

The following items will be discussed at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues to be held on Monday, May 20 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 410 at the Durkin Administration Building:

gb #8-285 - Mr. Foley/Mr. Comparetto/Miss McCullough/Mr. O'Connell (September 25, 2018)

Request that the Administration consider the implications of excessive heat and humidity upon the learning environment in the classrooms and the schools without air conditioning and the adverse conditions for students, teachers and staff. The Administration should develop a policy to be followed when the city has experienced consecutive days of excessive heat and humidity and the conditions in many of the schools are intolerable.

gb #8-301.1 - Administration/Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (October 23, 2018)

Response of the Administration to the request to provide an update on the education plan approval process for homeschooled children and specify when the process will be completed for the current academic year, including an update on plans to expedite the process to assure its rapid and efficient completion for 2019-20.

gb #8-351 - Administration (November 19, 2018)

To amend the Policy Manual by deleting IHBG - Home Schooling Policy and replacing it with the Home Schooling Policy as contained in the Student Handbook.

Committee Members
John F. Monfredo, Chairman
Dianna L. Biancheria, Vice-Chairman
John L. Foley

Administrative Representative
Jennifer Boulais
Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.

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

AGENDA #2

The Standing Committee on GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES will hold a meeting:

on: Monday, May 20, 2019
at: 5:30 p.m.
in: Room 410, Durkin Administration Building

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. GENERAL BUSINESS

gb #8-74 - Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria/Miss McCullough (February 14, 2018)

To formulate a policy, and appropriate protocols and guidelines, as to initiation of procedures in Juvenile Court under the "Children Requiring Assistance" statute (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 119, Sections 21 and 39E - 39I), in light of the decision of the Supreme Judicial Court in Millis Public Schools v. M.P. et al (SJC-12384, February 6, 2018).

gb #8-153.2 - Administration/Administration (June 11, 2018)

To discuss the proposed Strategic Plan.

gb #8-174 - Miss McCullough/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo (May 15, 2018)

Request that the Administration review the overall Dress Code Policy and update it, if appropriate.

gb #8-204 - Mr. Comparetto/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (June 13, 2018)

Request that the Administration consider creating a Development Specialist position to help raise much needed funding for the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #8-285 - Mr. Foley/Mr. Comparetto/Miss McCullough/Mr. O'Connell (September 25, 2018)

Request that the Administration consider the implications of excessive heat and humidity upon the learning environment in the classrooms and the schools without air conditioning and the adverse conditions for students, teachers and staff. The Administration should develop a policy to be followed when the city has experienced consecutive days of excessive heat and humidity and the conditions in many of the schools are intolerable.

gb #8-301.1 - Administration/Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (October 23, 2018)

Response of the Administration to the request to provide an update on the education plan approval process for homeschooled children and specify when the process will be completed for the current academic year, including an update on plans to expedite the process to assure its rapid and efficient completion for 2019-20.

gb #8-351 - Administration (November 19, 2018)

To amend the Policy Manual by deleting IHBG - Home Schooling Policy and replacing it with the Home Schooling Policy as contained in the Student Handbook.

gb #9-39 - Administration (January 25, 2019)

To consider approval of the 2019-20 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #9-42 - Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (January 30, 2019)

To establish a practice and procedure for expeditious compliance with School Committee Policy GCA ("All professional staff positions in the school system will be created initially by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.")

gb #9-62 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough (February 13, 2019)

Request that the Administration consider changes to the Student Handbook regarding headwear.

gb #9-71 - Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough
(February 19, 2019)

Request that the Administration seek input by April 2, 2019 from secondary principals regarding changes to the cell phone policy.

gb #9-99 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. O'Connell (March 13, 2019)

Request that the Administration review the action taken by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection against White & Brite Cleaners in Worcester and take necessary precautions to ensure that the students and staff at Gates Lane School are safe from exposure to contaminants.

gb #9-109 - Mr. Comparetto (March 13, 2019)

Request that the Administration consider hiring a consultant to study racial equity in the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #9-132 - Mr. Comparetto (March 27, 2019)

Request that the City consider updating the City Charter by creating district School Committee seats.

V. ADJOURNMENT

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

STANDING COMMITTEE: GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES

DATE OF MEETING: Monday May 20, 2019

ITEM: Mr. Foley/Mr. Comparetto/Miss McCullough/Mr. O'Connell
(September 25, 2018)

Request that the Administration consider the implications of excessive heat and humidity upon the learning environment in the classrooms and the schools without air conditioning and the adverse conditions for students, teachers and staff. The Administration should develop a policy to be followed when the city has experienced consecutive days of excessive heat and humidity and the conditions in many of the schools are intolerable.

PRIOR ACTION:

10-4-18 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

It was moved to suspend the rules to allow Jeremy Shulkin, a teacher at University Park Campus School, to speak to the item regarding the heat and humidity in the schools on certain days and the impact it had on the learning environment. He offered suggestions such as opening the windows wider, keeping the windows open at night and considering early dismissals.

Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:

Request that the Administration consider guidelines to address the excessive heat situations in the schools and involve the CPPAC, Site Councils and principals for their input and recommendations.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

BACKUP:

Annex A (2 pages) contains a copy of the Administration's response to Mr. Monfredo's motions.

The Administration recommends that this item be filed.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

11-19-18 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES

Max Stern and Jeremy Shulkin spoke to the item detailing the conditions at University Park Campus School during the heatwave in June.

Mr. Monfredo made the following motion:

Request that the Administration consider his suggestions as to possible solutions for days of excessive heat when the item is discussed at the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Miss Biancheria made the following motion:

Request that the Administration establish a committee to review options for dealing with oppressive heat situations at all schools.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

HELD.

12-6-18 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

4-2-19 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES

Mr. Monfredo made the following motion:

Request that the Administration consider his guidelines on dealing with excessive heat and report back with its recommendations by July 2019.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

4-4-19 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

Suggestions by John Monfredo converted to a motion:

Hot days -Principal contacts administration for assistance -

-Assistance could be but not limited to having the facility department bring over fans, air-conditioners, and whatever else is needed

Answer:

School administrators received directives from central office and Connect Ed calls were made to families during the heat spell in August 2018.. In addition, facilities bought fans and placed them in schools and activities were adjusted to account for the heat and humidity. The Administration is aware that staff and the EAW also provided fans for classrooms.

-Suggest to the principal to be sure that windows on the top floors are open at night

Answer:

Due to safety issues, the windows can't be left open at night.

-Encourage students to bring bottled water to school and provide water stations at the school

Answer:

Schools were provided with water stations from the nutrition office and students were also encouraged to bring water.

-Start immediately this year to review the shades and blinds at those schools with temperature problems. Work on identifying those schools and look for the needed funding to replace blinds or shades in areas that would impact the heat on those classrooms. Keeping the sun away from the classrooms would make a huge difference.

Answer:

Principals may notify facilities if there is a need to purchase or repair blinds.

-Contact area colleges close by and request assistance in placing students on the top floor to an area in their building

Answer:

School Administration will be encouraged to check with nearby community partners (e.x., UPCS and Clark University) for possible heat solutions such as using available classrooms. As might happen when schools are without heat in winter, classes might have to be relocated.

-As a last resort the Superintendent can close the building for the afternoon but there again this would impact transportation and place students alone at in their homes.

Answer:

Due to latch key issues and transportation problems, it is difficult to make a decision to close schools due to excessive heat.

In addition, I would like to recommend that administration or individual schools consider a "Go Fund Me" page or donor choose.org through the internet to fund resources for air conditioners or for the installation of over-head fans.

Answer:

We have the funds to supply air conditioners in emergency situations.

Another idea would be to look for cooperate sponsors for resources with signage for their donations.

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Monday May 20, 2019

ITEM: Administration/Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (October 23, 2018)

Response of the Administration to the request to provide an update on the education plan approval process for homeschooled children and specify when the process will be completed for the current academic year, including an update on plans to expedite the process to assure its rapid and efficient completion for 2019-20.

PRIOR ACTION:

10-18-18 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

It was moved to suspend the rules to allow Joseph Forjette, Elisabeth Fleming and Maryagnes Reilly, to speak to the item regarding the homeschool approval process and requested that the unapproved proposed plans be approved.

Mr. Foley requested that the individuals present be invited to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues when the item is discussed.

Referred to both the Administration for a report on Thursday, November 1, 2018 and to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues

11-1-18 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:

Request that the Administration adopt a Homeschooling Policy, if one is not already developed, detailing procedures and guidelines that are in full compliance with the 1987 SJC decision, *Care and Protection of Charles*.

On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

Referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.

(continued on page 2)

BACKUP:

Annex A (4 pages) contains a copy of the WPS Home School Plan Procedures.

The Administration recommends that the School Committee approve the backup and include it as procedures in the Student Handbook and as regulations in the Policy Manual.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 11-19-18 - STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES
Parents of homeschoolers, who attended the meeting, were given the opportunity to speak on their experiences and presented their future expectations.
HOLD.
- 12-6-18 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING - The School Committee approved the action of the Standing Committee as stated.

IHBG-R

HOME SCHOOL PLAN PROCEDURES

I. Notice to District

1. A parent/guardian seeking to home school their child must submit a homeschool education plan in writing to the Worcester Public Schools (WPS) Superintendent (care of the Child Study Department) before commencing the home school program.
2. Students must attend their assigned school until their initial home school plan is approved. Students who are currently receiving education under an approved home school plan may continue homeschooling until their new plan is reviewed and approved.
3. A parent who is no longer homeschooling must notify the district and re-enroll the child in a public or approved private school. A notification is required for each child upon attaining the age of compulsory attendance.
4. Homeschool education plan forms (both elementary and secondary) are available upon request from the office of Child Study at (508) 799-3175 for the convenience of the parent and the district. The form is provided as a convenience but is not required so long as the information is provided.

II. Homeschooling Plan Requirements

1. The parent/guardian must provide the following information as part of the home education plan, which will be reviewed by the Superintendent's Designee:
 - i. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects;
 - ii. The competency of the parents/guardians to teach the children;
 - iii. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents/guardians; and
 - iv. Evidence of progress to ensure educational progress in each subject area and the attainment of minimum standards.
2. Evidence of Progress: Worcester Public Schools accepts a home education plan which includes one of the following approved methods of annual assessment of student progress:

- i. Dated work samples
- ii. Report cards
- iii. Standardized assessments
- iv. Scope and Sequence
- v. Narrative report of progress

The District will provide the opportunity for home-taught children to participate in the annual standardized achievement battery which is typically administered at various times throughout the school year. Arrangements can be made with the Child Study Department.

III. Homeschool Plan Submission

1. To ensure prompt approval of a Homeschool Plan, parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to submit a Homeschool Plan as soon as possible, but must submit their Homeschool Plan at least 14 business days before the intended commencement date of the home-based education program.
2. In the case of the continuance of an established home-based education program, parents must submit their plan at least 14 days before commencement of the next academic year.
3. Home school plans are accepted throughout the year and reviewed as received.
4. Plans submitted prior to June 15th of each year will be reviewed within 2 – 3 weeks. Plans submitted after June 15th of each year will be reviewed within 4 – 5 weeks.
5. The district will take no adverse action against a homeschooling family during the time between submission and approval if the family has submitted a homeschool plan in good faith unless otherwise required by law. However, district personnel are mandated reporters pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 51A and will abide by their reporting requirements in appropriate cases.

IV. Homeschool Plan Review and Approval

1. The Child Study Department (as Superintendent's Designee) shall approve any homeschool plan that complies with District policy, Section II of this policy and applicable law.
2. In the event that the Child Study Department rejects a proposed homeschool plan, the reasons for the decision shall be set forth in writing to the parent/guardian, and the Superintendent or his/her designee, shall suggest specific homeschool plan revisions as necessary to cause such homeschool plan to obtain approval pursuant to this policy.
3. The Parents/Guardians will be invited for an optional meeting with the Child Study Department to receive support in successfully completing the plan. This meeting shall be offered in person or alternative means (via telephone, email etc).

4. Parents/Guardians have the right to an appeal hearing before the Superintendent regarding a homeschool plan rejection, which shall include the right to explain their proposed plan and present witnesses on their behalf. After the hearing, the Superintendent will issue a written decision setting out the reasons for his/her decision to override the rejection or uphold it. The parents/guardians will be given an opportunity to revise their proposal to remedy any inadequacies.
5. If the District chooses to seek prosecution of the parents pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 76 Section 2, the burden of proof shifts to the District to show that the instruction outlined in the home school proposal fails to equal in thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein, that in the public schools of Worcester.

V. Student Progress/Assessment

1. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will provide evidence of their child's homeschool program for review to the office of Child Study annually. It can be provided either at the end of the academic year and may be included with the submission of the Homeschool Plan for the next academic year. For families seeking to continue a home education, evidence of progress for the current year must be reviewed prior to approval of the home school plan for the upcoming year.
2. The evidence of progress shall be one of the five options listed in Section II. The family will select which option to show progress.
3. Worcester Public Schools will maintain permanent student record folders for students participating in a homeschool program which may contain work samples, standardized assessments, scope and sequence reports and/or narrative progress reports or other documents provided by parent(s)/guardian(s) and should be kept in a private and secure location by the superintendent or her/his designee. (603 CMR 23.00).

VI. Participation in Worcester Public Schools Programs

1. Home educated students do not participate in state testing programs such as MCAS and are not eligible to receive a Worcester Public School Diploma.
2. Worcester Public Schools is not responsible to supply textbooks or instructional materials to home schooling students
3. A student being educated in a home-based program within the Worcester Public Schools may have access to public school activities of an extra-curricular nature, only upon prior approval of the Superintendent or designee.

4. Home-schooled students may not participate in specific classes or courses offered during the school day that are not open to the public and that are intended for enrolled Worcester Public School students only.
5. The home-schooled student who accesses Worcester School athletics or extra-curricular activities after receiving approval from the Superintendent is subject to the following provisions that are consistent with MIAA guidelines:
 - i. Signed Worcester Public School handbook release form must be on file with the home school plan, acknowledging compliance with all Worcester Public Schools' rules and policies including MIAA guidelines.
 - ii. A home-schooled student who is determined to be eligible for High School athletics shall submit quarterly progress reports for review by the High School Principal on or before the dates established by the high school for report card distribution. Progress reports shall be submitted in a format that indicates clearly whether the home-schooled student has passed or failed each course identified under the approved home-school plan.
 - iii. The home-schooled student is subject to all High School eligibility standards as outlined in the student handbook and MIAA guidelines.
 - iv. The District reserves the right to allow enrolled students to have precedence or priority over the home school student with regard to placement on sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment.

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Monday May 20, 2019

ITEM: Administration (October 15, 2018)

To amend the Policy Manual IHBG - Home Schooling Policy to reflect the amendments that were approved for the Student Handbook as follows:

1st paragraph – after first sentence add: **Students must attend their assigned school until approval has been received.** At end of paragraph, add: **to avoid miscommunication and to ensure compliance with the home schooling approval law, parents are requested to give this notice in writing.**

4th paragraph, last sentence: **Home schooled students applying to participate in district-sponsored sports must follow the athletic eligibility guidelines.**

(approved at the Standing Committee meeting on Governance and Employee Issues held on June 14, 2018 and subsequently approved at the School Committee meeting held on June 15, 2018.)

PRIOR ACTION:

12-6-18 - SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Mayor Petty requested that the Administration forward any changes to Homeschooling policies to the parents who are homeschooling their children.

Referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues for further discussion.

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains the amended Policy IHGB that was included into the Policy Manual.

The policy has been included into the Policy Manual and therefore the Administration recommends that the item be filed.

FILE: IHBG

Home Schooling

Parents/guardians who choose to educate their children at home, as allowed under Massachusetts law, can fulfill the requirements of the compulsory attendance statute by having their educational programs reviewed and accepted in advance by the Worcester Public Schools. Students must attend their assigned school until approval has been received. The notifications to homeschool (elementary and secondary versions) are available upon request from the office of the Child Study Department at (508) 799-3175. To avoid miscommunication and to ensure compliance with the home schooling approval law, parents are requested to give this notice in writing.

Parents are expected to provide evidence of their child's home schooling program once a year. Students completing high school through home schooling programs are not eligible for a Worcester Public Schools' Diploma.

A student being educated through Home Schooling may have access to public school activities of an extra-curricular nature (e.g. sports, clubs) with the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

The district reserves the right to allow enrolled students to have precedence or priority over the home schooled student with regard to placement on sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment. With approval of the Superintendent or designee, and in consultation with the principal, a home schooled student may participate in sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment provided that he or she does not displace an enrolled student. Home schooled students applying to participate in district-sponsored sports must follow that athletic eligibility guidelines.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles

Care and Protection of Charles – MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)