



WHITTIER REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

A regular meeting of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee was held remotely on **Wednesday, October 14, 2020** 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 Scott wood
Richard Early Lisa O'Connor JoAnn Testaverde
Brett Murphy Johanna True Chip O'Connor
Dave Irving Garry James

Members Absent: Paul Tucker, Tony LeSage, Ben Fichera

Others Present: Maureen Lynch, Superintendent
Kara Kosmes, Business Manager
Patricia Lowell, Director Pupil Personnel
Paul Moskevitz, Vocational/Technical Coordinator
Katy Parsons, WREA President
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 Mr. James, seconded by Ms. L. O'Connor to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting for September 9, 2020 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Dr. Testaverde, seconded by Mr. James to approve the Minutes of Executive Session for September 9, 2020 as presented.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

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

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business posted.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Alyssa Michel, the new student representative was introduced and provided a report. She is a senior at Whittier from Haverhill. Her technical area is engineering. She has secured a co-op job at a wastewater company, Practical Applications Incorporated and will begin her job next shop week. She is ranked in the top 5% of her class and is a member of the National Technical Honor Society. She looks forward to working with not only the National Technical Honor Society but with Student Government as well to make this school year the best possible for all. Since her freshman year, Alyssa has been involved with many activities that Whittier has to offer. She has participated in volleyball, basketball and softball since enrolling at Whittier. She loves playing all three sports, but volleyball and softball are her favorites. She is the captain of both teams and has stayed in touch with her teammates in the hopes to have a season. In the meantime, they will be working with administration to organize after school clubs and sports virtually and in-person as time goes on. The staff at Whittier has been working hard to ensure the students' safety. Social distancing is practiced by all staff and students. Masks are required at all times, but mask breaks outdoors are provided. Arrows on the floor indicate the direction students should walk to avoid clusters of students. Alyssa reported that she feels safe when attending school in-person and understands that risks are being limited by following the enforced plan. She stated that school is different this year but it is as normal as possible under the unusual circumstances. She is very excited to be working with Superintendent Lynch and the School Committee throughout this school year and looks forward to attending future meetings.

Ms. Katy Parsons, WREA President provided an update. She has been the WREA President for the last 4 years. She stated the WREA has been active throughout the pandemic. There were approximately 55 members that participated in the task forces

over the summer. She stated there was a general membership meeting on October 14th. She stated although the staff has some concerns they are very happy with the communication with the District and feel safe. The Committee thanked Ms. Parsons and the teachers for all their work over the summer to prepare for the school year. Ms. Lynch stated that Ms. Parsons is finishing her WREA presidency and complimented her for all her hard work. She stated they worked as partners to bring students and staff back to school this year. She again thanked her for all her hard work throughout her WREA presidency. The Committee thanked Ms. Parsons and stated it was a pleasure to work with her.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel Action

The Superintendent, Maureen Lynch reported on the hiring of a plumbing & heating instructor, history instructor, co-op liaisons, medical tutors, Spanish translators and a building aide. She also reported on the resignations of a Spanish instructor, teaching assistant, route bus driver and history instructor.

Budget Update

There was no budget update.

MCAS Update

Ms. Lynch reported that all current seniors, juniors and sophomores do not have to take the Biology MCAS exam and have "passed" that MCAS requirement as long as they passed the Biology course at Whittier. There are three (3) seniors that still need to pass the math MCAS exam. Ms. Jensen, Coordinator of Data & Assessment will file an appeal on them in November and if the November retest is offered, those students will take it. Ms. Lynch reported that on October 1st, the Department of Education stated that the MCAS will be given during the 2020-2021 school year for Juniors and Sophomores in English and Math and freshmen will be given the Biology exam. Juniors will take the MCAS in English and Math in January 2021 and freshmen will take the Biology exam in June 2021.

Superintendent's Update

Ms. Lynch provided an update. On Thursday, September 10, 2020, she attended the MAVA Superintendents'/CTE Directors' remote meeting. On Monday, September 14, 2020, she attended the Amesbury City Council remote meeting along with Kara

Kosmes. On Wednesday, September 16, 2020, she attended the Commissioner's remote meeting. The Commissioner was able to provide an update on opening the of schools. The next meeting is Thursday, October 15th. On Thursday, September 17, 2020, she attended the MAVA Superintendents'/CTE Directors' remote meeting. On Friday, September 18, 2020, she attended the MAVA Officers' remote meeting. DESE is in the process of collecting waitlist data. On Friday, September 18, 2020, she attended the North Shore Superintendents' Roundtable remote meeting. At the meeting, they discussed ways to support one another throughout the school year. On Wednesday, September 23, 2020, she attended a webinar by Attorney Mike Long of Long & DiPietro regarding changes to Title IX. On Thursday, September 24, 2020, she attended the MAVA Superintendents'/CTE Directors' remote meeting. On Friday, September 25, 2020, she attended the MAVA Board of Directors' remote meeting. On Tuesday, September 29, 2020, she attended the DESE remote board meeting with MAVA officers. On Thursday, October 1, 2020, she attended the MAVA Superintendents'/CTE Directors' remote meeting. On Monday, October 5, 2020, she attended the MAVA Officers' remote meeting. On Monday, October 5, 2020, she attended a remote Q&A with Senator DiZoglio and Representative Vargas put on by the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce. On Monday, October 5, 2020, she attended the MAVA Quarterly Officers' remote meeting. On Thursday, October 8, 2020, she attended the MAVA Superintendents'/CTE Directors' remote meeting. On Tuesday, October 13, 2020, she attended the Merrimack Valley Superintendents' Association remote roundtable meeting. At that meeting, they discussed state reporting for the various learning models. Ms. Lynch provided an update on Whittier's hybrid learning model. She is very proud of the staff and students. She thought that mask wearing was going to be an issue but it has not been. Teachers and students take mask breaks throughout the day. The issue that still needs to be worked on is the 6 feet of distance. She is working with staff and emphasizing that they need to treat everyone they have contact with like they have COVID-19. That means they need to be wearing a mask at all times and staying 6 feet away from one another. Ms. Lynch reported that there have been 6 students and 3 staff members that have tested positive for COVID-19 so far this school year. There are currently 4 staff members and 13 students under quarantine because they were considered close contacts to those that have tested positive. Ms. Lynch stated that Haverhill will most likely remain in the red and she feels that Whittier can still move forward with in-person learning. If at any time she feels that being in the building is unsafe, she will move to remote learning for two (2) weeks and then re-evaluate.

Ms. Lynch provided a job description for a Special Projects Assistant - MSBA for the school committee to review and approve. She stated there is a lot of work that needs to be done to get to the feasibility study for the building project.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to approve the job description for the Special Projects Assistant - MSBA as presented.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Lynch reported that a check in the amount of \$2,000 was received in memory of David Dahlke. It is the family's wish that \$1,000 be donated to the Plumbing & Heating Department and \$1,000 be awarded as the David Dahlke scholarship. Ms. Lynch requested that the School Committee accept the donation and scholarship as presented and she thanked the family of David Dahlke for this generous donation and scholarship.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to accept the \$1,000 donation from the family of David Dahlke to the Plumbing & Heating Department and the \$1,000 David Dahlke scholarship as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Patricia Lowell, Director of Pupil Personnel Services provided the October 1, 2020 School Census. For informational purposes, she also provided the October 1, 2019 School Census report and a comparison between the two years. Currently, the Special Education population is at 18.8%, which is 2.7% lower than last year's percentage of 21.5%. There was a brief question and answer session that followed her presentation.

Ms. Lynch requested that the School Committee approve the following admission policy statement from DESE to be added to Whittier's admission policy. This statement will address the equitable evaluation of admission applications for student attendance and grades in the 2019-2020 school year. It will remain in effect for the 2021 and 2022 admission periods: *The areas of attendance and academic record will only be scored for the period of time leading up to March 13, 2020. These two categories will not be scored from March 16, 2020 through June of 2020. Pass-Fail grades from 2019-2020 will not be utilized. A return to regular attendance and academic recording has been put back in place effective 2020-2021.*

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. James to accept the above admission policy statement from DESE as an addendum to Whittier's admission policy as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Mr. Paul Moskevitz, Vocational/Technical Coordinator provided a presentation on the vocational/technical programs. He reported that the safety survey report response for the Coordinated Program Review has been delayed due to COVID-19 and will be completed by December 1, 2020. Mr. Moskevitz provided an update on the Capital Skills Grant 2020 for HVAC. He reported on the equipment that was purchased through the grant. Mr. Moskevitz reported that the YMCA opened the Early Education Center at Whittier at the start of the school year. There are a total of 21 children participating in the program. This year, the program opened up opportunities for staff to have their

children attend. There are 4 students in the Early Learning program and 8 students in the school age learning program. Mr. Moskevitz reported that as of October 14, 2020 there are 31 students out on co-op. Mr. Moskevitz also provided information on the new co-op COVID-19 controls that have been implemented. There is a Whittier COVID-19 permission form, a MASS COVID-19 control plan checklist and a pre-employment site visit checklist. He reported that according to the one year follow up survey for the Class of 2019, there is a 99% positive placement rate. Mr. Moskevitz reported on the Hot Work Certification program. He reported this program was implemented this year. It is the result of a new law generated because of a fire in Boston in 2017. Any trade area that produces a spark is required to be Hot Works Certified. The cost is \$5.00 per certification. He reported that 21 vocational staff, 7 maintenance workers and 2 transportation workers have been certified through Hot Works. He also reported that for 2021, all students participating in the Cooperative Program must be certified. This program is approved by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Ms. Lynch welcomed Mr. Moskevitz to the team. She stated she appreciates his hard work and work ethic.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

There was no Principal report.

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Kara Kosmes, the Business Manager provided the five-year capital plan for the Committee's review according to the annual agenda. This serves as a planning document that is updated each year to project the District's capital needs over a 5 year period and is used in the budget development process. Ms. Kosmes stated that several items listed on the Capital Plan have the notation "pending MSBA" next to them. Whittier is in the eligibility phase of the project and expects that these items will be addressed as the process continues to unfold. Ms. Kosmes stated that to date Whittier has received over 1.2 million dollars in state funding that has assisted with capital needs and will continue to pursue grants and other alternate funding sources to assist with funding capital needs. Ms. Kosmes also provided the variance report according to the annual agenda. Several salary accounts are over or under primarily due to the redeployment of staff necessary to meet the needs of the hybrid instructional model. A transfer request will be made at a future school committee meeting that will balance the salary accounts. Ms. Kosmes provided a net metering update. At the July school committee meeting, approval was requested for Whittier to enter into a net metering agreement with Haverhill AD 1, LLC that would authorize the purchase of approximately 3,200,000 kWh of electricity credits each year. This proposed net metering project is expected to result in annual savings of \$80,000 to \$100,000 in the school's electricity costs. The Committee gave approval for Whittier to enter into this Agreement pending legal review of the contract terms. The contract has been reviewed by legal counsel,

the terms have been deemed satisfactory and the contract is in the process of being finalized with the vendor. Mr LaBella would like a copy of the contract for the Net Metering Agreement. Ms. Lynch thanked the Y for helping students and staff this school year. She stated they have been phenomenal to work with.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Murphy went over the annual agenda items for November. The Annual MASC/MASS Delegate meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, November 7, 2020. It will be held virtually. Mr. Murphy reported that a Delegate and Alternate Delegate needed to be selected.

By motion of Mr. LaBella, seconded by Mr. James to nominate Dave Irving as Delegate and Dr. Testaverde as Alternate Delegate for the MASC/MASS Annual Delegate meeting on November 7, 2020. Approved by roll call vote - 1 Abstained (D. Irving)

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Executive Subcommittee has not met.

The Instructional Subcommittee has not met. They will meet on October 28, 2020 at 6:30 PM

The Plant Operations Subcommittee has not met.

The Salary & Negotiations Subcommittee met September 2, 2020. They will meet again on November 4, 2020 at 6:30 PM

By motion of Mr. Early, seconded by Mr. James to accept the minutes of September 2, 2020 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

The Policy Subcommittee has not met.

MEETING DATES

The Regular School Committee meeting is Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 6:30 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business posted.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session posted.

By motion of Mr. Early, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to adjourn at 7:31 PM.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Rand
Recording Secretary