

**School Committee Meeting  
9-16-20  
Minutes**

A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, September 9, 2020, at 5:00 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

*Present and participating remotely were:*

Jeanne Downs, chair  
Ellen Grieco, vice chair  
Kim Reichelt  
Chris Ryan  
Kathie Steinberg

*Also participating remotely (arriving at 5:25 pm):*

Arthur Unobskey  
Superintendent

Parry Graham  
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead  
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan  
Director of Finance & Operations

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 5:02 p.m. The meeting was recorded by WayCAM and was conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and according to the revised open meeting law that allows remote participation. A roll call was taken:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	absent	

**1. Superintendent Search:**

- Reviewed advertisement – application deadline is October 30. Could be in Ed Week on Sept. 30 and goes online for a month. Suggested to put on School Spring. School Committee agreed to advertise.

- Survey: TCW (The Children’s Way) will be included in the survey. Will ask Future Management Systems (FMS) to add a question about “Follow up to issues related to COVID-19” under #7. A discussion ensued about additions to the survey. Question #2 – Characteristics of a Superintendent – will ask FMS to add choice of “building connections for the WPS outside of Wayland”.
- Focus Groups: one hour online – if more than 15 participants, breakout rooms will be used. Six focus groups in total. Faculty, staff and administrator groups will be facilitated by FMS; discussed those questions that would be geared more to the individual groups. Information from the focus groups is incorporated into the leadership profile. FMS will do the staff, elementary parents, MS parents, HS parents, administrators, and CO staff. School Committee will do the community, town staff, and students. Dates, times and whether the focus groups will be recorded will be discussed with FMS.

The School Committee members will draft what they are looking for in a superintendent outside of those things that were listed and send to FMS.

Jeanne noted that the School Committee and WTA have come to an agreement on a 3-year contract last Friday. Town Meeting was very successful; HS students helped with the meeting. Jeanne thanked the residents for passing the school budget and the amendment to the school budget that included the salary increase that was negotiated with the WTA, as well as the Loker School roof project. Ellen noted that she and Kathie are pleased with the WTA settlement and it will be published soon including the amendment to the collective bargaining agreement that defines the teachers’ working conditions for this year.

**2. Comments and Written Statements from the Public:**

Kaylen Phillips, 8 Wayside Road: Thanked the School Committee for their tireless efforts. Kindergarten concerns: switch between full day and traditional, commit for full year, and may have to switch schools. Can we leave teachers, cohorts, and classrooms as they were assigned?

Jeanne read a public comment from Jen Ryan in which she expressed her sincerest thanks to the district’s teachers for being well prepared, organized and engaged with the students on the first day of school and going forward. Ms. Ryan also thanked the Wayland faculty, staff, and administrators for their continued work on behalf of the students.

Caitlin Golden read a statement on behalf of all Wayland kindergarten teachers. They asked the School Committee to reverse their decision to rearrange kindergarten classrooms after the school year has started and not balance the budget on the backs of the teachers and students. The conversation should be what is best for the students.

Jeanne read a public comment from Lauren and Michael Grant, 50 York Road. They expressed concern about the possibility of some Kindergarten teacher positions being affected based on the current full-day kindergarten enrollment.

Abby Haber, 74 Moore Road: 3<sup>rd</sup> grader and Kindergartner at Claypit Hill. There are far ranging implications of a reduction in staffing of our Kindergarten teachers after school has started; reassignments done weeks in the school year after relationships have been developed. Don’t punish

our teachers, families, and students. Could also impact cohorts in Grades 1 – 5. We need to provide stability that students need to thrive.

Jeanne read a public comment from Deb Russo, a Kindergarten teacher at Happy Hollow. In response to the possible kindergarten teacher staffing changes, she provided an outline of what is accomplished by the essential teachers during the three additional hours for full day kindergarten students.

Jeanne read a public comment from Sara and Brian Morrison, 1 Highfields, who also wrote in response to the information circulating that Kindergarten teacher positions may be affected based on the current full time kindergarten enrollment. They shared their experiences.

Jeanne read a public comment from Emilie and Colin Walters who also wrote in response to the information circulating that Kindergarten teacher positions may be affected based on the current full time kindergarten enrollment. They shared their experiences.

Jeanne read a public comment from Joanne Klein, school psychologist at Happy Hollow. Dr. Kline urged the School Committee to think creatively about how to fully fund the kindergarten program, especially since full day children have already met their teachers and many of their classmates, and children need stability and familiarity more than ever now.

Jeanne read a public comment from Devon and Pat Murphy, 1 Oxbow Road, regarding the Committee's consideration of eliminating kindergarten teacher positions or reducing their hours after the teachers have prepared for months and after the children met and started bonding with their teachers.

Jeanne read a public comment from Eliza Mosurick, 8 Concord Road, regarding her concern about the extensive time that full-day kindergarten students will spend on a screen, as a child's interest can wane and he/she can lose focus after a short period of time. Thus, she switched her child from full-day kindergarten to traditional for these and other reasons. Ms. Mosurick asked that a variance be approved this fiscal year for full-day kindergarten for which she referenced in the budget.

Jeanne read a public comment from a group of 122 families in which they proposed an alternate enrollment plan for Kindergarten during the 2020-2021 school year. The parents feel that they were left out of the important planning process over the summer and feel that their concerns have gone unaddressed. In addition, they feel strongly that teachers' jobs should not be affected and reorganizing class assignments now is in direct conflict with the district's focus on social-emotional health of the students.

Three public comments were not read due to a time constraint but are posted on the website. They are from Amanda Glynn, 56 Moore Road (Claypit and WMS parent); Colleen Kurson (Loker parent), and Justine Paul.

Jeanne responded to the public comments noting that the Kindergarten issue is a difficult one and School Committee puts a lot of effort into all its decisions. The students and staff are in the forefront of the decisions. Jeanne referred the characterization of the School Committee as callous and irresponsible by some and stated that no one on the Committee is such. She noted that the timing of this really stinks and there are no good answers. The Committee will solve this in a way that is least

disruptive to teachers and families. Jeanne reminded everyone that in this year of uncertainty, grace is needed more than ever.

**3. Consent Agenda:**

Approval of Minutes: August 3, 2020, August 5, 2020 and September 9, 2020 #1:

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

**4. Superintendent Update:**

School Opening:

Arthur shared photos of the first 3 days; enjoyed seeing some students back at school; had meetings with teachers who shared what they are doing. At TCW, he described experiences for children. At elementary level, impressed with teachers efforts. At Middle School, meeting with students. At High School, talked to staff about what they are doing this fall; we have to re-examine how we teach the students; developing methods of how students will be assessed. Teachers are developing play lists as well; building multi-layer pathways in areas that students are interested.

Caroline Han: Diversity & Equity Coordinator – talked about the district’s response to the equity needs of all of our students, particularly with some of the postings a couple of weeks around the BIPOC Instagram postings. These are issues around students feeling that they cannot fully express themselves or fully achieve their potential. Developed four goals: equitable access to rigorous courses, anti-racist education for staff, examine hiring practices, strengthen our partnership. All this has been made more urgent because of the posts. We need to provide avenues for the students to come forward.

Caroline noted t is important to address interpersonal acts of racism. Belonging is directly linked to learning outcomes. How can we make systemic change to benefit our students of color? Affinity groups are for students to talk about their experiences with others of color. Institutional change comes through other elements: K-5 social studies – teachers can connect to citizenship, action, and justice. Offering a district wide equity professional development to address the civil unrest. What is happening in our schools is a microcosm of what is happening in our country.

Caroline noted that the IDEAS Parent Group continues even though the formal course ended. In the remote learning environment we want to make sure that Boston and Wayland resident students can still connect. Could have virtual movie nights or virtual game nights.

Kim commented that on a ZOOM call at the High School, there was an unpleasant interaction and racist comments as well as other inappropriate comments. How can this be used as a learning moment for the students? Caroline will look into this.

## 5. COVID-19 Response:

### Discussion of Extracurricular Activities for 2020-2021 School Year:

Susan Memoli sent a list of robust activities: drama, strings and orchestra are planning for in-person instruction, mostly outside and on Wednesday afternoons. Strings and drama would be inside on a limited basis with up to 10 feet of distance. The School Committee suggested informing the Board of Health of these plans. There will also be remote experiences for extra-curricular activities: Student Council, WSPN.

### Special Education Update:

Richard noted it had been a good start to the school year. Have had students in every building – either visiting or receiving services in a limited fashion. Positive experiences. The amount of time and effort and planning for in-person learning and the planning to coordinate services while kids are in the buildings – teachers worked so hard and did an extraordinary job. TCW has gone well; kids following rules and wearing their masks. Starting with 25% of service delivery for students; 50% is the goal in weeks 4 and 5.

Arthur thanked Richard and the principals who have supported and navigated through this process.

### Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Full Day Kindergarten Revised Hybrid Opening Date:

Jeanne commented to the teachers, staff, and families know that the School Committee hears everything that is being said.

Updates: Facilities are still being worked on so a final early hybrid start date for Kindergarten cannot be provided at this time. Hope to have a date at the next meeting – Sept. 29, October 5 or October 19 are possible dates.

Update on the Kindergarten survey: 125 responses out of 203 kindergarteners enrolled.

As of this morning, 71.3% chose full day vs. the 64% that is in the books. Survey closes Friday; data will be tabulated; decision will be made regarding the number of class sections.

WRAP students can choose traditional or full day Kindergarten – approximately 22 students.

Ellen noted that this process was because of the reaction we got about in-person schooling. This is a balance to handle everyone's perceptions/expectations. Kathie noted that the Kindergarten issue remains a challenge as families are choosing other alternatives as well.

### Update on Elementary Class Size and Technology Support:

Arthur noted that there are now only 2 classes that are 3 above the guideline; 3 are 2 above the guideline. Since some families are still making decisions he feels we should hold off on making decisions of how to support these classes. If it is needed, there may be ways to have additional staff in the classrooms to support the teachers.

Technology Support: Mary Barber sent an all call to High School students – 19 responded – she had a meeting today to provide tech support to families and students who are experiencing technology challenges in their homes. Kim asked about issues with hardware. Arthur noted there is a MAC shortage right now; everyone has a device even if it is not a MAC. Leisha is working on the five-year lease.

Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Testing Resolution:

The resolution was to get the State to have something in place before kids came back to school. Kim suggested another option be pursued. Kim reported that there will be a meeting in this regard.

Review of Upcoming Communications and Listening Sessions:

Arthur will send a communication that will include a strong message about parents being vigilant to not host large gatherings of students. Allyson and Arthur will work on a message for students.

Kim and Chris are hosting a coffee tomorrow night. Ellen asked that questions about the WTA contract and/or working conditions MOA for the teachers be deferred to she or Kathie.

Updates: Reopening Criteria, Ventilation, Testing, Health and Safety:

Arthur, Kim, Jeanne attended a BOH meeting today; the BOH will have criteria in place for reopening next week and should have a recommendation based on steps/data on October 5 for going hybrid on October 19, but it remains the School Committee’s decision.

Ventilation: Louise Miller, Town Administrator, will have an update. In general, the outlined work/tasks at the schools and is largely finished.

Health and Safety: Susan noted that there is more than enough of PPE and supplies; doing everything we can do to mitigate the risk of transmission.

Next Steps:

6. Policy Matters:

Review and Possible Vote to Approve:

Pandemic Policy Updates (policies listed at end of agenda):

EBC Supplemental: Kim ran it by school counsel and it is fully incorporated and complete. Kim noted the changes she made to the policy.

Title IX Grievance Procedures (AC-R): Richard noted that this replaces the current AC-R. This new version is more relative to higher education and a lot of that was in response to student athletics. K-12 differences – The investigation and reporting process is different. There is an extra step – once the information is gathered, the investigative report must be given to the complainant and respondent.

Face Coverings (ECBFA): Additional wording was added regarding a teacher and a second adult in the same room and that both parties have to be comfortable about mask wearing in the same room.

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve for immediate implementation and put out for public comment policies EBC, AC-R and ECBFA . A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	

Kim Reichelt	X
Chris Ryan	X
Kathie Steinberg	X

**7. Financial Matters:**

Discussion and Review of COVID Related Finances:

Budget summary – identified amounts that Town Meeting voted for FY21 appropriation.

Bus costs have been almost finalized; Louise Miller will follow up with final steps to come to decisions re: the bus contract. 22% increase over last year. Susan described how the one bidder came down from 82% to 22% increase. Buses will be parked at the Town Building. Budget increases related to the elementary class sizes are still to be determined.

Kathie explained the increases to budget over last year – of those amounts we had increased contractual obligations of about \$650,000. The School Committee recommended budget was cut by \$150,000 and we were not able to direct funds to the needed areas. There are not discretionary items the district struggles to meet the needs of building maintenance, etc. It is really challenging to find additional funds.

The Town did close FY20 on September 4; an end of year report will be given to the School Committee and DESE and at the end of this month, the Q1 report will be presented to School Committee. Dr. McKibben said he would take our October 1 enrollment numbers in alignment with his projections and report back.

Discussion and Possible Vote for Funding Source for ADA Work:

Jeanne reminded the Committee that money in the High School building account was voted to use to pay for ventilation work. She noted that the grant that was applied for came through and is in the process of paying the account back. The town wants to potentially use some of the money in the High School building account to pay for needed ADA work as well.

**8. Administrative and Procedural Matters:**

School Council Discussion:

Kim proposed scheduling Glenn Koocher to talk about school councils. Kim was concerned about school councils and that people could get involved; not making effective use of school councils. A discussion ensued. Arthur noted It can be a challenge to get people involved in school councils. The Committee suggested 1) talk to principals about their experience; 2) talk to current and former members. School Councils prepare the School Improvement Plans. Kim hopes that the school councils communicate to the community. A suggestion was made to put the meeting dates in the All Schools News.

The Committee discussed its roles for 2020-2021:

Subcommittees:

Policy Subcommittee: Kim and Ellen

Finance Subcommittee: Chris and Kathie

Supt. Evaluation Subcommittee: Jeanne and Ellen

School Liaisons: Kathie – HS; Chris – CH; Jeanne – MS; Kim – Happy Hollow; Ellen – Loker and TCW.

Kim – Communications

PTO – Jeanne/ Kathie (alternate)

Audit Committee – need to replace Chris  
 WPSF – Kathie  
 Wellness Advisory Committee – Kim  
 Athletic Advisory Committee – Ellen  
 Negotiations – Ellen/Kathie  
 IT – Kim  
 Supt. Search – Ellen for this year

Upon a motion duly made Arthur Unobskey, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (4-0-1) to appoint Jeanne Downs as chair for 2020-21. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair		
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted (5-0) to appoint Ellen Grieco as vice chair for 2020-21. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Annual Report:

Jeanne noted that the annual report is due September 30; Jeanne will put on next week’s agenda for review.

**8. Executive Session:**

Subsequent to a roll call vote in regular session on a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 7:56 p.m. for the purposes of (a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the custodial union, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; and (b) approving the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: August 5, 2020.

The School Committee will be joined by Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.



The School Committee will adjourn in Executive Session. A roll call was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

**10. Adjournment from Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn executive session at 8:36 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

**Corresponding Documents:**