

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Westwood, Massachusetts

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 10, 2020**

**Attendance and Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:32pm by Chair Anthony Mullin. The meeting was held remotely<sup>1</sup>. Also present on the call were: Josepha Jowdy, Vice Chairperson; Carol Lewis, Clerk; Charles Donahue; and Maya Plotkin. Superintendent Emily Parks was present on behalf of the District. John Cianciarulo recorded the minutes.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Mullin called the meeting to order via roll-call attendance.

Mrs. Jowdy	Present
Mrs. Lewis	Present
Mr. Donahue	Present
Mrs. Plotkin	Present
Mr. Mullin	Present

The public was able to view the meeting online at [www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live](http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live) to provide real-time, public access to the activities of the School Committee.

**Action Items**

**Approval of Revised 2019-2020 School Calendar**

Ms. Parks is recommending that the School Committee remove April vacation from this year's school calendar. If approved, the last day of school for students would now be Friday, June 19. This includes the "make-up" days for:

- Tuesday, December 3 due to snow
- The state-required make-up days due to COVID-19:
  - Friday, March 13
  - Monday, March 16
  - Tuesday, March 17
  - Wednesday, March 18

Ms. Parks indicated that the District leadership team is in agreement with the recommendation. In addition, she has consulted the teachers' association, as their perspective is important. The union surveyed its members and eighty-percent agreed with the recommendation to cancel April vacation.

In addition, the Tri-County Superintendents' Roundtable has been discussing the topic. All of the representative districts, with the exception of two, are recommending the cancellation to their School Committees.

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<sup>1</sup> Remote meeting held in accordance with Executive Order of MA Governor, March 12, 2020 (Attached)

Commissioner Riley has stated that all days lost to health, weather, or safety emergencies be made-up to ensure a 180-day school year; or until the district has reached its previously-scheduled 185th day.

On the original calendar, the last day for students was Thursday, June 18. Five days would take the last day to June 25. Last Friday, the Commissioner provided updated guidance to districts with an option to cancel April vacation and add the four possible school days for April vacation back onto the calendar. Monday, April 20 is the Patriots' Day holiday and cannot be a school day.

If this change the calendar is approved, the District would only need to make up one day in June.

There was consensus among the Committee that any sense of a normal April vacation is impossible. People are stuck in their homes and not able to take a vacation. Most teachers and many parents feel like they are just getting into the rhythm of distance learning and would like to maintain that momentum.

**Mr. Donahue made a motion to cancel April vacation and approve the revised 2019-2020 school calendar with the last day for students to be Friday, June 19, 2020. Mrs. Plotkin seconded.**

Mrs. Jowdy	Aye
Mrs. Lewis	Aye
Mr. Donahue	Aye
Mrs. Plotkin	Aye
Mr. Mullin	Aye

**Vote 5-0-0.**

**Result: Approved (Unanimous)**

### **Adjournment**

**Mrs. Lewis motioned to adjourn. Mrs. Jowdy seconded.**

Mrs. Jowdy	Aye
Mrs. Lewis	Aye
Mr. Donahue	Aye
Mrs. Plotkin	Aye
Mr. Mullin	Aye

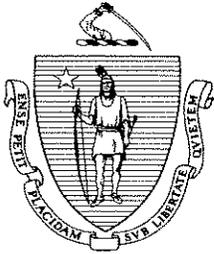
**Vote: 5-0-0.**

**Result: Approved (Unanimous)**

The meeting adjourned at 4:49pm.

List of Documents and Exhibits Used at Meeting:

- Draft revised 2019-2020 school calendar for School Committee approval.



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
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**CHARLES D. BAKER**  
GOVERNOR

**KARYN E. POLITO**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**ORDER SUSPENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS  
OF THE OPEN MEETING LAW, G. L. c. 30A, § 20**

**WHEREAS**, on March 10, 2020, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, acting pursuant to the powers provided by Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 and Section 2A of Chapter 17 of the General Laws, declared that there now exists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a state of emergency due to the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”); and

**WHEREAS**, many important functions of State and Local Government are executed by “public bodies,” as that term is defined in G. L. c. 30A, § 18, in meetings that are open to the public, consistent with the requirements of law and sound public policy and in order to ensure active public engagement with, contribution to, and oversight of the functions of government; and

**WHEREAS**, both the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”) have advised residents to take extra measures to put distance between themselves and other people to further reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19. Additionally, the CDC and DPH have advised high-risk individuals, including people over the age of 60, anyone with underlying health conditions or a weakened immune system, and pregnant women, to avoid large gatherings.

**WHEREAS**, sections 7, 8, and 8A of Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 authorize the Governor, during the effective period of a declared emergency, to exercise authority over public assemblages as necessary to protect the health and safety of persons; and

**WHEREAS**, low-cost telephone, social media, and other internet-based technologies are currently available that will permit the convening of a public body through virtual means and allow real-time public access to the activities of the public body; and

**WHEREAS** section 20 of chapter 30A and implementing regulations issued by the Attorney General currently authorize remote participation by members of a public body, subject to certain limitations;

**NOW THEREFORE**, I hereby order the following:

(1) A public body, as defined in section 18 of chapter 30A of the General Laws, is hereby relieved from the requirement of section 20 of chapter 30A that it conduct its meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body for interested members of the public through adequate, alternative means.

Adequate, alternative means of public access shall mean measures that provide transparency and permit timely and effective public access to the deliberations of the public body. Such means may include, without limitation, providing public access through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body while those activities are occurring. Where allowance for active, real-time participation by members of the public is a specific requirement of a general or special law or regulation, or a local ordinance or by-law, pursuant to which the proceeding is conducted, any alternative means of public access must provide for such participation.

A municipal public body that for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts is unable to provide alternative means of public access that will enable the public to follow the proceedings of the municipal public body as those activities are occurring in real time may instead post on its municipal website a full and complete transcript, recording, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as practicable upon conclusion of the proceedings. This paragraph shall not apply to proceedings that are conducted pursuant to a general or special law or regulation, or a local ordinance or by-law, that requires allowance for active participation by members of the public.

A public body must offer its selected alternative means of access to its proceedings without subscription, toll, or similar charge to the public.

(2) Public bodies are hereby authorized to allow remote participation by all members in any meeting of the public body. The requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at a specified meeting location, as provided in G. L. c. 30A, § 20(d) and in 940 CMR 29.10(4)(b), is hereby suspended.

(3) A public body that elects to conduct its proceedings under the relief provided in sections (1) or (2) above shall ensure that any party entitled or required to appear before it shall be able to do so through remote means, as if the party were a member of the public body and participating remotely as provided in section (2).

(4) All other provisions of sections 18 to 25 of chapter 30A and the Attorney General's implementing regulations shall otherwise remain unchanged and fully applicable to the activities of public bodies.

This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until rescinded or until the State of Emergency is terminated, whichever happens first.

Given in Boston at 6:40 PM this 12th day of  
March, two thousand and twenty.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charles D. Baker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

CHARLES D. BAKER  
GOVERNOR  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts