

WOBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
June 9, 2020

A Remote Meeting of the Woburn School Committee was held on June 9, 2020, beginning at 7:30 pm.

Chairperson Crowley took a moment of reflection for families in our community that may be suffering due to the Coronavirus.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Chisholm-Present, Ms. Cormier-Present, Mr. Kisiel-Present, Mr. Lipsett-Present, Mr. Mulrenan-Present, Dr. Wells-Present, Chairperson Crowley-Present

APPROVAL OF RECORDS

A motion was made to approve 5.5.20 SC Minutes.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

REPORTS/PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF

Dr. Crowley wanted to take this time to share with the committee what we learned during remote learning. Ms. Sprague, Ms. Young and Ms. Judkins put together a presentation on remote learning highlights.

Remote Learning Highlights

Ms. Sprague began by saying one of the things they quickly learned as they all worked together is that professional development and collaboration were going to be an important piece to make this somewhat manageable.

Professional Development

Tech Sessions:

24 different topics, over 44 hours total (very well attended)

Daily staff drop-in support sessions

Professional Development

Writing

Special Education

RBT (paraprofessional)

Collaboration

Drop-in planning sessions
Grade-level/department collaboration
Sharing successful models for remote learning

Chairperson Crowley interjected for a moment to remind the audience that is listening that this meeting is being recorded. If you are showing your face you will be recorded on Woburn Public Media. This meeting is not being live streamed tonight but will be available immediately after the meeting.

Remote Learning Format Review

High School: Rotating schedule M-Th
Office Hours and Support on Friday
Google Classroom

Middle School: Rotating schedule M-Th
Office Hours and Support on Friday
Google Classroom

Elementary: Google Meets M-Th
Daily Office Hours
Choice Boards
Google Classroom/Seesaw

Special Education: Providing direct services

English Language Learners: Meeting with students

Parent Survey:

Successes:

What has been the most beneficial to your child during this time of remote learning?

Challenges:

What has been the most challenging for you and/or your student(s) regarding remote learning?

Solutions:

What could Woburn Public Schools do to provide a better remote learning experience?

Supports:

What else, if not addressed above, does your child need to be supported educationally or emotionally while not physically attending school?

We had 1187 respondents representing 1931 students. The responses were evenly split throughout the grade levels.

Some of the survey information was shared before, through this work the themes were:

Consistency Organization Connections and Support

CONSISTENCY

Positive things that parents reported:

- Facetime Support
- Accountability & Feedback

Things we need to improve upon:

- Variable use and length of live teaching time
- Different platforms/sites used in remote learning.

Possible Solutions:

- Identify developmentally appropriate digital learning platform by grade level
- Create templates for digital learning platforms for consistency.

ORGANIZATION

Positive things that parents reported:

- Identified successful models for live meetings
- Multiple days to complete assignments

Things we need to improve upon:

- Overlapping live meeting times (household)
- Student focus/routine/motivation
- Parent balancing work/student support

Possible Solutions:

- Amplify successful models
- One device per student (updated tech capital)
- Coordinating meet times district-wide at elementary level
- Professional Development on best practices for asynchronous vs. synchronous learning
- Centralize shared teacher resources (Atlas)

CONNECTIONS AND SUPPORT

Positive things that parents reported:

- Teachers going above and beyond to connect with students
- Family time/Shared learning experience
- Access to counselors

Things we need to improve upon:

- Smaller group meetings (need more consistency)
- Creativity/balance of on-screen and off-screen tasks
- Differentiation of instruction to meet diverse learners

Possible Solutions:

- Create remote learning live session schedule to allow for smaller group meets
- Curate “off-screen” resources that support curriculum
- Expand project-based learning opportunities for students

UPDATED TECH CAPITAL

Meeting the Challenges of Remote Learning

Ms. Jenn Judkins walked the committee through an updated version of the Tech Capital with a focus on the student device piece. This makes up the most significant portion of the technology capital budget.

We had a lot of feedback from parents and the challenges with children sharing a device.

We're looking at the option of proposing a 1:1 option for children for the fall which should be doable given we have existing inventory. The options are to purchase them outright which was proposed in the initial technology capital presentation a couple of months back. In looking at the need to purchase devices more quickly and accelerate our device goals, it makes sense to look at a lease option for this because the cost of leasing a device is quite low, it is about a 6% premium or so per device. If you look at the total cost over the four years and then we would own them at the end of the lease. The purchase options for Chromebooks which will make up the bulk of our fleet of student devices would be \$270.00 each if we were to purchase them outright and that does include the case. Ms. Judkins removed the insurance cost because her team has been doing a great job of repairing devices in house. She feels it is reasonable to remove that cost to bring the total cost down. If we are looking at a leasing model the same devices are another \$15.00 over the course of 4 years or \$284.00/ea or \$71.00/year. Ms. Judkins feels the difference is pretty insignificant in that it helps to level out the cost of this instead of having such a high upfront cost. These would be leased to own so we would take ownership in the fourth year. Kindergarten students are going to be more successful on a Tablet device. Ms. Judkins feels we should plan to purchase Tablet's for that grade. We need them anyway for K and 1 ideally in the classroom when things resume to normal. Ms. Judkins feels the first graders can get by with the Chromebook, they can navigate it. In the short term we would need some additional iPad's in addition to the ones we already have in inventory. If we were to purchase that outright it would be just under \$56,000 to purchase the additional iPad's needed for kindergartners. In grades 1-12 the recommendation for the short term would be Chromebook's for those students. In a 1:1 model that would look like an additional 2400 devices; this is going to supplement our existing inventory of 1800 that we could deploy. We have deployed quite a bit of those already but we would continue to whittle down that inventory. The cost of that would be around \$170,000 per year for 4 years (lease). The total capital cost for next year for devices would be \$226,350. That would be an outright purchase for Tablet's and then a 4 year lease on the Chromebook devices. Ms. Judkins feels it is important to not just think about the short term goal but the long term goal. When Ms. Judkins put together her 5 year capital plan which she shared with the committee a few months back, she was looking at building up her inventory to these goals:

Device Goals - Long Term

Grades 2-12

Gr 6-12 1:1 - take home in HS only = 2100 devices

Gr 4 & 5 - 1:1 on carts = 800 devices

Gr 2 & 3 - 2:1 on carts = 500 devices

Total Maintained Student CB inventory = 3750

Grades K & 1

Tablet (iPad)

8/classroom = 290

Approx. Annual Recurring Cost to maintain device goals: \$268k

Doing a lease allows us to accelerate the buildup of the inventory count so we can meet the needs for remote learning. Ms. Judkins thinks because our teachers have been using technology so intensively when school resumes in a normal way their expectations and demand for technology is only going to be greater. She thinks it makes sense to accelerate this process.

FY 21 Capital request - the actual total capital request is actually \$200,000 less than she had initially requested. This is because it is going to be a recurring cost over time. When Ms. Judkins came to the committee a few months back; she was looking at \$685,000 in total capital. We are looking at \$485,000 for next year which \$226,000 is for the mobile devices, \$150,000 for the projector replacements which is a significant need and \$74,000 is our portion of the E-rate spending to make infrastructure upgrades; primarily to update our internet service.

Chairperson Crowley opened it up to questions from the school committee.

Mrs. Chisholm asked if a parent could purchase insurance for their device if they wanted to.

Ms. Judkins replied yes, she can make an insurance portal available where parents can have the option to insure the device. What this would do is offset the cost if there were to be a repair they had incurred. Her intention is that the devices would only be going home at the high school level. She is not advocating that they go home earlier. The annual cost is based on a life expectancy of a Chromebook lasting 4 years because they change classes and are more likely to drop them.

These will also include cases so there will be less damage but there will be damage and there will be loss. With in-house repair the cost to families is lower too because we are just charging them for the parts as opposed to the flat cost the insurance company would charge us.

Dr. Wells asked the administration how effective is the learning, how are we evaluating that?

How are we going to ensure we are doing the most effective type of learning?

Ms. Sprague said that is a really good question and a topic of conversation she has had in multiple groups. Right now individual teachers as they normally would are looking at the students work and providing feedback. Moving forward when the commissioner comes out with guidance we want to form a group to look and reflect on what we have done so far, we want to survey our staff and some of our secondary students to see their perspective on remote learning. Also, we have had discussions on the assessments that we do; moving forward to the fall we will have to analyze that data so we can appropriately address the needs of our students moving forward.

Dr. Wells asked if there are thoughts there is going to have to be online assessments?

Ms. Sprague said yes there is going to have to be online assessments, how that is going to look, we are not sure right now. That is part of our planning to look at that. There will be requirements from DESE too.

Dr. Wells asked Ms. Judkins, why do we need to have projectors?

Ms. Judkins considers the projector a really essential piece of classroom teaching equipment. Even teaching in a 1:1 environment it is preferable to have the kids screens down and have them more engaged as opposed to being behind a screen. It provides a better shared learning experience. She does not see getting away for the projectors.

Mr. Lipsett asked Ms. Sprague if she anticipates any additional needs in professional development to help teachers adjust to a project based approach if that is something we are going to be focusing on if we have to remain online or not.

Ms. Sprague replied that there is going to be staff that need some support and they have been working on project based learning over the last year or so; it is not that unknown to people. She feels the bigger challenge to figure out as we move forward are which platforms we will need that will be the most successful in helping teachers support the learning they need to provide to the students.

Mr. Kisiel asked what the family's responsibility is for a complete loss of a device.

Ms. Junkins said in other districts they would charge the full price of the device. Usually the most common damage is screen damage. They are making screens more durable. If it is a manufacturing related issue like a key stops working, that is not considered accidental damage and we would not charge parents for that. Typically you would have an adjusted rate, usually half the rate of the repair for students on free and reduced lunch.

Ms. Cormier asked Ms. Judkins if it is still accurate that we will no longer need to maintain computer labs. Ms. Judkins said there are a few computer labs that will need to be maintained; art graphic labs, world language labs and the cab labs. Her capital budget reflects this. She has the labs still in there and Ms. Judkins had planned on not replacing the labs anyway because we were anticipating the 1:1's at the high school.

Ms. Cormier asked if we currently have Wi-Fi hotspots.

Ms. Judkins said we do not have this currently, it is in her operating budget for next year and we would have it in place for the fall. This is a hot item as you can't get them right now. Ms. Judkins feels this is an important piece to any 1:1 program. We would have about 20 of them to start.

Chairperson Crowley thanked Ms. Sprague for her presentation; she really liked how it was solution based. Going forward she is excited to see innovation. She also thanked Ms. Judkins.

Updates from Administration

Dr. Crowley mentioned he is on weekly calls with the commissioner of the state of Mass.

They were led to believe that the guidance from the state would come out at some point next week. We will follow the guidance and Dr. Crowley expects the plan to be relatively prescriptive. He does not believe there will be a lot of district discretion as it relates to the plan. Dr. Crowley said this Friday the elementary schools are doing drive by pickup of all belongings. The week of the 15th the Kennedy will be doing pickups and the week of the 22nd will be the Joyce. The high school is also arranging for students to come in and get their belongings. We will be following all protocols.

DISCUSSION -framework for Superintendent Evaluation

Chairperson Crowley presented a framework.

She began by saying the committee normally likes to evaluate the Superintendent in public at the last meeting. Given everything that is going on Chairperson Crowley asked the committee if they would be amenable to do it in the second week of July. The Superintendent would provide the data and the structure for the evaluation at our next meeting and then we would evaluate him in public in July. Two major things for the committee's consideration; one is that we might be able to do that meeting in person vs. ZOOM and secondly since everything is going to change or not in June it might give the Superintendent space to deal with the management of the school vs. the school committee's evaluation.

Mr. Mulrenan spoke as Chair of the Personnel subcommittee; he does not know if we can even do this in the fall. He feels this administration has been working their butts off. He feels Dr. Crowley will say he will get this done, but he would like the Superintendent to have some breathing room.

Chairperson Crowley has discussed this with the Superintendent. There is a DESE deadline on submitting evaluations. Coming from a discussion with Dr. Crowley it is July/August and Dr. Crowley agreed it could be the middle of July.

Chairperson Crowley asked if any of the members objected to this. There were no objections so Dr. Crowley and Chairperson Crowley will work out a framework of how the process will work. Dr. Wells asked if there is any guidance from the state on how to fairly evaluate a superintendent based on what has happened this year.

Chairperson Crowley said the regulations have not changed. They might by July so that is another reason to wait.

Dr. Wells said it is not fair for anybody to be evaluated on a plan that was disrupted by unexpected occurrences.

Chairperson Crowley said that we will not do the evaluation on the last meeting in June; we will do it sometime in July. She will update the committee of any developments with MASC.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Student Services and Achievement Subcommittee

Ms. Cormier said they met on June 4th.

Extended School Year (ESY) enrollments will be remote, 10a-12p (nothing in person due to safety). Will provide as much face-to-face instruction as possible.

The local food pantry opened May 25th. Families can only go once per month so supplemental food from the district has been very helpful. New families have been reaching out to Adriana.

Six families have newly applied for SNAP, which will provide \$56,000 in reimbursement to the district. Free lunch eligible families receive EBT/EBT-F \$28.50 per week. Adriana is doing delicate relationship work to support qualified families who may be reluctant to sign up for fear of repercussions. Adriana has been trained on how to connect families to the Virtual Gateway for SNAP/Mass Health/Transitional Assistance and her position has already paid for itself.

The next ELPAC will be held on June 22nd at 6:30 PM.

Finance Subcommittee

Mrs. Chisholm said they met on 6.9.20.

They reviewed the list of bills.

Dr. Wells made a motion to approve the list of bills.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Athletic fees — with all that is going on the subcommittee made a motion that we do not want to pursue fees for the 2020-21 school year.” Further discussion on athletic fees — a motion was made that we bring this to the full committee and see if there is support to endorse adding the fees to our students. The amount of time that would be needed to bring data back, survey folks etc. would be wasted if there is no support to begin with. We can revisit it at a later date if the committee feels necessary.

Dave Dunkley updated the subcommittee on the athletic field at the HS. There was a misunderstanding on the vote of the committee and the bid was put out, accepted and is on the Mayor's desk. We had voted to accept the bid and the contractor was willing to hold the price until next year, and we would have it completed by July 2021. The Mayor is willing to allow us to take 200k out of this year's savings to have the work completed this summer. We would need another vote for this to happen.

One issue would be that they were due to start after July 4th and it could take 6 weeks — which would interfere with the now scheduled graduation for our seniors on July 25th.

Mr. Dunkley said the bid did come back and with everything we are just under \$600,000 and that is what we were planning for. Mr. Dunkley spoke with the Superintendent and Mr. Elia that we were going to have a problem with getting the field started on the Monday after July 4th. Both of them said the committee has put this on hold. Mr. Dunkley then notified the purchasing agent not to move forward with awarding the contract because of their desire not to do the job at this time. A couple of days later Mr. Dunkley received a call from Mayor Galvin asking what was happening. Mr. Dunkley told Mayor Galvin the committee decided to hold off right now, and he

mentioned he doesn't understand why, this isn't a budget issue, we have \$400,000 that we can take out of the field renovation account, and we can take \$200,000 in savings from this year and use towards the field. Mr. Dunkley has spoken with the contractor, and he will hold the pricing for next July however he needs the contract signed. So we need to move forward with the contract to hold the pricing.

Mrs. Chisholm commented we have to decide whether to go forward with the completion of the field but either way there might be an issue with timing if we wait until the 4th. What do we do for the kids who already missed out and if we do have a high school graduation and can't use the field where would we have it? Would they be able to do the field after July 25th?

Mr. Dunkley said they would be able to do this after July 25th and he was in the process of setting up a meeting to discuss the logistics. If they had the go ahead and the contract was signed the material could be there, so they could start the field the Monday after July 4th. They would just do the field, have graduation, and then we would do the track. We could also do the whole job after graduation but that could impact mid-August if the kids are able to come back for their fall camps. If we did it all after July 25th the track and field will be completed for September 1st.

Mr. Dunkley updated the subcommittee on the dugouts- the budget was 45k and the bid came in just under 60k. The Mayor is working on getting the extra 15k to complete the entire dugout project. The next day Mr. Dunkley received a phone call from Charlie Doherty. He said the mayor found the money; it is from some of our left over capital. Mr. Dunkley said fine take it out of this line, which was for roll-up doors for the cafeteria, which the project is done and complete.

We can move forward and get this job done. Initially, when we were talking about funding the field, we were taking \$400k out of the field rental account — we had around \$68k left over in some capital items from the last couple of years when the projects were completed. We were also going to use money from the energy reserve. The mayor at that time said we can do it with the \$200k out of the savings for this year. Mr. Dunkley gave Charlie Doherty the go ahead to take \$15k out of one of our old capital lines, so we could complete that contract and get that project going.

Mrs. Chisholm asked Mr. Dunkley what his recommendation would be, should we wait until after graduation?

Mr. Dunkley recommended we wait until after graduation, there may be an impact with kids being able to get onto that field mid-August, but we have the back practice field, we have the baseball field where they can practice on, we do have the soccer fields behind the Joyce. The field and track will be done by September 1st.

Dr. Wells made a motion to carry out the field repair this year beginning after the graduation date of July 25th and we fund it as described by Mr. Dunkley.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

Dr. Wells on the motion, he wants to be clear on one of our concerns about doing it this year; we were very concerned about the uncertainties coming up in the fall, and we didn't want to expend money that we may need in the fall, but he is assuming since the Mayor is saying the money is

available now that he understands that we may need money in the fall and that he may be willing to help us in that case. We just want to make sure that it is clearly understood that this doesn't alleviate the potential need for funds for the fall for unknown circumstances.

Mrs. Cormier on the motion, if for some reason graduation is pushed out again would we be able to adjust this date?

Mr. Dunkley said we will have to look at this again and figure out a plan if this should happen.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Chairperson Crowley stated this motion passes and as described by the Mayor's description of the funding mechanism the school committee approved to go forward with the field renovation this summer.

Policy Subcommittee

Mr. Kisiel said they did not meet but we need to take 4 policies off the table.

JB: Equal Educational Opportunity

JFABD: Homeless Students Enrollment Rights and Services

JFABE: Educational Opportunities for Military Children

JFABF: Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care

Mr. Mulrenan made a motion to remove the 4 policies off the table.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Mr. Kisiel stated the subcommittee did make a motion to move forward with these policies in a vote 3-0.

Dr. Baldassarre added a lot of the policies are derived from MASC, and he recommends approval.

Mr. Kisiel made a motion to approve these policies and put them in the policy manual.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passes 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Mr. Kisiel is hoping to meet next week with his subcommittee regarding the following policies: Fundraising, Student Travel and Public Comments

Mrs. Chisholm asked Mr. Kisiel to resend those policies to members.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairperson Crowley received 3 emails from the following people: Laura-Jean Costa, Carrie Johnson and Shauna Pulley.

Ms. Costa and Ms. Johnson had similar concerns about the timing of the Woburn Public Schools response to the racial injustice that has been going on in this country. Dr. Crowley had released a statement after we received these emails, and they crossed. Dr. Crowley did submit a statement to the Woburn community inviting them to have more discussion on racism and condemning racism in the Woburn Public Schools. Ms. Pulley had concerns about our curriculum; she indicated she would like to speak at public comment at our next meeting.

Chairperson Crowley made a motion to enter these emails into the public record. Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passes 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Mr. Lipsett sent the committee a communication asking the school committee to consider the following resolution:

Resolution on Affirmation of Support for Staff, Students, and Community Members of Color
He feels there is at least a need for discussion on systemic change in a lot of things that we do as a society. Multiple committees are going to be considering this resolution in the upcoming weeks. Mr. Lipsett took that language and adjusted it a little to fit Woburn's specific circumstances. The resolution talks about a need to promote the needs and safety of staff and students of color. To support efforts within the classroom to engage students of diverse backgrounds. Most importantly to listen to the voices, experiences, and critiques of students, staff, and community members of color and take such action based upon their input and with their involvement that is necessary. Woburn is a community that is changing. People come to Woburn from different parts of the country and different parts of the world, with so many experiences and backgrounds. We need to be responsive to the needs of our students and community. Mr. Lipsett is offering this resolution as a starting point to signal to administration and to the public that this is something we want to make sure we are doing systemically in the Woburn Public Schools.

Mr. Mulrenan made a motion to table the resolution.

Ms. Cormier made a motion to adopt the resolution as read.

Motion was seconded.

Ms. Chisholm commented that Mr. Mulrenan wanted to table the resolution. She asked him if there was a reason; did he want to forward this to a subcommittee.

Mr. Mulrenan was concerned as this item was not on the agenda for tonight. The MASC is distributing this resolution to many school committees. He feels if it is on the table tonight, it has been adapted to the Woburn district, he thinks it is acceptable to go ahead and pass the resolution. If need be we can always backtrack and remove it and go through the proper channels if anybody has a problem with this down the road.

Chairperson Crowley said we can look upon this favorably and then officially adopt this after the public side has seen this.

Mr. Lipsett was planning at the next Curriculum subcommittee meeting hoping to invite members of the Embrace club as well as Ms. Pulley and others in the community to speak on these issues. It is possible that some of this language may be adjusted.
Mr. Mulrenan made a motion the school committee favorably adopts this resolution in principle. Mr. Lipsett will review it with the community and bring it back to the full committee as a finished work product.
Chairperson Crowley asked Ms. Cormier if she is ok with this adaptation of her motion. Ms. Cormier responded yes.
Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Chairperson Crowley said the only reason the committee is not adopting this very important resolution tonight is because it was not an agenda item. The committee is favorably looking on this unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

For the purposes of strategy in litigation and/or collective bargaining.
Mr. Mulrenan made a motion to enter into the executive session.
Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Entered into executive session at 9:19 PM

Chairperson Crowley announced we are back in public session, no votes were taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn.
Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Mrs. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Cormier-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Lipsett-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairperson Crowley-yes

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean MacLeod

Jean MacLeod

Recording Secretary

