

October 15, 2020
School Committee Meeting

A meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in Room 320 at the Multi-Service Center.

Call to Order/Roll Call:

Present from School Committee: Joyce Bacchiocchi, Michael Flaherty, Kevin Brogioli, and Apryl Rossi. Also in attendance: Dr. Kimberly Shaver-Hood, Superintendent, Dr. Andrea Schwamb, Assistant Superintendent, and Jamie Wiksten, Recording Secretary.

Absent: Mary Morgan

The meeting was called to order by Chair Joyce Bacchiocchi. She announced the meeting was broadcast live, recorded by WCTV, and audio recorded by Jamie Wiksten.

Chair Bacchiocchi lead us in the pledge of the allegiance.

Public Participation:

No public participation

Good News:

Mr. Brogioli noted there is now a Covid dashboard on the website that promotes transparency across the district.

Mr. Flaherty toured the new Elementary School and was able to view all of the areas of the building. He announced that the Selectmen voted in favor of recommending the citizen petition article to name the new school of Wareham – *Wareham Elementary School*, and it will be voted on at the next town meeting (date TBD).

Ms. Rossi commented that the school district once had six elementary schools and now will be housing all of our elementary students in one building.

Chair Bacchiocchi thanked everyone who made it possible to bring our students back into the schools on October 5.

Report of Student Representative:

Emily Roberge shared with the committee that students are thankful for the meals that are handed out. Miss Roberge shared that many clubs are meeting virtually. The Drama Club is producing an original musical. Sports are unfortunately not in session, with the exception of a few Wareham students participating in a cross-country training at a safe distance with the ORR school district.

Honor Society, Key Club and Student Council are helping with a trunk or treat event, which is a nice way to bring everyone together with safe distance.

Minutes of October 1, 2020 Meeting:

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Ms. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.
No further discussion.

yea – 4
nay – 0
abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Early Literacy Acquisitions:

Chair Bacchiocchi shared that this item was placed on the agenda by request of Ms. Morgan who had some questions and unfortunately was not able to be at the meeting.

Dr. Schwamb invited Carrie Thurston to attend the meeting via live zoom. Dr. Schwamb mentioned that she has answered questions about Carrie Thurston for the past four years, and expressed her curiosity as to what the issue is, when there is data that speaks to the work of Ms. Thurston.

Chair Bacchiocchi explained that an expense/bill that was generated prompted the question. The chair also mentioned for Mr. Brogioli's benefit, sharing the background of who Carrie Thurston is and what she does for the district would be beneficial.

Dr. Schwamb welcomed Carrie Thurston via live zoom and introduced the school committee to Ms. Thurston.

Dr. Schwamb explained that when she came to the school district in 2014-2015, she implemented a way to collect data from early elementary students using a system called FAST. The results: 64% students were low, 9% below, 23% average, and 4% above. There was a summer slide which was concerning and Dr. Schwamb was hearing that children were not prepared for grade level in Wareham.

A Superintendent from Maine who knew Carrie Thurston (previously a Special Education Teacher) recommended her services to Dr. Schwamb, and in February 2017 Dr. Schwamb brought Ms. Thurston to Wareham.

After Ms. Thurston began working with Wareham students, the average began to improve.
Dr. Schwamb continued that Ms. Thurston has brought to Wareham skills that are both automatic and fluent.

Dr. Schwamb stated that the plan has never been for Ms. Thurston to stay in Wareham forever. She would like her to make a concrete difference and then discontinue services. Dr. Schwamb shared that during next year; the school district hopes Ms. Thurston can stay through the transition of the move into the new Elementary School, pending on what happens during Covid.

Carrie Thurston explained that learning begins at the bottom of the pyramid. Ms. Thurston explained her program is about giving teachers tools and skillsets to tackle the lower part of the pyramid that were typically thought to require special education services.

Ms. Thurston shared that currently there is 0% regression in Grade 2 (35 students tested), and Wareham teachers were diligent in providing services March – June 2020.

Mr. Brogioli asked if the data was specifically FAST as an assessment tool.

Dr. Schwamb responded that Wareham has seen success in our test scores and mentioned that Grade 5 students did unbelievably well with their NWEA scores (MAP Growth), and Carrie Thurston works through Grade 4.

Mr. Brogioli asked what percentage of elementary teachers have been trained with Ms. Thurston, and Dr. Schwamb responded that all elementary teachers work with Ms. Thurston.

Mr. Thurston explained that the mindset behind the work, is working right beside the teachers in Grades PreK – 4, alongside the teacher and their students.

Dr. Schwamb shared unanticipated benefits that may be directly connected to Carrie Thurston are the special education numbers are now lower than the numbers have ever been. Referrals and students qualifying for services decreased each year, which equates to \$600,000 dollars in savings for the district, because the district is finding solutions for students to be successful.

Dr. Schwamb explained that Ms. Thurston's price has dropped, and her invoicing changed from three times per year, to twice per year. Overall, her total contractual cost is \$10,000 less this school year. She supported the summer BOOST program, she never charges for her professional development and is available 24 hours per day/7 days per week. Wareham is getting huge services for very little money.

Chair Bacchiocchi relayed Ms. Morgan's question. Ms. Morgan's question pertained to the expense, but the Chair felt it was explained that there would be a reduction of her services once the teachers are trained, and asked if there will still be a need to have Ms. Thurston's resources available. Dr. Schwamb responded that the district would do whatever is best for our students.

Dr. Schwamb stated that Wareham has very savvy teachers who have taken this on, created strategies, and Ms. Thurston has an intuitive understanding, supports the teachers, and has a gift that we are grateful to have her here in Wareham.

Dr. Schwamb shared that a Wareham Teacher shared that Ms. Thurston's professional development was in the top three PD courses that she has ever been to in her 30 years of teaching. Dr. Schwamb stated that she would hate to lose her and it would be detrimental to our students.

Mr. Flaherty feels the data speaks for itself and trusts Dr. Schwamb with the approach she has chosen.

Mr. Flaherty asked why Dr. Schwamb feels Wareham could lose Ms. Thurston.

Dr. Schwamb responded that she is constantly challenged for the services of Carrie Thurston when the program is changing our student's lives.

Mr. Flaherty has heard great things from Dr. Schwamb and the teachers, and the biggest complaint has always been that the staff wishes they could have more of Ms. Thurston. The Chair agreed with Mr. Flaherty and feels the results speak for themselves.

Carrie Thurston explained to the committee that she does work with student through Grade 7/8 in other districts, and if at any time Wareham would like to expand the training, Ms. Thurston will be ready for us.

School Calendar:

Dr. Shaver-Hood explained that there is a shift of the in-service days from Tuesdays to Wednesdays. This has been recommended because hybrid falls on Monday/Tuesday, so with the switch, in-service will not interrupt the students who attend hybrid on Tuesday.

Chair Bacchiocchi asked if this means professional development will be conducted remotely. Dr. Shaver-Hood confirmed this.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to amend the calendar, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Report of the Superintendent:

Dr. Shaver-Hood asked the committee to approve the payroll and bill warrants listed in Superintendent's Newsletter.

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

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Dr. Shaver-Hood reminded the committee that food distribution would continue throughout the school year. There are five locations for food distribution. Hybrid students are given food as they depart from the building.

Dr. Shaver-Hood shared with the committee that they received a list of capital items, and she will be happy to put this on a future agenda to discuss further. She explained that since Town Meeting was postponed, the school is anticipating there will be capital money given to the school district, which would be received in December.

Dr. Shaver-Hood mentioned the Fire Alarm System Replacement (\$249,750.00). She continued that it is getting difficult to find parts for repair of the current system. She explained there is going to come a time in the near future, that it will be need to be replaced. Dr. Shaver-Hood explained that there are some items that are not considered capital. Some of the items are overdue to be addressed, and she needed a way to make note of the items that the school district is aware of, and with enough money, the school will address.

Mr. Flaherty asked if the document was submitted to the capital planning board. Dr. Shaver-Hood responded yes.

Dr. Shaver-Hood shared that the school has been diligently working on HVAC since last May. One major project is ready at the High School, but waiting on parts and crane pick. This particular HVAC project does not connect with health and well-being of the air quality. Dr. Shaver-Hood also included that both the High School and Middle School need chillers replaced.

Mr. Flaherty asked when was the last time she was asked to appear of the Capital Planning.

Dr. Shaver-Hood responded that she was asked to appear earlier on this day at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Flaherty asked the Superintendent for a description of the PR Liaison posting (one position per school). Dr. Shaver-Hood explained that it is a Public Relations position; job responsibilities include collecting the good news and to publicize the information. It is an in-house stipend position, and anyone can apply for it.

Mr. Flaherty also asked about the Retention Report and asked if it is ready. Dr. Shaver-Hood responded that it is in the works and will be finalized soon.

Dr. Shaver-Hood shared that October is National Principals Month. Wareham has four principals who should be celebrated, who are doing an amazing job as the leaders of our buildings.

Dr. Shaver-Hood was excited to announce that Lieutenant Keegan Cahill, JROTC and honor student was awarded Legion of Valor for his countless hours of services, and excellence of academics. The army limits one award per 4000 cadets. This year, Keegan was one of 53 JROTC cadets presented this medal. On October 20, 2020 at 2:30 p.m., he will receive this medal, and this is the first time a JROTC student from Wareham will receive this award.

Dr. Shaver-Hood shared that we have completed our second week with hybrid students in the buildings. The school district is watching Covid numbers very closely, and Dr. Shaver-Hood is relieved that we have not had a Covid case to date. The Covid dashboard will be updated daily on the website.

Ms. Rossi asked what the plan is as the numbers continue to increase.

Dr. Shaver-Hood responded that she had a zoom meeting with the commissioner, and the commissioner is pushing students to go back. The rise in Covid numbers are not effecting schools. Some towns should be more aggressive to get their students back in.

Mr. Flaherty asked for the status on the cafeteria kitchens.

Dr. Shaver-Hood explained now that the schools are operating in hybrid, the furloughed employees were recalled, all cafeteria kitchens are open, and the savings have remained in food service.

Superintendent Evaluation Discussion:

The Chair explained that Mr. Harding (MASC trainer), expressed to the committee there was to be no penalizing a superintendent because of goals not met due to Covid. If there were a goal that could not be met due to Covid, there would be an adjustment made in the evaluation.

No further discussion.

Report of the School Committee.

Mr. Flaherty shared that the policy review committee met on October 7, 2020 via zoom. There were 12 voting members consisting of school committee members, administrators, teachers and parents.

Closing One School Building: FILE: EBCA

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the recommended amendments by the policy review committee. *Remove "all" in paragraph 2, and move the bullet paragraph beneath Decas, to fall under Wareham Middle School.*

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as amended, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4
Nay -0
Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Emergency Closings: FILE EBCC

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the recommended amendments by the policy review committee. Add "#5. *Or other extenuating circumstances.*"

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as amended, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea - 4
Nay -0
Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Emergency Health Procedures FILE EBDC

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the amendment as is, recommended by the policy review committee.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as is, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4
Nay -0
Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Bus transportation: FILE EEA

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the amendment as is, recommended by the policy review committee.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as is, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4
Nay -0
Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Online Instruction: FILE IGCB

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the recommended amendments by the policy review committee. *Remove "secondary" from line one, and change Grades 8-12 to Grades Pre K – 12.*

Chair Bacchiocchi asked how this policy would now apply to an elementary student.

Dr. Shaver-Hood responded that originally this policy was written for secondary online courses. She continued stating the school district now conducts online instruction/remote. Therefore, by expanding the policy to meet all grades, we are representing current operations.

Dr. Schwamb would like offer remote learning to all Prek-12 students. By extending the policy to all grades, WPS has opened the door for possibility that the district did not have before.

The Chair asked for a motion.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as amended, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4

Nay -0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Attendance Grades 8-12: File JEB

Mr. Flaherty explained that this policy was tabled. The section on "No Credit Policy" opened a discussion, and it was suggested to table the policy and invite Mr. Palladino to the next Policy Review Meeting to give justification to the policy.

Student Attendance: File JEE

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the recommended amendments by the policy review committee. *Remove "by semester" at the end of the last sentence.*

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as amended, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4

Nay -0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Empowered Digital Use: FILE JFAC

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the amendment as is, recommended by the policy review committee.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as is, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4

Nay -0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Security: Visitors to School Building: File KKB

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the recommended amendments by the policy review committee. *Add "Under certain conditions, the policy will defer to established procedures".*

Mr. Flaherty noted that the suggested amendment was to "defer to established procedures".

Dr. Schwamb wanted to make flexibility, by establishing procedures; the policy would not have to change during the pandemic.

Mr. Brogioli suggested that a new policy for Covid related issues would help protect policies like this.

The Chair asked for a motion to approve as amended.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as amended, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4

Nay -0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Emergency Plans: File EBC

Mr. Flaherty asked the committee to approve the amendment as is, recommended by the policy review committee.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to adopt the policy as is, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Yea – 4

Nay -0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

POLICY ON COVID –RELATED ISSUES - Discussion

Chair Bacchiocchi mentioned there is a new policy that can be adopted by the school committee. She mentioned that the next meeting is in three weeks, and by that time, the committee should be ready to vote on the policy.

Mr. Flaherty clarified that the school committee is following the policy that the Chair had implemented; all new policies are brought to a meeting for a discussion, followed by a meeting for a vote.

Elementary School Building Committee:

Webcams are on the website and showing live what is happening in the building.

Resolutions:

Ms. Rossi read the final paragraph of each resolution, followed by discussion and a vote from the committee members. Mr. Flaherty reminded the committee that the committee is not obligated to vote on each resolution.

Resolution 1: MCAS AND HIGH STAKES TESTING

Chair asked for a motion to approve Resolution 1.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to approve Resolution 1, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

Discussion: Mr. Brogioli responded that if we hold students harmless, he does not know how valid the testing would be if the testing were held harmless. Mr. Flaherty pointed out that the resolution consists of three years without MCAS testing.

All in favor of approving the resolution as stated:

Yea – 3

Nay – 1 (Mr. Flaherty)

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 3-1-0

Resolution 2: Covid -19 State Funding

Mr. Flaherty motioned to approved, seconded by Ms. Rossi

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Resolution 3: School Committee Anti-Racism Resolution

Ms. Rossi made a motion to approve as is, seconded by Mr. Brogioli.

The Chair asked for further discussion. Ms. Rossi feels our district is already practicing resolution 3, as we have the luxury of a diverse town, which primarily sees no color.

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Resolution 4: Lowering the Voting Age for Municipal Elections

Ms. Rossi moved to approve Resolution 4 as is, seconded by no one.

Ms. Rossi will abstain from Resolution 4 at the delegate meeting, as the committee was silent and there was no vote.

Resolution 5: Supporting Increased Federal Support and Stimulus Funding for Public K – 12 Education

Mr. Flaherty agreed that more money is needed, but questioned if taxes would go up.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to approve the resolution as is, seconded by Mr. Brogioli

Yea – 2 (Ms. Rossi, Mr. Brogioli)

Nay – 2 (Chair Bacchiocchi, Mr. Flaherty)

Abstain – 0

VOTE: 2-2-0

Tie. Ms. Rossi will remain silent at the delegate meeting for Resolution 5

Resolution 6: Retention of Medicaid Revenue

A vote to move to discussion was made by Mr. Flaherty, seconded by Mr. Rossi

Dr. Shaver-Hood does not get any of the money back from Medicaid; the funds are given to the town. Mr. Flaherty confirmed that this resolution would force the money to be returned to the school.

All those in favor of Resolution 6:

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Resolution 7: Attempts by US DOE to direct funding to private schools

Mr. Brogioli made a motion to approve resolution 7, second by Ms. Rossi

Mr. Flaherty asked what the resolution does. Ms. Rossi responded that the US Secretary has inappropriately intercepted language in the recently enacted Covid-19 relief.

All those in favor:

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Resolution 8: Membership of a school committee member on the board of elementary and secondary education.

Mr. Flaherty made a motion to approve Resolution 8, seconded by Ms. Rossi

All those in favor:

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Resolution 9: Providing Equity for sexual orientation LGBTQ+ Students, Teachers and Staff

A motion to approve was made by Ms. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Flaherty

Discussion: Mr. Flaherty asked how the resolution is different from today. Ms. Rossi responded that she believes it fall within the language, making it all encompassing, not only LGB, but now including LGBTQ+, sexual and gender identity. The Chair responded that she interpreted it that the information was true in the state of Massachusetts, but not federally, but this is to petition it on a federal level.

All those in favor:

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Resolution 10: Relative to the monitoring of the attendance of students during the pandemic.

Mr. Flaherty motioned to move to discussion, seconded by Ms. Rossi.

Mr. Flaherty asked Dr. Shaver-Hood her opinion on the accountability requirements of attendance.

The Chair asked if the Superintendent already received guidance from DESE for attendance.

Dr. Shaver-Hood confirmed that there is a lot of guidance from DESE in how to code attendance. She responded that due to circumstances, a child might not be able to get online when a teacher is online. She explained there is a struggle with the flexibility and understanding that a student is present, even when checking in takes place at a different time than expected.

Ms. Rossi feels that Wareham has the online in motion and concessions for families, including simultaneous online instruction. She believes the resolution is a protection of the coding, not to affect a child's attendance record.

Mr. Brogioli explained that the attendance could affect the schools rating, and in light of the pandemic, this resolution would help to give schools a break.

Dr. Schwamb explained that this measure is new and accountability was added to attendance a number of years ago, which is something schools cannot control.

All those in favor:

Yea – 4

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

Ms. Rossi will attend the meeting via zoom (300 districts) and looks forward to reporting at the next meeting following the delegate assembly.

Chair to release the Executive Session Minutes:

The following executive sessions were released: February 3, 2020, March 20, 2020, and June 3, 2020.

Any other business:

The Chair noted that next meeting is in three weeks on Thursday, November 5, 2020.

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

Yea -- 4

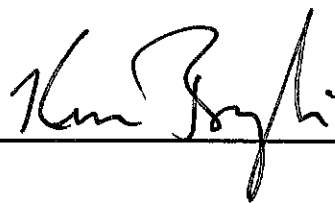
Nay -- 0

Abstain -- 0

VOTE: 4-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



List of Documents;

Superintendent's Newsletter, Votes and Discussion, October 1, 2020 Minutes Draft, Amended School Calendar 2020-20219, Proposed School Calendar DRAFT 2020-2021, Summative Evaluation Report of the Superintendent (form), Wareham Public Schools Evaluation 2019-2020 (form), Superintendent's Goals 2019-2020, Policies: File EBCA, EBCC, IGCB, JEE, KKB,EBDC, EEA, JFAC, EBC, JEB, EBC-S, Resolutions, Flow Chart 2020-2021, Policy Review Meeting Schedule, Vacancy List, and Personnel List