



WHITTIER REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

A regular meeting of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee was held hybrid on **Wednesday, May 12, 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: Ron Fitzgerald Chip O'Connor JoAnn Testaverde
Richard Early Lisa O'Connor (remote)
Brett Murphy Charlie LaBella
Dave Irving Garry James

Members Absent: Ben Fichera, Johanna True, Tony LeSage, Scott Wood, Paul Tucker

Others Present: Maureen Lynch, Superintendent
Kara Kosmes, Business Manager
Chris Laganas, Principal

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 6:31 P.M. Mr. Murphy took attendance. All members listed as present were in attendance at Whittier Tech High School. Lisa O'Connor was present remotely via ZOOM Teleconferencing. 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. Irving to approve the Minutes of the Annual Organization meeting for April 14, 2021 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde, to approve the Minutes of the Public Hearing on the FY22 Budget for April 14, 2021 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting for April 14, 2021 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. James to accept the Minutes of Executive Session for April 14, 2021 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to accept the Treasurer's Report for April 2021 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Murphy reported that 12 school committee members turned in their school committee self-evaluation forms and that the results were provided in the packet. He asked if there were any questions or comments.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Alyssa Michel provided an update on sports and activities of the different clubs. She reported that the Chess Club meets on Thursday afterschool in the library. Last week, they had 18 players. The Club has grown a lot throughout the year. Peer Leaders will be raising money to participate in the Wildcat Walk on May 20th. This will support the American Cancer Society. They have also begun recruiting students for next year. The Multicultural Club is using their club funds to purchase t-shirts for their members. They are continuing to explore and discuss healthy ways to practice Bystander Intervention when faced with hate speech or bullying. DECA will meet virtually next week to discuss competition categories and dates for the 2021-2022 school year. The Interact Club is hosting a Wildcat Walk after school on Thursday, May 20th. Walkers are asked to get a \$10 sponsor to participate. Students can walk virtually as well. All donations received by the Wildcat Walk will be made to the Relay for Life of Greater Haverhill. The United Nations is preparing for the next online virtual Model United Nations conference to be held on Saturday, May 15th. Students will be debating global climate change, freedom of the press and protection of journalists, and healthcare for indigenous people. GSA has begun meeting in-person after school on Tuesdays. They are planning GSA activities to celebrate the graduating GSA seniors as well as pride events. Applications close for the GSA State Leadership on Friday. Wrestling has 24 candidates. Their first match is this week at Masco versus Masco and Greater Lawrence. They are practicing at Northern Essex Community College after school and will be traveling for all their meets due to Whittier's gymnasium space being used for lunches. Girls' lacrosse has 20 players on the roster. They have 13 from Whittier and 7 from Amesbury. The Varsity Baseball team has started the year 2-0. There are 9 seniors on the team and they are

very excited to be playing after missing a season last year. The Softball team has their season opener on Tuesday at Essex Tech. They won 10 to 1. They will be having their first home game on Saturday morning. The Varsity Boys' Lacrosse team is 2-1 and has 22 players on their roster. Boys' track has some young talent and are looking forward to their first meet on Thursday. Girls' track team is getting ready for their first meet this Thursday against Greater Lowell. Ms. Lynch stated that this was Alyssa's last school committee meeting as student representative before she graduates from Whittier. She thanked Alyssa for her hard work and wished her well in the future. Mr. Murphy presented Alyssa with a thank you gift from the School Committee and wished her well. Mr. Laganas introduced the new student representative, Ryan Link. Ryan stated he is from Haverhill and in the Advanced Manufacturing shop. He is very involved in Skills USA.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel Action

The Superintendent, Maureen Lynch reported on the hiring of individuals to work the April Vacation Bootcamp, individuals to work on the Curriculum Design Team and spring coaches for 2020-2021. She also reported on the resignations of a hospitality instructor and maintenance mechanic for retirement purposes.

Budget Update

Ms. Lynch reported that as of May 12, 2021, Merrimac, Newbury and Rowley have approved Whittier's budget. Ms. Lynch stated that the following meetings will be held this week: Ipswich on Saturday; Salisbury on Monday; and West Newbury next Saturday.

MCAS Update

Ms. Lynch reported that sophomores completed two days of math MCAS exams. Next week, sophomores will be participating in the English MCAS exam. On June 8-9, 2021, freshmen will be participating in the science MCAS exam.

Superintendent's Update

Ms. Lynch provided an update. She reported on Monday, April 26, 2021, she attended the MAVA Officers' remote meeting. The Executive Director of MAVA has resigned and they are in the process of looking for a new Executive Director as well as a reorganization of the group. On Monday, April 26, 2021, she attended the Merrimac Town meeting along with Kara Kosmes. The meeting was held at Whittier Tech. On

Tuesday, April 27, 2021, she attended the remote AVTE meeting to discuss MSBA reimbursement for vocational schools. On Tuesday, April 27, 2021, she attended a call with Jeff Riley, DESE Commissioner along with all Superintendents in the Commonwealth. He provided more guidance on close contacts and the need to return all students to school. On Thursday, April 29, 2021, she attended the remote meeting with the General Advisory Board chairpersons and school committee members. She thanked all committee members that were able to attend and Paul Moskevitz for organizing the meeting. On Friday, April 30, 2021, she attended the MAVA virtual Board of Directors' meeting. On Thursday, May 6, 2021, she attended a remote curative/outreach vaccine site meeting along with Patty Lowell and the City of Haverhill. The meeting was held to organize a vaccine clinic at Whittier for students if parents are interested and consent to the vaccine. Ms. Lynch reported that there are many end of the year activities that are being organized to meet the COVID guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Health including a prom, sports banquet and graduation. As the guidelines change, so do the plans. Senior Formal is on May 25th; Senior Sports Banquet is on May 27th; and Graduation is on June 3rd.

Ms. Lynch reported that given in-district acceptances for incoming freshmen, there will be no seats for school choice students for the 2021-2022 school year.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to not allocate seats for school choice for the 2021-2022 school year unless the student began at Whittier and moved out of the District. Unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Ms. Lynch recommended that the School Committee approve the appointment of Kristine Morrison as the Director of Pupil Personnel effective July 1, 2021. Ms. Morrison spoke a little about herself.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. James to appoint Kristine Morrison as the Director of Pupil Personnel effective July 1, 2021 as recommended by the Superintendent. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr. Chris Laganas, the Principal provided a copy of the proposed 2021-2022 school calendar for approval.

By motion of Ms. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. James to accept the proposed 2021-2022 school calendar as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Kara Kosmes, the Business Manager reported on the audit reports for Whittier from Powers and Sullivan. The opinion on the financial statements is unmodified, which is a clean opinion and best you can have; all reporting deadlines were met; the information received was accurate; and no material weaknesses were found. Ms. Kosmes reported that the Management letter addressed one item. The auditors have recommended that the District implement a cyber risk assessment. Whittier has contracted with a company who will conduct this testing which is expected to be completed over the next several months. Mr. LaBella asked about the cyber risk assessment. Ms. Kosmes stated that the company will test the systems and make recommendations. Mr. LaBella recommends bringing any changes from the cyber risk assessment company back to the auditors for review.

By motion of Ms. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Irving to accept the auditor's report as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Kosmes provided bid results for janitorial services, school supplies and Strataysys J55 System for informational purposes. Ms. Kosmes reported that a request for approval of a transfer in the amount of \$900,000 from the E&D account to the Stabilization Fund was provided in the packets. At the end of FY20, the Department of Revenue certified \$999,446 in Excess and Deficiency funds for Whittier. After the transfer, there will be \$99,446 in E&D but she anticipates that the account will be replenished by funds that remain in the operating budget at the close of the fiscal year. In order to accomplish this, there is a request for the School Committee to increase the FY21 general fund operating budget to \$26,768,882. The revenue for this increase will come from E&D and will result in no change to the member municipalities' assessments.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to transfer \$900,000.00 from the E&D Account to the Stabilization Account to increase the FY21 general fund operating budget to \$26,768,882.00 as presented and set forth in the Business Manager's memorandum dated May 4, 2021. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Murphy went over the annual agenda items for June. He reported that the information for the Superintendent's Evaluation was provided in the packet and the Superintendent's Evaluation form can be found online. He asked members to fill it out and return it by June 1, 2021. Mr. Murphy asked members to take a look at the subcommittee lists and let him know if they want to be added/deleted from any committees.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Executive Subcommittee has not met.

The Instructional Subcommittee has not met. They will meet in early September.

The Plant Operations Subcommittee has not met.

The Salary & Negotiations Subcommittee has not met. Ms. Lynch will set up a meeting for next week.

The Policy Subcommittee met April 14, 2021 and May 12, 2021.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Dr. Testaverde to approve the minutes of April 14, 2021 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

MEETING DATES

The Regular School Committee meeting is June 9, 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 Dr. Testaverde to adjourn at 7:18 PM.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Rand
Recording Secretary