



WHITTIER REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

A regular meeting of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee was held hybrid (remote/in-person) on **Wednesday, February 8, 2023** via ZOOM Teleconferencing at 115 Amesbury Line Rd., Haverhill, MA per the Act extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency, specifically suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20 until March 31, 2023.

Members Present: Scott Wood Greg Noyes Johanna True
 Brett Murphy Ron Fitzgerald Garry James
 Paul Tucker Richard Early

Members Remote: Lisa O'Connor, Dave Irving

Members Absent: Joseph Haberland, Sandi Coppinger, Chip O'Connor,
 JoAnn Testaverde

Others Present: Maureen Lynch, Superintendent
 Chris Laganas, Principal
 Kara Kosmes, Business Manager

Mr. Murphy stated that the meeting was being recorded and held hybrid (remote/in-person) via ZOOM Teleconferencing per the Act extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency. This Act includes an extension, until March 31, 2023, of the remote meeting provisions. Per the extension, the public was not allowed to physically access the meeting. However, Public Comment was made available via email in advance of the meeting start time and/or prior to Public Comment. The meeting was available for the public to view live via:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/WhittierTechHighSchool> Mr. Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M. Mr. Murphy took attendance. All members listed as present were in attendance at Whittier Tech High School. Lisa O'Connor and Dave Irving were present remotely via ZOOM Teleconferencing. Mr. Murphy began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Murphy asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment.

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Mr. Wood to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting for January 11, 2023 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. James to approve the Treasurer's Report for January 2023 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business posted.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Taylor Leblanc provided an update on sports and activities of the different clubs. The Boys Varsity Basketball has a record of 8-8. The boys have 4 games remaining and are making a push to qualify for the state tournament. Girls Varsity Basketball has a record of 4-11. Their next game is Thursday against Malden at home. Wrestling has finished with an overall record of 14-6, with all six losses coming to the top 10 ranked teams in the state. They had the annual Travis Yell Memorial Dual tournament on Saturday. Whittier lost in the finals to Lowell High 40-37. Hockey has a record of 6-7. Their next game is February 8th against Newburyport at the Graf rink. Cheerleading is working on their routine for their CAC competition, which will be on February 26th at Billerica High School. SkillsUSA created recognition day, in which a survey was shared with all teachers to nominate a student who exemplifies some aspect of the SkillsUSA Framework. A special guest, Chelle Travis, will be coming to Whittier Tech to see everything that SkillsUSA has been doing to promote Framework Culture. Multicultural Club has been approved for a field trip to the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA to view the Yin Yu Tang House exhibits as part of their identity and Global Cultural Awareness via the Visual Arts program. Key Club is finishing up filling out 210 Valentine's Cards that will be handed out at a Nursing Home in Newburyport. Peer Leadership is collaborating with DECA for a fundraiser. Interact Club is working on Valentine's Day cards going out to area nursing homes such as Baker Katz, The Oxford, and Lakeview Houses. Chess Club had over 25 students attend last week, many of which were new students. The tournament finally came to a dramatic end with a senior winning 2-0. They are planning another tournament for March. Student Government is working on plans for a student-faculty basketball game sometime in the spring. They worked with the marketing department to create merchandise for student government members.

United Nations is preparing to participate in a conference on March 17th, at Northeastern University. The topic for the conference is Global Mental Health. They will also be headed to UMass Lowell for a 2-day conference in early April. Robotics is continuing programming and working on drones. Environmental Club is continuing to work on their tree sign projects. They are also starting to set up tower guards for culinary, which are hydroponic gardens to grow herbs. Ski Club is looking forward to a ski trip to Pico in Mendon, Vermont, on Sunday. Drama is continuing to work on the school musical, *Mamma Mia!*, which is scheduled for March 17-19th. The carpentry shop has done a fantastic job with the sets. Art Club is working on building a fish for the New England Says No to Plastic show. GSA will be attending the February GSA Leadership Council meeting at Reading High on Thursday. The GSA bulletin board has been updated to showcase the various pride flags and what they all represent. DECA is working on a Valentine's Day fundraiser and collaborating with Peer Leadership. They are also recruiting for next year. Yearbook Club has submitted the final cover design. The senior section is done. The staff section is being worked on next. Poetry is looking forward to hosting a poetry slam at their next meeting. Peer to Peer is continuing to work on their Awareness Table event for March. They are also working on the Relay for Life cancer walk for the spring.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel Action

The Superintendent, Maureen Lynch reported on the hiring of evening school instructors for spring 2023 and an electrical instructor. She also reported on the resignations of three cafeteria workers.

Budget Update

Ms. Lynch reported that the Executive Subcommittee met February 8, 2023 to discuss the FY24 budget. They are at a 5.62% increase over last year and will work to reduce the increase closer to 5.0% for the March meeting.

MCAS Update

Ms. Lynch reported that November retest results are in: Two of the three students passed the ELA retest; the one student who did not pass will retake it in March 2023. The current pass rate is 99.7%. Seven of the nine students passed the math retest; the two students who did not pass will retake it in March 2023. The current pass rate is 99.4%. On February 1st and 2nd, twenty-eight students took the biology retest. Results for this exam will not be in until late April or early May.

School Building Update

Ms. Lynch reported that next week the regular building meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14th to discuss many things but mainly the financial impact of a renovation, renovation and addition or a new building. On Thursday, February 16th they will be having a second public forum on the building project. This meeting is scheduled at 7:00 pm in the auditorium at the school. On Friday, February 17th the School Building Committee will be making a final decision on the building project. Ms. Kosmes and Ms. Lynch have had many meetings over the last couple of weeks to determine how to proceed in getting approval from the cities and towns.

Superintendent's Update

Ms. Lynch provided an update. On Friday, January 13, 2023, she had a meeting with Leftfield and Amanda Crosby and Paul Moskevitz, the vocational coordinators. They met to discuss the square footage needed for some of the Chapter 74 programs. On Tuesday, January 17, 2023, she attended a meeting for the newly formed Athletic Hall of Fame. Ms. Lynch stated that Ms. DeSalvo has done an amazing job coordinating and drafting bylaws for the endeavor. The committee consists of current and former coaches, principal, superintendent, booster member, and the athletic director. They are looking forward to having their first Athletic Hall of Fame dinner in the fall. On Wednesday, January 18, 2023, Ms. Lynch had her monthly interview with Win in the morning on WHAV radio. On Wednesday, January 18th and 25th, and February 1st and 8th, she attended Whittier's weekly executive project meetings. On Thursday, January 19, 2023, she attended an Early College Briefing. There seems to be much momentum going forward with Early College. On Monday, January 23, 2023, she attended the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce Annual Mayors & Town Managers meeting in Andover. On Tuesday, January 24, 2023, she met with Superintendent John Lavoie from Greater Lawrence to discuss transportation with him and one of his school committee members. On Thursday, January 26, 2023, she attended the MASS Mid-winter meeting in Marlborough. On Friday, January 27, 2023, she hosted a Superintendent luncheon. The Associate Commissioner was there to discuss how to go about having Innovation Pathways. On Friday, February 3, 2023, she attended the North Shore Superintendents' Roundtable meeting. Ms. Lynch reported that the National Executive Director for SkillsUSA will be visiting Whittier on Friday, February 10th. Jane Moskevitz met her at the ACTE conference this past fall and invited her to Whittier. On Monday, February 13th, Congresswoman Trahan and Congressman Moulton will be visiting Whittier along with mayors and other members of the Massachusetts legislative delegation. They will take a tour of the school and have lunch in the Poet's Inn. This meeting is to discuss the upcoming building project and the need for vocational education.

Ms. Lynch requested acceptance of a new scholarship from the family of Sophie Perkins Ouellette. They are donating a \$100.00 scholarship to be used for a Kenneth Perkins Memorial Scholarship to be awarded to an outstanding senior in the carpentry program. Kenneth Perkins was a carpentry instructor at Whittier for many years.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. Tucker to accept the Kenneth Perkins Memorial Scholarship as presented by the Superintendent with gratitude.
Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Lynch reported on some of the many outside projects that carpentry and auto body have done for the community. Ms. Lynch requested the school committee's approval of an out of state field trip request from the Ski Club for March 10, 2023 to Pats Peak Ski Area in Henniker, NH. This field trip was previously scheduled for February 3, 2023 but was canceled due to the extreme cold temperature forecast. She also requested approval for Robotics to go to Salem, NH on March 3rd for a robotics competition.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. Wood to approve the out of state field trip request from the Ski Club for March 10, 2023 to Pats Peak Ski Area in Henniker, NH as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to approve the out of state field trip request from Robotics for March 3, 2023 to attend the robotics competition in Salem, NH as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr. Chris Laganas, the Principal, provided a principal update. The Whittier wrestling team hosted the Travis Yell Tourney at Whittier on Saturday, February 4th. There were eight schools represented and it was a successful day for the Whittier wrestling team and the entire wrestling community. February 1st started the celebration of Black History Month. Whittier continues to highlight contributions of African Americans and create lessons/discussions to educate students on all aspects of diversity. All students have completed midterm assessments and are on their way with third quarter. The new last day for school is June 15th because of two snow days. Mr. Laganas congratulated Whittier's Guidance team for the great work they do everyday and beyond with the students. It is Counselors Week and Whittier has been honoring them for their compassion and tireless work. The following individuals are part of the guidance team: Deb Costello, Marcia Curtis, Michelle Catena, Jill Karatkewicz, Andy Bonifacio, Heather Sweeney, Rachael Rossi, Lillian Levesque and Lee Gastonguay.

During winter vacation Whittier is offering a Boot Camp and attendance make-up for students from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm beginning Tuesday, February 21st - Friday, February 24th. The freshmen have chosen their shops and will start in their vocational areas on March 15th. The guidance team has been interviewing at the middle schools. These interviews will be all done by the beginning of March. The Boosters Club has been selling merchandise and snacks at the school during sporting events. Mr. Laganas thanked Heather, Ronda and Janice for working and fundraising for the student athletes. This year's High School play is "*Mamma Mia!*" It is a musical based on the songs of the Swedish pop group ABBA, with a book by British playwright Catherine Johnson. The musical has become a worldwide phenomenon since its premiere in 1999. It has been performed in over 50 countries and has been seen by over 60 million people, making it one of the most successful musicals of all time. The dates for the play are Friday, 3/17 and Saturday 3/18 at 7pm and Sunday 3/19 at 2 pm.

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Kara Kosmes, the Business Manager provided an appropriation for regional transportation funds in the amount of \$270,056.00 from the Regional Transportation Revolving Account to be used to make the down payment on the lease buyout for 17 buses.

By motion of Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. James to appropriate \$270,056.00 from the Regional Transportation revolving account to be used to make the down payment on the lease buyout for 17 buses. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Kosmes reported that the Whittier Tech Educational Foundation received a \$1,000 scholarship from the North End Boat Club in Newburyport to be used for purchasing tools of the trade and/or continuing education and is to be awarded to a student who has excelled in the Machine Technology program and intends to pursue a career in Machine Technology. On behalf of the foundation's board of directors, Ms. Kosmes thanked the North End Boat Club for this generous donation with gratitude.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Murphy went over the annual agenda items for March. Mr. Murphy asked the Committee if anyone had an objection to moving the March school committee meeting

and budget workshop to Wednesday, March 15th. No one had any objections. The budget workshop will be held at 5:00 pm and the school committee meeting at 6:00 pm.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Executive Subcommittee met January 11, 2023 and February 8, 2023,

By motion of Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to approve the minutes of January 11, 2023 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

The Instructional Subcommittee has not met.
The Plant Operations Subcommittee has not met.
The Salary & Negotiations Subcommittee met February 8, 2023. They will bring information to the March school committee meeting.
The Policy Subcommittee has not met.

MEETING DATES

The Budget Workshop is March 15, 2023 at 5:00 pm.
The Regular School Committee meeting is March 15, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business posted. Mr. Murphy reminded members to do the conflict of interest training that was sent via email.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Murphy reported that there is a need to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining - teachers, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee and upon completion of Executive Session will adjourn.

By motion of Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to enter into Executive Session and upon completion of Executive Session will adjourn. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

The Committee went into Executive Session at 7:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Rand
Recording Secretary