

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
May 3, 2022
Remote Online Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Those present included Chair Catherine Mirick, Vice Chair Linda Chow, Secretary Leda Eizenberg, members Melissa Martin and Craig Mack; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent Sandy Trach; Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Mahr; Director of Student Services Sarah Orlov; and Student Advisory representatives Ivy Wang, Sofia Dobado, Evelyn Harrison, and Abraham Budson-McQuilken.

Ms. Mirick announced that the meeting is being held remotely and recorded by local media and broadcast live by Wellesley Media.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no speakers.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Mirick stated that Town Meeting finally concluded after seven nights over five weeks. The FY23 budget was approved as presented. She added that Article 44 regarding prioritizing academic excellence did not pass. She noted it did engender interesting discussions that will continue. Additionally, there is a meeting regarding an update on Hunnewell construction logistics for abutters at 7:00 tonight, which Ms. Mirick will attend.

Ms. Martin stated she had a number of reports related to Conversations with the School Committee at various schools, Office Hours, and others; however due to the meeting's tight timeframe, she will defer to next week's meeting. She provided a brief update on the Hardy project. The design team will present the detailed design at the May 10 meeting and a vote will be taken the following meeting to support the design.

Ms. Eizenberg offered a shoutout to Jacey Shumaker, Speech and Language Pathologist at Upham. She applied for a grant from the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism Joey's Fund Grant Program for a core communication board. It was delivered last week and the students and families are very excited to have it as part of the playground. She noted it is a testament to the above and beyond commitment of WPS teachers.

Ms. Chow stated the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) took up the lacrosse practice wall at the Sprague field complex a few weeks ago. They are continuing discussions in determining their role in the approval of the installation. The School Committee voted in November 2019 to approve its installation. She shared the letter the Committee prepared for the ZBA last year that summarized forums held with neighbors and abutters and the work that had been done.

Mr. Mack stated he will also defer outreach he received from Town Meeting to the next meeting due to time constraints. He acknowledged Ms. Wang and her contributions to Town Meeting, noting it was wonderful to see young folks engaged in the civic process.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Lussier noted this was Teacher Appreciation Week and he wanted to honor and recognize the amazing work of educators in WPS. He stated PTOs and PTSOs organized lunch and other things on a daily basis for the educators. He added so much is always asked of educators, even more is being asked of them now, and they are incredibly committed to the students.

He offered the following recognitions:

Performing Arts Director Michael LaCava congratulates several High School Performing Arts Ensembles that participated in State Music Festivals and returned with some Top Honors. On March 26th, the WHS 2:00 Jazz Band participated in the MAJE (Massachusetts Association of Jazz Educators) State Jazz Band Finals at Norwood High School. The Jazz Band received a Silver Medal for their outstanding performance! In addition to the overall award, Teddy dePeyster (trumpet) was selected by the judges for an Outstanding Musicianship Award.

On April 1st, the WHS Wind Ensemble performed at the MICCA (Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association) State Concert Band Festival. The Wind Ensemble performed three selections and were awarded a Gold Medal (Superior Rating) for their performance. By receiving this award, the Wind Ensemble was invited to participate in the MICCA "Gold Medal Showcase" on April 10th. Following the Wind Ensemble, the WHS Orchestras also participated in the MICCA State Festival. Sinfonia and Honors Chamber Orchestra both performed and both groups received Gold Medals. This is the first time in recent years that both of the orchestras received the Superior ratings. Both ensembles were also invited to participate in the MICCA "Gold Medal Showcase".

On Saturday, April 30th, Wellesley High School hosted the annual MAJE Jazz Combo and Jazz Vocal Festival. The WHS Jazz Instrumental Combo received a Silver Medal for their performance. Members Ben Harris, Sebastian Papa and Alex Hosking received Outstanding Musicianship Awards. The WHS Rice Street singers received a Gold Medal for their performance, and Molly Gandler, Brendan Althoff, and Alex Hoskyns received Outstanding Musicianship Awards. By receiving a Gold Medal, the Rice Street singers will be showcased at the MAJE Jazz Gold Medal Showcase being held at the Hatch Shell in Boston on Sunday, May 15th. In addition, the judges invited the WHS Jazz Combo to also perform at the Hatch Shell in Boston so both ensembles will have the opportunity to play at and be featured at this state event!

Congratulations to all of our students and staff members on their recent success!

From WHS Department Head of Science & Technology Engineering Nora Wilkins:
Congratulations to the Wellesley High School Women of Science club teams that recently competed in the annual Women of STEM competition at Bedford High School. The teams competed in various science challenges to win scholarships. The WHS women's teams placed 10th and 1st place out of 32 teams, making it the third year in a row where Wellesley women have been champions! Congratulations to the Women of STEM and their advisor Dani Fuchs!

From Drew Kelton, WHS Assistant Principal and Fiske Principal Rachel McGregor:
Congratulations to WPS Alum Blake Lothian (Class of 2021) who participated and completed his first race in his debut appearance at the NASCAR Camping World Truck series in early April. Blake recently visited Fiske elementary to share with students his story and how he uses growth mindset to focus on where he needs to improve to reach the next level. We wish him good luck in his competitions.

STUDENT ADVISORY REPORT

Ms. Harrison stated the student representatives have been working with a student affiliate group of Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). The first official conference of the Massachusetts Association of Student Representatives (MASR) will be held May 14. They will have the opportunity to talk to representatives from around the state and meet members of MASC. She noted they will bring updates back to the Committee.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes - March 8 and March 22, 2022

Gift Acceptances

NE Medical Billing Invoice 3/31/22

Trip Approval - Peru 2023

Thom Carter, K-12 Director of Art, joined the Committee and offered an overview of the requested trip to Peru. He stated WPS has never had an art trip to South America. Students will go to an artist village and see working artists. They will learn to weave baskets and ceramics students will learn how to throw. They will see the history of the Incas, kayak on a lagoon, and take close up photography of birds.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

MOVED: Ms. Eizenberg; SECONDED: Ms. Chow; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SCHOOL PHYSICIAN CONTRACT

Dr. Lussier explained there are a few positions and appointments that fall under the purview of the School Committee and the School Physician is one of them.

Ms. Orlov stated the current School Physician, Dr. Gail Kraft, has served WPS for 35 years and will be stepping away from the role at the end of this year. She noted WPS is very grateful for her years of service and support to students. She then introduced Dr. Karen Sadler, who will begin the role as of July 1, pending contract approval. Dr. Sadler is a highly regarded local pediatrician who has been practicing medicine for 37 years and is affiliated with multiple area hospitals. In 2022 she was named one of Boston Magazine's Best Pediatricians for the sixth year. Ms. Orlov then explained what a School Physician does. It is a required position for all school districts in Massachusetts. The physician plays an integral part of school health by providing support and training to the Director of Nursing and school nurses. She acts as a liaison to physicians in the community on a variety of health-related issues and engages in clinical consultation and broader health policy consultation. She signs medical orders at the beginning of the year and provides physicals and vaccinations for new students who may not yet have a physician. She added it is a critical role and WPS is very fortunate to have Dr. Sadler. Dr. Sadler stated she has been in the school health world since 2002 when she joined Framingham and now works with several districts. She noted each school is different and she finds the work very rewarding, as she has been in academic medicine and it is nice to be out into communities.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to approve the School Physician contract as presented and authorize Catherine Mirick to sign on behalf of the School Committee.

MOVED: Mr. Mack; SECONDED: Ms. Martin; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCEMENT - LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Dr. Lussier stated districts are required to approve a 185-day calendar each year, knowing there must be 180 attended school days. This year, WPS utilized two of the five contingency days.

Therefore, the 180th and final day of this school year, barring any unforeseen weather or something that might prevent school being held, will be Tuesday, June 21, which will be a half day for students. This day follows the Monday holiday for the observance of Juneteenth, which falls on a Sunday. Staff will report for one additional day.

HUNNEWELL TRACK & FIELD LIGHTING – UPDATED PROPOSAL

Ms. Chow reminded the Committee that at its last meeting on March 22, they discussed detailed feedback from the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) regarding the light proposal. Revisions to the proposal were discussed and the Committee will vote on the revised proposal at this meeting. Ms. Chow and Ms. Mirick will then bring the revised proposal to NRC at their meeting on May 5. Revisions included the following.

Clarification and expectation setting - The number of games was adjusted to 15 in a school year. A stipulation was added that NRC would be asked to allow for additional games in the unlikely event MIAA or the Baystate Conference would require additional games such as makeup games. In terms of numbers of practices, the revision allows for one per team rather than two, for a total of six potential night practices.

Further mitigation - WPD Chief Pilecki confirmed the same strategies would be employed for events with less attendees, between 500 and 1,000, compared with major events and that for the first year all football games would be treated as major events. Additionally, it would be ensured that other WHS events would not conflict with night games at the T&F. As a key update since the last meeting, Epsilon Associates has reviewed and confirmed their findings and conclusions and has drawn up a report they will share with the School Committee and NRC. Additionally, in response to a letter received from neighbors who hired a consultant that cited outside sports lighting guidelines set by the International Dark Sky Association, Ms. Chow emphasized the guidelines allow up to 15% of backlight within 33 feet of the edge of the field while analysis by the IDA of the current lighting design proposal indicates that reading will be 2.71%.

Trust and good will - In addition to revising the proposal, the proposed lighting usage policy was reviewed and updated. Specifically, this establishes a point of contact and chain of command for any potential issues. It also emphasizes the responsibility of the student athletes in respecting neighbors and the environment.

Additionally, Ms. Chow offered an update on the bathroom and concession stand proposal. She noted Dave Hickey, Town Engineer, brought the bathroom/concession stand proposal to the Wetlands Protection Committee (WPC). It has been signed off by WPC and is now ready to go to the Design Review Board (DRB).

After a brief discussion, the Committee again thanked Ms. Chow for all her hard work.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to approve the revised proposal for enhancements to the Hunnewell Track & Field as presented and to authorize Linda Chow to make small adjustments as necessary.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Ms. Eizenberg; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCUSSION: JICFB - BULLYING POLICY, PREVENTION & INTERVENTION PLAN

Ms. Chow stated that since the policy was last discussed on March 8, the subcommittee took the Committee's feedback and consulted with attorney Amy Rogers. Additionally, Ms. Harrison and Ms. Wang had great questions and thoughtful feedback and suggestions. She noted tonight's agenda item was to discuss the additional changes and vote on the policy at the following meeting. Once the policy is approved, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP) will need to be revised and approved by the Committee.

Ms. Eizenberg stated the revised policy seeks to clarify intent and language and enable everyone to feel that their questions have been answered. Revisions include the following:

The name has been changed to Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy to differentiate between the policy and procedure. Changes throughout were made to align with statute. Based on feedback around reporting, language was clarified about why it is important to report; however failing to report is not a punishable offense. She noted they were asked if the policy could clearly state consequences; however it was advised that the policy not go into that level of detail, rather be explained in the student handbooks. In the Training and Assessment section, it was asked if substitutes undergo training. While day-to-day substitutes do not, next year there will be full-time substitutes and they will be trained. In response to community feedback, an addition to the Reporting section was added stipulating that annually the Superintendent will give a general overall summary of incidents for the year. The emphasis is on privacy and the School Committee will be given data as disaggregated as possible.

Dr. Lussier suggested amending the wording in the Training section to state that staff will be trained at the start of the school year, rather than before the start of school year, as there are often late summer hires and it would be challenging to get all staff trained before the year begins.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Mirick stated the revised policy will be posted on the WPS website for the public and the Committee will vote on the policy at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 6:56 pm, Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Ms. Eizenberg; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Leda Eizenberg
Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used:

Dr. Sadler CV 2021

School Physician Contract - Unsigned

Hunnewell Track & Field Enhancement Projects - Proposal, Policy and Q&A May 2022

Updated Hunnewell T&F Proposal for SC 5.3.2022

Policy JICFB - Current

Redlined JICFB v1.1 5.3.22

Clean JICFB v1.1 5.3.22