

SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Meeting – March 2, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, March 2, 2022, at 5:30 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

*Present:*

Chris Ryan, Chair  
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair (arrived at 5:35 p.m.)  
Jeanne Downs  
Jessica Polizzotti

*Absent:*

Kim Reichelt

*Also present:*

Dr. Omar Easy  
Superintendent

Parry Graham  
Assistant Superintendent

Ellen Whittemore  
Director of Finance & Operations

Chair Chris Ryan convened the regular session at 5:33 p.m. The meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

1. **Public Comment:**

Heather Gruber, 108 Sears Road, to seek the root of the WTA's concerns. She is deeply concerned that there could many departures from the district and asked the School Committee to do something before it becomes a reality. Mrs. Gruber made several adverse comments about the current Superintendent, adding that he could not have known what is best for the schools between June and August without a thorough assessment. Mrs. Gruber particularly focused on the addition of iReady and the elimination of Lexia. She asked the School Committee to do their duty and act in the best interests of the schools.

*Ellen arrived at 5:35 p.m.*

Craig Gruber, 108 Sears Road, raised the issue of potential departures from each school, adding that teachers have concerns and fears and asked the School Committee to understand the reasons why. Mr. Gruber commented that he reviewed the revised budget submissions and many, if not all, of the concerns and suggestions raised in previous meetings were either ignored or disregarded. He goes on to list three budgeting concerns, including the unmet needs, and believes that the Committee should look at and understand the difference between a "desirement" and a "requirement". Mr. Gruber encouraged the Committee and the Superintendent to engage in a zero-based budget process and work collaboratively with teachers, staff, administrators and the community.

Charlotte Trim, Lincoln, MA, presented a long list of side effects for children when vaccinated. In her opinion, COVID does not affect children unless they are immunocompromised and the vaccines represent medical experiments. Ms. Trim asked the School Committee how much money the district received to bring into the medical experiments.

Alexia Obar, 18 Dean Road, thanked the School Committee, Superintendent, Administrators, and teachers for all the good work going on in Wayland. She is hopeful that everyone, students, families, and staff, can work together and collaboratively, adding that some things need to change and there are some things that can be done better.

Jenny Kaplan, 27 Pleasant Street, is a parent who has never attended a School Committee meeting, but has heard that there has been much disconnect between the School Committee, the Superintendent, and families and teachers. She encouraged a better understanding of the concerns, the need for everyone to feel supported by the community, and the urgency to find a way to fix what is going on.

Jeanne Downs, 195 Concord Road, spoke for herself, not the School Committee. She is troubled by the many public comments made during the past several months, either in person, via email, and online. In the end, the common goal is what is best for the students. Not everyone will agree, but we need to think about how we disagree, how we say what

SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Meeting – March 2, 2022

we want to say while remaining respectful to one another.

2. **Superintendent Update:**

(a) COVID-19 Update:

Parry provided COVID data since the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. There has been a decline in the number of cases since then, adding that there have been 18 student cases, mostly at Claypit Hill, and 7 staff cases since and does include cases from February vacation and at-home family tests. Parry noted that the trend seems to be that many of the cases are within the same family.

(b) Discussion and Possible Re-vote (Amendment) regarding Masks on School Buses as of March 7, 2022:

Based on the last School Committee vote, the plan is to make masks optional based on the latest CDC guidance. A discussion ensued about masking on school buses, and Dr. Easy noted that Boston does require masks on buses, as our METCO students travel into Wayland from Boston. Consistency is important in this regard.

Upon a motion duly made by Jess Polizzotti, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to make masks optional on school buses starting March 7 for all students.

(c) Discussion and Possible Vote regarding the Following:

- Expectations of Volunteers in the Schools, including Health Attestation Forms and Masking:  
The School Committee discussed the vaccination requirement and the continuation of the health attestation form for visitors in the schools.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to update the expectations for volunteers in the schools to making masks optional as of March 7 and keeping the current requirements of being fully vaccinated and completing the health attestation form.

- After School Sporting Events and Activities, including Capacity and Masking:  
Currently, the capacity at indoor sporting events and other activities or events is about 50% with social distancing of a chair in between each spectator. Capacity in other districts varies. One suggestion was to provide regular seating with a possible section reserved for those who want to social distance. A discussion ensued in this regard.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to increase the capacity for after school sporting events and activities to 80% and make masks optional as of March 7.

Dr. Easy added that Needham, Natick, Weston, Ashland, Millis, and Lincoln/Sudbury High School are all at 100% capacity.

- Requirement of a Negative COVID Test on Day 6 to Return to School:  
Current information from DESE and DPH suggests that requiring a negative COVID test on Day 6 to return to school may not be possible, as the School Committee voted at its last meeting. School counsel advises that we cannot require a negative COVID test on Day 6 at this time, as provided via email to Dr. Easy.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to amend the School Committee's vote from the last School Committee meeting and change the wording from "requiring" a negative COVID-19 test on Day 6 to return to school to "recommending" a negative COVID-19 test on Day 6 to return to school.

Chris reminded everyone that respecting people's individual choices is important, as some will go through a transition period to work out the logistics and individual comfortability, particularly for students. Messaging in this regard was discussed.

3. **Administrative Matters:**

(a) Review of OML Determinations:

This agenda item was passed over.

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – March 2, 2022

(b) Update on Communication with WTA:

Chris updated the School Committee about his conversations with the WTA President regarding the Committee's and WTA's communication, collaboration, and working relationship. Next steps were suggested in moving forward to improve the relationship that included meeting on a rotating monthly basis with two WTA E-Board members, two Central Office administrators, and two School Committee members. In addition, another monthly meeting was suggested with two WTA E-Board members and two School Committee members.

A discussion ensued to hear the School Committee's thoughts and to offer ideas regarding the format. All were in favor of these meetings, and suggestions included establishing ground rules, identifying specific topics beforehand, and consideration of the Open Meeting Law. Chris will consult with the WTA regarding format and scheduling.

#### 4. Policy Matters:

(a) Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Amended Policies:

- EBC – Supplemental Interim Pandemic Policy
- EBCFA – Face Coverings

At its last meeting, the Policy Subcommittee voted to rescind the EBC Supplemental Interim Pandemic Policy. Policy EBCFA was edited to reflect current DESE guidelines that includes a suggestion to recommend but not require masks, particularly the unvaccinated and the immunocompromised. Masks will be required post-COVID for five days in buildings. Masks, however, will be required in health rooms and they will be available in that location.

The School Committee reviewed the recommended changes to Policy EBCFA.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve Policy EBCFA – Face Coverings as updated and that the School Committee rescinds Policy EBC Supplemental Interim Pandemic Policy.

Jess added that the Policy Subcommittee may meet with 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who are interested in working with the Subcommittee around religious holiday policies.

#### 5. Consent Agenda:

(a) Accounts Payables Warrant:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated March 2, 2022, in the amount of \$522,536.95.

(b) Approval of Minutes: January 26, 2022

Jeanne and Jess suggested some edits, additions and spelling, for the January 26, 2022 minutes.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda as amended.

#### 6. Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:

None.

#### 7. Executive Session:

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to enter Executive Session at 6:34 p.m. for the purposes of a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; (b) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Wayland Educational Secretaries Association (WESA), as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; (c) reviewing executive session minutes for possible declassification as listed on the agenda: January 4, 2021, January 6, 2021, January 11, 2021, January 13, 2021, January 20, 2021, January 27, 2021, January 29, 2021, February 3, 2021, February 10, 2021, February 16, 2021; (d) approving executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: February 9, 2022; (e) discussing strategy in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel (Superintendent of Schools), as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(2), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Meeting – March 2, 2022

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Chris Ryan, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Jeanne Downs	X	
Jess Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	absent	

The School Committee will be joined by Dr. Omar Easy, Superintendent, Parry Graham, Assistant Superintendent, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will adjourn in Executive Session and will not reconvene in open session.

Kim Reichelt joined the meeting remotely in Executive Session.

8. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 9:48 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Chris Ryan, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Jeanne Downs	X	
Jess Polizzotti	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Omar Easy, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

**Observers:**

See attached.

**Corresponding Documentation:**

1. Agenda
2. Public Comments
3. Public Records Submitted but not Part of Public Comment
4. Policy EBC – Supplemental Interim Pandemic Policy
5. Policy EBCFA – Face Coverings
6. Accounts Payables Warrant
7. February 9, 2022 Minutes
8. Executive Session Motion