

**Westwood School Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2018**

Present:

Carol Lewis, Chairperson
Brian Kelly, Vice Chairperson - Absent
Charlie Donahue, Clerk
Tony Mullin, Committee Member
Joseph Jowdy, Committee Member
Danielle Sutrich, WHS Student Representative

Emily Parks, Superintendent
Allison Borchers, Assistant Superintendent
Heath Petracca, Director of Business and Finance - Absent
Abby Hanscom, Director of Student Services

**Meeting called to order 7:01 pm
Pledge of Allegiance**

Meeting was recorded by Westwood Media Center

Superintendent's Report (7:01-8:05)

Ms. Jowdy wanted to let the group know that Mr. Kelly regrets that he will be absent from this meeting. He had to be out of town for work. He wanted to pass along that he truly enjoyed serving on the School Committee.

Student Recognition

Ms. Parks wanted to recognize several students this evening.

Students from the Sheehan School were finalists in the National Geographic Bee held at Sheehan. The students are Francesca Gennari, Sara-Luna Sassine, Meg Greally, Kevin Doherty, and Nico Castro. Sara-Luna was the champion at Sheehan and she competed at the State Bee in April.

Grade 5 student Nathan Feinfeld from the Downey School also competed in the National Geographic Bee. He answered all the questions correctly though 6 rounds and a total of 7 out of 8.

Students from the Martha Jones School in grade 5 participated in the Stock Market challenge and won the fall round, Sean Collins and Luke Stacey. Brady Dumais and Sean Trusevitch won the spring round. Eve Lucas was 1st place in Massachusetts and 3rd in the nation in the stock market game essay contest. Would like to thank Mark Goguen and Rob Bartlett who are the advisors.

Several high school students were recognized for being successful in the Massachusetts Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Despina Aslanidis, Rose Cautela, Brenna Cox, Helen Dong, Kayley Fiorino, Hannah Shaby, Katie Webster, Yina Yang, Hannah Blum, Abigail Draeger, Bridgette Goss, Haley Morrison, Grace Perrone, Neil Wei, Will Conway, Alexandra Lapin, Ryan Shea. Of these students, four students who had a gold key in the state was then submitted to the National competition. Rose Cautela, Brenna Cox, Hannah Shaby, Kayley Fiorino. They all won a National Silver award. She wanted to also recognize Mrs. Thurston who is the department chair for the Art Department K-12, and the other art teachers at the high school for their wonderful work.

SBRT Update:

Ms. Hanscom reported. SBRT stands for Screening, Brief intervention and Referral to Treatment. A WHS team of 8 staff to be trained in June. Tenth grade screening is to start in February 2019. It would take place during the sophomore guidance seminar. Now need to determine when the second grade level will be decided. The staff can be trained in the fall, need to decide if 7th or 8th grade.

Questions asked are: In the past 12 months, how many days...

- Use any marijuana or synthetic marijuana?
- Take prescription medication or pill that was not prescribed to you or take more than was prescribed?
- Use anything else to get high?
- rode in a car driven by someone who was high or using alcohol or drugs?

If answer yes to any of these 4 questions, then it goes on to further questions that a clinical professional knows how to handle.

Ms. Jowdy asked how would it be decided if it is 7th or 8th grade? The middle school team would discuss this and make a recommendation. How will the parents be informed about this? Other communities have used their website to inform.

Mr. Donahue asked how do we know that is confidential? It is considered confidential by State law. Why would a student want to answer honestly? Hope that having a strong trusting relationship with a teacher/counselor would help the student to answer honestly. Mr. Donahue asked how other towns have experienced this. By asking these questions, they may answer no initially but then after thinking about the question came back to the counselor to ask for help.

Mr. Mullin asked if someone says yes are the parents informed? The parents can be informed only when the student agrees.

Ms. Jowdy asked if the student refuses to tell parents, what happens? The counselors would work very closely with that student to encourage the help and notification to the parents. There is no time limit on working with them to keep encouraging them to communicate with their parents.

Ms. Lewis asked about the training. It is a full day training that does not have a cost. Once some of our staff goes to this training we will then have a network of working with others who also took this training. Ms. Lewis asked how this information will be stored. That needs to be determined. The state only needs to be notified that this was done, the data is not shared with the State. Each interview takes about 5 minutes.

Mr. Donahue asked if other states have done this? This has been driven by Governor Charlie Baker.

Q3 Financial Report

Ms. Parks reported the district is on track for 3rd quarter and for the end of the year.

Mr. Mullin had a question about how the maintenance line item was doing and wondered if there was a surplus? Ms. Parks will have Mr Petracca get that answer.

Mr. Donahue asked about the items that are at 150% spent. He wanted to get some more information on that.

Building Project Community Engagement Update

May 30th is the Town Meeting and a very important vote for the School Committee warrant. In March and April there were 12 separate presentations, 7 PTO meetings, community forums were video recorded and on WestCat as well as school web page. Five frequently asked questions are also answered on the webpage from the question that came out of these forums. We need to get the parents out to the meeting. All the Principals have sent this out in their newsletters, Ms. Parks and Ms. Lewis will have a letter sent out to all the parents on the list serve, PTO presidents have been asked to spread the word. It is so important that we get the residents to the meeting to vote.

School Security Update

Ms. Parks reported there is another article at the town meeting to approve funding to hire consultants to do a comprehensive audit of the schools' and town buildings' security. This article is from the Selectmen. If that passes, then funding will be available for the study to take place in the summer. In the interim, photo IDs will be issued for all the employees of the district. Chief Silva will look at Apps that can communicate quickly between school and police in a security issue.

Report of Entry Findings

Ms. Parks wanted to report on what she has done this year. It includes data collection, observations, challenges and opportunities. She will post all of her findings in a report on the website for the public to read. This report is not to list of solutions, but came up with four themes:

- Contemporary teaching and learning that is future-oriented

- Horizontal and Vertical Alignment of Curriculum and practices
- Social and emotional curriculum and services
- Instructional time and “fitting it all in”

Enrollment Chart:

Ms. Parks showed enrollment numbers for all who have registered for the next school year. All of the classrooms are within the guidelines set by the School Committee.

Public Participation (8:05-8:10)

A resident has concern about the Verizon cell tower on the Middle School. It will be discussed at the meeting next month, but parents are concerned about the health concerns regarding having a cell tower on the building.

A resident is representing a number of Downey parents. Her child’s 1st grade classroom size was over guidelines and sent a letter to Central Office. There are over thirty houses on the market in the Downey district. The concern is that the infrastructure at Downey is not as accommodating if all of these houses sell and more students move in. Wanted to know how this would be dealt with if this does happen.

Discussion Items (7:45-8:45)

Update on District Goals - Science Initiatives (8:10-8:40)

Ms. Borchers introduced Kate Doyle, Elementary Science Coordinator; Katie Clarke, Middle School Science Coordinator; Becky Green, High School Science department chair

Goal 1 Innovation - Promote and continue to support innovative programs and practices that accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, and levels of readiness in a changing world.

Goal 2 Leadership - Promote frequent, intentional conversations about teaching and learning in order to improve professional practice and student outcomes.

Goal 3 Curriculum - Align district science curriculum, PreK-12, to the new State learning standards, according to the recommendations of the Science Review Committee.

Elementary science: **Innovation** instructional technology coaches introduced coding/robotics in 3rd grade. All teachers are now implementing an inquiry-based approach to instruction. **Curriculum** teachers aligned earth and space science units to new standards. Continued refining lessons based on STEMscopes, a new elementary science program and supplementing with lessons from Mystery Science program. **Leadership** Elementary science leadership team members planned and led professional development for their colleagues. Science specialist provided coaching for elementary teachers.

Middle School science: **Innovation** computer science added robotics units to grade 6 and 7 and a web design unit to grade 8. Engineering classes in all grade levels incorporated more explicit instruction of Engineering Design Standards from the MA frameworks. **Curriculum** New online curriculum resources from McGraw-Hill were introduced this winter. Teachers used interim assessments to gauge students' retention of core concepts from Grade 6 & 7 **Leadership** The curriculum coordinator position was expanded to include instructional coaching.

High school science - **Curriculum** all teachers developed and implement more inquiry-based units, continuing the transition toward student-centered science education. A co-taught biology class helped students meet the MCAS science competency determination. **Leadership** led by the science chair and principal, a committee conducted a thorough examination of the WHS course sequence for science. **Innovation** chemistry and physics teachers trained in the modeling approach to science education, and implemented new lessons and units.

Elementary

Complete curriculum alignment by adding life science standards
Continuing to build science content understanding for all teachers
Integrate science learning with other content

Middle School

Investigate options for expanding the scope of engineering projects
Complete the curriculum alignment process
Pilot a co-taught special education science course in grade 6

High School

Complete transition to inquiry-based unit design
Finalize course sequence recommendation and create an implementation plan

Life-Threatening Allergy Policy - Second Reading (8:40-8:42)

Motion was made by Ms. Jowdy to wave the third reading, Seconded by Mr. Donahue.

Official Vote: Unanimous approval

Policy Amendments to Address Pregnancy Fairness Act - First Readings (8:42-8:43)

- AC- Nondiscrimination
- GBA- Equal Opportunity Employment
- GCF-Professional Staff Hiring
- JB-Equal Educational Opportunities
- JFBB-School Choice

These policies need to be updated because of a new state law and to be in compliance. No questions, will have the second reading at the June meeting.

Action Items (8:40-8:50)

Approval of Minutes: March 15, 2018

A motion to approve the March 15, 2018 minutes was made by Ms. Jowdy. Seconded by Mr. Mullin.

Official Vote: Unanimous approval

Approval of Minutes: March 20, 2018

A motion to approve the March 20, 2018 minutes was made by Mr. Mullin. Seconded by Mr. Donahue.

Official Vote: Unanimous approval

Approval of Minutes: April 12, 2018 (9:00AM)

A motion to approve the April 12, 2018 minutes was made by Ms. Jowdy. Seconded by Mr. Donahue

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Approval of Minutes: April 12, 2018 (7:00PM)

A motion to approve the April 12, 2018 minutes was made by Ms. Jowdy. Seconded by Mr. Mullin .

Official Vote: Unanimous approval

School Choice Vote - 2018-2019

A motion **Whereas** the Educational Reform Act of 1993 requires that the enrollment of non-resident students under the School Choice provision unless the Committee votes by June 1 not to participate, and **Whereas** the School Committee provision takes away money from the sending district and awards it to the receiving district, and **Whereas** Westwood's per pupil expenditure is greater than the maximum allowable reimbursement, which means Westwood would subsidize each choice student, and **Whereas** there is no provision for selecting students who might better fit Westwood's educational system, and **Whereas** once Westwood accepts a pupil it must keep the pupil through graduation even though Westwood's demographic situation might change considerably, and **Whereas** it is likely that a number of students will return to their sending districts or otherwise leave Westwood, thus creating a potential income loss, now hereby be it **Resolved** that the Westwood School Committee respectfully declines to participate in the School Choice Program with the provision that should surrounding school districts subsequently and prior to June 1 decide to accept the provisions of School Choice, the Westwood School Committee reserves the right to do likewise in order to protect its fiduciary interests in this matter. The motion was made by Mr. Mullin to waive the reading of this motion. Seconded by Ms. Jowdy.

Roll call -

Mr. Donahue Yea

Ms. Jowdy Yea

Mr. Mullin Yea

Ms. Lewis Yea

Mr. Kelly- Absent

Motion passed.

New Business (8:46-8:56)

Ms. Lewis explained that one of the responsibilities of the School Committee is to provide a written evaluation for the Superintendent. A rubric provided by the state is a guideline that they can use to create this evaluation. There are pieces to apply to the evaluation. Goals are required by the rubric. Professional practice goals, student learning goals, district improvement goals. Ms. Parks was asked to write an assessment on these three goals and she provided that. School Committee needs to use a rating system in four areas: 1. instructional leadership, 2. management and operations, 3. family and community engagement, 4 professional culture. Ms. Lewis asked that before the June meeting for the committee to give feedback and that the evaluation will be presented at the June meeting.

Ms. Lewis received a letter from parents of a student that went to the Galapagos Islands trip. They wanted to share how the teachers were wonderful before, during and after the trip for an amazing experience.

Ms. Lewis wanted to thank Danielle Sutrich for being the student rep for the School Committee. Presented her with some Bentley University items, the school she will be attending next year.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Jowdy. Seconded by Mr. Donahue.

Official Vote: Unanimous approval

Meeting Adjourned at 8:56pm