



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, August 10, 2022** via ZOOM Teleconferencing at 115 Amesbury Line Rd., Haverhill, MA per Governor Baker's 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.

Members Present: Richard Early Johanna True Garry James
Brett Murphy Ron Fitzgerald
Paul Tucker Joseph Haberland

Members Remote: Lisa O'Connor, Greg Noyes, Dave Irving, JoAnn Testaverde,
Chip O'Connor

Members Absent: Charlie LaBella, Scott Wood

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

Mr. Murphy stated that the meeting was being recorded and held hybrid (remote/in-person) via ZOOM Teleconferencing. Per Governor Baker's 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 Governor Baker's 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 6:30 P.M. Mr. Murphy took attendance. All members listed as present were in attendance at Whittier Tech High School. Lisa O'Connor, Dave Irving, Greg Noyes, JoAnn Testaverde and Chip O'Connor 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. Mr. Murphy introduced and welcomed Greg Noyes. Greg is a new Amesbury representative on the Whittier School Committee.

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Mr. Irving to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting for June 8, 2022 as presented. Approved by roll call vote - 1 Abstained (G. Noyes)

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to approve the Minutes of Executive Session for June 8, 2022 as presented. Approved by roll call vote - 1 Abstained (G. Noyes)

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to approve the Treasurer's Reports for June & July 2022 as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Mr. Murphy reported that Mr. Mahoney, the Treasurer requested student activity account authorizations from the School Committee in accordance with JJF-Student Activity Accounts Policy.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. James to authorize the Principal to accept money for the following existing student activity organizations: Class of 2020, Class of 2021, Class of 2022, Class of 2023, Class of 2024, Class of 2025 Field Trips, Gay/Straight Alliance, Journalism, Key Club, MultiCultural Club, Music/Drama, Peer to Peer, Ski Club, Student Council, Skills, Yearbook, Cosmo Tips, Poets Inn Tips, Robotics, General/Misc Student Activities. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business posted.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

There was no student representative report.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Personnel Action

The Superintendent, Maureen Lynch reported on the hiring of a moderate disabilities instructor, two math instructors, two school adjustment counselors, teaching assistant-vocational, teaching assistant - special education, teaching assistant guidance, an art instructor, a marine technology instructor lts, student learning loss & intervention coordinators, online academic summer school instructor, summer attendance school instructors, CTI summer program instructors, nurses to update student health & immunization records, co-op liaisons, working forer, cluster chair/department heads, fall coaches and diversity, equity and inclusion coordinators. She also reported on the resignations of a maintenance mechanic, route bus driver, school psychologist and electrical instructor.

Budget Update

Ms. Lynch reported that the Business Manager is doing transfers during her report.

MCAS Update

Ms. Lynch reported that Whittier received raw scores August 9, 2022. It will take some time to review and hopefully they will be able to share the scores at the September or October meeting.

School Building Update

Ms. Lynch reported that the school building committee completed 2 out of 3 of the Visioning Meetings for the school building project. Ms. Lynch and Kara Kosmes meet weekly with the Project Managers and the Architects. On August 11th they will be visiting 3 schools (Essex Tech, Minuteman Tech, and Hunking) to get some building ideas. Ms. Lynch also visited Cape Cod Tech while she was in the area.

Superintendent's Update

Ms. Lynch provided an update. On Thursday, June 9, 2022, she attended the Whittier - Designer Contract Review with DSP members. On Tuesday, June 14, 2022, she

attended the Whittier Educational Visioning Leadership Kick off meeting. The leadership team met with the architects, the owner's project managers, and other members of the team to start planning what they want for the school building in the future. On Tuesday, June 14, 2022, she attended the School Building Committee meeting. On Wednesday, June 15, 2022, she attended the Whittier weekly Executive Project Meeting. The group reviewed future meeting plans and calendars. On Wednesday, June 15, 2022, she attended the Merrimack Valley Chamber Board Meeting. She was asked to speak about vocational education at Whittier Tech. The event was at Maria's Restaurant in Haverhill. From speaking and meeting with attendees there is a desperate need for a skilled workforce. On Wednesday, June 22, 2022, she attended the Whittier weekly Executive Project Meeting. This is the weekly meeting with the OPM, and Architects. On Wednesday, June 22, 2022, she attended the MSBA/Whittier Kick-off meeting. This was an online meeting with MSBA. On Wednesday, July 6, 2022, she attended the Whittier/DESE Pilot next steps Meeting. This was a pilot project by DESE to look at how the Department of Education reviews vocational programs. This project started in April and was wrapped up at this meeting. Their plan is to increase the number of students going into coop programs. On Monday, July 11th - Thursday, July 14th, she attended the MASS Conference along with Katrina Jensen. There was a real focus on DEI initiatives as well as SEL. On Monday, July 11th, she attended the first Visioning Meeting with over 40 stakeholders in the Whittier District. It was exciting to see how much interest there is in the future of the Whittier Tech building. On Monday, July 18th - Wednesday, July 20th, she attended the Women's Power Trip Conference. This conference was an opportunity to meet with women leaders throughout the country and develop best practices. On Thursday, July 21, 2022, she attended the Whittier weekly Executive Project Meeting along with Kara Kosmes. On Tuesday, July 26, 2022, she attended the remote School Building meeting. On Tuesday, July 26, 2022, she attended the Whittier Vision Workshop along with over 40 other stakeholders in the Whittier District. On Wednesday, July 27, 2022, she attended the Whittier weekly Executive Project meeting along with Kara Kosmes. On Monday, August 8, 2022, she attended a remote meeting with Commissioner Riley. Ms. Lynch discussed plans for the upcoming school year. They include professional development on a Tiered Focus Response, Special Education Inclusion model, Learning Loss goals and Advisory. She reported that over the last 3 years much of the Professional Development time has been lost. She requested an additional ½ PD day be added to the School Calendar for September 23rd to ensure that Whittier provided the PD necessary for the beginning of the school year. With this additional time, they are still over the required time school hours as outlined by DESE regulations.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. Tucker to approve an additional ½ day for professional development on September 23rd as recommended by the Superintendent . Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Lynch reported that Whittier has received \$19,572.79 to establish the Mary T. Watson Scholarship Fund. Mrs. Watson was the first Executive Director of Haverhill Housing Authority and remained active in the agency for over 60 years. Later in life, as Mary's health began to decline, she was tremendously grateful for the care she received from health care professionals, and so it was her wish that a scholarship at Whittier be established and that \$1,000 be awarded each year to a student in the Health Assisting Program who plans to continue in that field. Ms. Lynch requested the School Committee's acceptance of this scholarship.

By motion of Mr. Irving, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to establish the Mary T. Watson Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$19,572.79 with gratitude as presented by the Superintendent. Unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Ms. Lynch reported that Whittier has also received a grant/donation from a foundation who wants to remain anonymous for capital vocational equipment in the amount of \$365,000.

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to accept with gratitude the grant/donation from an anonymous foundation in the amount of \$365,000 for capital vocational equipment as presented by the Superintendent. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

Ms. Lynch informed the Committee that Whittier received a letter from Governor Baker dated July 15th stating that Whittier was awarded a Career Technical Initiative grant in the amount of \$468,000.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mr. Chris Laganas, the Principal, provided a copy of the proposed Student/Parent Handbook for the 2022-2023 school year for review and approval. He discussed the proposed changes.

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Ms. L. O'Connor to accept the proposed 2022-2023 Student/Parent Handbook as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

He also provided a copy of the proposed 2022-2023 School Improvement Plan for review and approval. He stated that the changes are highlighted in yellow and provided an overview.

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Mr. James to accept the proposed 2022-2023 School Improvement Plan as presented. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Kara Kosmes, the Business Manager reported that the variance report for the FY22 fiscal year end was provided for informational purposes and includes columns which align to the transfer request provided in their packets. The transfer will bring all district accounts to a positive balance. She stated that the last column in the variance report shows what the ending balance in each account will be after the transfer.

By motion of Mr. Tucker, seconded by Mr. Irving to transfer \$1,921,399.00 as outlined in the Business Manager's memorandum dated August 3, 2022. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Murphy went over the annual agenda items for September. Mr. Murphy reported that the IRS raised the Standard Mileage Rate for the final half of 2022 to 62.5 cents per mile. He requested a vote from the Committee in this regard.

By motion of Mr. Fitzgerald, seconded by Mr. James to to accept the 2022 Standard Mileage Rate increase for the final half of 2022 from the IRS to 62.5 cents. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Executive Subcommittee has not met.

The Instructional Subcommittee has not met.

The Plant Operations Subcommittee has not met.

The Salary & Negotiations Subcommittee has not met.

The Policy Subcommittee has not met. They will meet August 24, 2022 at 3 pm.

MEETING DATES

The next Regular School Committee meeting will be September 14, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business posted.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Murphy stated there is a need to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the School Committee and upon completion of Executive Session will adjourn.

By motion of Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the School Committee and upon completion of Executive Session will adjourn. Unanimously approved by roll call vote

The Committee went into Executive Session at 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Rand
Recording Secretary