

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
June 14, 2022
Remote Online Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Those present included Chair Catherine Mirick, Vice Chair Linda Chow, Secretary Leda Eizenberg, members Melissa Martin and Craig Mack; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent Sandy Trach; Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Mahr; Director of Student Services Sarah Orlov; and Student Advisory representatives Ivy Wang, Sofia Dobado, Evelyn Harrison, and Abraham Budson-McQuilken.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeff Wechsler, of Precinct H, is a Town Meeting Member and parent of students at WMS and WHS. He thanked the Committee and Administration for their work, particularly over these last few difficult years. Regarding COVID, he hoped WPS will remain vigilant heading into next year, pay attention to virus trends, and be flexible. He also voiced concern about school start times, noting districts in parts of the country have moved start times for middle and high schools to be later. He believes it is worth looking into.

RECOGNITION OF DEPARTING AND INTRODUCTION OF NEW ADMINISTRATORS

K-12 METCO Director Cynthia Russell, Director of Technology Kathy Dooley, and WMS Principal Mark Ito joined the Committee.

Dr. Ito stated he was excited to introduce Ana Hurley as the incoming Assistant Principal to WMS. Ms. Hurley has served as the Assistant Principal at the Dover Sherborn Middle School since July 2020. Her experience ranges from curriculum design, creation of the master schedule, and implementing district-wide initiatives.

Ms. Russell stated she was excited to introduce Nile Fox as the incoming WHS METCO Academic Coordinator. Mr. Fox most recently worked at Boston Public Schools Green Academy and has worked at Needham Public Schools and is the head volleyball coach for the boys and girls programs at Newton North.

Ms. Hurley and Mr. Fox expressed their excitement to join the WPS community.

Dr. Lussier highlight colleagues who will be retiring after long careers or moving on in their professional journey at the end of this year.

He stated Director of Technology Kathy Dooley has been invaluable, especially during the pandemic. She was always focused on ensuring kids had devices and access to technology. Ms. Dooley stated she enjoyed her nine years in Wellesley and was happy to be completing her educational journey here. She felt they were able to get great things done and was sad to leave her Wellesley family - the technology team and senior administrative team. Ms. Martin thanked Ms. Dooley for her leadership in being able to translate technological aspects of technology into lay terms and breaking down what it means for students and educational practice.

Dr. Lussier stated Director of Student Services Sarah Orlov has made an impact nothing short of extraordinary over the past few years in managing a portfolio among the most complex in the district, including a large number of staff, specialized programs, and out of district students. Ms.

Orlov stated she felt honored to have been in Wellesley the past few years. She has appreciated the support she received and stated everyone was a pleasure to work with. Ms. Eizenberg thanked her for her ability to keep things going for the more vulnerable students during COVID. She added people felt connected to her and knew how much she cared about each and every child.

Dr. Lussier stated the hardest goodbye for him was to Addie Doherty, who has been his Administrative Assistant since he arrived ten years ago. He added he could not imagine a better partner and values their bond, both personal and professional, and noted he would not have gotten through these ten years without her. Ms. Doherty stated she will miss Dr. Lussier with all her heart but will be nearby and will check in. She noted she will miss the WPS team.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Chow offered an update on the Hunnewell Track & Field enhancement project, particularly the lighting proposal currently before the Natural Resources Commission (NRC). She noted she shared with the Committee a set of questions sent to NRC that some neighbors are hoping to have answered. NRC is currently reviewing draft usage policies and may vote on the lighting proposal at its June 16 meeting or at their following meeting.

Ms. Mirick reminded the community there will be a Farewell To Hunnewell Open House on Wednesday, June 15 from 5:00-7:00 pm for anyone who wants to walk through one more time.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Lussier stated the past Saturday was a busy day at Hunnewell. He acknowledged the hard work of Ms. Mahr and FMD in packing, sorting, and going through the school to code which items should go where. He noted staff were there for the better part of the day.

He acknowledged WPS staff members who were recognized at the Annual WEF Chair Ceremony. These staff members have served 25 years in Wellesley and include: John Burns (WHS Social Studies Teacher), Lisa Cannon (Hunnewell Grade 2 teacher), Carolyn Collins (PreK-5 Science, Technology/Engineering Department Head), Kirk Fredericks (WMS Fitness & Health Teacher), John Griffith (WHS Fitness & Health Teacher), Kathy Haller-McNeil (Schofield Occupational Therapist), Moe Henzel (Sprague Gr 4 Teacher), Kathy Hood (Schofield Kindergarten Teacher), Erica Ilyin (Bates Gr 5 Teacher), Julie Kenerson (Gr 6 Social Studies Teacher), Christine Laborde-Casterot (WHS French Teacher), and Erika Weberg-Vina (WHS Family & Consumer Science Teacher).

He stated WPS will continue its participation in DESE's Culturally Responsive Leadership Academy (CRLA) and that Ms. Eizenberg and Ms. Chow will continue to serve as School Committee representatives.

Tuesday, June 21 will be the 180th day of the year and will be a half day for students. Staff will report one additional day.

Ms. Martin offered an update on the Hardy building project. She stated the design development documents have been submitted to MSBA and the project will continue through the permitting process. The next step is for the Design Review Board to take up the Project of Significant Impact process.

STUDENT ADVISORY REPORT

Mr. Budson-McQuilken and Ms. Dobado had nothing to report.

CONSENT AGENDA

Meeting Minutes – May 24, 2022

Surplus Material Memo - WMS Math and Elementary ELA curriculum material

Fiske Tree Gift

Gift Acceptances

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

MOVED: Mr. Mack; SECONDED: Ms. Eizenberg; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DEMOGRAPHIC/ENROLLMENT STUDY WITH FUTURETHINK

Ms. Mahr stated that after the Committee approved use of surplus funds for a demographic and enrollment study, she sought out three quotes. Two quotes were received. One was from FutureThink, which WPS has worked with twice, the last being in February of 2020. That bid came in at \$18,750. The other bid was from MGT, which is a company out of Florida, and came in at \$78,000. She noted MGT tends to do very large facility studies focused around growing capacity, which accounts for the higher cost. Ms. Mahr requests the Committee authorize a contract with FutureThink in the amount of \$18,750.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to authorize a contract with FutureThink in the amount of \$18,750.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Mr. Mack; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

WMS PROGRAM OF STUDIES AMENDMENT

Ms. Mirick reminded the Committee that at the May 24 meeting, Ms. Trach and Adam Blumer presented a request to amend the WMS Program of Studies to include an elective course in media literacy.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to approve an amendment to the WMS Program of Studies as presented.

MOVED: Mr. Mack; SECONDED: Ms. Eizenberg; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNSELING SERVICES CONTRACT - HRS

Dr. Lussier stated that Human Relations Service (HRS) has been a longtime presence within the Wellesley community and within WPS. The current Counseling Services contract expires July 31, 2022 and a successor contract is sought.

Ms. Orlov stated HRS has provided excellent support to students and staff of WPS for years. She noted a Request for Proposal went out in March, to which only one bid was received, that of HRS. She is recommending the Committee approve their bid. HRS provides consultation to staff around student issues and provides clinical supervision to clinical staff. Additionally, they provide consultation to staff around staff issues, which is a unique service they provide that not many districts have access to. They also provide the District with staff that work in WPS buildings.

Ms. Mahr stated the request sought an hourly rate in order to assure flexibility, as services might be greater in some years. Overall, the estimated yearly cost is approximately \$43,000. She is asking the Committee to authorize a three-year contract with HRS at hourly rates of \$175 in 2022-23, \$180 in 2023-24, and \$185 in the 2024-25 school years.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to authorize a three-year contract in the amounts presented with Human Relations Service, Inc.

MOVED: Ms. Eizenberg; SECONDED: Ms. Martin; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

POLICIES ADF AND ADF-R - WELLNESS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES; AC - NON-DISCRIMINATION AND ACAB - HARASSMENT

Ms. Mirick reminded the Committee and community that the recommended revisions to these policies were discussed at the previous meeting. Ms. Chow stated there was no feedback from the public. Ms. Martin reminded the Committee of the additional proposed changes to language around gender and re-ordering the sections of Policy AC.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to approve Policy ADF and ADF-R as well as Policy AC, as amended at the previous meeting.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Mr. Mack; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUPT VACATION CARRYOVER

Dr. Lussier requested the ability to carry over ten vacation days into the new fiscal year. The Committee encouraged him to use his well-deserved vacation time next year.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to approve the carryover of ten vacation days into the next fiscal year for the Superintendent.

MOVED: Ms. Eizenberg; SECONDED: Ms. Martin; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION & MERIT PAY INCREASE

Ms. Mirick reviewed the evaluation process and provided an overview of the final summative evaluation. On assessing progress towards goals, the Committee rated all goals met, with some fully met and some still in progress. On assessing performance on standards, the Committee

rated Dr. Lussier's performance as proficient on each of the four standards. They also rated him proficient on overall summative performance. Committee members then had an opportunity to speak to Dr. Lussier's work and leadership. They commented on his intense work ethic and focus with command of details as well as a sense and vision for the long-term direction of the district. They noted he rose to the challenge and completed a very successful school year during what has arguably been the most challenging year many have faced. They commended his leadership amidst COVID and its ever-shifting variants and public health opinions while also continuing the district's focus on equity work. They added that communication is an area of growth and something to continue to evolve.

Dr. Lussier stated his appreciation for the thoughtful comments of the Committee. He added any Superintendent is only as successful as their team and that all good things in WPS are due to him having exceptional teammates, notably Ms. Mahr and Ms. Trach. He thanked the Committee for their tireless work, in particular recognizing the role of chair. He acknowledged the role of chair is always difficult and that this has been an exceptionally challenging year. Ms. Mirick's leadership at Town Meeting and her presentation of the district's work, her tenor and tone, were what was needed in the moment.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to approve the Superintendent's summative evaluation for the 2021-22 year as presented.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Ms. Chow; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Ms. Mirick stated that each year, after completion of a performance review, the Superintendent shall be considered for a merit pay increase up to 2%. Ms. Mirick recommends approving a 2% merit increase. Mr. Mack agreed that it was commensurate with the evaluation and is fair and appropriate.

Mr. Mack made a motion to approve a merit pay increase of 2% for the Superintendent. Ms. Chow seconded the motion. ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

Ms. Mirick stated the Superintendent's current contract runs through July 1, 2023. The contract specifies that the Committee will, prior to June 30, 2022 vote whether or not to enter into negotiations of a new or extended contract. She noted that Dr. Lussier has shared his interest in continuing to serve as Superintendent of WPS. The Committee will vote in open session whether to enter into negotiations, after which the Committee will enter into Executive Session to discuss how negotiations will take place. Whenever negotiations are completed, a negotiated contract will be brought back to Open Session for a vote.

Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to enter into contract negotiations with the Superintendent for a new contract beginning July 1, 2023.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Ms. Chow; ROLL CALL: Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES: REVIEW FOR RELEASE

Ms. Mirick stated the Superintendent and Committee Chair are expected to review on a quarterly basis any minutes from Executive Session meetings to determine if they can be released to the public. She noted that she and Dr. Lussier do not believe any should be released at this time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:55 pm, Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session under MGL c.30A, §21(A), exemption # 3 - Strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wellesley Educators Association and for discussion of strategy regarding litigation; exemption #2 – Strategy with respect to non-union salaries and strategy for contract negotiations with non-union personnel, because, as the Chair declares, an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating positions of the Committee, and to invite into the Executive Session Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendents Cindy Mahr and Sandra Trach, Director of Human Resources Monica Visco, and Jim Pender, and to not return to Open Session at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

MOVED: Ms. Eizenberg; **SECONDED:** Mr. Mack; **ROLL CALL:** Ms. Mirick – Yes; Ms. Eizenberg – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes.; Mr. Mack - Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Leda Eizenberg
Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used:

Demographic and Enrollment Study Bid Memo
Counseling Service - HRS Bid Memo