



WHITTIER REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

A regular meeting of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee was held remotely on **Wednesday, January 13, 2021** via ZOOM Teleconferencing per Governor Baker's Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20.

Members Present: Charlie LaBella Ron Fitzgerald Ben Fichera (6:43)
Richard Early Lisa O'Connor JoAnn Testaverde
Brett Murphy Johanna True
Dave Irving Garry James

Members Absent: Paul Tucker, Chip O'Connor, Scott Wood, Tony LeSage

Others Present: Maureen Lynch, Superintendent
Kara Kosmes, Business Manager
Chris Laganas, Principal
Alyssa Michel, Student Representative

Mr. Murphy stated that the meeting was being recorded and held remotely via ZOOM Teleconferencing. Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 20, the public was not allowed to physically access the meeting. However, Public Comment was made available via email in advance of the meeting start time and/or prior to Public Comment. The meeting was available for the public to view live via: <https://www.youtube.com/c/WhittierTechHighSchool> Mr. Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. Mr. Murphy took attendance. Mr. Murphy began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Murphy asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment.

By motion of Dr. Testaverde, seconded by Mr. James to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting for December 9, 2020 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to accept the Treasurer's Report for December 2020 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business posted.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Alyssa Michel, provided an update on student clubs. SkillsUSA is preparing to participate in the March 11th District 4 Conference & Qualifying event. This year, "Districts" will be held at Whittier with students taking their respective tests online rather than traveling to Greater Lowell for a full day of activities. Results will be released on March 18th. Students who qualify will be eligible to compete in the State Conference on April 30th at Blackstone Valley. All COVID-19 guidelines will be adhered to at both the District and State Hybrid contests. Sign up sheets are due back from each of the shop areas by Friday, January 15th. The Interact Club worked with the Key Club, Student Government and Peer to Peer and distributed over 500 cards to 4 nursing homes as well as Salisbury Meals on Wheels. They are hoping to run another card distribution for Valentine's Day. DECA is competing virtually in the District competition. They are completing their role play scenarios and will complete testing by January 19th. The Multicultural Club met December 17th and shared virtual Secret Santa gifts with one another. Some of the gifts included a customized music playlist, a personalized google slide souvenir of warm wishes and encouragement, and a beautiful portrait done entirely on an art app. In addition, they read and discussed Whittier's Bullying and Hazing policy and signed the policy. At their last meeting, they met in breakout rooms to discuss their vacations and any other pertinent issues. They will continue to meet and discuss world and local issues and how to best understand them. The Chess Club has been meeting each week on remote Mondays. They have approximately 20 members, with 10 students showing up virtually to compete. They are hoping to get more students involved. Peer Leaders continue to meet bi-weekly. At their last meeting, they discussed leaders that they admire in their lives. This was used by students to develop a list of essential leadership qualities. Key Club has been working to build a meeting schedule that's consistent and convenient for all the students as well as trying to work out community service ideas that will keep students safe. They partnered with the Interact Club, Student Council, and other clubs in the school to provide holiday cards for people in the community. The Key Club is planning to do something similar for Valentine's Day. Model UN will be meeting on January 19th via Google Meet. They will be debating the question, "Can renewable energy replace fossil fuels?" Following the debate, they will introduce the next topic area and countries will be assigned for their first international debate. Model UN will also discuss possible participation in virtual UN

conferences later this spring. GSA continues to meet on Mondays. They receive updates from the MA GSA Leadership Council. They are preparing for the next virtual meeting on Tuesday, February 9th. Student Government continues to meet bi-weekly with representatives from each class. They are currently promoting the upcoming Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday with daily announcements by student representatives about the life and lasting impact of his work. These pieces were written by members of the Student Government. Currently, there are approximately 20 participating members. They are looking forward to planning more student activities to promote school spirit over the next month.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel Action

The Superintendent, Maureen Lynch reported on the hiring of a Breathe Program Counselor and clerical support for the Health Office.

Budget Update

Ms. Lynch reported that the Executive Subcommittee met January 13, 2021 to discuss the FY22 budget. At that meeting, they began with a 4.49% increase which will be reduced for the next Executive Subcommittee meeting.

MCAS Update

Ms. Lynch reported that the MCAS for juniors has been postponed with no new dates. As of now, the plan is for Grade 10 students to take both the English and math MCAS in May 2021 and grade 9 students will take the biology MCAS exam in June 2021.

Superintendent's Update

Ms. Lynch provided an update. On December 10th, December 17th and January 7th, she attended the remote MAVA Superintendents'/CTE Directors' meetings. On Friday, December 11, 2020, she attended the remote Capital Skills Grant spending check-in. Whittier was awarded a \$300,000 grant for CAD and Engineering but needed to make some amendments based on COVID-19 issues regarding implementation. They are working with the State on this. On Monday, December 14, 2020, she attended a remote admissions discussion between MAVA officers and other vocational schools. On Monday, January 11, 2021, she attended the MAVA Quarterly Officers' meeting. On Tuesday, January 12, 2021, she took part in the interview process for Early College Designation with DESE's Associate Commissioner, Cliff Chuang and the Under Secretary of Education, Bob LePage along with Tia Gerber, Patricia Lowell, Kelly Fay and Chris Laganas. Whittier is waiting to hear if they will become designated as an

Early College school. Ms. Lynch reported that nine communities in the Whittier District are in the red and two are yellow. Ms. Lynch reported that sophomore and junior vocational students will be returning to school on Mondays. They will be separated by week but will be in A and B cohorts together. This will begin on Monday, January 25, 2021. It will give students three days of vocational training during their vocational week. Ms. Lynch reported that the State is offering "pool testing" for schools. She has had several meetings discussing the pros and cons of moving forward with this type of testing at Whittier. She has met with the nursing staff, the school physician, president of the union and administration to discuss this matter. They will continue to gather information but she stated they are not sure it will be a worthwhile endeavor but a final decision has not been made.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr. Chris Laganas, the Principal provided a principal's update. Mr. Laganas reported that Whittier is preparing for the next phase of bringing more students back to school. During their vocational week, sophomores and juniors will be back in school on Mondays beginning January 25th. Kevin Welch, Cafeteria Manager and his staff have set up remote Monday pick up sites for breakfast and lunch every Monday in January (1/18, 1/25) from 10 am to noon at the Poet's Inn entrance. Meals will be provided for 7 days for families in need. Mr. Laganas reported that virtual clubs although they are difficult to run have been successful. He stated it is wonderful to see the students involved again.

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Kara Kosmes, the Business Manager provided the Variance Analysis from July through December as required by the annual agenda. She reported that a transfer was approved last month that aligned several accounts that had negative balances.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Murphy went over the annual agenda items for February. Mr. Murphy reported that the 2021 Standard Mileage Rate form the IRS is 56 cents. Mr. Murphy asked the Committee to vote on acceptance of the rate.

By motion of Mr. Iving, seconded by Mr. James to accept the 2021 Standard Mileage Rate from the IRS of 56 cents. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Executive Subcommittee met January 13, 2021. They will meet again on February 10, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

The Instructional Subcommittee has not met. They will meet on January 27, 2021 at 3:00 pm.

The Plant Operations Subcommittee has not met. Ms. Lynch stated that Robert Hardy and his crew have been doing a phenomenal job keeping the building clean and safe.

The Salary & Negotiations Subcommittee has not met.

The Policy Subcommittee has not met.

MEETING DATES

The Executive Subcommittee meeting is February 10, 2021 at 5:30 pm. The Regular School Committee meeting is February 10, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business posted.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session posted.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. LaBella to adjourn at 6:55 PM.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Rand
Recording Secretary