Wellesley Public Schools  
School Committee Meeting  
September 3, 2019  
Kingsbury Room, Wellesley Police Station

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 and Assistant Superintendent Joan Dabrowski. Ms. Martin announced that the meeting was being recorded by local media.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**  
No one present wished to speak.

**RECOGNITIONS**  
Dr. Lussier recognized the following individuals and groups:

Dr. Lussier thanked the staff of Facilities Management Department, instructional technology, school secretaries, Central Office, and the HR Department for all their work in getting WPS ready for a successful opening on August 28th. He also expressed his appreciation to Mike LaCava, his Performing Arts Department staff and the over 100 WHS students who participated in opening day festivities.

From Joan Dabrowski, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning: Congratulations to the 92 educators, teachers and administrators (PreK-12) who attended the three day PBL101 courses this summer. The courses were facilitated by WPS’s professional development partner PBLWorks. These educators are prepared to launch project-based learning units in their classrooms this fall and join just over 100 PBL-trained colleagues in WPS.

Also thank you to Wellesley Kiwanis for hosting the lovely new teacher luncheon at the Wellesley College Club.

Thank you to Chelsea Bailow, PreK-12 Director of Professional Development for the outstanding work she did to welcome the newest WPS educators during the New Professional Staff Orientation and for preparing their WPS Mentors. Additional thanks to the WPS Mentors for the work they’re doing (and will continue to do) to support new colleagues during their first year in Wellesley.

Thanks to Mike LaCava, Beth Bergeron & Amy Jankins for their "behind the scenes" work on the standards-based report cards throughout the summer. As we prepare to launch our PreK-5 SBRCs this school year, there are a number of technical tasks to complete (e.g. setting up PowerSchool templates, preparing learning continuums for teachers, planning the teacher PD supports). Mike, Beth, and Amy continue to bring their detail-oriented skills to this project. We are grateful for their efforts and are excited about the SBRC work that will unfold in the coming weeks. Dr. Lussier acknowledged that none of this work would have been possible without Dr. Dabrowski’s leadership over the past two years.
From Linda Corridan, Dept. Head for Nursing Services: Thank you to Newton Wellesley Hospital for donating 20 doses of nasal naloxone (NARCAN) for the emergency bags in every Nurse's Office as part of their Community Outreach Program.

Dr. Lussier thanked Babson College for providing the venue, catering and technology for this summer’s Administrative Retreat held over four days.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS
Ms. Chow reported a letter has been sent to the Sprague Field abutters providing an update on upcoming discussions around options for locating the lacrosse practice wall. This will be discussed at the September 17th School Committee meeting.

Mr. Roberti informed the Committee that he and Ms. Martin participated in the finalists days for the position of Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Ms. Martin reported the WMS Building Systems Project schematic process is well underway. FMD’s Steve Gagosian will be providing the Committee an overview of the design and seeking support for the work prior to presenting to the Permanent Building Committee. Ms. Martin also informed the Committee that the Board of Selectmen will be starting discussions of the FY21 budget guidelines at its meeting next week. An Interboard Meeting is scheduled for September 19th. Ms. Martin noted that the Committee meeting dates have been drafted and will be posted to the website if there are no objections.

Ms. Martin also acknowledged a letter sent to the Committee from the Norfolk County Sheriff Jerome McDermott concerning the establishment of a Task Force on Juvenile Substance Abuse and Mental Health. Sheriff McDermott is requesting the appointment of a Wellesley representative to the Task Force. Dr. Lussier was asked to recommend the appropriate individual to represent Wellesley on this task force who would provide the best impact and engagement for the community.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT
Introduction of New Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Dr. Lussier provided background on the creation of the position of Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and then introduced Dr. Charmie Curry who was recently appointed to the position and will be joining WPS on September 16th. Dr. Curry addressed the Committee and expressed her excitement in joining the WPS community and starting this important work.

CONSENT AGENDA
- Minutes Approval: August 1, 6, and 16 Open Sessions
- Gift Acceptances – see attached
- Trip Approvals:
  - JSA Fall State Conference 11/24/19
  - JSA Winter Congress 2/6-2/9/20
  - Nat’l HS Model UN Conference March 2020
  - JSA Spring State Conference 4/24-4/26/20
- Landscaping Gift Donation: WHS Latin Garden
- Declaration of Surplus Materials - District-wide
Dr. Lussier addressed the landscaping gift donation of the WHS Latin Garden, explaining that in response to the School Committee’s concerns with the previous proposal last fall, the garden is no longer tied to a memorial, and the upkeep will be maintained by Latin teacher Paul Esposito. With these changes, Dr. Lussier believes this gift satisfies the Committee’s requirement and is recommending approval.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Roberti, the Committee **VOTED** to approve the August 1, 2019 open session minutes as presented. The vote was 4 in favor – 0 against – 1 abstention.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee **VOTED** to approve the August 16, 2019 open session minutes as presented. The vote was 3 in favor – 0 against – 2 abstentions.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. Roberti and seconded by Mr. Kelley, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to approve the balance of the Consent Agenda as presented.

The Committee expressed its sincere appreciation for the generous support from individual and community donations.

**WTA Unit C Contract Approval**

The Committee was joined by HR Director Gayle McCracken who provided an overview and major elements of the WTA Unit C contract which covers teaching assistants and paraprofessionals.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Roberti, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to ratify the agreement between the Town of Wellesley and the Wellesley Teachers Association (WTA) Unit C: Teaching Assistants and Paraprofessionals Unit, for the July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022 period.

**Enrollment and Elementary Placements Update**

Dr. Lussier provided a snapshot of the WPS enrollment and elementary placements for the 2019-20 school year, noting this is an unofficial report and more detailed and official reporting will be presented later in the fall.

The overall elementary enrollment as of earlier today is as follows: elementary opened at 107 sections which is the same as last year; 108 sections had been projected. There are no sections above guideline at this time, and the sections are virtually evenly split as being at or below guidelines. Guidelines provide ranges of 18-22 students for grades K-2 and 22-24 students for grades 3-5.

A total of 22 open enrollment requests were received. Of this number, 14 were approved; 4 were offered but declined by families; 3 were withdrawn prior to taking action; and 1 request could not be accommodated.
There were 6 students in total who were reassigned due to section closures to new enrollment.

Overall enrollment as of today: elementary is 2089, which is 17 students less than internal projections. Dr. Lussier noted that enrollment has declined by almost 400 students over the last ten years at the elementary level. The WMS population is at 1175 students and WHS is at 1509, with a total enrollment, not including PAWS, of 4773, which is 27 students less than internal projections.

**Hunnewell and Hardy/Upham Projects Update**

**Hunnewell School**

Ms. Gray reported the SBC met recently and carefully reviewed the most viable options for swing space including internal swing space use for an early Hunnewell that would allow construction to start in 2021, and two Hunnewell late options which would use a closed school (either Hardy or Upham) for swing space. One late option provides a construction start in 2024 at which time the school that is closed, based on the Hardy/Upham project, would be used as swing space. The second late construction option provides for two schools to be operating on the same site simultaneously.

Ms. Gray indicated the SBC considered the swing space options from an educational programming viewpoint, operational challenges, as well as challenges of the internal swing space and construction of the late Hunnewell options. The SBC did not look favorably on running two schools on one site based on concerns with site circulation, traffic, parking and playground use. There was a strong preference within the SBC, if the late Hunnewell option is chosen, to find a way to redistrict after the Hardy/Upham project and have a six school solution using the empty school as the swing space for Hunnewell students.

Ms. Gray reported the SBC was fairly supportive of continuing to look at an early Hunnewell solution. This interest is relative to the timeliness of the project being complete, from a cost standpoint, the current condition of the Hunnewell building, and getting students back into an updated building sooner.

In order to receive community feedback regarding the various options and solutions, Ms. Gray noted that members of the Administration, School Committee and SBC will be attending informational meetings at each of the elementary schools. Dr. Lussier provided an outline of what will be discussed at these meetings including providing an overview of the total HHU set of projects, how internal swing space would work and how it will affect each elementary school, as well as projected timelines.

Dr. Lussier and Hunnewell principal Ellen Quirk, will be attending these meetings as well as the host school principals and members of the SBC. Ms. Martin encouraged School Committee members to attend these meetings when possible.

There was a question regarding whether there will be an update from the architect and OPM on swing space and whether there will be information on how the SBC is deliberating and the decision-making process. Ms. Martin noted that if members have questions or issues they would like to discuss, to please provide them to her and she
will determine if it is possible to perhaps have a joint session with the Selectmen and SBC to discuss any concerns.

Ms. Martin also indicated that the goal is to vote on the swing space option at the Committee’s meeting on October 1st. The SBC is scheduled to vote on swing space at its meeting on October 3rd. There was discussion concerning the timing of the School Committee’s vote relative to the SBC vote. Ms. Martin explained that the vote on October 1st concerns whether the Committee wishes to move forward with the internal swing space option, which is under the exclusive control of the School Committee, as opposed to other potential swing space options which are not. In discussions with the SBC, it has been determined that the SBC feels it is necessary to get approval from the School Committee and Administration that they are in favor of moving forward with internal swing space. Therefore it is appropriate for the Committee to vote on October 1st and the SBC will then vote to ratify the School Committee’s recommendation. There was also discussion on the timing of voting the entire package for presentation to the Special Town Meeting in the fall.

Ms. Gray reported the SBC will be presenting the Hunnewell building project to the Advisory Committee on September 18, and will then meet with the Permanent Building Committee on September 26 to address any questions they may have on the project, which was presented to them on August 8th. SBC members have also been invited to attend the school forums to get a sense of the community’s comments and concerns.

Ms. Gray announced that given the complexity of the HHU projects, the SBC is working to develop a dedicated HHU website which will be coming soon.

**Hardy/Upham Project**

Ms. Chow removed herself from the table at 7:49 pm

Ms. Gray reported the SBC, in conjunction with the MSBA, is starting work on the feasibility study for the Hardy/Upham project. The MSBA project coordinator and project manager met with Town representatives, toured the Hardy and Upham buildings, and shared the rules and regulations of the MSBA process which are available on the MSBA website for review. At the September 5th SBC meeting, members will discuss the SBC’s role, work plan, timeline and process for this project. It is expected that this process will result in a recommended solution to the MSBA by the end of the school year as to where the new school will be built.

Ms. Chow returned to the table at 7:52 pm

**Assignment of Liaison to PBC for Hunnewell Project**

Ms. Martin explained that there is a need to appoint a School Committee member as the liaison to the PBC for the Hunnewell Elementary School Project. The Committee liaison to the PBC for a school facilities project becomes a voting member of the PBC for that particular project.
After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Roberti, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to designate Sharon Gray as the liaison to the PBC for the Hunnewell Elementary School Project.

**PROPOSED APPROACH FOR REDISTRICTING**
Dr. Lussier addressed the District’s approach for establishing redistricting plans for the HHU project responsive to new schools being built on the Hunnewell and Hardy or Upham sites. He reviewed the processes used during the last two redistricting efforts as well as SC Policy JC, Elementary School Attendance Zones. Dr. Lussier indicated there is consideration for an outside party to help guide this new redistricting effort by managing meetings and providing overall support in the process. He noted there is an urgency for the redistricting work to be completed. While the feasibility study will take place throughout the course of the year, redistricting will need to take place over the next 4 or 5 months. Two scenarios will be considered: one at Hardy and one at Hunnewell.

Lexington Public Schools has recently gone through redistricting using an outside party, and Dr. Lussier will be discussing the process with his Lexington colleagues to get pros and cons of this work. He hopes the cost of this work is included as part of the project cost. There is also consideration to update the enrollment study completed several years ago.

It was noted that part of the MSBA process will require a preferred method of redistricting that is supported by the Committee, and the SBC will also need to review and approve the plan prior to submittal to the MSBA.

Dr. Lussier discussed the need for a clear charge from the Committee on the expectations for redistricting, whether it is done by an external party or internally. The Committee will prepare and discuss the charge for this work at an upcoming meeting.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE LIAISON**
Ms. Li Na Musayev indicated she looks forward to working with the Committee and Administration this coming year, recognizing there are a number of important projects ongoing, as well the new process for Special Education budgeting, and the overall FY21 budget process.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**
No one present wished to speak

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**
At approximately 8:25 pm, Ms. Martin entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session, to comply with MGL c 30A, §22 to review the August 16, 2019 Executive Session minutes, to invite Dr. David Lussier into executive session, and to return to open session at the conclusion of the Executive Session only to adjourn.

**MOVED:** Mr. Roberti  **SECONDED:** Mr. Kelley  **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Roberti – Yes; Mr. Kelley – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes.  **MOTION CARRIED:** Yes – 5, No – 0.
**ADJOURNMENT**
At approximately 8:30 pm, upon a motion made by Mr. Roberti and seconded by Mr. Kelley, the Committee *unanimously VOTED* to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Kelley
Secretary

**Documents and Exhibits Used:**
- Gift Approval Form: Latin Garden
- Trip Approval Forms: JSA Fall, Winter, Spring State Conferences
- Trip Approval Form: HS Model UN Conference
- Memo RE: Surplus Declaration of District-wide materials
- Memo RE: Enrollment Update – 8/27/19
- SC Policy JC – Attendance Zones
- 2013 Redistricting Guiding Principles & Redistricting Committee Roster
- Memo RE: Unit C Contract Ratification – 8/27/19