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

PUBLIC COMMENT
No one present wished to speak.

This is Teacher Appreciation Week! Thank you to all the amazing educators who are in Wellesley Public Schools.

From Michael LaCava, K-12 Director of Performing Arts: On Saturday, April 27th, the WHS Jazz Combo and WHS Rice Street Singers participated in the annual MAJE (Mass. Association of Jazz Educators) Jazz Combo/Choir festival. The groups performed in front of a panel of adjudicators and were judged in a variety of areas related to their ensemble and how they performed against a set of standards.

The WHS Jazz Combo received a silver medal for their performance. In addition to their overall medal, Outstanding Musicianship Awards were given to Russell Hornung, Rowan DePeyster, and Alex Feinberg.

The WHS Rice Street singers received a Gold Medal for their performance. This is the 11th consecutive year the Rice Street Singers have received a Gold Medal at the MAJE festival and this group is recognized as one of the top Jazz Vocal ensembles in Massachusetts. In addition to the Gold Medal, Outstanding Musicianship Awards were given to Liliana Sydorenko, Sofia Ko, and Joseph Fantasia. Also, Congratulations to Rice Street singer WHS Senior Sofia Ko who was also recognized as the Overall MVP of the entire festival!

From Tim Eagan, Department Head of Classical and Modern Languages, Congratulations to Mike Travers, a new WHS Spanish teacher this year, who led a 2-hour workshop for the department on strategies to teach grammar as a concept and in context. It was very impressive that a young teacher had the courage and confidence to present to a very experienced group of colleagues.

Sprague School would like to recognize parent John Covey for his contributions to Sprague. He has helped troubleshoot problems with the sound system in the gym, led science experiments for the 5th graders on solar flares, has helped organize the Creative Arts offerings, and led a special booth for Sprague at the STEM Expo. We thank him for his commitment to Sprague School and appreciate his contributions.
From Director of Student Service Lori Cimeno: thank you to **Linda Coridan and her team of school nurses** for their constant care and professionalism in keeping the staff and students safe and healthy. We wish them all a Happy Nurses’ Week.

Congratulations to **Rob Evans**, Executive Director of the Human Relations Service (HRS), on his retirement after 40 years of leading the organization. Dr. Lussier acknowledged Dr. Evans and the HRS for all of their good work in the District.

Dr. Lussier announced that the Wellesley Public Schools was recently honored as one of three entities in the state to receive the **Massachusetts Green Ribbon School Award** for its work making buildings more energy efficient, using environmentally friendly cleaning practices, offering healthy food choices, fitness programs and outdoor activities, and work around curricula that is focused on environmental awareness. Dr. Lussier was joined by Phyllis Theermann from Wellesley Green Schools to receive the award at the State House. Special thanks to Ms. Theermann for organizing this grant and for all her good work with sustainability.

Dr. Lussier thanked the Wellesley Police Department for securing a $19,000 State grant that will fund 80 new radios to supplement the current school radios that were brought on line as part of the security project. Thank you to Chief Pilecki, Deputy Chief Whittemore and all the staff who will be programming the new radios.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Roberti reported there will be a Wellesley Green Schools meeting on Friday, May 10\(^\text{th}\), from 9 am – 10 am at Phyllis Theermann’s home, and a Green Collaborative Meeting on Thursday, May 9\(^\text{th}\), from 9 am to 11 am, at the Wellesley Free Library.

Ms. Martin reported that the kickoff meeting for the **Middle School Piping Project** was held last week. There is a preconstruction meeting scheduled for next week, with work starting this summer. The first meeting with staff regarding programming and classroom designs for the **Middle School Building Systems study** is scheduled for May 8\(^\text{th}\).

Ms. Gray acknowledged the Girl Scouts’ efforts on their **No Idling** campaign. Their work is visible all around town.

Ms. Chow reported a **SPAC** meeting is scheduled for May 8\(^\text{th}\), at which time there will be continued discussions regarding the architecture for the Strategic Plan and key strategic priorities of the plan.

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Lussier reported that work continues on **personnel searches**, with a principal finalist day at Sprague today, and work has started on the searches for the positions of Director of Student Services, Director of Libraries and Innovation, and Director of Diversity. Thank you to the Committee members who participate in the search process for these positions.

The **Senior Reflections for METCO** was rescheduled to Wednesday, May 15\(^\text{th}\), at 6 pm. Dr. Lussier encourages Committee members to attend and hear the students’ powerful reflections on challenges as well as successes during their time at WPS.
Dr. Lussier also acknowledged the good work of the **Girl Scouts** on the No Idling campaign. He thanked the Girl Scouts as well as the **NRC and Wellesley Green Schools** who are getting this message out.

The annual **K-12 Artists Exhibit** starts tonight through May 29th at the Wellesley Free Library. He encouraged members to stop by and see the amazing student work from all grade levels.

**Student Advisory**
Ms. Magel reported things are going relatively well at the high school, especially for Seniors! Students have just started two weeks of APs, which is stressful, however, senior activities have also started and are going well. Reorganization of various groups is also in progress.

**Consent Agenda**
- Gifts Approval

The Committee again recognized the generosity from local organizations and individuals. In particular, the Committee recognized the very generous and continued support of the Wellesley Education Foundation.

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.

**Last Day of School Announcement**
Dr. Lussier indicated that students are required to attend 180 days of school annually. Currently the 180th day of school is Friday, June 14th. Therefore, barring any unforeseen events, June 14, 2019 will be the last day of school for students, which is a half day. Teachers report to school one additional day, on Monday, June 17th.

**WHS Assessments Annual Report**
The Committee was joined by Dr. Dabrowski, WHS Principal Jamie Chisum, and Director of Guidance Dana Plunkett, who presented the WHS Assessments Annual Report including the participation and achievement data from the PSAT, SAT, Pre-ACT, ACT and Advanced Placement (APs) for the class of 2018.

Ms. Plunkett presented the demographics of participants, as well as participation rates for the SAT and ACT. She provided an overview of the SAT/ACT process and reviewed SAT results which continue to be consistent with previous years and are outperforming comparable schools in Massachusetts. She reviewed PSAT scores over a 6-year period, noting performance has also been consistent in these assessments. Ms. Plunkett reviewed subgroups results including participation rates and overall performance for minorities and students of color. She indicated that the students of color are outperforming students in this subgroup in the state and the nation. Dr. Dabrowski highlighted that under the Black/African American student cohort, the high school mean reflects about a 150-point gain from last year and wondered if the additional work METCO has been doing to offer SAT preparation classes, funded
through the Friends of Wellesley METCO, impacted these results. ACT scores and participation rates were reviewed, including comparisons with peer districts and state and national scores. AP participation rates and results by subject were reviewed, showing high average scores.

Dr. Dabrowski indicated that results are positive overall for most students in Wellesley, however the data also indicates a need to consider areas for further analysis and improvement in order to ensure all students can access these preparatory courses and exams. Staff continues to work on narrowing the achievement gap that persists both in the areas of participation and achievement.

Next steps include addressing diversity, equity and inclusion issues by continuing METCO SAT prep classes; engaging in course selection conversations with students coming in from the Middle School; and maximizing support in the Academic Resource Center. With regard to cultural proficiency, there are considerations regarding the expansion of professional development for educators, and the continuance and expansion of cultural proficiency opportunities for students. In addition, it is planned to consider a wider view of assessments including support of Evolutions, refining and continuing the end-of-year finals experience, and aligning assessments with Profile of a Graduate competencies.

Dr. Chisum discussed project-based learning work that is ongoing at the high school with Evolutions and beyond, and its successes.

The Committee thanked Drs. Dabrowski and Chisum, and Ms. Plunkett for their presentation.

**SCHOOL CHOICE PUBLIC HEARING/VOTE**

Ms. Mahr explained that the School Choice Program allows parents to send their children to school in another district that is a School Choice district and tuition is paid by the sending district to the receiving district through a Cherry Sheet assessment, which has a maximum of $5,000 per student. Every year the school committee in each district must decide whether it will accept new enrollments under this program and, if so, in which grades. The DESE considers a district as School Choice unless the school committee opts out by June 1st of each year. Given the challenges the District is facing at each level relative to enrollment and student demand in courses at the high school; the addition of staff at the Middle School to support the increasing social/emotional needs and intervention requirements of students; and the overall space constraints and facilities conditions, it is recommended that the Committee vote to opt out of the School Choice Program for Wellesley Public Schools for the 2019-20 school year.

At approximately 7 pm, the public hearing on School Choice was open for comment. No one present wished to speak. The hearing closed.

After a brief discussion and clarifying questions, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee *unanimously VOTED* that in accordance with MGL Chapter 76, Section 12B, it withdraw from the School Choice obligation in the school year beginning September 2019 through June 2020.
**K-5 Standards-Based Report Cards (SBRC) Update**

The Committee was joined by Dr. Dabrowski and Performing Arts Director Michael LaCava to bring the Committee up to date on the progress made since its last presentation in February, share the final drafts of the K-5 standards-based report cards and present key features of the new report cards.

Dr. Dabrowski provided the history and background that culminated in the development of the new SBRCs. She reviewed the SBRC goal which is to clearly communicate student progress and performance toward Massachusetts grade level standards and expectations for both students and families. She noted that standards are complete for Social Emotional Learning (SEL), English Language Arts (ELA), Math, Spanish FLES, and specialist areas; in Science, practice standards are complete, however, content standards will be rolled out in the 2020-21 version of the SBRC; Social Studies remains the same, pending new State frameworks that will be guiding the curriculum and will be included in the 2020-21 version of the SBRC. There is a plan in place for how English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities will be assessed and participate in the SBRC.

Dr. Dabrowski reported that technology support on implementation of the SBRCs is ongoing; discussions with the Teachers’ Association are ongoing relative to how teachers will be supported on this implementation plan; and presentations to the School Committee have been held, with a request for action at its next meeting.

Mr. LaCava reviewed the K-5 performance indicators, the assessment of special populations, and the considerations that went into the layout/format of the SBRCs, as well as plans for the next version of the SBRC that will be rolled out in 2020-2021 with any tweaks that need to be made. Ms. Dabrowski indicated a FAQ sheet has been prepared for parents providing answers to anticipated questions.

Next steps include building a professional development plan for school year 2019-20; presentation and approval of the School Committee; and introduction to all K-5 educators on June 5th. There will be introductory SBRC sessions for all K-5 parents in the fall of 2019, and a K-5 SBRC parent survey in the winter of 2020 to receive back on needed revisions and refinement.

The Committee asked clarifying questions and thanked Dr. Dabrowski and Mr. LaCava for their work on this project.

The draft report cards will be posted on the website for review by the community. Action is slated for the next Committee meeting.

**Policy JG – Student Enrollment and School Assignment**

Mr. Kelley provided some history on this topic indicating at a recent meeting there were questions concerning placement of students and organization of sections in cases where enrollment is low or declining in a particular grade. This was triggered by the case at Upham School this year where there is a kindergarten single section and there
is concern with school year 2019-20 with both kindergarten and first grade class enrollment.

At the last Committee meeting, the Policy Subcommittee was asked to consider ways to encapsulate the policy and increase its flexibility to provide the opportunity for enough students at a grade level that would warrant two sections. The Subcommittee did meet and reviewed a draft prepared by Mr. Kelley to address these issues. Mr. Kelley proposed the following to be added to the end of Policy JG:

**Single Sections**

*In the event that enrollment projections and/or early registration numbers indicate that there is a chance that a grade level at a given school will only comprise enough students for one class (according to the class size guidelines described above), the District shall modify its process for registration and Open Enrollment as follows:*

- The grade level will not be closed to registration of new resident students.
- Open Enrollment requests for that grade level will be accepted beginning January 1.
- The District shall consider the possibility of Open Enrollment placements when making the decision whether to create a second section at that grade level.
- Before finalizing any decision to create a second section at that grade level, final acceptance of Open Enrollment placements will be required from families.

The Policy Subcommittee discussed how to provide more flexibility in the policy which is addressed in the proposed addendum to the policy, however no consensus was reached on the issue of how to address creating two sections at a grade level when only one is warranted. The Subcommittee believes that this discussion should be addressed by the full Committee.

Dr. Lussier provided an update of the Upham enrollment status. Based on the number of neighborhood student enrollments, both kindergarten and grade 1 at Upham School will have two sections in the 2019-20 school year.

Mr. Kelley indicated the Committee has received numerous emails relating to this topic, as well as confusion regarding section closures for next year and the concern with staff disruption that occurs when single grades move through the system. Dr. Lussier explained that any time a grade level is closed to enrollment, it is only for the current school year. He confirmed that, at this point, there are no grade level closures for the 2019-20 school at any elementary school. With reference to staff disruption, Dr. Lussier explained staff disruption is not unique to single section grades, but happens frequently in the District due to class contraction and expansion, from 2 to 3 sections or vice versa, as well as staff leaves of absence, etc., all of which require flexibility.

The Committee then discussed the draft policy addendum at length and provided feedback including adding a clause under the second item that provides the Superintendent with the flexibility to act on the Open Enrollment requests independent of the deadlines that are specified in the existing process and explicitly providing flexibility on space availability deadlines.
The Committee agrees with the flexibility provided to the Superintendent regarding open enrollment and keeping grade levels open to resident students. The Committee is also unanimous in its belief that there should not be a mandate of two sections per grade level, but the Superintendent should make best efforts not to have one section grade levels. In addition, the use of staff children and Boston students should not be used as levers for increasing numbers to accommodate an additional section.

The Committee discussed that since both K and 1 at Upham will have two sections this year, the urgency to get the Policy JG revised and approved is reduced. Mr. Kelley is recommending bringing the policy back to the Policy Subcommittee to address the revisions made this evening, as well as giving the Superintendent an opportunity to react to the draft addendum presented this evening. There was discussion that since the policy is being revisited, it should be reviewed in its entirety to determine if additional revisions are needed and then vote all changes at one time.

It was decided that action on the policy will be tabled, pending further review and finalization by the Policy Subcommittee and presentation at a subsequent Committee meeting for approval.

**Hunnewell Swing Space**

Ms. Gray discussed swing space for an ‘early’ and ‘late’ Hunnewell School project. The early Hunnewell option would allow construction to begin in 2021 with a projected completion date of 2023, with a cost of between $4 million and $8 million for swing space. The ‘late’ Hunnewell option provides that Hunnewell is built after the MSBA project is completed, with a projected construction start date of 2024 and completion in 2026. Proposed swing space for the late version will cost between $10 million and $11 million.

Early Hunnewell swing space options include reconsidering use of the St. Paul building, internal swing space considerations developed by the WPS Administrative team, placing a modular school at Sprague, or perhaps two modulars: one at Sprague and one at Schofield, where the cohorts would be split between the 2 modulars: K-2 and 3-5.

Ms. Gray discussed the St. Paul’s school building which is not ADA compliant and it will cost between $4.7 to $7 million to bring the building up to code. These are figures were developed over 6 months ago and do not include escalation costs. In addition, there will be the cost of leasing the property, and concerns with parking and traffic. It is not clear if the property is still available, and it was noted that even if the property was secured, the work to bring the building into compliance will result in the building opening a year later than the estimated time that the early Hunnewell project would be completed. The building is, however, in very close proximity to the current Hunnewell school and will keep the Hunnewell community together in one location.

Dr. Lussier provided an overview of the Internal swing space proposal which includes having each of the other six elementary schools each hosting one Hunnewell grade level. He discussed how this would work and its challenges. Dr. Lussier discussed transportation for the students, and accommodating families with students in multiple
grade levels. The staff at Hunnewell are in full support of this proposal as are the staff in the other six elementary schools. Unfortunately, the feedback received from parents, both within Hunnewell and from the receiving school has been primarily negative.

It was noted that reviewing and thoroughly assessing the various swing space options and assessing all of the possibilities is part of the overall process of conducting a feasibility study. Although the feedback on the internal swing space option has been negative, it was a comprehensive process and appropriate review of all available options.

The ‘late’ Hunnewell option provides that Hunnewell is built after the MSBA project is completed, with a projected construction start date of 2024 and completion in 2026. One swing space option would include running two schools on one property, pending the completion of the new school at Hardy or Upham and Hunnewell. At the end of the construction, redistricting would occur. Ms. Gray reviewed traffic and parking considerations that will need to be addressed, as well as how to accommodate over 500 students on one property. Another option is to redistrict after the first project is finished, and then use the closed school, either Hardy or Upham, with additional modulars to accommodate the Hunnewell students. Additional modulars would be required because the new redistricted Hunnewell community is significantly larger than the population of either Upham or Hardy. These options will range in cost from $10 million to $11 million.

Ms. Gray acknowledged that there is no simple solution to swing space, however, the buildings are not adequate and need to be addressed as soon as possible.

Mr. Kelley acknowledged that most feedback from parents, both within Hunnewell and from parents of the receiving schools, on the internal swing space scenario is that they feel it is too disruptive, will overcrowd the remaining six schools and cannot be supported. He indicated that it does not appear that there is a viable swing space scenario for an early Hunnewell.

The Committee discussed that building/renovating elementary schools is a Town-wide as well as community-wide challenge in order to meet the needs of all students. Recognizing that there will be growing pains for all, community-wide support is needed in order to move forward with this important work.

Dr. Lussier is of the opinion that, based on feedback from the community, internal swing space is no longer an option for consideration. After a lengthy discussion, the Committee agreed that although the internal swing space proposal brought forward by the Administration was both creative and thoughtful, it will be removed from consideration for swing space, acknowledging there are no other viable swing space options for early Hunnewell at this time.

HHU UPDATE
Hunnewell
Ms. Gray reminded the community there is a public forum for the Hunnewell Project scheduled for Thursday, May 9th, from 7 to 9 pm, at the WMS Auditorium.
project schedule and process, design options, site details, sustainability package, parking and general cost estimates will be discussed.

Ms. Gray reported the SBC has narrowed down the building options to an all new school and an addition/renovation. The SBC is most supportive of an all-new option, but will await feedback at the forum and will take action at its next meeting following the forum.

Questions were asked about the status of parking options and the proposal for a parking deck at the Cameron Street lot, the use of solar panels, and sustainability options.

**Hardy/Upham**  
*Ms. Chow removed herself from the meeting discussion.*

Ms. Gray informed the Committee that the SBC has received proposals from six architectural firms for the Hardy/Upham project, all of which will be reviewed and a recommendation prepared for consideration by the MSBA on June 4th.

*Ms. Chow rejoined the meeting.*

**SUPERINTENDENT’S EVALUATION PROCESS**  
Mr. Kelley discussed the Superintendent’s annual evaluation process. As in the past, the Committee will use the format prepared by the DESE which addresses the status of achievement of the District and Superintendent’s goals throughout the year, as well as professional practice and performance indicators across a wide range of activities. Mr. Kelley distributed and reviewed the evaluation schedule. Dr. Lussier will provide a self-evaluation using the DESE form.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**  
*Leda Eizenberg,* Schofield and Upham parent, thanked the Committee for its work on Policy JG and commitment to continue its review of single sections and sibling issues.

*Andrew Wilson,* Hunnewell parent, thanked the Committee for all of its work on development of the HHU options. He expressed his disappointment that an early Hunnewell option is perhaps no longer a possibility; he believes a number of Hunnewell parents support the early option, but have been less vocal.

*Amy Gottschalk and Stephanie Hubbard,* Upham parents, are pleased to learn that there will be two sections for kindergarten at Upham School for the 2019-20 school year. They thanked the Committee for its work on this issue and look forward to engaging in future discussions regarding revisions to Policy JG.
**ADJOURNMENT**
At approximately 10:10 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:**
- Memo Re: School Choice
- Memo-Presentation: WHS Assessments
- Memo-Presentation: Standards-based Report Cards
- Draft Report Cards: K and Gr 4
- Policy JG Addendum
- Schedule for Superintendent’s Evaluation