

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

AGENDA #11

The School Committee will hold virtually a special meeting:

on: Monday, March 15, 2021
at: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
in: Virtually in Room 410 at the Durkin Administration Building

ORDER OF BUSINESS

ACTION

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| I. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>
<u>INVOCATION</u> - NONE
<u>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/NATIONAL ANTHEM</u> | 5:33 p.m. |
| II. <u>ROLL CALL</u>

Miss Biancheria, Mrs. Clancey, Mr. Foley, Ms. McCullough,
Mr. Monfredo, Ms. Novick and Mayor Petty | |
| III. <u>APPROVAL OF RECORDS</u> - NONE | |
| IV. <u>MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION</u> - NONE | |
| V. <u>IMMEDIATE ACTION</u> - NONE | |
| VI. <u>REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT</u> - NONE | |
| VII. <u>COMMUNICATION AND PETITION</u> - NONE | |
| VIII. <u>REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES</u> - NONE | |
| IX. <u>PERSONNEL</u> - NONE | |
| X. <u>GENERAL BUSINESS</u>

gb #1-77 - Administration
(March 1, 2021)

To conduct a forum on School Reopening for families. | |
| X. <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>

Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
Clerk of the School Committee | 6:45 p.m. |

N O T E S

gb #1-77

Superintendent Binienda provided an outline for the March 29th reopening of school. Salient points included:

- Group 1 will be attending on Mondays and Tuesdays.
- Group 2 will be attending on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- Teachers will be teaching hybrid and remote classes at the same time.
- The number of students returning to school and learning via the hybrid model is 12,667.
- The number of students continuing with remote learning is 10,609.
- Cohort letters will be sent out this week containing transportation information which will include bus locations, numbers and seat assignment.
- Students MUST board their bus from their designated bus stop and WILL NOT be allowed on another bus.
- Medical waiting rooms will be for COVID related symptoms only, and parents/guardians will only be allowed to transport the child home.
- Health Portal instructions are now also available on a YouTube video and a Google Doc has been created for those not on the portal yet.
- All schools will close at 4 p.m. for thorough cleaning.
- School Committee members toured three schools to look at the air quality equipment.

Mr. Walton stated that he had been contacted by Verizon with news of hotspots overheating. ConnectEd messages and social media alerts will be provided with more information including the Verizon contact number, 1-800-540-4263.

The Superintendent also addressed the following questions that were solicited online from families and provided answers as shown below:

Question:

How will the hybrid classes be taught?

Answer:

The teachers will have two screens and will be teaching remote and in-person at the same time.

Question:

What should we do if we chose the hybrid model but would prefer to switch to the remote model?

Answer:

Contact the principal of the school.

Question:

Will students attending hybrid learning have their same teacher?

Answer:

Yes. If the teacher is on a Leave of Absence, another teacher will be taking over the class.

Question:

Will the schedules be the same?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Will there still be independent classwork time?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Will there be mask breaks in secondary schools?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

What if we never received a Chromebook?

Answer:

Contact the school to be sure you have a Chromebook for the first day of school.

Question:

What is the process for arrival and dismissal?

Answer:

Each school website contains the arrival and dismissal times and processes.

Question:

What if my child won't keep his/her mask on while on the bus?

Answer:

Contact the principal of the school.

Question:

Will staff be following mask protocols?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

What is the plan for ozone testing?

Answer:

No ozone testing is needed because the equipment is ozone free.

Question:

What if a child or staff member shows signs of COVID?

Answer:

Students will be sent to the medical waiting room, and referred to school based health centers, such as the Edward M. Kennedy and Family Health for a COVID test.

Question:

How will we know if someone tested positive?

Answer:

Principals will contact the COVID coordinator and notify families if there was direct contact. All other families will be notified if there is a student who tested positive in the school but was not in direct contact.

Question:

If a student tests positive, can he/she still learn remotely even if they chose hybrid?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

How will we be focusing on social skills in kindergarten?

Answer:

Students will learn to work together with classmates and also do computer work.

Question:

Will high schools students be switching classes?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Will there be a freshman orientation at WTHS?

Answer:

Yes. The principal is having office hours this week and a virtual orientation will take place in June.

Question:

Are there enough buses for high school students?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Will schools be fulfilling the social distancing requirements?

Answer:

Yes. Desks will be 6ft apart.

Question:

How will hybrid learning work at WTHS?

Answer:

Students will be doing two days of academics and two days of shop.

Question:

When will the district provide information on afterschool programs?

Answer:

There will be no afterschool programs for elementary schools. High schools will have limited afterschool programs and transportation will not be provided.

Question:

What if there is a bus route change needed?

Answer:

Contact the principal regarding any moves. If the student is a Special Education student, it may take up to two weeks to incorporate the change.

Question:

Can students bring their own lunch?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

How will PE classes be held in the hybrid?

Answer:

That depends on the school. Check the school website.

Question:

If we chose remote, but would like to switch to hybrid, what do we do?

Answer:

There is currently a waiting list and if space becomes available, you will be contacted.

Question:

How many days a week will school be open?

Answer:

There are two groups. Monday-Tuesday group and Wednesday-Thursday group. Friday is remote.

Question:

Will teachers be physically in the classroom?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Is school going to be a full day?

Answer:

Yes, with the exception being half-day preschool.

Question:

Will all students be entering through the same entrance or multiple entrances?

Answer:

Check the school website for school specific information.

Question:

Will temperatures be taken at school?

Answer:

No.

Question:

How will I know if my child's transportation has changed?

Answer:

Letters will be sent home with transportation information and the WPS portal also contains that information.

Question:

Will students be required to have an ID to get on the bus?

Answer:

No.

Question:

What has the WPS done to ensure that the students who are required to take the MCAS are able to pass their grade level standards?

Answer:

WPS is confident that students that have learned remotely will be able to pass.

Question:

Is it unsafe that the teachers have not all been vaccinated?

Answer:

The guidance regarding teachers needing to be vaccinated shows there is a low rate of infection in schools.

Question:

Once you are vaccinated, will you need to quarantine after exposure?

Answer:

Following the CDC guidelines, there will be no need to quarantine.

Question:

Are kindergarten students going to be wearing a mask all day?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

What about dance and gym classes, will masks be required?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Will there be elementary and middle school orientations?

Answer:

Yes.

It will take place on the first day in the hybrid setting.

Question:

What is the effectiveness of the ionization equipment and are the machines loud?

Answer:

Evidence shows the effectiveness after 15 minutes for combatting the virus. The machines are not very loud.

Question:

What about April vacation?

Answer:

WPS will be publishing travel guidelines. Teachers and students who have been vaccinated will not require a test upon returning to school. If they have not been vaccinated, they will need to quarantine for seven days and have a negative test result on day 5, or quarantine for 14 days if they did not have a test.

Question:

How will Early College Classes work?

Answer:

ECC will be done using the Chromebook.

Question:

When will students be getting vaccinated?

Answer:

That is currently unknown, but it may be July.

Question:

How will high school lunch work?

Answer:

It will be Grab and Go and eat in designated areas.

Question:

Are there restrictions and protocols regarding parent pickup?

Answer:

Depending on the age of the student, they may wait inside social distanced or for high school students, they may wait outside.

Question:

How will teachers make sure students wash their hands?

Answer:

Before and after eating and sanitizers are available.

Superintendent Binienda stated that families should contact the principal of the school with any other questions and check the WPS website or individual school website for more information.

On a roll call of 6-0-1 (absent Mayor Petty), it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
Clerk of the School Committee