



WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Minutes of September 9, 2020  
**School Committee Meeting**  
Held at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School  
600 Franklin Street, Whitman MA

Meeting convened: 6:06 p.m.  
Meeting adjourned: 7:38 p.m.  
Members present: Robert Hayes, Frederick Small, Michael Jones, Daniel Cullity, Christopher Howard, Steve Bois, Dawn Byers, Hillary Kniffen and David Forth, Jr.  
Members absent: Christopher Scriven  
Administrators present: Jeffrey Szymaniak, Superintendent of Schools  
George M. Ferro, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Schools  
John Tuffy, Director of Business and Finance

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Chair Hayes called the meeting to order and announced this evening's meeting is being recorded and broadcast live via WHCA-TV and on line.

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence

Chair Hayes took the agenda out of order.

Executive Session

The Committee will enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declared; WHEA Memorandum of Understanding.

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted by roll call to enter into executive session at 6:10 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declared; WHEA Memorandum of Understanding.**

**Mr. Bois – Yes**

**Ms. Byers – Yes**

**Mr. Cullity – Yes**

**Mr. Forth – Yes**

**Mr. Howard – Yes**

**Mr. Jones – Yes**

**Ms. Kniffen – Yes**

**Mr. Small – Yes**

**Mr. Hayes – Yes**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted by roll call to come out of executive session at 6:21 p.m.**

**Mr. Bois – Yes**

**Ms. Byers – Yes**

**Mr. Cullity – Yes**

**Mr. Forth – Yes**

**Mr. Howard – Yes**

**Mr. Jones – Yes**

**Ms. Kniffen – Yes**

**Mr. Small – Yes**

**Mr. Hayes – Yes**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

The Committee returned to their regular meeting session.

#### Meeting Minutes Approval

*August 6, 2020*

Chair Hayes recommended passing over the approval of the August 6, 2020 meeting minutes.

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to pass over the approval of the August 6, 2020 meeting minutes. The motion passed 8-0-1.**

*August 26, 2020*

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to approve the meeting minutes of August 26, 2020, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

Chair Hayes took the agenda out of order to vote to accept the WHEA/WHRSO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during COVID-19.

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to accept the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during COVID-19 between the Whitman Hanson Education Association (WHEA) and Whitman-Hanson Regional School District (WHRSO), as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

Kevin Kavka, President of WHEA, spoke to the seamless collaboration in working with administration and is looking forward to continuing the process during upcoming collective bargaining negotiations in the fall.

#### Superintendent's Report

*Updates on reopening of Schools*

Superintendent Szymaniak reported he toured the facilities with Mr. Sandland and several School Committee members earlier today. Classrooms and other areas of the buildings look much different under the COVID-19 social distancing mandates. Mr. Szymaniak noted there is still much trepidation in the community and has a parent Zoom question and answer meeting planned with school nurses for September 10.

Mr. Szymaniak announced the parent portal for grades PK-8 opened today. Parents and students can now see their classroom teachers and schedules. The Superintendent reported 386 students are fully remote and home-schooled students have increased to 90 this year. Mr. Szymaniak spoke to accommodating many cohort request changes. Superintendent sent families an update on the opening of school on September 4. Principals will follow by sending school specific updates today. The Committee discussed consultations with the boards of health for information on any spikes in COVID cases in the towns that would impact in person and hybrid learning program status. Mr. Szymaniak stated the lead nurse is in constant communication with both boards of health and should a decision be needed to move to full remote due to a spike in COVID cases, the closure would most likely be for a period of time (i.e., 10 days). Mr. Szymaniak reported he met with the Safety/Security Team and, through that group, can identify clusters of cases in the community. If it were necessary to move to full remote, the Superintendent would call for the change and convene the Committee to discuss the length of the remote learning

structure. The decision would be made using metrics based on each town and in working with the boards of health.

#### *Student Handbooks*

Mr. Szymaniak presented the elementary, middle and high school student handbooks for approval. There were no major disciplinary or graduation changes. In alignment with the Memorandum of Understanding with WHEA, the Committee discussed excluding bandanas in the face covering policy EBCFA. The Committee discussed adapting the same directive for the district's face coverings policy and moved to a vote.

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Ms. Byers seconded; voted to amend the Face Covering Policy EBCFA to exclude bandanas as a face covering. The motion passed unanimously.**

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Ms. Byers seconded; voted to accept the elementary, middle and high school handbooks, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

There was a discussion regarding the exclusion of mid-year exams and finals at the high school this year. Mr. Szymaniak indicated the high school principal is working on a modification to a more project based method of valuation. It was noted that many districts are moving in this direction and it does not mean a teacher cannot administer an assessment to students.

#### *Parent / Teacher Survey Results*

The Superintendent conducted two surveys to determine the interest of out of district and in district teaching staff with children, who may need childcare.

The District received 95 responses from out of district teachers:

Conley	20
Duval	19
Hanson Middle	15
Indian Head	15
Whitman Middle	20
Highs School	6

The District received 49 responses from in-district teachers K-9:

Kindergarten	5
Grade 1	6
Grade 2	7
Grade 3	8
Grade 4	6
Grade 5	12
Grade 6	6
Grade 7	3
Grade 8	4
Grade 9	3

Mr. Szymaniak recommended not participating in a remote childcare program at this time but will continue to investigate remote childcare options. Adding more students, hiring staff and finding space is not currently budgeted. Committee members agreed it would be a convenience, but is not feasible at this time. Mr. Szymaniak reported that the YMCA has secured another facility in Whitman at the First Congressional Church to provide additional daycare options for the community. The Superintendent reported he is also challenged with a small number of paraprofessional staff to support the remote teachers.

#### *Superintendent's Evaluation*

Chair Hayes presented the End of Cycle Summative Evaluation of the Superintendent results.

END OF CYCLE SUMMATIVE EVALUATION REPORT: SUPERINTENDENT JEFFREY SZYMANIAK, 2019-20						
<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Assess Progress Toward Goals</b>	<b>Did not meet</b>	<b>Some Progress</b>	<b>Significant Progress</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Exceeded</b>
	Professional Practice Goal				5	3
	Student Learning Goal				5	3
	District Improvement Goal			2	4	3
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Assess Performance on Standards</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	
	Standard I: Instructional Leadership		1	5	3	
	Standard II: Management and Operations		1	5	3	
	Standard III: Family and Community Engagement		1	2	6	
	Standard IV: Professional Culture		1	3	5	
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Overall Summative Performance</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	
			1	3	5	

Chair read the Committee’s evaluation comments aloud. The Committee discussed the lack of a superintendent’s self-assessment during the end of cycle process. Chair Hayes noted the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recently updated the end of cycle process and superintendent’s evaluation tool. The Committee did not receive the newest evaluation tool but will move forward with the new template in the next cycle. Mr. Szymaniak thanked the Committee for their feedback and commented on the challenges of the last school year.

*YTD Budget Report – John Tuffy*

Director of Business and Finance, John Tuffy, presented the year to date financial reports. Mr. Tuffy reported the reports are slightly different this year and appropriated funding may change due to school opening later than usual and the district is not experiencing the same spending patterns as in the past. A new salary table is not yet available as the district is still in a hiring process. Nearly 11.8% of the budget has been spent, which is 1% less than the previous year. Revenue is still uncertain since the state has not passed its budget and final circuit breaker and regional transportation figures have yet to be finalized. Mr. Tuffy confirmed he is working closely with the town administrators and will meet the deadline for COVID related reimbursement submissions. Mr. Tuffy reported he will begin the formal FY2020 closeout process on September 10 and open FY2021. At the next meeting, line item transfers will be presented to close out any open purchase orders and will not impact the bottom line.

Unfinished Business

*2020-21 Academic Calendar Updates*

The Superintendent presented an updated 2020-21 school year academic calendar that included parent conference dates and Wednesday half day professional development days.

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to approve the changes to the 2020-21 School Year Academic School Calendar, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

New Business

*Donation Acceptance*

South Shore Veteran’s Assistance, Inc. donated a solar powered light for the flagpole at Indian Head Elementary School outside of Memorial Hall so the flag may be flown during the evening.

**VOTE: Mr. Forth motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to accept the donation of a solar powered light for the flagpole at Indian Head Elementary School from South Shore Veteran’s Assistance, Inc., as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

*Surplus Requests*

The Committee received multiple requests to declare outdated items as surplus. The high school submitted a request to declare outdated math and business related arts textbooks as surplus, and Duval Elementary requested

to declare outdated/no longer in use library books as surplus. The Committee voted to declare the items as surplus as a blanket vote.

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to declare the High School math and business related arts textbooks as well as the Duval School library books as surplus, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### Subcommittee Reports

##### *Facilities Subcommittee*

Mr. Small commented on the facilities walk-through with the Superintendent and Facilities Director. The Facilities Subcommittee met earlier this evening. The Subcommittee reviewed the capital project matrices which will be distributed to the full Committee. A technology capital matrix will be developed in order to visualize a complete picture of the needs in that department.

##### *Policy Subcommittee*

The Superintendent will schedule a Policy Subcommittee meeting in the near future.

##### *Next Meeting*

The Superintendent will schedule an interim School Committee meeting on September 30, 2020 to discuss the Strategic Plan and community engagement focus. The Superintendent will also give a brief update on the opening of schools and the budget and move to goals, strategic plan and engagement focus.

Mr. Szymaniak stated the Student Advisory Report will be back on school committee agendas once the student school council meets in October. All meetings will continue to adhere to social distancing mandates.

There was a discussion to hold bi-monthly School Committee meetings. Some Committee members found bi-monthly meetings may be challenging with anticipated upcoming subcommittee and negotiations meetings.

The Superintendent will provide the Committee with items to consider for discussion in preparation of the engagement focus meeting on September 30.

The Superintendent spoke to the joint meeting with the towns select Boards on September 15, 2020 but has yet to see a formal agenda.

##### *Insurance Subcommittee*

The Insurance Subcommittee will schedule a meeting within the near future with the Director of Business and Finance.

The Superintendent recommended forming a Negotiations Subcommittee at the October meeting in anticipation of collective bargaining negotiations.

##### *Adjournment*

**VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Lindberg

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*Signature of School Committee Secretary*

Meeting Handouts:

- Meeting agenda and memo for September 9, 2020
- Meeting minutes of August 26, 2020
- Student Handbooks

- YTD Budget Reports
- 2020-21 Academic School Calendar
- Donation request (Indian Head solar powered light for Flag)
- Surplus requests (HS - 2 and Duval - 1)
- Gov. Baker letter awarding FY2021 MA 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Grant Centers – Exemplary Programs Grant Fund Code 646
- WHEA/WHRSD MOU (confidential under separate cover)
- Updated District Calendar 2020-21 Academic Year
- Superintendent's 2019-20 End of Cycle Evaluation Summary
- Student Handbooks