

**Wellesley Public Schools  
School Committee Meeting  
May 26, 2020  
Remote Online Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. Those present included Chair Melissa Martin, Vice Chair Linda Chow, Secretary Matt Kelley, members Sharon Gray and Jim Roberti; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendents Joan Dabrowski and Cindy Mahr; Student Services Director Sarah Orlov; Director of Equity & Inclusion Charmie Curry; and Student Advisory representatives Rachel White and Violet Lahive.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT** No one wished to address the Committee

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Gray reported that the **Hunnewell project** will be discussed at this week's PBC meeting. Topics include adjustments to the Hunnewell floor plan, commissioning and the construction manager selection process.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Lussier indicated his team is working on a plan to have staff enter their respective school buildings to **close out their classrooms** for the summer and disseminate student materials that remain. Each principal has developed a schedule they will share with staff and families on the appropriate protocols for securing materials. This work is being done in close coordination with the Facilities Management Department.

Dr. Lussier reported the kickoff meeting of the **School Reopening Advisory Committee** is scheduled for May 30th, with weekly meetings to follow. He reminded the Committee that this is an 18-member committee comprised of administrators, principals from each level, the Facilities Management Director, Health Director, Head of Nursing, and parent and student representation. This committee's task is to serve as a high-level advisory group to provide overarching guidance to the more specific working groups that will be formed around the major topics that must be addressed such as teaching and learning, transportation, building operations, etc. Dr. Lussier indicated that while the state guidance on reopening has not yet been provided, this group can begin some preliminary planning work. He thanked Ms. Gray for agreeing to serve as the School Committee's representative.

Dr. Lussier announced that in-person **Town elections** are scheduled for Saturday, June 13th and will be held at Babson College. There has been an ongoing mail-in campaign for registered voters to vote by mail, but June 13<sup>th</sup> will provide an opportunity for those who do not wish to vote by mail to do so in person.

Dr. Lussier also announced that the **Annual Town Meeting** has been rescheduled to Monday, June 22, 2020.

Dr. Lussier thanked the **Wellesley Education Foundation** for inviting Dr. Dabrowski and him to its end of year board meeting last week. This provided an opportunity to thank the Wellesley Education Foundation for its continued generous support of the Wellesley Public Schools. He looks forward to working with next year's presidents, Liz Larsen and Jenn Fallon.

Dr. Lussier confirmed that the **high school graduation parade** is proceeding as scheduled on June 6<sup>th</sup>. He thanked Dr. Chisum and his team, as well as the Wellesley Police Department and Babson College, for all their work in making this happen.

### **STUDENT ADVISORY**

Ms. Martin asked what the process is for selecting new student advisory members, which Ms. White explained and also announced that she will be continuing as one of the representatives for next year. Ms. White will invite the new School Committee Student Advisory members to attend the June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Martin entertained a motion to approve the May 12, 2020 Open Session minutes as presented to the Committee this evening.

**MOVED:** Ms. Gray; **SECONDED:** Mr. Kelley; **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Kelley – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Mr. Roberti – Abstained; Ms. Chow – Abstained;  
**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:** Yes – 5; No – 0

### **PLAYING FIELDS REOPENING PLAN**

Ms. Chow provided an update on the status of the reopening of playing fields based on State guidance that was recently released. She noted there was a question regarding whether the School Committee, as the owners of some of the fields, needed to take action on reopening the fields since they were closed by the actions of the NRC, Board of Health and Wellesley Police. Ms. Chow reported that Executive Director Meghan Jop believes that a vote of the owners is required to reopen the fields.

Ms. Chow informed the Committee she attended a meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup> with representatives from all stakeholders, and reviewed the framework for the reopening of fields. It was agreed that a common set of rules for all the fields was needed as well as compliance by residents. NRC Director Brandon Schmitt in coordination with the Schools, Recreation and Police, has drafted a set of guidance/rules for parks and athletic fields, which Ms. Chow reviewed with the Committee. The date of the fields reopening will be dependent on approval of the guidelines and when the signs are installed at the fields. The community should refer to the COVID-19 Town daily briefing for updates on the reopening date.

After discussion, Ms. Martin entertained a motion to authorize the reopening of school-owned fields and tennis courts in conjunction with the reopening plan for NRC-owned land that is currently under development with the Department of Public Works, the Schools, Recreation Department, and Police Department and will be executed when approved by the Director of the Department of Health.

**MOVED:** Mr. Kelley; **SECONDED:** Ms. Chow; **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Kelley – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Mr. Roberti – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:** Yes – 5; No – 0

### **WHS ASSESSMENTS REPORT**

The Committee was joined by Dr. Dabrowski, Dr. Anne Beauchamp, Dr. Jamie Chisum and Guidance Director Dana Plunkett, who provided the annual update on high school assessments for the class of 2019.

Dr. Beauchamp reviewed the WHS demographic percentages for the class of 2019, participation statistics overall on the SAT and ACT, and then participation by race/ethnicity. Results of the grade 11 PSAT were reviewed, as well as SAT test taking by class year, and mean SAT Scores which show that Wellesley outperformed students in Massachusetts as well as the United States in Reading/Writing and Math. The mean SAT scores by peer districts were also reviewed. Dr. Beauchamp referred to the College Board's note cautioning comparisons amongst peer communities due to varying factors that are considered by each community. ACT test taking by class year was reviewed, as well as mean scores by subject area. It was noted that Wellesley once again performed very strong in all categories as compared with average scores in the state and country.

AP test takers and scores by school year from 2014 to 2019 were reviewed, as well as scores by subject area.

Ms. Plunkett discussed the impact of COVID-19 on testing, noting that the March through June SATs were cancelled; the April ACT was rescheduled to June but it is not clear if host sites will be available to accommodate testing; and ACT and possibly SATs will be offered at home in the fall. Ms. Plunkett indicated the AP tests moved to an online format this year and has incurred some issues with test submissions, which have since been addressed but the situation is still not ideal.

Ms. Plunkett also reported that more than 70 colleges and universities are temporarily waiving standardized tests in its admission requirements specifically due to COVID-19. Everything is still quite tentative with colleges and organizations trying to adjust to this new environment.

With regard to putting this year's scores in context, Ms. Plunkett informed the Committee that starting in the fall 2020, College Board will offer all colleges and universities more specific information relative to the applicant's high school, SAT score range for the applicant's high school; and scale scores representing the applicant's high school and neighboring information. Wellesley's profile will be updated to have this information available as well.

Next steps include educating students to help them understand how results are interpreted by colleges; continuing to address gaps that exist among student groups by working with students of color on issues such as transitioning to the high school, the course selection process and test taking. In addition, WHS will support multiple ways to provide evidence of preparedness for college including GPA/transcript, essays, school profile, teacher evaluations, and letters of recommendations.

Ms. Plunkett informed the Committee that recognizing these are difficult and uncertain times, the WHS staff is working continuously to make the college admissions process as smooth as possible, while still ensuring students continue to achieve at a high level.

Committee members asked questions during and at the end of the presentation and thanked Dr. Chisum, Dr. Beauchamp, and Ms. Plunkett for the presentation and their continued support of all students.

### **WORLD LANGUAGE UPDATE**

The Committee was joined by WMS Principal Mark Ito, Department Head for Classical and Modern Languages Tim Eagan, and K-5 Department Head for World Languages Barbara Barnett to provide an update of the expansion of Classical and Modern Languages at the Middle School.

Mr. Eagan reviewed enrollment by language in grade 6, and by individual grade levels. He discussed successes and challenges. Successes included the onboarding of 3 great teachers, using the odd/even model worked well to maintain other important programs, and K to 12 articulation and alignment. Challenges included the tight schedule of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, room sharing, ensuring that all students study a language in grades 6 through 8, and inconsistent common planning time for teachers. Mr. Eagan reviewed global benchmarks, performance indicators and daily learning targets that measure student learning. Adjustments and refinements that were made throughout the year were addressed through curriculum planning meetings, collaboration with Ms. Barnett at WMS meetings, development of a new thematic unit at the high school, and adjustments that focused on proficiency targets and language functions. Mr. Eagan also reviewed the tools that are being used when schools transferred to online remote learning.

Mr. Eagan announced his department just received grant funding to review department-wide curriculum adjustments needed due to the school closure. Original proficiency targets will be reviewed to determine if/how to adjust them due to school closure. This will require a review of language skills and functions, as well as vocabulary and grammar structures. Mr. Eagan reviewed how adjustments will be made through proficiency-based instructions.

Mr. Eagan also reviewed the status of awarding the Seal of Biliteracy noting that 27 students earned the standard Seal of Biliteracy and 4 students earned the Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction.

Dr. Ito acknowledged Mr. Eagan's leadership in onboarding three new educators and setting up mentoring for the new teachers, as well as launching the new program at the Middle School while continuing his Middle and High School responsibilities.

After questions, the Committee thanked Dr. Ito, Mr. Eagan, and Ms. Barnett for their thorough presentation.

#### **SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR**

Ms. Martin reviewed the Committee's schedule for upcoming meetings in light of updated dates for the Town election and Annual Town Meeting (ATM). She proposed that the election of any replacement officers be scheduled for the June 16<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting, which will be followed by Annual Town Meeting on Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is anticipated that ATM will last one day, so she is proposing a final Committee meeting on June 23<sup>rd</sup> primarily to vote on Committee reorganization and assignments. If ATM continues for an additional day, then the Committee meeting will be moved to a date following the final day of Town Meeting. Committee members were agreeable to this schedule.

#### **TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

After a brief discussion, Ms. Martin entertained a motion to approve the job descriptions of Help Desk Specialist, Tech Support Specialist and Technician as presented:

**MOVED:** Mr. Kelley; **SECONDED:** Ms. Gray; **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Kelley – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Mr. Roberti – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:** Yes – 5; No – 0

#### **END OF YEAR DISTRICT AND SUPERINTENDENT GOALS REPORT**

Dr. Lussier was joined by Dr. Dabrowski, Ms. Mahr, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Charmie Curry, and Student Services Director Sarah Orlov, each of whom presented the Committee with the final status of their respective sections of the District goals.

Dr. Lussier again reminded the Committee that the goals document is not reflective of the full work of the District, and in particular this year, where the intensive work of the last three months is not reflective in the goals at all.

The Committee asked questions relative to hiring practices during COVID-19, work of the disproportionality leadership group in Student Services, the focus of the DE&I office during the epidemic, and using the Challenge Success approach in PreK-5.

Dr. Lussier indicated that the progress made this year in both planned and unplanned work is due to the exceptional individuals with whom he works, and he is proud to be part of this team.

Committee members commended Dr. Lussier and his team for their exemplary work overall in meeting the written goals, as well as meeting the challenges presented late in the year of developing an entirely new way to educate students during a pandemic.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** No one wished to address the Committee.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At approximately 9:10 pm, Ms. Martin entertained a motion to adjourn.

**MOVED:** Mr. Kelley; **SECONDED:** Ms. Gray; **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Kelley – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes.; Mr. Roberti - Yes

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:** Yes – 5; No – 0

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Kelley  
Secretary

**Documents and Exhibits Used:**

SC Meeting Agenda/Posting – May 26, 2020

Draft Minutes 5/12/20

Draft Signage for Field Openings

WHS Assessment 2020 Presentation

Grade 6 CML Presentation

EOY SY19-20 Goals Report