

**Westwood School Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2019**

Present:

Anthony Mullin, Chairperson
Joseph Jowdy, Vice Chairperson
Carol Lewis, Clerk
Charles Donahue, Committee Member
Maya Plotkin, Committee Member
Ayesha Tariq, WHS Student Representative

Emily Parks, Superintendent
Allison Borchers, Assistant Superintendent
Lemma Jn-baptiste, Director of Business and Finance
Abby Hanscom, Director of Student Services

**Meeting called to order 7:00pm
Pledge of Allegiance**

Meeting was recorded by Westwood Media Center

Superintendent's Report (7:00-7:06)

Introduction of New Administrators

Ms. Parks reported it has been a smooth start to the school year. She introduced Lisa Freedman who is the new Preschool Director and the new METCO Director, Lateefah Franck.

Welcome New Student Representative

Ayesha Tariq is the new Student Representative and Ms. Parks wanted to welcome her to the Committee. Along with being a strong academic student, she participates in musical theatre and the acapella group. She was the co-captain for the tennis team the last two years and likes to write poetry. She won the first Westwood High School Poetry Slam last year.

District Enrollment Update

At the July School Committee meeting, some adjustments were made to some elementary sections. A K/1 section was added at Deerfield. Because there didn't need to be a second kindergarten classroom at Hanlon, the District was able to split the grade 2 class into three sections at Hanlon. There is a singleton class of 24 at Deerfield in grade 2, so an instructional assistant was added to this classroom.

Other

Some feedback was received from a few parents of middle school students concerned with the lack of notification about postural screening for 6th grade students. There should have been a notification and changes have been made to make sure notifications are sent out in the future. Upon looking into this, it was realized that the School Committee policy around screenings doesn't reflect what is currently being done. Ms. Hanscom will work on a draft to update this policy and bring to a future School Committee meeting.

EEE risk notifications have been sent out. Ms. Parks has been working with the Board of Health and will be ending outdoor events early as recommended.

On October 4, 2019 a coffee will be held for the public at Hanlon at 9am to meet with the district administrators.

School Committee Chair and Subcommittee/Liaison Updates (7:06-7:20)

Building Project and Community Engagement Plan Update

Ms. Plotkin reported. The architect selection process is taking place. The MSBA submitted the RFS and received 8 responses. The MSBA has a design review panel that decides which architect will be selected. Sixteen members are on this design review panel, with 3 members being from Westwood which are Ms. Plotkin, Ms. Parks, and Ms. Hyde. On October 1, 2019, the meeting with the design review panel will take place and this is when the panel votes to interview the top three architect candidates or start negotiating directly with the top architect pick. If vote to interview the top three candidates, that will occur within two weeks of the October 1, 2019 meeting. Then a vote will take place to determine who to negotiate with for the project. The goal is to have the architect on board by mid-October.

A flyer will be going out next week about the community engagement sessions. Two sets of sessions will be taking place. This notification is going out by various means: List serve, social media, hard copies at Curriculum Nights, and news media.

The first set of sessions is called Initial information presentation and feedback session which will take place on October 23, 2019 and November 4, 2019 which will take place at 7pm at the Thurston cafeteria. The purpose of these sessions is to present to the community the design team, OPM, architect, and the rest of the team. To review the school building process and remind everyone how we got to where we are now. Then, break out into small groups for feedback, to discuss project priorities.

The second set of sessions is called the Education Plan presentation. These will take place on December 9, 2019 and December 12, 2019 at 7pm at the Thurston cafeteria. This presentation to the community will identify what priorities came from the first set of meetings, review what the School Committee has come up with as an education plan, and what the next steps are for the school building committee.

Next spring, sessions will be held to start talking about what the project will look like.

2019-2020 Liaison Final Assignments

Anthony Mullin

Budget Steering Committee, Norfolk County Sheriff's Task Force, Select Board, Westwood High School

Josepha Jowdy

Council on Aging, Downey School, Sheehan School

Carol Lewis

Hanlon School, Hale Reservation Working Group, Municipal Task Force, Preschool

Maya Plotkin

Martha Jones School, Permanent Building Committee, SEPAC, Chair of School Building Committee

Charlie Donahue

Deerfield School, MASC Delegate, Legislative Council, PTO Forum, Thurston Middle School

Meeting format and timing

The School Committee Chair and Subcommittee/Liaison Updates were moved to the beginning of the meeting instead of having them at the end of the meeting. Also, this will be the last month of paper distribution for the School Committee meeting packet. The packets will be moving to iPads with the agenda and hyperlinks to the agenda starting next month.

New Business and Updates

Mr. Donahue distributed the *Boston Magazine* rating of top high schools. Westwood High was ranked the 14th best high school in Massachusetts, higher than other competitive communities. He wanted to thank the administrators and teachers for all their hard work.

Also Judith Ciardi, who used to live in Westwood and now lives in New Hampshire, has painted scenes from all over Westwood. She gave all of her paintings to the Westwood Historical Commission. These have been on display at the Westwood Library this summer. The Commission would like to donate seven of these paintings to the school department so that a painting could be placed in each of the school buildings.

Ms. Jowdy wanted to congratulate Mr. Donahue who will be receiving an award from the Charitable Irish Society of Boston. He will be receiving the silver key award. This is a highly prestigious award with only 3 individuals receiving it this year. In the past, Mayor Marty Walsh received this award. This organization helps immigrants coming from all countries who need help with housing, financial support, etc.

Public Participation (7:20-7:21)

None

Discussion Items (7:21-7:52)

District Improvement Strategy and Goals - 2019-2020 (7:21-7:35)

Ms. Parks presented.

Priority 3.1 was updated from the June meeting and specific action steps were updated: Develop and implement a district-wide plan for meeting students' social and emotional learning needs and physical wellness. The change was adding physical wellness to this priority. Two additional action steps are to: form a committee to begin examining the viability and logistics of later secondary school start times and conducting a comprehensive PreK-12 wellness curriculum review.

Priority 3.3 was updated from the June meeting and specific action steps were updated: Expand efforts to help students navigate the technology-infused environment in a way that is safe, effective, healthy, and well-balanced.

Objective 4, Facilities for the Future, is very relevant this year. Priorities 4.1 and 4.2 will be very relevant to what the School Committee will be working on this year. The action steps were articulated for these two priorities.

From the District Improvement Plan, Ms. Parks has articulated the Superintendent goals for this year. Most of the goals come from the District Improvement Plan. For the Professional Practice Goal, it is to complete the New Superintendent Induction Program. For the Student Learning Goal, it is based on the priority to develop and implement a district-wide plan for meeting students' social and emotional learning needs. For the District Improvement Goal, Ms. Parks highlighted the facilities goals since that will be worked on this year.

Based off the 3.1 priority, Mr. Donahue wondered if there were student ambassadors in the district that welcomed not only METCO students, but any new student in the district. The METCO program students come in 6th grade and hopes each student could have a friend. The Running Start Program included all new students, not just METCO students at Thurston this year.

Ms. Jowdy wondered how curriculum alignment between all grade levels was going to be different. More interconnectedness has taken place, creating ways to really see what is happening and discussion with everyday practice. The social studies curriculum will be the focus this year.

Mr. Mullin asked what Primary Source is. It is based in Watertown, MA and is a professional development and curriculum material organization. The 8th grade social studies teachers participated in a program with Primary Source this summer that is meant to support the teachers in their efforts to implement a meaningful, engaging civics curriculum.

Ms. Plotkin was hoping for an update on the SEL position. This is a newly hired position for this year. The coordinator will be working with all of the schools and will come to a School Committee meeting later in the year to report on her findings.

Ms. Parks noted that the School Committee Policy for these goals needed to be updated. This will be the first reading and will be on the agenda next month for the second reading.

- First reading: ADA - Mission Statement

- First reading: ADAA - Goals
- First reading: ADAB - Core Values

Review of Summer Programs (7:35-7:44)

Ms. Parks stated that all of the memos from Central Office are in the packet explaining all that took place during the summer in the District. She asked Ms. Jn-baptiste to present on the Capital Improvements.

Ms. Jn-baptiste wanted to thank Ken Aries and all of the operations team for their work. The new elevator is up and running at the middle school. Classroom door locks at the high school have been updated. The high school paving project was budgeted for \$100,000 but came in at \$75,000 so a crosswalk and a speed bump could be added to the high school parking lot. A lot of air conditioning units were added. The middle school HVAC project is still in process. The electrical upgrade at Deerfield was not done. It was budgeted at \$30,000 but came back at \$90,000. A total of \$60,000 in grant money was received from the state and could be used starting in mid-August.

2020-2021 School Calendar (7:44-7:48)

The national election is November 3, 2020. That day would be the all day inservice day for teachers, not the Monday after Thanksgiving, November 30, 2020. The Rosh Hashanah holiday is on a weekend so that is why not listed on the calendar. First day of school would be Tuesday September 2, 2020 with the last day of school June 18, 2021 with no snow days and June 25, 2021 if there are five snow days. School is starting before Labor Day, going to school Wednesday and Thursday before Labor Day and returning the Tuesday after Labor Day.

Biannual Review of Concussion Policy (7:48-7:52)

It is required by law to have a concussion management policy. Every other year it needs to be reviewed. The policy has been reviewed by the Athletic Trainer, Paul Lilla, and this policy is good and doesn't need to have any changes. Ms. Parks also wanted to point out that on the webpage under the Athletic Trainer link there is a lot of information about concussions.

Mr. Donahue requested that this information could be given out to parents so they know this information is available for them to access.

Action Items (7:52-7:56)

Approval of District Goals and Superintendent Goals

A motion was made to approve the District Goals and Superintendent Goals by Ms. Lewis. Seconded by Ms. Jowdy.

Mr. Donahue was interested in Ms. Parks' New Superintendents' course and when completed after this year, if there are other professional development options for her? Yes, she would be looking for other training/coaching after this program is completed.

Mr. Donahue also asked if the survey for graduates had been put together. The District collects e-mail addresses, has a survey prepared, and will work with the consultant to see if there are enough e-mail addresses collected in order for this survey to be statistically tracked. Mr. Donahue also asked if the Committee could see the survey questions again.

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Approval of 2020-2021 School Calendar

A motion was made to approve the 2020-2021 School Calendar by Ms. Jowdy. Seconded by Ms. Lewis.

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Approval of Concussion Policy

A motion was made to approve the Concussion Policy by Ms. Plotkin. Seconded by Ms. Lewis.

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Vote to form Building Project Community Engagement Subcommittee

A motion was made to form the Building Project Community Engagement Subcommittee by Ms. Lewis. Seconded by Mr. Donahue

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Approval of Minutes: July 18, 2019

A motion was made to approve the July 18, 2019 minutes by Ms. Jowdy. Seconded by Mr. Donahue.

Official Vote: Unanimous approval

Approval of Superintendent as district representative to TEC Board of Directors

A motion was made to approve Ms. Parks as the district representative to TEC Board of Directors by Ms. Lewis. Seconded by Ms. Plotkin.

Official Vote: Unanimous approval

Executive Session (7:56-7:57)

Mr. Mullin entertained Ms. Plotkin's motion to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation; and to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect hereto, and not to reconvene in Open Session. Ms. Jowdy seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Mr. Mullin noted that the Committee would not be returning to public session.

The Committee entered into Executive Session at 7:57pm.