student, and

WHEREAS once Westwood accepts a choice student, Westwood must keep such student through graduation, regardless of whether Westwood's demographic situation has changed, and

WHEREAS it is likely that a number of students will return to their sending districts or otherwise leave Westwood, thus creating a potential income loss, now hereby be it

RESOLVED that the Westwood School Committee respectfully declines to participate in the School Choice Program; provided, however, that if surrounding school districts subsequently, and prior to June 1, decide to accept the provisions of School Choice, the Westwood School Committee reserves the right to do likewise in order to protect its fiduciary interests in this matter.

Motion seconded by Maya Plotkin.

Roll-call vote:

Amanda Phillips: **Yes**
Maya Plotkin: **Yes**
Dorothy Parmelee: **Yes**
JoAnna French: **Yes**
Anthony Mullin: **Yes**

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Westwood, Massachusetts

MOTION made by Tony Mullin to waive the third reading for Policy IKFA: Graduation Requirements. Motion seconded by Maya Plotkin.

Roll-call vote:

Amanda Phillips: Yes
Maya Plotkin: Yes
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes
JoAnna French: Yes
Anthony Mullin: Yes

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

MOTION made by Tony Mullin to approve international field trips. Motion seconded by Doris Parmelee.

Roll-call vote:

Amanda Phillips: Yes
Maya Plotkin: Yes
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes
JoAnna French: Yes
Anthony Mullin: Yes

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

New Business

Adjournment

MOTION made by Maya Plotkin to adjourn into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if it may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the committee. Motion seconded by Amanda Phillips.

Roll-call vote:

Amanda Phillips: Yes
Maya Plotkin: Yes
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes
JoAnna French: Yes
Anthony Mullin: Yes

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

The Committee adjourned into executive session at 7:56pm.

The Committee returned to open session at 8:29pm

MOTION made by Tony Mullin to adjourn. Motion seconded by Doris Parmelee.

Roll-call vote:

Amanda Phillips: Yes
Maya Plotkin: Yes
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes
JoAnna French: Yes
Anthony Mullin: Yes

Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Westwood, Massachusetts

The Committee adjourned at 8:30pm.