



HAMILTON-WENHAM
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 • TEL. 978-468-5310

School Committee Meeting
Zoom Virtual Meeting [Link](#)
Zoom Webinar ID: 885 7269 5794
Meeting Password: 304249
Wednesday, June 3, 2020
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Present:

David Polito, Chairperson
Gene Lee, Assistant Secretary
Michelle Bailey, Vice Chairperson
Michelle Horgan, Secretary
Peter Wolczik
Stacey Metternick
Tai Pryjma

Also Present:

Julie Kukenberger, Interim Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance & Administration
Mary Beth Banios, Incoming District Superintendent
Craig Genuardo, Athletic Director
Leadership Team members, identified below
Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order

6:00 PM

David Polito, Chairperson, calls the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

2. Motion to Adjourn Into Executive Session

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PURPOSE #3: TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO ALL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING GROUPS, AND TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION THEREAFTER.

MOTION by David Polito;

Tai Pryjma	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

Dr. Kukenberger notes that the Leadership Team is prepared for a 6:30 PM presentation and there is a brief discussion regarding the anticipated length needed during the Executive Session meeting.

Open Session reconvenes at 7:15 PM.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MOVE THE CHAIR'S REPORT TO THE NEXT ORDER OF BUSINESS ON THE MEETING AGENDA.

MOTION by David Polito;

Michelle Bailey	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

3. Chair's Report

Mr. Polito provides a chair report addressing both internal and external School Committee matters and concerns. He notes that the hosting School Committee meetings via Zoom has resulted in better attended meetings and a more open dialogue with the community. He commends all those involved for their work to keep things in the district running as smoothly as possible. Mr. Polito highlights the racial justice issues nationally, and locally, demonstrated by the Hamilton-Wenham march in solidarity held yesterday, 06/02/20. With this in mind, Mr. Polito addresses the recent hate speech that occurred during a School Committee meeting two weeks ago. He states that he spoke with community member Chris Coughlin earlier this evening. Mr. Coughlin had heard that one of the commenters used his family name, personally naming his son, in that conversation. Mr. Coughlin wants to assure the community that neither he nor his family were behind these comments, and further, would appreciate the School Committee's assistance in identifying those responsible. Mr. Polito reiterates the School Committee's commitment to offering the public an opportunity to speak, but reminds the community that those that become disruptive in the comments will be immediately removed from the meeting. He reviews the process guiding the citizen comments portion of School Committee meetings.

4. Citizens' Comments

Amy Desimone, 15 Porter Lane, Wenham: What is the situation with teacher/union contracts based on Wenham's delayed town meeting? Is there an update on state funding?

Lisa Bial, 25 Monument Street, Wenham: Thoughts on the Wenham 07/11/20 Town Meeting date?

As many watching tonight's meeting have commented, the meeting is not being displayed in "gallery view". Brief discussion regarding a solution to the viewing problem. Dr. Kukenberger points out that the upcoming presentation will rely on screen-sharing, so the gallery view will not be an issue.

5. New Business

A. HWRSD Remote Learning Model Presentation

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger provides a brief summary of the work being done and the success/behind the scenes work for the district's Remote Learning model and implementation. The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Leadership Team & Staff appear at the meeting this evening to update the School Committee on the Remote Learning Model, as detailed in the [presentation](#).

High School

Eric Tracy, HWRHS Principal, and Brian Menegoni, HWRHS Assistant Principal review the Remote Learning success, challenges, student participation/engagement, and lessons to carry through should Remote Learning continue.

Middle School

Craig Hovey, MRMS Principal, and Liz Lovell, MRMS Assistant Principal review the Remote Learning success, challenges, student participation/engagement, and ideas for improvement to the Remote Learning model.

Elementary School

Carolyn Shediak, Winthrop Principal, Jennifer Clifford, Cutler Principal, and Ben Schersten, Buker School Principal review Remote Learning success for teachers, staff, students, and families; what is missing from the current Remote Learning model; and lessons to carry through should Remote Learning continue.

School Counseling

Kristin Lazzaro, Director of School Counseling reviews the Remote Learning impact on student mental and emotional health, including the support offered to students and families. She reviews what has been working well and what challenges are faced in addressing student needs. Ms. Lazzaro thanks all those involved in supporting students through this time, with special acknowledgment to SRO Kent Richards.

Professional Development

Peggy McElhinney, Director of Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction, reviews the Remote Learning model specific to Professional Development, noting the success and challenges in continuing to provide ongoing training to educators regarding the use of technology. Ms. McElhinney notes that there are weekly meetings to assess teachers' needs and the best options to provide ongoing education.

Student Services

Stacy Bucyk, Director of Student Services, Maureen Smith, Elementary Special Education Coordinator, and Lindsey McGovern, Secondary Special Education Coordinator (MRMS/HS) review Special Education in the age of Remote Learning, including Individualized Education Plans, asynchronous versus synchronous learning, outside resources/guidance, ongoing planning and best meeting the needs of students, student success, and areas for continued focus.

Dr. Kukenberger and the School Committee members thank the Leadership Team for their dedication and continued hard work throughout this crisis.

Ms. Bailey asks if the Middle School students were surveyed with respect to the data presented. Mr. Hovey responds that surveys are in process and further reflection is thus necessary. Ms. Bailey encourages further evaluation and analysis regarding disciplines that do/do not transfer well from In-Person to Remote Learning, as she notes hearing a number of comments from community members regarding concerns surrounding PE specifically. Ms. Bailey asks about plans to replace traditional assessment days with learning days, as she is aware that finals have been cancelled. Mr. Tracy explains that teachers are exploring longer-term and/or project based assessment. He sent a letter to families yesterday which details student expectations/requirements.

Discussion regarding end of the year events:

- Mr. Tracy explains that graduating Seniors are invited to a celebratory car parade this Saturday, 06/06/20, at 11:00 AM. Parents are encouraged to drive, and Seniors will proceed down 1A, with family, friends, teachers, staff, and others from the community stationed along the route holding signs and cheering. Mr. Tracy clarifies that this parade event is in addition to the graduation ceremony which is scheduled for Saturday, 06/25/2020, at 10:00 AM (the ceremony will be limited, abiding by the CDC and state advised safety measures/restrictions). Students are to receive their diplomas at a later date.
- Mr. Hovey states that a virtual video production will be shared on the last day of school, in lieu of the traditional 8th Grade Filing Out Ceremony;

- On 06/16/2020, elementary students are invited to parade through their teacher's driveways to close out this school year;
- PE teachers are coordinating *Drop Everything and Move* activities;
- Friends of Buker and Cutler groups have coordinated the 5th Grade graduate yard signs.

Ms. Bailey asks about students picking up their belongings from the schools. Mr. Hovey and Mr. Tracy explain that there are scheduled pick up dates on 06/11/2020 and 06/12/2020. Accommodations are available for students and families who are unable to pick up on the scheduled day. Thomas Geary, Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations, adds that custodial staff have been incredibly flexible and devoted to ensuring that students needing their belongings earlier are accommodated. He thanks the custodial staff for their ongoing flexibility and commitment to help students/families.

Dr. Kukenberger thanks the Acord Food Pantry and Catherine Donovan, Director of Food Services for collaborating to ensure families have access to food throughout this crisis.

Ms. Bailey requests that the 06/03/20 meeting agenda is updated with a link to this presentation.

B. Honor Retirees & Student Representative

- *Gretchen Ahearn, Cutler Classroom Teacher, 1992-2020*
- *Dolly McIlvaine, Adjustment Counselor, 1993-2020*
- *Thomas Kain, Student Representative to the School Committee*

Retirees are very busy focusing on their students and unfortunately could not join the meeting this evening. Thank you to Gretchen Ahearn and Dolly McIlvaine for their commitment to the students and schools over the years!

Thomas Kaine, Student Government representative is recognized for his service over the past year. Dr. Kukenberger notes that a gift and card will be sent. Thomas Kaine briefly joins the meeting and thanks the School Committee for allowing him the opportunity to participate.

C. Title IX Self Audit for Athletic

[Exhibit](#)

Craig Genuardo, *Director of Athletics*, reviews the details of the Title IX self audit for athletics, as presented in the [exhibit](#). Mr. Genuardo explains that he worked alongside the Athletic Department and Trish Fields throughout the month of April to compile data for the audit. The version presented is not intended to offer finality, but rather, it is a fluid document reflecting the current realities of the district's athletic offerings. He reviews the major themes from the audit, including detailed information regarding the sports offered (broken down by gender), substantial proportionality, and the 11 components of full and effective accommodations. Mr. Genuardo highlights areas for improvement within the district. A discussion follows regarding coaches, user fees, boosters, ticket revenue, as well as the importance of the Turf Field to ensure equity.

Ms. Horgan thanks Mr. Genuardo for his hard work on this audit, noting how important it is to ensure equity in the district.

Discussion regarding user fees and the policy, or lack thereof, that dictates the amount of user fees and the associated difference that exists between Boys' and Girls athletic programs. Ms. Bailey points out there is currently no policy. A discussion follows addressing the history of user fees, past and current School Committee policy, previous discussions on the matter, controversy, etc. Dr. Kukenberger recommends that Mr. Genuardo analyze best practices for a future presentation. The conversation will be continued at later meetings.

D. Once in a Lifetime Opportunity for Boy's Basketball Team

[Exhibit](#)

Mr. Genuardo explains the [Andrew James Lawson Foundation Invitational 2020](#): an annual event where Boys and Girls Basketball teams compete at Boston Gardens over the course of a day. Revere High School invited Hamilton - Wenham as their opponent for this year's games. Mr. Genuardo says this would be a non-league game, and that there is a required ticket-selling component which the Booster parents have agreed to take on. Mr. Genuardo points out the perceived inequity/potential Title IX issues, noting that this particular opportunity was presented to him, and he did not seek out the opportunity knowing it would exclude the Girls' team. Mr. Genuardo promises to do everything in his power to ensure the Girls' Basketball team is afforded the same, or a similar opportunity, in the future. Discussion regarding ongoing equity and the specific opportunity presented for the Boys' Basketball team.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE 2020/2021 BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM PARTICIPATION IN THE ANDREW JAMES LAWSON FOUNDATION INVITATIONAL, TO BE HELD THIS COMING WINTER AT BOSTON GARDENS.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Gene Lee.

Discussion: Ms. Bailey asks for clarification that the District is *not* responsible for any of the costs, yet it remains a school-sanctioned event. Mr. Genuardo agrees, explaining that this is a "non-league, away game". As a result, the team would be bussed in and follow all district protocols. Ms. Bailey requests that the Boys' Basketball team engage in a conversation before attending the event, acknowledging the privilege afforded to them and a personal reflection on that privilege. Mr. Genuardo agrees, and appreciates Ms. Bailey's excellent suggestion.

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

E. FY21 Budget Reduction Discussion

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger shares the June/July District Timeline, as presented in the [exhibit](#).

Mr. Lee and Ms. Bailey review the structures of the upcoming Town Meetings and elections: Hamilton is scheduled for 06/20/20, with elections on 06/25/20. There is 1 yes vote needed during Town Meeting and 4 yes votes needed in the election to see the District budget passed. Wenham is scheduled for 07/11/20, with elections on 06/25/20. There are 2 yes votes needed in Town Meeting and 3 yes votes needed in the election to see the District budget passed. In summary, the community needs to vote **9 times** in order to pass the district budget. If a favorable vote is made for one portion of the ballot, but a negative vote is cast for the other portion, the entire budget will fail.

Discussion regarding budget approval timeline; timeline of Town Meetings; meeting with State Representatives; projected state funding available; Student Opportunity Act; budget forecast; Chapter 70; uncertainty in allocations; challenges in operating on a 1/12 budget; etc. Discussion regarding budget reductions and the 06/15/20 deadline to inform district staff of any non-renewal notices. District also anticipates written guidance from DESE on 06/15/20.

Discussion regarding the consequences and strategy in the scenarios of the budget failing/passing. Mr. Leone details the 1/12 budget and the potential impact on the District. Should the 1/12 budget continue for

any length of time, the district will essentially drain all savings, and staff will need to be laid off or furloughed.

Discussion regarding communication strategy moving forward:

- Letter to Booster Parents sent from the Friends groups, per request of Ms. Horgan;
- Ms. Bailey informed the Chronicle about the Wenham BOS vote;
- Draft of the Letter to the Editor, that Mr. Lee has drafted and sent out;
 - A fascinating argument follows, regarding the hyphenation of Hamilton - Wenham. There is no resolution, but the issue will thankfully be addressed at a future meeting;
 - Mr. Lee prefers that the letter is signed by each School Committee member, in order to provide a more unified and strong message. Discussion regarding potential challenges given that the Chronicle typically calls each author for verification before publishing letters. Mr. Lee agrees to sign the letter on behalf of the School Committee.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPTS AND APPROVES THE LETTER THAT GENE LEE WROTE TO THE EDITOR OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Peter Wolczik.

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

6. Superintendent's Report

A. Enrollment Report by Towns

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger explains that this enrollment report includes data broken down by each town.

Ms. Bailey asks about the process of Kindergarten registration. Dr. Kukenberger states that parents will be informed of their child's placement in August. Siblings will be placed in the same school, however their teachers will remain unknown until August. Further discussion regarding Kindergarten registration.

Ms. Metternick requests an enrollment report with out-of-district placements, specifically. Dr. Kukenberger agrees to provide this information at a future meeting.

B. Roadmap to Re-entry

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger respectfully requests to move this presentation to next week's School Committee meeting, 06/10/20, due to the numerous presentations and long meeting this evening. She assures the community that District Administration is analyzing approaches across the globe to determine the best strategy moving forward.

The Roadmap to Re-Entry agenda item is tabled until the 06/10/20 School Committee meeting; there are no objections.

7. Chair's Report

(Moved to beginning of the School Committee meeting, per request of Mr. Polito).

8. Committee Reports (Continued)

A. Capital/Financial Subcommittee

- No further updates.

B. Policy Subcommittee

- Next meeting of the Policy Subcommittee is Wednesday, 06/10/20. Agenda items include reviewing community feedback on the Religious Observance Policy, and revising the policy to include stronger language. This may be offered for a second reading/adoption at the 06/17/20 School Committee meeting. Dr. Kukenberger invited Danielle Pertucci, Stacy Bucyk, Peggy McElhinney, and Alan Taupier to attend the next Policy Subcommittee meeting to provide their written feedback.

C. Negotiations Subcommittee

- Next meeting of the Negotiations Subcommittee is Monday, 06/08/20. Agenda items include meeting with the Education Association Union and Custodian Union to continue negotiations.

9. Consent Agenda

A. Vote to approve prior meeting minutes

- April 1, 2020

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE PRIOR MEETING MINUTES DATED APRIL 1, 2020 AS PRESENTED IN THE CONSENT AGENDA ABOVE; THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Gene Lee.

Stacey Metternick	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

10. Other

A. Topics for Future Meetings

Next Meeting is June 10, 2020 at 6:00pm.

- Executive Session regarding negotiations with unions;
- Kindergarten registration update;
- Current out-of-district enrollment report;
- Roadmap to Reentry, presented by Dr. Kukenberger and Mr. Geary;
- Hamilton - Wenham - hyphen discussion;
- Ms. Horgan suggests an agenda item for next meeting: discussion regarding contracting with Mary Beth Banios or having Mr. Leone take on additional work during Dr. Kukenberger's scheduled vacation (beginning on 07/23/20);
- Mr. Wolczik will extend an email invitation to Kristen Borges and the 4 participants of the National History Day competition;
- Ms. Bailey notes that The Hamilton - Wenham Girls' Basketball team is offering to chalk driveways with the Generals Logo. If community members would like to participate, please contact Booster parent, Lisa Fibbe at lmfot@comcast.net.

11. Vote to Adjourn

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN
THE 06/03/2020 MEETING AT 10:53 PM.**

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Stacey Metternick.

Stacey Metternick	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

Respectfully submitted August 2nd, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A § 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. The School Committee reserves the right to implement additional remote participation procedures and will notify the public of these procedures as soon as practicable. Please [click here](#) to read the Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20.

*Zoom App Information: If you plan to participate, download the [Zoom.com](#) application now. The option to download will also be available at the start of the meeting. When opening the Zoom App, select "Join Meeting" in the upper right corner and enter the meeting id: 885 7269 5794; password: 304249. The community should ask questions via the "chat" function within the Zoom application during the Citizen's Comments section. During the Zoom meeting, participants will be given instructions on how to provide their comments. Unfortunately, we must limit the in-person conversations to just the Committee members. However, for the benefit of all, the School Committee meetings will be available on our local cable channel, HWCam, and [HWCam.org](#), for review a few hours after the meeting has ended. Members of the public can access the meeting via [YouTube HWRSD live stream link](#) the next day.