

**Wellesley Public Schools  
School Committee Meeting  
May 9, 2023  
6:30 PM  
Remote Online Meeting**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Those present included Chair Leda Eizenberg, Vice Chair Linda Chow, Secretary Craig Mack, members Christina Horner and Catherine Mirick; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent Sandy Trach; Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Mahr; Director of Student Services, Kat Bernklow. Student representatives, Sofia Dodobo, Ivy Wang and Evelyn Harrison.

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

A change in schedule this evening to accommodate the many public comment requests based on the agenda item of negotiations.

The committee gave a brief update to the community before the first of two public comments sections.

Catherine Mirick updated on negotiations on all five units with the WEA. We presented this package directly to the WEA bargaining team in our session yesterday. Then through the mediator, agreed to two of the WEA counter proposals related to elementary specialists and elementary morning duties, pending approval of the final package. The session ended after 10 p.m. with no resolution

Recognizing that this was our last scheduled mediation session, we wanted to ensure that the Committee's proposal built on the progress already made through negotiations and included a final, targeted attempt to further address compensation for our lowest paid employees. The offer we presented to the WEA represents our last, best offer, which increased the total compensation package by \$1.8 million over four years, concentrating all of this additional funding on those members of our support staff in Units C, D, and E.

Taken together, this compensation package would keep our teachers among the highest paid in Massachusetts, and would also significantly increase the annual compensation of colleagues who play critical support roles in the district, such as teaching assistants and paraprofessionals. We have broken down this package in great detail across each job classification to help ensure clarity on what these compensation increases would look like for our staff members across all units.

Our bargaining team was able to present a compensation structure that would immediately further boost pay for these employees. As an example, a first-year elementary teaching assistant with current potential earnings of \$25,413 this school year would see an increase to

approximately \$32,275 this year, and up to \$36,205 of potential earnings at the end of the four years.

On the topic of **supervision**, Elementary Specialists will provide morning supervision of students from 8:15 AM to 8:30 AM. They, in turn, will not receive students prior to 8:40 AM. Principals will do their best to limit this supervision to two times per week with a maximum of three.

For **Elementary prep and plan time** offers an increase to the minimum contracted prep and plan time from 120 minutes to 150 minutes per week. (The district already exceeds this with 240 minutes for many elementary educators) plus eliminating monthly, Thursday afternoon meetings in exchange for one Wednesday collaborative team meeting time. Agreed to designated testing clock form Elementary Special Educators. We are one of the very few schools in the district that has early release on every Wednesday.

The district will agree to form a Task Force to revisit the structure of specialists' FTE Calculations and assignments beginning the spring of 2025.

**For Secondary (WHS/WMS) office hours**, teachers at WMS and WHS will post office hours (35 minutes) at least once a week for students to drop by and receive additional instructional support. At WMS, these office hours will be in the afternoon and at WHS, these office hours will be in the morning or the afternoon.

For **parental leave**, we have eliminated the disparity of eligibility in addition there has been a Parental Leave Bank populated with days equally from all members. Any member may tap up to 5 days per child before using their own personal or accrued time.

**Unit C Due Process**, the district has agreed to a provision for Unit C members related to discipline or dismissal during the school year. (These positions are still subject to annual appointment.)

## **Compensation**

### **Unit A (our largest bargaining unit): Teachers and Nurses.**

There are sixteen total steps (4.17 %) plus the COLA increase that an individual can advance each year they are employed. There are also four lanes for compensation levels, Bachelors, Masters, Masters 30 and Masters 60 (or PhD). In a four year period an individual will increase four steps and receives a total percent increase of 31.23%

### **Unit B: Instructional Leaders, Department Heads, Directors and Assistant Principals**

There are a few different schedules that apply to these employees: a 190 Day, 204 Day, 209 Day (both A & B) and a 214 Day schedule. In a four year period an individual will increase four steps and receives a total percent increase of 20.84%

### **Unit C (second largest), D and E**

Unit C positions include:

- Teaching Assistants for Kindergarten, Buildings, General Education, Special Education and Library Instructional Assistants.
- Paraprofessionals for Special Education, Math, Reading, Behavioral Technicians and accompanists.
- Medical Service Professionals

Unit D positions include:

- Departmental and school secretaries

Unit E positions include:

- Administrative Assistants
- Accounting Coordinators
- Assistant Athletic Director (Annual, Exempt (not hourly))
- Transportation Director (Annual, Exempt (not hourly))

The profile developed was based on the most common position titles to provide a view of potential earnings of the course of four (4) years.

- Use the number of expected work hours
- Proposed rate of pay
- Add in the retention payment
- Calculate the potential earnings for the year

Additional profiles and schedules are available on the website.

**Public Comment Part One:**

**Isabel Bida, 22 Thomas Road**

A student of WPS, she is currently in high school and asks for respect for our teachers and staff and to come to an agreement with the contract with WEA.

**Rachel Wilson, 19 Windgate Road**

Supports all the teachers and encourages the School Committee to come to an agreement with the WEA to financially compensate the ESPs and help retain the excellence in teaching that we continue to have.

**Christina O'Brien, 316 Walnut Street**

A parent of 4 students in the Schofield Community asking to please settle the negotiations with the contract with the WEA.

**Kate Cirino, 32 Croton Street**

A parent of 3 students in the Schofield Community and urges the School Committee to agree to the terms of maternity leave under the negotiations terms with the WEA Contract.

**Diana Kulkarni, 81 Carisbrooke Road**

The parents of 2 students in the Schofield Community agree with all of the speakers and support all of our teachers and ask that we get back to the negotiations with the WEA and settle the contract.

Reports

**School Committee**

Catherine Mirick spoke on Save Routes for Schools, next weekend the Wellesley Wonderful Weekend will have a great event on Bike Safety.

Linda Chow update on the Hunnewell Track and Field. In a meeting with the NRC to further take action on the usage of lighting. The commission had a discussion on the topic and voted to support the lights and pass on their approval to the Wetlands Protection Agency. Epsilon will provide a very in depth report to all departments. A peer report will be arriving on May 18th.

Leda Eisenberg, reports on an event at HunneHam (Hunnewell and Upham) where the murals of an artist who did a collaboration with the students based on the core values of the school.

The School Committee has office hours this week via Zoom Thursday, May 18th at 10:00 a.m.

Craig Mack thanks all of the educators this week especially for Teacher Appreciation Week.

**Superintendent**

David Lussier thanks the Friends of Wellesley METCO for a great get together last weekend for a hike in Boston.

Wellesley Green Schools, Whitson's and the Hunnewell/Bates community for restarting our food donation program in the cafeteria. Students donate unopened food that they are not eating and would otherwise throw away. At the end of the week the food is donated to the Wellesley Food Pantry with the help of parent volunteers. After just 4 days students have already donated two grocery bags full of food.

Schofield School had its *Day of Imagineering* on Wednesday, May 3rd. Students created vending machines, arcade games, spaceships, robots, clothing and even jewelry out of recycled materials. This day would not have been possible without the leadership of Schofield's art teacher, Ms. Desrosiers, as well as the efforts of teachers, many parent volunteers and Wellesley Middle School's team of eighth graders.

On Friday, May 5th, members of the Wellesley Middle School Performing Arts Department traveled to perform in a music competition at East Longmeadow High School called Trills and Thrills. 115 students from four different WMS ensembles were involved and are graded by judges using a rubric that includes ensemble musicianship skills including Intonation, technique,

interpretation, and balance. All of the groups impressed the judges and they were all rated SUPERIOR, the highest rating the competition offers. The groups will use the judges' feedback to improve their upcoming spring concerts.

Congratulations to all of the middle school students who performed and special thanks to our WMS Ensembler Directors for supporting and preparing our students for the Festival: Ms. Lauren Connors, WMS Chorus Director; Ms. Valerie Stark, WMS Chorus Accompanist; Dr. Sergey Khanukaev, WMS Orchestra Director; Mr. David Adams, WMS Band and Jazz Band Director.

8th grade community service day was a huge success, lots of different projects going on all over town.

Wellesley High School's Choir Director Kevin McDonald is named a Quarterfinalist for the 2024 Grammy Music Educator Award

Congratulations to the Academic Decathlon Team who competed in the National Finals this past week in Frisco Texas! Additional congratulations to Alan Song who won the Gold Medal in Math and took home the Bronze Medal in the Interview Event. Cayden Xia won the Bronze Medal in Science, Dennis Zhang won a Silver Medal in Math, and Bella Wong who also took home the Bronze Medal in Math.

### **Students**

Ivy Wang - Early May is AP exams and finals, thank you to all of the teachers for their tremendous support during this time of year. Student Congress elections voted in Armita Hamrah and Niles Bowditch.

School Committee reps will be our very own Amita Hamrah, Evelyn Harrison, Ivy Wang, Niles Bowditch and Sophia Dobado. Dr. Allen is working with the students to include a METCO student to the student team.

### **Consent Agenda**

Gift Acceptances & Surplus Items

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

Moved - Craig Mack

Seconded - Catherine Mirick

**Roll Call** - Christina Horner -yes, Cather Mirick - yes, Linda Chow - yes, Craig Mack - yes, Leda Eizenberg - yes.

**Motion Carried (5-0)**

### **Action/Discussion**

*The Future Use of the Upham Building*

Colleagues, Steve Gagosian, PBC and Matt Chin, Recreation Department attended the meeting to go over potential uses for the Upham building once the school closes.

One project is to help the residents in the Warren Building to use the Upham building when Warren is going through renovations as a temporary space for an efficient scenario. The building has several advantages for many different reasons, Recreation can use the gym and the ground for their activities. The building is up to code, the Zoning Board will need to permit the use of the building to a temporary change from school to business. The plan is from June of 2025 for 5 to 6 months. The only real need to get the building approved is adding lots of signage to direct visitors when they enter the building. The HVAC unit will be portable air conditioning where needed.

There may be an opportunity for use by the Town Clerk Office for early voting at Upham to support them.

This item will be up for vote at our next meeting.

#### [Policy LC \(New\) Educational Research in Schools](#)

The Superintendent or their designee, is authorized to cooperate with colleges, universities, and other recognized research agencies in promoting potentially useful research. Because of the potentially large number of requests for studies in our schools it is necessary to limit the number and establish guidelines for the approval of studies.

Staff are expected to seek approval from the superintendent or their designee before any studies, research, surveys, or other data collection occurs.

If approved, the district will determine the mode and method of dissemination.

#### *Superintendent Evaluation Process*

Using the DESE Rubric of standards, Dr. Lussier will fill out a self evaluation and provide it to each of the members of the committee. Once received, members will then personally meet individually with the superintendent with their own reports. The members will submit their recommendations to the Chair of the committee. One additional component that was added this year is the school committee meeting with the WPS Administrative team who work directly with the superintendent to help in the evaluation.

#### **Public Comment Part Two**

##### **Regina LaRocque, 49 Harris Road**

A big thanks to the school committee, the teachers and staff of Wellesley Public Schools. She is extremely hopeful to settle a contract with the WEA.

##### **Kevin O'Brien, 316 Walnut Street**

4 students in the Schofield community. Please settle a contract with the WEA as soon as possible.

**Brit Kelly, 45 Pine Street**

2 students in the Schofield community moved here from NYC. A remarkable level of care has been given to their children by the TAs and paraprofessionals. Please expedite a settlement with the WEA.

At 8:30 pm, L.Eizenberg entertained a motion to enter into an executive session under G.C. c. 30A, §21(A), exemption #3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wellesley Educators Association.

We will not be reconvening in an open meeting.

**Invited to Executive Session:**

David Lussier, Supt., Cynthia Mahr, Asst. Supt. Finance and Operations, Sandy Trach, Asst. Supt. Teaching and Learning, Monica Visco, Director of Human Resources, Kat Berklow, Director of Student Services, Sharon Gray, Coordinator of Community Engagement, Jim Pender and Rick Gello, Labor Counsel, Meghan Jop, Town of Wellelsey, Executive Director.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Ms. Eisenberg entertained a motion to adjourn the open session meeting.

Moved - Craig Mack

Seconded - Catherine Mirick

**Roll Call** - Christina Horner -yes, Catherine Mirick - yes, Linda Chow - yes, Craig Mack - yes, Leda Eizenberg - yes

**Motion Carried (5-0)**

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Mack, Secretary

**Documents and Exhibits Used:**

Surplus Items

Materials for Policy Discussion

FY23 Quarter Three Report

