

School Committee Meeting
February 11, 2021

A remote meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. using zoom technology. The meeting was recorded by WCTV and streamed live.

Call to Order/Roll Call:

Present: Joyce Bacchiocchi, Michael Flaherty, Kevin Brogioli, Apryl Rossi, and Mary Morgan. Also present, Dr. Kimberly Shaver-Hood, Superintendent, Dr. Andrea Schwamb, Assistant Superintendent, and Jamie Wiksten, Recording Secretary.

Public Participation:

Bridger Kearns, a parent of two Wareham students, shared with the School Committee that she is struggling to understand why Wareham is still participating with two half-day in-person sessions. She has reached out to School Committee and recently spoke with Dr. Shaver-Hood and is searching for answers as to why students cannot attend two full days. She shared with the Committee that the Superintendent explained to her that transportation is a major factor, and there is not enough time to clean buses between the runs. Mrs. Kearns does not understand why there needs to be so much cleaning. She suggested elementary students ride the bus on one side of the vehicle, and high school students ride on the other side. She stated that the Superintendent shared her need to protect the bus drivers, and Ms. Kearns feels the bus driver can accomplish safety by washing their hands.

The Chair responded that the Superintendent has made progress, and will announce it later in the meeting, following along with the agenda.

Ms. Kearns responded that her patience is wearing thin, as the students are now headed into the third term.

Deanna Semple, WEA President, stated that surrounding towns are in full remote, but every district and every school has to deal with different logistics, and wants it to be understood the WEA will work with the district with guidelines of safety for teachers and students as the top priority. She stated the workload has tripled for teachers and wants that to be understood, but will not sacrifice safety.

Good News:

The Chair shared that she was happy to hear there was a change made in the Wednesday schedule at the high school and is hearing it has been a positive change.

Student Report:

Emily Roberge reported there have been two Wednesdays since the schedule change and the day is less rushed and the teachers encourage students to use the help block after advisory. Key Club is celebrating Valentine's Day by celebrating the custodians, nurses, and librarian. The High School will be participating in fall sports this March, followed by the spring sports season.

Minutes of the Meeting January 7, 2021:

Mr. Flaherty made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Morgan.

Roll Call Vote: Kevin Brogioli -yea, Michael Flaherty - yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea and Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Minutes January 21, 2021:

Mr. Brogioli made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

Roll Call Vote: Kevin Brogioli -yea, Michael Flaherty - yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea and Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Overview of a School Day, Decas Elementary School, Bethany Chandler:**Decas Schedule:**

- 8:50 AM students greet their teachers with a Covid friendly greeting.
- Morning work
- Teachers' work on core literacy standards
- 20-minutes of PE or Unified arts class
- Math
- When weather permits, there are outdoor classroom lessons, including nature walks and classes in the courtyard
- Dismissal begins at 12:30 p.m.
- Students continue to meet with teachers remotely accessing teacher's playlists and remote activities.

Mr. Brogioli asked Ms. Chandler what is the average synchronous instruction time. Ms. Chandler responded that synchronous instruction occurs all day, as lessons are planned throughout the day with breaks in between.

Dr. Schwamb explained that there is 5.5 hours a day.

The Chair asked if there are any teachers who are fully remote. Ms. Chandler responded two Kindergarten teachers, three Grade 1 teachers, and two Grade 2 teachers have two full remote classes.

Originally there were 22-24 remote students per class, and it has dropped to 19-20 in the remote classes. The trend is more students are returning to hybrid with less students staying in remote.

Ms. Rossi asked if students have trouble logging in during the day. Ms. Chandler responded that normally this happens due to connectivity issues, but there is a technician who supports the families with these concerns.

Ms. Morgan asked about the sub-separate students and Ms. Chandler responded that the same teacher is streaming in their classroom while working with the hybrid students.

Overview of a School Day, Minot Forest Elementary School, Joan Seamans:

- Students enter at 8:40 a.m., sanitize and walk to their classroom
- Bus students enter at 8:50 a.m., sanitize and walk to their classroom

Remote:

- Full remote students zoom as early as 8:30 a.m. and zoom until 10:30 a.m.: Morning meeting, whole group lessons, breakout rooms and independent work
- Lunch 11:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

-12:00 p.m. afternoon zooms for small group work, and unified arts

Hybrid:

- Morning meeting routines, ELA, Math

- Team teachers move from class to class.

- 12:28 p.m. is bus dismissal and students are sent home with breakfast and lunch.

- Additional class zooms are held in the afternoon and unified arts classes

- This equates to 21 hours per week.

Ms. Rossi asked about zoom attendance. Ms. Seamans responded that most students are connecting and teachers are doing a great job connecting with their students.

Ms. Morgan asked about sub-separate classrooms. Ms. Seamans responded that the remote sub-separate zoom during the hybrid class.

The Superintendent thanked Bethany Chandler, Joan Seamans and their staff for all of their hard work, and thanked them for their flexibility and collaboration, as it speaks to their leadership and the elementary staffs.

Proposed School Calendar 2021-2022:

The Superintendent shared with the Committee that the drafting of the calendar begins with the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent. In-Service, orientation, first day for students, holidays, professional days and the last day of school is taken into consideration. Afterward, the draft is sent to the principals and WEA leadership. Once they accept the draft, we bring the calendar to the school committee, and ask the committee to vote on the school calendar.

Ms. Rossi commented that she noticed the terminology of Columbus Day was listed as Holiday Observed and shared that is was nice to see this change.

Dr. Shaver-Hood responded that the term was used to be politically correct.

Mr. Flaherty shared that he posted the draft of the calendar provided in the packet on social media asking for feedback, but did not receive feedback.

Dr. Schwamb explained that it could be confusing to share a “draft”; therefore, to avoid confusion for families, sharing should begin after the calendar has been approved.

Mr. Flaherty explained that his issue is more of an issue with the packet itself, as he feels the public should see everything that the Committee sees in the packet for opportunity to comment during public participation. Mr. Flaherty is concerned if he hadn’t put the calendar on social media, the public would not have a clue, the Committee would vote on it, and the following day the public would be livid.

Dr. Schwamb explained the MCAS schedule is not available yet, and when there are professional days that fall within that schedule, adjustments will need to be made. She also confirmed the early release days have been switched to Wednesdays.

Mr. Brogioli made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar, seconded by Ms. Rossi.

Roll Call Vote: Kevin Brogioli -yea, Michael Flaherty - yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea and Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

VOTE: 5-0-0

WPS 2026 Strategic Plan:

Dr. Schwamb shared the current strategic plan is coming to a close at the end of 2020-2021 school year. She has begun the planning process for the 2026 Strategic Plan and wants to have a clear vision and is so proud of the work everyone has done thus far. She shared the planning committee has looked at the 2021 plan and is moving forward into the 2026 plan with modern curriculum. Wareham needs to be digitally convergent through digital application and easy access.

There are hundreds of standards and the committee has picked five areas. There is a lot of work ahead, and it gives hope for the future of Wareham.

Mr. Flaherty thanked Dr. Schwamb for her hard work.

The Chair asked who serves on the Steering Committee.

Dr. Schwamb shared there are 38 members from the Guidance Department, Selectwoman, members from the community, Teachers, the Union President, Classroom Teachers, and School Committee members.

At the completion of the Strategic Plan, there will be a School Committee vote at the last meeting of June.

End of Year Report:

Ms. Suckow submitted a summary of the End Of Year report.

Town Appropriation Budget	\$29,430,737
Expenditures	\$29,262,564
Encumbrances	\$0
Returned to the Town	\$ 168,174

Mr. Flaherty asked if the school has the figures for in-kind from the town. Ms. Suckow told Mr. Flaherty she would get back to him with an exact figure.

Budget Transfers:

Ms. Suckow presented the transfers.

Mr. Flaherty inquired about Central Utilities. Ms. Suckow responded that projections show there will be a need for additional funds for Utilities (MSC, the old Boys and Girls Club, and East School).

Dr. Shaver-Hood responded that there are utility issues at East. Last year, most likely too much was cut from Central Utilities when we were trying to save teacher positions.

Mr. Flaherty questioned the Middle School utilities. Dr. Shaver-Hood explained that Minot is not absorbing any of the heating at the Middle School, and the budget for Minot will transfer to Middle, as Minot shares the building.

Mr. Flaherty made a motion to approve the budget transfers, seconded by Ms. Rossi.

Roll Call Vote: Kevin Brogioli -yea, Michael Flaherty - yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea and Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Report of the Superintendent:

The Superintendent asked the Committee to accept the Bill and Payroll Warrants as listed in the School Committee packet.

Payroll Week Ending January 16, 2021 \$886,489.30

Payroll Week Ending January 16, 2021 \$-3,132.00

Payroll Week Ending January 23, 2021 \$136,813.39

Bill Warrant 1/21/2021 \$3,847.80

Bill Warrant 1/28/2021 \$3,847.80

Bill Warrant 1/21/2021 \$152,917.12

Bill Warrant 1/28/2021 \$3,839,881.81 (Minot)

Bill Warrant 2/4/2021 \$190,490.81

Mr. Flaherty made a motion to approve the bill and payroll warrants, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Roll Call Vote: Kevin Brogioli -yea, Michael Flaherty - yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea and Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

VOTE: 5-0-0

- The Superintendent shared that the District has received a number of grants and additional money that needs to spent. She asked the Committee for the go-ahead to restore the custodian salaries, as they took zero last year and gave up their rate to help balance the budget, as well as the Administrators (Directors, Principals, and Superintendents) who also took a zero to make the budget work. She continued that she would like to restore their pay to what it would have been, had they not taken the zero, by making it retroactive. The Superintendent expressed her appreciation to the custodians and to the Administrators for their willingness to do so. They helped the District out in a time when there was great concern for the budget, and to make that sacrifice is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Flaherty asked what the dollar amount would be to restore these salaries. The Superintendent shared the following:

Custodians: \$25,796
Administrators: \$28,818

Mr. Flaherty echoed the Superintendent's comments and shared that a vote is not needed, but the district would have his vote as he is in full support.

- The Superintendent shared that the Food Service Director, Mike Russo, has been writing grants for equipment and recently received \$45,000 to purchase a van and she is in the process of working with the town regarding this purchase.
- On January 21st there was a statement filed by Ellen Chambers. She filed against the District with the Department of Education. She filed a complaint that the district had removed language that the parent agrees to excuse the district from strict adherence to IEP timelines, which are difficult to pursue due to governmental directive arising from, or related to COVID issues. This was put into place when COVID began and Wareham was trying to make accommodations and work with families. Wareham did use this language but it's since been removed. Wareham reported this to the department, and Superintendent received a letter two days ago stating that they do not require any corrective action in this matter, and the complaint has been closed.
- The Superintendent reported that she received the Title I figures, and Wareham has increased by four points to 32.04. Wareham will receive substantially more funds because the poverty level is higher.
- Wareham is seeing a drop in Covid numbers and the schools has applied with the state, requesting our nurses administer COVID testing to students and staff if need be. Once Wareham receives the approval, the District will be purchasing some kits, and nurses will receive the training and parent permission would be attached to this.
- The Superintendent continued there is a good possibility there will be availability of the vaccine coming to Wareham in the very near future. The Board of Health has assured her that the Wareham Public School staff will be given ample opportunity to receive the vaccination, if they so desire.
- Discussions have begun with the WEA to extend the school day, but have not come to any agreement about when that is going to occur. The Superintendent announced that on March 8 it is her intention to return students to a longer school day. DESE changed the requirements on transportation that would bind Wareham in transporting of our students. Now there are no restrictions when we transport our elementary students from today forward with the exception of windows need to be open at two inches. Cleaning procedures will continue, but it does change how we look at transportation. The restrictions are two students per seat. As the District plans to move forward we are going to start gradually and increase by several hours a day. By April 22, Wareham will be full day,

At the next school committee meeting, the Superintendent will ask for a vote to extend the day beginning March, 8, and will ask for the Committee's support.

Mr. Brogioli asked if DESE had any new changes with the cafeteria.

Dr. Shaver-Hood shared that DESE just changed the directive for social distancing from 6 feet to 3 feet. They also stated additional changes are coming in the very near future.

Ms. Morgan expressed that everyone wants the students back, but it's important that we continue to look at the numbers after February vacation, and commended Wareham for being cautious.

Mr. Flaherty pointed out that a member of the public had a question, and at the discretion of the Chair, she can decide whether or not to allow the question to be asked.

Ms. Kearns asked why there was such a slow approach to returning and why is the District not adding Wednesdays?

The Superintendent responded that the District has an MOA that is being negotiated with the teachers, and Wednesday is listed in the MOA. As far as a slow approach, the school needs ample time to prepare and DESE made the announcement just today. The Superintendent concluded that if at any point COVID cases rise, we would stop the expansion, as her goal is to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Deanna Semple asked why the School Committee meets remotely?

The Chair responded that she would prefer the meeting to be in person and the only reason meetings are remote is the building that the School Committee meets in (MSC), is closed to the public. The Committee tried hybrid meetings in the fall, but the meeting did not run smoothly. The Chair has considered moving the meetings back to a school, but the schools are also closed to the public. That is the only reason why School Committee meets remotely.

Ms. Rossi asked about families who would still want to learn remotely.

Dr. Shaver-Hood responded that those families can continue remote if they so choose.

Bridget Kearns asked to speak again and expressed that she did not understand why Wareham is taking this very gradual approach, as it does not make sense to her, and wanted it explained better because she didn't feel the Superintendent was giving an adequate answer.

The Chair explained that the DESE guidelines only changed today.

The Superintendent thanked Ms. Kearns for sharing her opinion, and reiterated that she will be bringing a plan to the Committee for a vote.

Ms. Morgan shared that she works for another school district, and that district returned to full days, and are now operating fully remote because of the amount of Covid cases that occurred.

Ms. Kearns challenged Ms. Morgan asking her if she was confident that was the reason for Covid cases to rise.

The Chair responded that what was heard tonight is the Superintendent has committed to coming back to the Committee with an actual plan in two weeks. Now is the time to move forward and that's what the Superintendent has committed to do.

The Superintendent stated that keeping our staff and students safe is her priority, and she will not vary from that. Regardless of statistics, Wareham will stay the course, and is going to do the right thing for everyone.

Superintendent Goals 2020-2021:

Chair Bacchiocchi announced to the committee that they received a revised version of the goals. The Chair had asked the Superintendent to add something that the Committee could use to measure the goals. The Superintendent added the following:

- Access and provide students with opportunities for additional academic assistance.
- Addressing capital needs and some of the specific capital needs.

The Chair asked that the Committee vote on the goals tonight, and at a future date assign the indicators for the actual evaluation.

Dr. Schwamb indicated that in the self-assessment, the indicators are mentioned under each of the standards with evidence in every self-assessment. Everything that is related to those indicators is supported by evidence throughout the self-assessment.

The Chair suggested that the Committee would vote on the goals tonight, and at a future time, the Committee would vote to approve the indicators that she assigns to those goals.

Dr. Shaver-Hood agreed that it would make it more precise and easier to evaluate.

Mr. Brogioli made a motion to approve the Superintendent's Goals, seconded by Ms. Rossi.

Roll Call Vote: Kevin Brogioli -yea, Michael Flaherty - yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea and Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

VOTE: 5-0-0

The Chair explained that currently the supplement to the DESE form is used to weigh the goals. In the last few years the Committee hasn't made any changes to the weighing of the goals, but wanted to bring that subject up now in case anyone had any changes that they wanted to propose.

Mr. Flaherty suggested the Committee revisit this at a later date along with the indicators.

Report of School Committee:

Chair Bacchiocchi shared that the Elementary School Building Committee Projects Managers will attend the first meeting in March and give an update.

Any Other Business:

The Chair read a letter addressed to Governor Baker written by School Committee member Kevin Brogioli in show of support to the Teachers and Staff. Although it was not on the agenda to vote, she asked the committee if they would agree to sign.

Dear Governor Baker,

As elected town officials in charge of ensuring the safety and well-being of our staff and students, we are asking that you and our State Legislators allow our teachers, administrators, and school support staff to receive the Covid-19 vaccination as part of Phase I implementation.

We all want our students to return to school as quickly and safely as possible. We believe the vaccination of our staff would be an important step in making this return possible. It would be safer for our dedicated teachers and other essential support workers, helpful for all of our students, and beneficial for our parents and community.

We realize that vaccine supplies are currently limited and that everyone is trying their best in unprecedented and difficult times. Still, we believe schools should be a priority. This truly is in the best interest of our students who have lost valuable educational opportunities for too long.

Thank you for all the work you have done on behalf of the citizens of our State. Please assist our school staff members who have worked so diligently and courageously throughout this pandemic.

*Respectfully,
Members of the Wareham School Committee*

Ms. Morgan asked it if makes sense to include that others states made teachers a priority, as teachers should have been part of phase one. The Chair agreed to change the language in the first paragraph.

Mr. Flaherty announced that he would not be running for School Committee in the upcoming election.

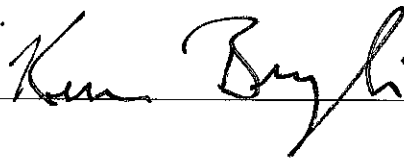
Mr. Brogioli made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Rossi.

Roll Call Vote: Kevin Brogioli -yea, Michael Flaherty - yea, Mary Morgan – yea, Apryl Rossi – yea and Chair Bacchiocchi – yea.

VOTE: 5-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____



List of Documents:

Agenda

Superintendent's Newsletter

Minutes January 7, 2021

Minutes January 21, 2021

2021-2022 School Calendar

End of Year Report

Budget Transfers

Superintendent's Goals

Vacancy Listing

Personnel List