

October 5, 2020

A regular meeting of the Westfield School Committee was held on Monday, October 5, 2020, at 7:00 pm remotely (due to COVID-19 crisis). Members present by roll call were: Ramon Diaz, Diane Mayhew, Bo Sullivan, Cindy Sullivan, Heather Sullivan, Tim O'Connor, and Chairman Humason.

At 7:00 pm Chairman Humason called the meeting to order.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public participation, excluding personnel

Cindy Sullivan read the following emails:

Cyndi Fillion, King Place, Westfield

I wanted to reach out and take a minute to ask a question in hopes to get an answer before the committee votes. I have four kids in the Westfield Public Schools. They are all learning remotely at this time, and will not go into hybrid until November if the tentative dates stay what they are due to being in Cohort A.

I, and I'm sure many Westfield families, would like to know what the remote weeks will look like for students. At this time, my children are in a good rhythm, of logging on for both synchronized and asynchronous learning. Right now, many teachers are doing well with providing education the best they can and are finding their own rhythm. My fear is, what happens when that teacher is then providing in person learning to the other Cohort? When the initial plan was approved by the School Committee, the Superintendent provided the members with the promise of both synchronized and asynchronous learning. How does that happen with hybrid? With them being home for one week, it seems as though they could be having to teach themselves the material while potentially waiting for a teacher to email them back if they have questions. How does one be counted as present for this week, if there is no synchronized learning? If we can't get these kids back learning in person, Westfield parents would like to know what happens on their home weeks? I feel we need a better answer to this question to ensure that all students are being taught by a teacher and not teaching themselves by watching videos or reading materials throughout an entire week.

Lorena DuBois, Kane Brothers Circle, Westfield

I am writing in regards to the current plan for the phased re-opening of the schools in Westfield. I am the parent of a High School senior currently enrolled in Westfield High School and I wanted to contribute my 2 cents prior to this evening's vote on Phase 2.

I, like many parents, listened to the committee meeting this past summer when discussion occurred as to how best to bring back students safely for this academic year. I left with the impression that the committee would be erring on the side of caution and taking things slowly with longer timeframes between each phase. It now appears that the current plan is to allow 2 weeks between each phase with Phase 3 scheduled to begin October 26th. I feel that 2 weeks is not an adequate amount of time between phases to study the effects of how the current phase is working or not. Data shows that it can take up to 2 weeks for symptoms to manifest themselves. Cases across the country are beginning to rise and a lot of

those are because of the return to schools. Springfield has just been labeled a red category. According to the paper, someone at the Tech Academy (where everyone is in shops and spaced far apart) tested positive and an employee at Abner Gibbs did as well. I think there are way too many variables involved in a school environment to control and that just gets harder with more bodies in the building.

I, therefore, ask that you please seriously consider slowing down the timeline and pushing back the return to school phase dates to allow more time to see how Phase 1 goes for a few more weeks and to do the same for subsequent weeks.

Thank you for your time and consideration and what you do for our city.
P.S. Hi Heather! :)

Sergio and Maura Bonavita, Wildflower Circle, Westfield

I am writing this email in advance of your meeting this evening to advocate for the end of remote learning and to move to the "phase" which allows our children to return to in person education.

An honest evaluation of any data related to COVID-19 clearly indicates that children under 20 years old are at virtually no risk from the virus. The risk the children face in relationship to the virus is the irreparable harm which online learning and social isolation present. As the parents of two young children in the Westfield Public School system and a third child that will enter next year, we have seen first hand that remote learning is a distant substitute for in class education. Forcing a 6 year old and an 8 year old to stare at a computer to "learn" is borderline criminal. I would also like to be clear that the teachers we have encountered have done an exceptional job with the impossible situation that they have been put in - this is in no way a referendum on their efforts or desire to teach children. While we acknowledge the risks to teachers and administrators as it relates to the virus, we would task this committee to spend less time debating whether or not the kids CAN go to school and more time debating HOW they do it. Nearly every industry has adapted to new protocols with far less time to prepare than the education system has had. Perhaps allowing high risk teachers to teach from home while a teacher assistant from a low risk demographic is present in the classroom would be an effective strategy.

As parents we take our children's education very seriously. The idea that any child, including our own children will not have the access to a proper education until a "vaccine" is released is terrifying and should keep us up at night. Some level of risk in life is inevitable and we fear for a society that is willing to trade the future of its children's education for the elimination of all risk. Thank you for your time.

Heidi & Patrick Leonard, Root Road, Westfield

Please vote yes for the next phase of hybrid. Full remote learning has been a struggle in our home. We do not want our kids falling behind on their learning. Thank you

Heather Talbot, Hassler Street, Westfield

In light of the uptick in cases we have started to begin seeing in our area, I don't feel we are, or should be in the position, to begin any other phases of the in person hybrid weeks at this time.

I would strongly encourage the school committee to postpone any further voting of hybrid in person learning weeks. The city hall isn't even open, but yet you want

to have children in schools? We have to limit gatherings, but you want a classroom full of students?

We have already seen staff at Abner, a positive COVID case at WTA, a slow meticulous approach is needed here. The learning centers have been opened which should help parents. Please don't rush this. The teachers, administration, and staff have done, and are doing a fantastic job of remote learning. No parents even know who will even be teaching our kids during home remote weeks on the hybrid plan. Busing information hasn't been communicated to any parents yet.

Please take this into consideration and slow down these phases. Thank you.

Laura Harlow, 32 St. James Avenue

A concerned parent of a first grader here. My daughter is in first grade at Highland Elementary. We are another family who are completely struggling with remote learning. While I understand that during these trying times, there is not a clear cut solution to making everyone happy, we have got to have a better plan for our kids than what is currently in place.

I am considered to be in a good position because I am able to stay home with my children, however there are three of them and one of me. With the workload and time commitment expected of our elementary kids, this is absolutely impossible. I am a level headed and well balanced person who uses time wisely, and I am finding myself unable to keep up with the current model that is remote learning. It is causing a lot of stress to me and my entire family. My daughter is not excited to learn, she is totally frustrated. To be frank, it would have made more sense to just pause for this year and have no school, as opposed to what we are being expected to do with remote and or hybrid learning.

In order for elementary aged kids to accomplish what is expected, they need an adult with them most of the day. In my case with a first grader, the whole day. She does not know how to transfer from Google classroom to Google meets, etc. without help yet, nor should she be expected to at week 2. I shudder to think of all of our Westfield families, who like myself, have multiple children, and are trying to navigate through this. We cannot possibly be with our children in front of the computer all day and sufficiently take care of younger children. Does that mean my first grader will fall behind, and associate school with frustration and see how I am struggling so much? Yes it does and that is not fair for her or the family as a whole or to our community as a whole.

I know full well that everyone involved is doing their best and working their hardest, and I have no complaints about any teachers or staff at Highland. My major concern is that the way things are going for so many families, this is not sustainable long term, and many people are sinking, causing potential emotional harm to our kids and it does not feel right. We have to do better. We have to find a way to return them to school, to full in person learning.

There is a choice. Parents who are not comfortable sending their kids to school, do not have to. But for parents who believe (based on facts) that our risk of exposure to and spread of COVID 19 is low enough to make going back a reasonable transition, we need to be able to do that.

We appreciate your consideration in this matter, and hope that our kids can be back in classrooms learning together in the second week of October. Back to full in person learning, and not any sort of hybrid model.

Joanne & Jayson Charland, North Road, Westfield

I am writing on behalf of my son, who is a 12-year-old with Down Syndrome that is in an Inclusion Program at the Westfield Intermediate School. Please consider including him in the cohort of children that require in-person, all-day instruction. He truly needs in-person instruction to keep him on track for his educational progression. Learning in an online environment is not meeting his educational needs as it very difficult for him to stay focused and engaged throughout the day. Any progress made during the 2019-2020 school year may be lost if we do not act quickly to get him in the environment he needs and deserves.

Portions of the online learning environment are too difficult for him to navigate on his own, and it has been frustrating for him, resulting in a disinterest with school. Other services that he requires, such as speech and OT, are much more difficult to administer virtually. All of these factors combined will affect him negatively going forward and the longer this continues, the more he regresses.

Brock & Stacey Nubile, Canterbury Lane, Westfield

We are reaching out to you in regards to the upcoming vote on the hybrid learning plan and how it relates also to the fully remote learners. We have 2 children in the WPS, one in 10th grade and one in 5th grade. Schooling during the summer of 2020 was abysmal, to put it bluntly. Over the summer, we decided to enroll our children in the remote learning plan for the academic year 2020-2021 with the hopes that remote schooling would be much better than it was in the spring due to a longer planning window for teachers and the comfort knowing that teachers and staff wanted to do better. We have been pleasantly surprised with the remote learning for both of our children this fall. The teachers have adapted well and are providing excellent live instruction as well as utilizing new digital learning formats to supplement. We have no complaints about the education our children are currently receiving remotely from Westfield Public Schools. We had high hopes that this valuable remote learning would continue through the remaining school year.

It has come to our attention that your committee will be voting on a hybrid learning plan this week; a hybrid plan that has not been made public and will affect not only hybrid learners but remote students as well. As we understood the original learning plan published and submitted to Massachusetts DESE this summer, each cohort would be attending school one week with in-person instruction and one week at home with a remote component. Now we are hearing that you are proposing that the students will not receive any instruction during their week at home; those students will be given assignments, projects and “busy work”; there would be only a teacher available via email, no live interaction between students and staff.

We have learned that this model of one week on and one week off will be applied to the remote learners as well. Remote learners will have one week or remote instructions via Google Classroom and one week of no actual instruction, just assignments and projects and busy work, no attendance taken, no true accountability. Applying this new approach to remote is neither what was submitted to the state nor what was promised to students and teachers. Why does remote learning need to change just because some students are beginning hybrid learning?

How is it possible to leave our students to learn on their own during their week at home when we know from our experiences during the spring of 2020 that this

doesn't work? Our students missed out on the end of last year's curriculum and started this fall behind where they would have normally been. We would most certainly love for this to be normal and for all students to be able to attend in person, but there is a pandemic going on and the best worst choice is to continue in the remote posture until things are safer for everyone. This undisclosed until now plan will cause students to slide backward and reduce the efficiency with remote learning that teachers and students have achieved this fall.

And why all the secrecy about the plan? We have received lots of emails and surveys all summer from the superintendent's office and yet nothing this past month about something as important as the details of what hybrid learning will look like has been shared with students, families, and your own staff. How can you as a committee vote to send our children back to school in person when you aren't even meeting in person? This alone should end the debate. Why the hypocrisy? Why hide the hybrid plan? Why break what is actually working and safe for everyone?

Our own children have adapted and thrived in the remote learning model for the past 3 weeks. It's unfair to force an unnecessary change on our remote students at this point in time. Our hope is that we are wrong, that the info we received was bad and that you do have the best interest of all students at heart. Our hope is that in these crazy times you might put the students first; our youth have lost a lot in the past 7 months, it seems as if you are now trying to take away a quality education as well. If you go forward with this "half-school" plan, you are failing every student in Westfield, shame on you.

3. Approval of School Committee meeting minutes

a. Special meeting minutes of September 21, 2020

Diane Mayhew moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to approve the September 8, 2020 School Committee meeting minutes.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

4a. Westfield Public Schools 2020-2021 Back to School Plan

Superintendent Czaporowski provided an update regarding the plan. Also, Public Health Director Joe Rouse was in attendance.

Cindy Sullivan moved, Bo Sullivan seconded to approve the start of Phase 2. Superintendent Czaporowski and Joe Rouse provided input and answered questions from committee members.

Amended motion:

Bo Sullivan moved, Diane Mayhew seconded to amend Phase 2, as follows:

PHASE 2 = October 19, 2020 start date

Special Education (RISE, LLD, Quest, and Transition Program),

English Language Learners (EL1 & EL2) will return every day
 Grades: Kindergarten, 1, 5, 7, 9, McKinney Vento/Homeless, Foster Care
 Will return to school (in person) every other week (A & B week)

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan		X
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Tim O'Connor		X
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	5	<u>2</u> motion passes

4b. WHS Football 2020-2021 modified practice schedule

Bo Sullivan moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to approve the Westfield High School Football 2020-2021 modified practice schedule, as presented.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

Ryan Dunphy reported that the spectators are limited to one spectator per athlete for indoor sports.

5. Acceptance of the listing of Bus Drivers, Monitors, and Substitutes

a. Regular Education: Bus Drivers and Substitute Drivers

Diane Mayhew moved, Ramon Diaz seconded to accept the listing of regular education bus drivers and substitute drivers, as presented.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

b. Special Education In-District: Bus Drivers and Monitors

Diane Mayhew moved, Ramon Diaz seconded to accept the listing of special education in-district bus drivers and monitors, as presented.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

c. Special Education Out-of-District: Bus Drivers and Monitors

Diane Mayhew moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to accept the listing of special education out-of-district bus drivers and monitors, as presented.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

6. Approval of home school applications HE2021-89 to HE2021-134

Tim O'Connor moved, Bo Sullivan seconded to approve home school applications HE2021-89 to HE2021-134.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

7. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Westfield Education Association Unit A teachers:

Bo Sullivan moved, Ramon Diaz seconded to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Westfield School Committee and the Westfield Education Association Unit A regarding the early retirement incentive for two employees, as presented, and authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the committee.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan		X
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	6	<u>1</u> motion passes

8. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Westfield Education Association Unit B (asst. principals, supervisors)

Bo Sullivan moved, Tim O'Connor seconded to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Westfield School Committee and the Westfield Education Association Unit B to the terms, conditions, and understanding during the states COVID-19 emergency, effective only for the 2020-2021 school year, as presented, and authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the committee.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

9. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Westfield Lunch Association

Bo Sullivan moved, Tim O'Connor seconded to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Westfield School Committee and the Westfield Lunch Association as follows: all employees will be paid on a twenty-one pay cycle for the 2020-2021 school year with all insurances spread out over a twenty pay period, as presented, and authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the committee.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

10. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Westfield Cafeteria Managers Association

Bo Sullivan moved, Tim O'Connor seconded to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Westfield School Committee and the Westfield Cafeteria Managers Association as follows: all employees will be paid on a twenty-one pay cycle for the 2020-2021 school year with all insurances spread out over a twenty pay period, as presented, and authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the committee.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

11. 2nd/final reading, by title only, of policies

a. Policy File: JLCB Immunization of Students

Diane Mayhew moved, Bo Sullivan seconded a 2nd/final reading, by title only, to adopt policy File: JLCB Immunization of Students.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

b. Policy File: JLCB-R Administrative Regulations Regarding Immunization of Students

Diane Mayhew moved, Bo Sullivan seconded a 2nd/final reading, by title only, to amend policy File: JLCB-R Administrative Regulations Regarding Immunization of Students.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan		X
Heather Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	6	<u>1</u> motion passes

12. Report of the weekly signed warrants

Bo Sullivan reported the following warrants were signed:
 September 14, 2020 – 14 batches totaling \$332,049.96
 September 25, 2020 – 16 batches totaling \$393,581.78

13. Superintendent's Reports

a. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations

Tim O'Connor moved, Bo Sullivan seconded to accept the following gifts/donations:

- Southampton Road, Southampton Rd PTO, \$6,573.40, educational purposes, gift account, to purchase online subscriptions to Studies Weekly and Brain Pop for grades K-4
- Westfield Public Schools, Amelia Park Children's Museum, supplies for school: glue sticks, notebooks, pencils, pencil boxes, etc. estimated value \$1,800.00
- Fort Meadow, Abner Gibbs, Franklin Ave, Highland, Paper Mill, Westfield Intermediate, WHS, Westfield Gas & Electric, desk shields, washable face masks, portable dry erase board, mask lanyards, pencils, colored pencils, value \$ 3,352.45

Adopt-a-Student Technology Donations to be deposited in the Student Connectivity Gift Account:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Donation</u>
Matt Garlo	Montgomery Rd, Westfield	250.00
Thomas & Anne Woodson	Squawfield Rd, Westfield	250.00
City Hotel, Thomas Daley	Elm Street, Westfield	250.00
Steve & Sarah Hagen	Pochassic St, Westfield	500.00
Peter Weston	Butternut Rd, Westfield	250.00
John Flahive	Arnold St, Westfield	250.00
Laurie Furkey	Allen Ave, Westfield	50.00
Lauren Figy & John Cadigan	Llewellyn Dr, Westfield	250.00
Ralph & Sue Figy	Brookline Ave, Westfield	250.00
John & Denise Quinn	Forest Glen Dr, Westfield	250.00
Harry & Anne Rock	North Rd, Westfield	250.00
James & Joanne Papadimitriou	Rachael Terr, Westfield	250.00
Gary & Karen Couture	Bates Rd, Westfield	250.00
Peter Chrzanowski & Lisa Gariepy	Susan Dr, Westfield	250.00
Prabodh & Mina Reshamwala	Forest Hill Rd, Westfield	1000.00
Bryco LLC	Broadway, Westfield	500.00
Brian & Sue Crawford	Elizabeth Ave, Westfield	100.00
Brian Sullivan & Sonia Desclos	Sherwood Ave, Westfield	250.00
Ray Manos	Westfield	20.00 cash

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

b. Other

Superintendent Czaporowski provided an update on hotspots and remote learning centers.

15. Mayor's update: Mayor Humason provided an update.

16. School Committee update: none

17. Items for referral to subcommittee: none

18. Old business:

19. Subcommittee Reports/Recommendations

a. Reports: none

b. Minutes: none

20. Other items not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting:

Greater Westfield Babe Ruth League request to build two dugouts at Jachym Field
Cindy Sullivan moved, Ramon Diaz seconded to approve Westfield Babe Ruth's request to build two dugouts at Jachym Field.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

21. Next regular School Committee meeting: October 19, 2020

At 9:22 pm Bo Sullivan moved, Ramon Diaz seconded to adjourn the meeting.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>
Cindy Sullivan	X	
Heather Sullivan	X	
Ramon Diaz	X	
Diane Mayhew	X	
Bo Sullivan	X	
Tim O'Connor	X	
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>	
	7	<u>0</u> motion passes

Mr. Stefan Czaprowski, Superintendent of Schools
Clerk – Westfield School Committee

A true copy, Attest:

Cindy Sullivan, secretary
Westfield School Committee

CS/cm