

Committee Members
Alex Guardiola, Chair
Vanessa Alvarez, Vice-Chair
Maureen Binienda
Susan Mailman

Administrative Representative
Dr. Marie Morse

OFFICE OF THE
CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MA 01609

AGENDA #1

The Standing Committee on TEACHING, LEARNING and STUDENT SUCCESS will hold a hybrid meeting:

on: January 23, 2025, 5:00 p.m.
at: 20 Irving Street, Room 410, Worcester, MA 01609
Virtual: [Click here to view the meeting](#)
Also accessible by telephone, to dial in call: +1 301-715-8592 or +1
305-224-1968

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

2-61 Mailman/Clancey/Johnson/Kamara/McCullough/Novick
(February 7, 2022)

[Request that the Administration, before further expansion of pre k programming in WPS, include local non-profit early education and care partners in order to incorporate lessons learned and to avoid pitfalls of 20 years ago.](#)

[Click to view the prior action sheet for item gb 2-61](#)

Recommendation: Approve and File

gb 2-56.6 Johnson/Clancey/Mailman/Kamara/McCullough/O'Connell Novick
(February 7, 2022)

[Request that the Administration provide an update on library programs and the use of librarians throughout the district.](#)

[Click to view the prior action sheet for item gb 2-56.6](#)

Recommendation: Approve and File

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Kristi Turgeon
Clerk of the School Committee



WORCESTER
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Dr. Marie Morse
Assistant Superintendent
Teaching & Learning

P 508-799-3644
E morsemd@worcesterschools.net

Dr. John E. Durkin
Administration Building
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609-2493

Date: January 17, 2025

Item Number: gb 2-61

Item Description: Request that the Administration, before further expansion of pre-k programming in WPS, include local non-profit early education and care partners in order to incorporate lessons learned and to avoid pitfalls of 20 years ago.

(3/20/24) Chairperson Guardiola made a motion to receive an update on this item when the aforementioned grant was awarded to the program.

Recommendation: Approve and File

Rationale:

Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)

The community and public schools have united efforts to pursue the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) grant.

CPPI grants are available to districts in high-need communities to support local coordination and investment in access to high-quality preschool. Initial grants support up to a year of planning with implementation grants following.

The grant program aims to provide 3 and 4-year-olds in a district with equitable access to high-quality preschool, while ensuring families have multiple provider options to choose from across public and community-based classrooms. This levels the playing field for kindergarten readiness across the district, establishing coordinated curriculum and similar goals regardless of where a child is enrolled.

This initiative aims to establish a Worcester Early Childhood Leadership and Governance Team to strengthen existing partnerships. The grant facilitates collaboration between Worcester Public Schools and community partners to evaluate district-wide early childhood needs and strategically plan comprehensive preschool services throughout the community.

Key partners in this endeavor include the Guild of St. Agnes, YWCA Central Massachusetts, Edward Street Child Services, and the Worcester Public Schools.

Update on the CPPI Grant work

With a focus on the **Priority Strand: Equitable access to special education and inclusion.**

CPPI supports program designs that ensure full inclusion of children with disabilities across all settings, ensuring that children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) have access to required supports without necessary transitions or other barriers through an Itinerant Team model. The leadership team will:

1. **Provide Comprehensive Services:** Develop and implement a plan to deliver Special Education (SPED) services directly within the childcare settings that children attend. This approach would eliminate the need for weekly transportation to Worcester Public School (WPS) sites for itinerant SPED services and the return trip to community locations. By doing so, the district can reduce transportation costs, alleviate the demand for classroom space in elementary schools, and optimize service providers' time and resources.
2. **Provide Professional Development:** Develop and implement a Professional Development plan that addresses the community-wide professional development needs and highlights joint professional learning opportunities for both district and early learning partner educators. Implement a system to capture data or utilize current data sources to implement a plan to meet the professional needs of the early education workforce. Identify what resources are needed, and available, to address the current needs.

Year one: The CPPI Initial Planning Grant:

- The Initial planning grant was first awarded on March 15, 2024, with a total funding of \$178,678.
- Under the initial planning grant and in collaboration with our partner sites, the YWCA at Salem Street and the Guild of St. at Granite Street, the WPS CPPI Leadership members developed and supported the implementation of a peer observation model where teams of WPS Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers visited each community site and conducted classroom observations in June/July 2024
- On August 8, 2024, Service Agreements with the Guild, YWCA and Edward Street were created
- Teachers from the Guild and YWCA were surveyed and data collected included educators' years of experience, education, comfort levels and classroom and other needs
- The required Community Assessment was developed based on information gathered by WPS and submitted to EEC
- In August, the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) was implemented in each of the community agency CPPI classrooms by a consultant hired through Edward Street with grant funding

Year Two: The CPPI Implementation Grant:

- The Worcester Public Schools was awarded the CPPI Implementation grant on October 1, 2024. Since this award, the WPS, CPPI Leadership team has worked to meet the changing CPPI Community Assessment expansion requests of EEC
- The Implementation Grant has a total award of \$750,000.
- December 2024 - A plan of professional development and training based on the observations and surveys from the initial planning grant was created and meetings were held with each site's administrative team to gather feedback and plan for presentations
- On December 19, 2024, the August 8, 2024, Service Agreements with the Guild, YWCA and Edward Street were amended, to meet the new budget and may be amended once more
- In December 2024 the 3 Early Childhood CPPI positions, (1) Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), (1) Speech & Language Pathologist (SLP) and (1) Focused Instructional Coach (FIC) were posted on School Spring. These postings yielded 9 candidates, with only 4 meeting the required qualifications. Interviews were scheduled for the week of January 13, 2025
- On January 9, 2025, CPPI Leadership team members visited North Hampton to speak to key members of their CPPI leadership team and observe their CPPI classrooms
- Ongoing plan for collaborative CPPI meetings, planning and PD implementation across community and district staff



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Dr. John E. Durkin
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Date: January 17, 2025

Item Number: gb 2-56.6

Item Description: Request that the Administration provide an update on library programs and the use of librarians throughout the district.

2/26/24 Estimated next update: January 2025

Recommendation: Approve and File

Rationale:

The Worcester Public Schools maintains a strong and collaborative partnership with the Worcester Public Library. Through this renewed collaboration, many valuable opportunities have been introduced in our schools, benefiting all students. Additionally, a dedicated group of community volunteers and caregivers has come together to support elementary schools without active libraries. They are currently in the early stages of assessing needs to develop a plan for providing guidance, resources, and strategies to promote library services for students. Schools remain committed to supporting library services in various ways. Below are some of the initiatives we are excited to highlight this year.

- **SORA-** Worcester Public Schools renewed and strengthened our partnership with the Worcester Public Library. WPL has added all WPS students and staff to their paid subscription to SORA- a digital platform for ebooks and audio books. Titles are available in multiple languages and are accessible through Clever or the SORA app on any device with wifi. Colleen Kelly, the History and Social Science/Library Curriculum Specialist meets with SORA representatives yearly to review updates to the platform.
- **Summer Reading-** Colleen Kelly and Katie Olney, English Language Arts Curriculum Specialist, worked with the WPL to curate a collection of books that students entering grades 7,8,9, and 10 read for one of their summer reading books. The library purchased additional physical copies and made them available in all branches as well as purchased digital licenses for all students in grades 7-10 to access the book in SORA. In the ELA Curriculum Maps, excerpts of the required text are used during the first 4 weeks of instruction.
- **Vending Machine/MOU-** Worcester Public Library has had some staffing changes. Doug Lord, who was the main point of contact for WPS, is no longer with the library. Katie Olney and Colleen Kelly are meeting with his replacement in early February. The status of the Book Vending Machine and the WPS draft of the MOU will be a part of that meeting.

- **WPL book giveaway for WPS K-3 teachers**-Tuesday, January 7th-Books were chosen for children with K-3rd Grade reading skills that encourage social emotional learning and independent reading--including decodables--and books in Spanish, Portuguese, and Vietnamese with options to request forthcoming books in these languages as well as Albanian.
- **4th prep**- library research lessons have been added to the Educational Technology Curriculum Maps for all grade levels. Library lessons highlight digital citizenship, digital literacy, and research skills using the GALE databases. All Ed Tech teachers were trained to use GALE during their October Department Meeting and teacher support is provided on an individual basis when needed.