The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Those present included Committee Chair Matt Kelley, Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Linda Chow, and members Sharon Gray and Jim Roberti; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendents Joan Dabrowski and Cindy Mahr; and Student Advisory Chris Kolb. Mr. Kelley announced that the meeting is being recorded by local media.

Mr. Roberti was welcomed as the newest member of the Committee.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**
Michelle Chalmers, resident and President of World of Wellesley, spoke in favor the retaining the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the FY20 budget, regardless of the need to reduce the FY20 budget request.

Catherine Mirick, resident and parent of WPS students, spoke in support of the Committee’s voted FY20 budget, and specifically regarding her support for the position of Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

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

Dr. Lussier thanked WPS Registrar Nancy Costigliola, the elementary building secretaries and nurses for their work on Saturday, March 9th, at the Kindergarten Roundup.

Dr. Lussier announced the retirement of Sprague Principal Susan Snyder effective the end of the school year. Ms. Snyder has been an outstanding colleague and principal for Sprague School. He reviewed the schedule for the search process.

**From Bates Principal Toni Jolley:** Thank you to the entire Bates faculty who worked so hard to create a special Bates in Bloom experience for families last Thursday. Bulletin boards and display cases were bursting with students’ art work and inside each classroom students proudly shared the products of their hard work such as essays and narratives, science and social studies projects, math games and hands-on science experiments with families and friends.

**Sprague Principal Susan Snyder** recognizes the Assembly Committee comprised of: First Grade Teacher Karen Lindquist, Third Grade Teacher Kristan Fiore, Fourth Grade Teacher Taryn Drake, Kindergarten Teacher Genie Madden, Librarian Sara Jaunikiskis, and Literacy Specialist Christina Cooney. This group planned Sprague’s annual A-CAT-emy Awards "Oscar Themed" celebration of reading on Friday, March 1st. Students voted for favorite books in categories such as "Favorite Hat Book" or "Favorite Hero in a Chapter Book." Thanks to music teacher Brian Hagar McKee for leading the school song and favorite song about reading, "Free to Read."
Sprague’s PE teacher Margaret Flitsch was in charge of the drum roll, and local Postal Service employee and children's author, Wayne Watson was the visiting author and recipient of the "Hats Off Award" for his book "Gus the Goose." It was a wonderful celebration of reading that also coincided with Dr. Seuss' birthday the next day.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

School Committee members discussed their experience at the March 7th School Committee meeting held in Boston, which was an opportunity for the District’s Boston families to engage in dialogue with the School Committee and members of the senior administrative staff. The new METCO Director Doreen Ward was commended for organizing a successful event. The conversation was extremely candid and difficult at times as families recounted examples of when students and parents have experienced micro-aggressions and not felt welcome in the District. Some key themes included how curriculum could be improved, issues with athletics, and the call for more conversations. Parents appreciate that their students feel safe and able to share their voice at school, but would like to see more of a dialogue. The Committee hopes it can move forward with some of the action items discussed and provide important context in conversations about the budget. Members would like to see this meeting scheduled as an annual event, and perhaps hold an office hour session in Boston.

Ms. Chow announced that the WellesleyCreates event is scheduled for Saturday, March 16th, followed by the STEM Expo on April 6th.

Ms. Gray reported she attended the School Wellness Advisory Committee meeting last week. The central theme this year is concern with vaping and juuling and the dramatic increase in use by WHS students. There will be a parent presentation on this topic on April 23rd.

Ms. Martin reported she recently participated in the Hats Off Read Across America at PAWS which was a great experience. She also reported the WMS piping project bid results will be reviewed on Thursday at the PBC meeting and is scheduled for discussion at the Advisory Committee meeting on March 20th.

Mr. Roberti thanked community for electing him to the School Committee. During his first week on the job he attended the Wellesley Green Schools meeting.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Lussier addressed a recent event at the high school that challenged the District’s work on diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. He commended the High School staff on actions taken after the incident which has resulted in much conversation on safety, inclusion and beyond. He noted that the recent event at the high school and the Thursday night meeting in Boston reflect on the important and challenging work that is needed around diversity.

Dr. Lussier is pleased to announce that the 2017-18 District Progress Report has been sent to all Wellesley households and Boston families. He recognized the good work of Linda Chow, Victoria Ostler, Joan Dabrowski, Amanda Brown, and Beth Bergeron in getting the report completed.
The final Kindergarten Roundup was held on Saturday, March 9th. There are 299 students now registered for kindergarten; the projection for 2019-20 school year is 310.

Dr. Lussier reported that upon a routine inspection of the Hunnewell School basement, the custodian found that one of the structural columns between the boilers has significantly deteriorated. The Facilities Management Department is working on it and he will keep the Committee informed. Dr. Lussier noted this only highlights the urgency of getting the Hunnewell project completed.

Dr. Lussier is very excited to announce the visit from Lisa Damour, psychologist and bestselling author, whose focus is on anxiety and stress in adolescent girls. She will be engaging with students, staff and parents during various sessions tomorrow.

STUDENT ADVISORY
Mr. Kolb reported that March 6 was the Annual Seminar Day which was very successful. He congratulated the WHS Acapella groups for a great performance of Acastock on March 8th.

CONSENT AGENDA
- Gift Acceptances
- Trip Approval: NAfME All Eastern Concert
- Declaration of Surplus: Testing Materials
- Declaration of Surplus: Hunnewell Library Books

Dr. Lussier informed the Committee that the All Eastern Concert is outside the realm of the field trip policy and is not managed through WPS. All consent, permissions and chaperones are coordinated through the All Eastern group. However, in the spirit of keeping the Committee informed, it was decided to bring the trip forward for approval even though it is not within the time limit for submission.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Ms. Martin and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Committee unanimously VOTED to suspend Policy IJOA Field Trips for the duration of the meeting.

After a brief discussion upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Chow, the Committee unanimously VOTED to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

SEAL OF BILITERACY
The Committee was joined by Tim Eagan, Gr 6-12 Department Head of World Languages and ELL Director Anne Higgins to present the WPS proposal to award the State Seal of Biliteracy to students who have attained proficiency in English and at least one other language by high school graduation. The Seal provides a means to recognize high school graduates who attain high functional and academic levels of proficiency in English and a foreign language.

Mr. Eagan reviewed the eligibility requirements, the assessments that determine proficiency, and the implementation plan, with testing dates through the beginning of April. If the Seal is approved, WPS students meeting the requirements for the Seal will
receive this designation in the form of an insignia affixed to their transcripts as well as to their diplomas.

Dr. Lussier feels this is a great opportunity for students. Due to the timing with this year’s implementation, he is requesting the Committee take action this evening. Although the Committee’s practice is to consider a proposal at one meeting and take action at the next, members were unanimous that it is appropriate to take action this evening in order to move forward with the program in a timely fashion.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Roberti and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Committee unanimously VOTED to approve Wellesley Public Schools participation in the Seal of Biliteracy Program that awards the Seal to students who have attained proficiency in English and at least one other language by high school graduation.

Mr. Eagan and Ms. Higgins were thanked for bringing this proposal forward.

2017-18 Nursing Activities Report
The Committee was joined by Linda Corridan, Department Head of Nursing Services, who presented the Nursing activities for the 2017-18 school year. Ms. Corridan indicated the focus area in the 2017-18 school year was on physical, social and emotional health. She reviewed this work at each level, from PAWS to the high school. She reviewed statistics for 2017-18 noting that enrollment was 4,999 students, with 75,067 encounters with school nurses, averaging 407 daily visits, and a return to class rate of 93.2 percent.

Ms. Corridan reviewed the nurses professional practice goal which was the culmination of 2 year’s work around emergency management involving focus groups on table top scenarios, dealing with emergencies on field trips and protocol review.

The student learning goal addressed strategies to support students in the classroom and reducing the number of visits and amount of time spent in the nurse’s office. Students who tend to wander into the nurse’s office periodically throughout the day were identified and provided with the supports needed to get them back into the classroom quicker or not visiting the nurse’s office at all. This intervention work has resulted in a decrease in the number of visits to the nurse by 265, and increased classroom time by 1,575 minutes.

Ms. Corridan reviewed SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) results in the middle and high schools. This screening is done at the end of the substance abuse component in their health education classes.

The nurses are continuing work around Profile of a Graduate and Challenge Success by supporting the social, emotional and physical health of the students. In addition, work continues on standardization of nursing documentation which is part of their professional practice goal.

Ms. Corridan expressed concern with the amount of time available for communication, support and group work amongst her nurses; the difficulty in recruiting skilled per diem
support to cover nursing absences, and the number of nurses who will be retiring in the near future.

**SCHOOL WELLNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SWAC) UPDATE**

K-12 Director of Fitness and Health Joanne Grant joined Ms. Corridan and Dr. Dabrowski in presenting the annual SWAC update to the Committee.

Ms. Corridan provided an overview of SWAC and its charge. Ms. Grant reviewed its membership, noting the addition of the District’s new school resource officer Kathy Poirier and John Mulryan, a Fitness and Health educator at the high school. Highlights for the 2018-19 school year were reviewed including continued work on Challenge Success with a focus on balance: sleep, technology and workload. At the Middle and High Schools, administration and completion of the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) with results pending for the spring and summer 2019; focus on anxiety and stress in girls, including the upcoming event with Lisa Damour, a psychologist and bestselling author whose focus is on anxiety in girls; and a more concentrated focus on vaping and juuling, and educating parents and students on this problem through letters and a presentation by Dr. Lester Hartman.

Next steps for the spring and school year 2019-20 include a review of school start times with neighboring communities; continue to follow implementation of Challenge Success; a review of the MWAHS results; addressing anxiety and stress in girls; and continued focus on vaping and juuling.

The Committee thanked Ms. Corridan and Ms. Grant on their efforts and the thoughtfulness of their work around these topics.

**FY20 BUDGET**

Mr. Kelley reviewed the status of the Committee’s FY20 budget, recapping the Selectmen’s meeting where the Selectmen unilaterally reduced the WPS budget to 3.5 percent, from the School Committee’s voted 3.65 percent, or a $154,899 reduction. This amount was also subsequently voted by the Advisory Committee and will be the budget presented to Town Meeting for action.

The Committee members expressed concern that the Selectmen voted on a reduced School budget without engaging in dialogue with the Committee about the effects of these cuts and these changes. Although the Selectmen have the authority to present a motion relative to the Town’s operating budget, past practice has been to take into consideration the votes take by the Town boards and committees on their respective budgets.

Dr. Lussier reviewed some possible options to address this dilemma. He informed the Committee that there is an expectation in the community that if the budget is reduced it will include the elimination of the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). The Administrative team discussed this issue earlier in the day and it was the unanimous view of the group that they do not want to create any sense of vulnerability within the budget for this position, despite the very good possibility that this position could be restored on the floor of Town Meeting. Staff is now left with a series of bad choices on
what should be reduced. A number of line items were considered and discussed earlier in the day. Dr. Lussier is requesting more time to review the list of considerations to meet the $154,000 reduction. He believes it is unlikely that the items selected for reduction will be restored by Town Meeting.

Ms. Mahr discussed a potential solution for the cut by increasing the Circuit Breaker offset in FY20 by $154,899 and carrying forward revenue received in FY19 to FY20. The impact is a reduction in the School Department’s turnback to the Town at the end of FY19 and a reduction in available Free Cash in FY21.

School Committee members discussed the options that are available including not considering reductions and presenting the budget as voted by the Committee. This budget is the result of hours of due diligence and is based on School needs; create a gap list of items to be reduced; or use the Circuit Breaker offset proposal. It was agreed that the Director of DEI would not be included in any proposed reductions. There was concern with the timing and how the Circuit Breaker approach will be perceived.

After a lengthy discussion, Dr. Lussier was asked to create a gap list to cover the $154,899 reduction, with the belief that there will not be a motion to amend to restore the reductions on Town Meeting floor. The Committee will plan to meet prior to Town Meeting to review the proposed gap list and perhaps take action.

**MID-YEAR GOALS REPORT: DISTRICT AND SUPERINTENDENT**
Dr. Lussier provided an update on the status of the 2018-19 school year District and Superintendent goals.

Committee members acknowledged the extraordinary work of the administrative staff and recognized that the continued management of the current workload is difficult to sustain long term.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: REVIEW FOR RELEASE**
Mr. Kelley reviewed the process that should be used to determine if Executive Session minutes will be released, which provides that once the listing of unreleased minutes have been reviewed by the Superintendent and the Chair, the minutes recommended for release will be listed on the agenda for action by the Committee. If Committee members wish to review a particular set of minutes, they can individually request a copy from the Superintendent’s Office prior to the meeting in which action is slated to ensure that everyone has had the opportunity to review them. Since this process was not followed for the February 12, 2019 Executive Session minutes, action is deferred until a future meeting.

**HUNNEWELL AND HARDY/UPHAM PROJECTS UPDATE**
Hunnewell School
Ms. Gray reported the project team is further developing options and cost estimates on to how to proceed with Hunnewell School. The SBC is meeting on March 21 and will review available information on these options.
Hardy/Upham Project
Ms. Chow removed herself from the table at 9:37 pm.
Ms. Gray reported the MSBA has approved the SBC’s recommendation of Compass Project Management as the OPM for the Hardy/Upham Project. A Request for Services is being developed and will be submitted to the MSBA for approval once it is complete. Ms. Chow rejoined the meeting at 9:39 pm.

Hunnewell Elementary School Education Program
After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Ms. Martin and seconded by Ms. Chow, the Committee unanimously VOTED to approve the Hunnewell Elementary School Education Program as presented.

Public Comment
Susan Westmoreland, parent of WHS students, co-president of Friends of Wellesley METCO, is encouraged by the Committee’s strong support for the position of Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, noting that children of all religions, gender identity and race will benefit from the work of this individual. She also stressed the importance of having this person support faculty and how to address the many important and complex topics related to diversity, equity and inclusion. Ms. Westmoreland thanked the Committee and the Administration for their work in making the Wellesley school system one of the best.

Adjournment
At approximately 9:50 pm, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Kelley
Chair

Documents and Exhibits Used:
Trip Approval Form: NAfME All Eastern Concert
Memos – Declaration of Surplus: Testing Materials & Library Books
Memo and Presentation – Seal of Biliteracy
Nursing Activities Report and Presentation
Memo and Presentation – SWAC
FY20 Budget Reductions Option 1 slide
Mid-Year Goals Report
Hunnewell Education Program - Final