

WEST BOYLSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, February 14, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.
Middle/High School Media Center – Library
Along with live stream @ <https://youtube.com/@wblive125>

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

James Pedone, Jr. Chairman
Jason Ponticelli, Vice Chairman
Jennifer Breen
Nancy Hubbard
Emily Lehman Miller

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Richard Meagher, Superintendent of Schools
Christopher Fournier, Principal Middle/High School
Alex Audette, Principal Elementary School
Cristy Morrison, Business Administrator
Sherri Traina, Director of Special Education

ADMINISTRATORS ALL PRESENT

ALSO PRESENT

Faculty and audience.

Mr. Pedone called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Ponticelli moved, seconded by Ms. Hubbard to accept the regular meeting minutes of January 10, 2024.

VOTE 5-0-0

2. Student Recognition Awards: Elementary School, Middle School, High School

Students from the Elementary School, Middle School and High School were recognized as Student of the month: Ben Sivert, Caylor Bella, and Samantha Mullins.

3. Student Advisory Council Representatives

Student Advisory Council Members Hunter McNulty-Hochberg and Anabelle Anand reported on:

- A Cappella – Students are preparing music for the joint fundraiser with GSA.
- GSA – Students had their carnation sales for the Valentines fundraiser. Also choosing May Professional Development for teachers.
- HS Student Council – Working towards Spring Spirit Week in March and Spring Dance on March 15th. Student Clothing Drive March 4th to March 22nd.
- Interact Club – Interact Club packed up Valentine’s for the senior center and also served breakfast to seniors. The club is starting to plan spring events; one possibility is a charity walk, “In It to End It”.
- MHS Jazz Band – Will host Open Mic Night on March 29th.
- Music Department – Preparing for Music in the Park on May 15th.
- National Honor Society – Students that have a GPA of 85% or higher will be invited to complete an application to apply to NHS. The NHS Induction Ceremony is on April 4th in the MHS auditorium at

6pm. Additionally NHS is organizing a fundraiser to raise money for scholarships. Last year NHS held a middle school dance for a fundraising event and hope to do the same this year.

- National Art Honor Society – Membership invitations will be sent this month to students who received an A in a studio art course. The induction ceremony will be held in April.
- National Spanish Honor Society – Following the Spanish Honor Society Induction of new members, the SHH has changed meeting days to Wednesdays. Students are also organizing themselves into subcommittees to better facilitate implementation of ideas. They are also working on coordinating with NAHS to complete some cultural art paintings.
- Tri-M Music Honor Society – Tri-M Music Honor Society had a successful first Karaoke Night at the Beaman Library this month. The society will continue scheduling Karaoke Nights for the last Thursday of each month until the end of May. Trip to Broadway to see “Water for Elephants” on May 17th.
- Volleyball Club – Students are now using the weight room and learning proper strength training techniques. They have been meeting every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday during winter sports season.
- Wellness Club – The students are beginning to organize and plan for Refresh Day which will be held in May. The Wellness Club will also be collaborating with Interact to assist with a possible charity walk, “In It to End It”, in the spring.
- Freshman Class – The freshman class will hold a middle school “March Mingle” on March 1st and a Dodgeball Tournament on March 12th. The class is also working on their first play competition.
- Sophomores – The sophomores will hold a Trivia Night on March 21st. They are also getting ready for the upcoming Plant Sale in May.
- Junior Class – The junior class is preparing for prom.
- Senior Class – Seniors are having two fundraisers this month. On Feb. 17th they will be selling concessions at the Clark tournament being held at West Boylston HS. Then on Feb. 28th the seniors are hosting a Volleyball Tournament after school. This tournament invites staff and students to compete.
- Athletic Updates – Girls’ Basketball Clark State Tournament on February, 17th. Boys’ Basketball Tournaments TBD dates.

4. Acknowledgement of Recording Secretary

Mr. Pedone acknowledged Ms. Pratt, the recording secretary, Mr. Bokankowitz, the district IT Coordinator, and the West Boylston Public Access channel.

5. Highlight on Schools: Middle/High School Curriculum Update – Mr. Chris Fournier

Mr. Fournier presented the Middle/High School Curriculum Update presentation to the School Committee.

Ms. Breen asked Mr. Fournier: How often are the curriculum maps are being updated by the high school teachers? Are they being submitted weekly, monthly? Are we asking for an update on a regular schedule to keep up with the block scheduling?

Mr. Fournier replied to Ms. Breen: As they (teachers) are teaching in real-time they are submitting their maps for the curriculum as they are teaching into the Google document. By the end of the year the map is completed in that document. It will then allow teachers to make adjustments the next year should they be teaching a different elective or if there are scheduling changes or even if they need to add more content. There are current lessons and homework assignments that are designed for the new schedule.

Ms. Lehman Miller asked Mr. Fournier: What structure have you been able to build around teaming around curriculum mapping for teachers so they are not doing this in isolation both subject areas and vertically and grade level teams?

Mr. Fournier replied to Ms. Lehman Miller: Grade level teams, at the middle school level, teachers meet every day as part of their team meeting time on a weekly basis. All professional development time has been dedicated to curriculum mapping work. We have also allot time next year for curriculum mapping work and if a department needed more time we could find more time for that department.

6. Community Input

Jacqueline Leonardo – 7 Nuha Circle, West Boylston – Ms. Leonardo asked the School Committee when we reach 9 for the submission on the new school could we possibly elaborate on why we were denied? I know that we were denied on our first submission but I don't know if they had given us any particulars? Also can we touch upon what we are requesting? What are we really asking for in what we are really asking for going forward?

Mr. Pedone replied to Ms. Leonardo: Mr. Pedone stated community inquiries aren't typically answered at the meetings however, this question is related to an agenda item. The first part, if remember correctly, there were 60 submissions that made it to the second level and 20 submissions were selected. The full details of selections is unknown to the School Committee except for the fact that we are competing with 60 other applications along with their needs and available funds. There are two pieces to this process. One is for a new school and the other is for accelerated repair. The accelerated repair budget for the state was zero. It may or may not have had anything with us getting accepted because we were not pursuing the accelerated repair program. There was other parts of the criteria that was not allowed on the previously submitted form, and decided by additional School Committee members that are no longer on the Committee. The criteria was building a new Jr. /Sr. High School consisting of grades 7-12 and the current Middle/High School would become Pre-K through 6th grade. Then Major Edwards Elementary School building would be given back to the town. The submission only allowed for asking for "a school". This next request allows to include all of the additional information just mentioned in this meeting. At this time, all additional information has been uploaded and is now waiting to be submitted with the entire plan along with grade reconfiguration.

7. Announcement of Public Hearing on the FY25 Budget.

Mr. Pedone announce the Public Hearing for the FY25 Budget will be held on March 13, 2024 in the Media Center of the West Boylston Middle/High School, 125 Crescent Street, West Boylston, MA 01583 along with being live streamed at <https://youtube.com/@wblive125> at 6:30pm.

8. Warrants

Ms. Breen moved, seconded by Ms. Lehman Miller to approve the payables warrant dated 1/16/2024; 1/29/2024; 2/12/2024.

VOTE 5-0-0

Ms. Hubbard moved, seconded by Mr. Ponticelli to approve the payroll warrants dated 1/19/2024 and 2/2/2024.

VOTE 5-0-0

9. Vote to authorize the Superintendent to submit the Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Mr. Pedone read the below statement to the School Committee, Administrators, Community, and Faculty present:

Having convened in an open meeting on February 14, 2024 prior to the SOI submission closing date, the School Committee of Town of West Boylston in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest

Form dated March 14, 2024, for the West Boylston Middle/High School located at 125 Crescent Street, West Boylston, MA 01583 which describes and explains the following deficiencies and priority category for which and application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future. Priority 5, Modernization of school facility systems – poor energy efficiency and poor operating efficiency; and hereby future specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Ms. Breen made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to submit the Statement of Interest Form to the Massachusetts School Building Authority seconded by Mr. Ponticelli.

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Hubbard –	Yes
Mr. Ponticelli –	Yes
Ms. Breen –	Yes
Ms. Lehman Miller –	Yes
Mr. Pedone -	Yes

VOTE 5-0-0

10. Subcommittee Reports

- Policy Subcommittee – Ms. Breen shared with the School Committee that the Policy Subcommittee met and reviewed Policy JICFB – Bullying Prevention. There will be a first reading in March.
- Safety Subcommittee – Mr. Meagher shared with the School Committee that the Safety Subcommittee met on February 2nd and reviewed the “I Love U Guys” Foundation staff presentation.
- Budget and Capital Planning Subcommittee – Mr. Ponticelli shared with the School Committee that the Budget and Capital Planning Subcommittee met and discussed some different budget forecasts that may change some numbers prior to the Public Hearing in March.

9. Communications and Reports

- a. Major Edwards Elementary School Principal Mr. Audette reported on:
 - “I Love to Read” month
 - “Unmask the reader in you!” themed night, January 24th event
 - Major Edwards Elementary Community Meeting subject “Responsibility”, February 2nd
 - “Community Reading Day”, February 12th
 - “I love to Read Day”, February 14th
 - “Share a Favorite Day”, February 15th
 - Grade Level “Buddy Reading” (K/5th, 1st/3rd, 2nd/4th), February 16th
 - Winter Vacation Week, February 19- February 23rd
 - The West Boylston Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Kindergarten Transition Program Meeting, February 27th @ 5:30pm in the library
 - PTA Meeting, February 28th @ 7pm in the library
- b. Middle High School Principal Mr. Fournier reported on:
 - WB Football Annual Banquet
 - Varsity Basketball Teams Senior Nights
 - Ski Club Updates
 - Term Two Report Cards Issued

- Third Term Progress Reports, February 16th
 - Internship Updates
 - Staff Updates
- c. Director of Special Education Ms. Traina:
- Preschool Lottery, April 1st
 - Preschool Open House, March 13th
- d. Business Administrator Ms. Morrison reported on:
- January 2024 Expense Report
- e. Superintendent of Schools Mr. Meagher reported on:
- School Crisis Handbook Updates
 - District Professional Development Training, January 22nd
 - “I Love U Guys Foundation”
 - Anna Maria College “Table Talk Exercise”, January 11th
 - FY25 Budget Updates
 - District and Schools Report Cards

Mr. Ponticelli asked Mr. Meagher: Just for further clarification are we no longer practicing A.L.I.C.E.?

Mr. Meagher replied to Mr. Ponticelli: We are not practicing A.L.I.C.E. any more. We shifted back from the language at the elementary school right before the pandemic. We could use the two programs in tandem however, it's not ideal. This program (“I Love U Guys”) follows the situation and scope of how it affects the school and the community.

- f. School Committee reported on:
- West Boylston Public Access Discussion

Mr. Pedone shared with the School Committee that there was a request from the Town that if the West Boylston Access Channel was unable to attend a School Committee meeting could the School Committee provide the meeting footage. All School Committee members and Mr. Bokankowitz, the district IT Coordinator, agreed the request could be easily fulfilled.

12. Adjournment

Mr. Ponticelli moved, seconded by Ms. Breen to adjourn the meeting at 7:54pm.

VOTE 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Pratt
Recording Secretary