

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – April 10, 2024

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. at the Wayland Town Building

*Present:*

Erin Gibbons, Chair  
Jeanne Downs, Vice Chair  
Ellen Grieco  
Erin Mueller  
Christina Rodrigo

*Also present:*

David Fleishman  
Acting Superintendent

Betsy Gavron  
Interim Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan  
Director of Finance & Operations

Debbie Dixson  
Interim Director of Student Services

*Also:*

Heath Rollins, Athletic Director  
Klara Sands, WMS World Language Department Head & Teacher

**1. Welcome & Call to Order:**

Chair Erin Gibbons called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being recorded by WayCAM.

**2. Special Matter – School Budget Hearing:**

*2.1 Presentation of School Committee Recommended FY25 Budget:*

Erin Gibbons opened the budget hearing at 6:07 p.m., and she presented the School Committee’s recommended FY25 budget that included the School Committee’s mission, mission of the school district, and the budget goal. Also reviewed was the FY24 current year, the FY25 budget process, the proposed FY25 School operating budget, an enrollment review, an FTE overview, a comparison with comparable communities, and the proposed FY25 School Capital Budget.

The School Committee’s Mission is “to support the mission of the Wayland Public Schools through the setting of policy, hiring and overseeing the Superintendent, and recommending an appropriate budget that delivers a high-quality curricular educational program to the children entrusted in our care.”

The School Committee’s Budget Goal was “to fully support the academic and social/emotional growth of our students while respecting the fiscal constraints facing Wayland residents and the needs of other Town departments.”

In FY23, the budget appropriation was \$47,164,770 less utilities which was moved to unclassified and resulted in an adjusted budget of \$46,091,270. In FY24, the budget appropriation was \$48,803,195 including the added \$1,350,000 for the COLA increase for the new 3-year bargaining unit contracts, resulting in an FY24 budget appropriation of \$50,153,195, an 8.8% increase over FY23. All contractual obligations are expected to be met in FY24.

The budget process began in October 2023 during which the Town Manager’s Guidelines were reviewed and a level service budget was recommended that would include tuition-free Full Day Kindergarten. Priorities were identified and resources were realigned. After discussions between the School Committee and the leadership team, the Acting Superintendent presented his recommended budget on December 13, 2023. In January 2024, the School Committee held several meetings to review the different areas of the budget and voted to approve a proposed level service budget of \$52,630,763 or 4.94% over FY24. However, with the addition of Full Day Kindergarten, a separate line item of \$535,769 was added and brought the combined total to \$53,166,532, a 6.01% increase for FY25. Then on

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – April 10, 2024

March 13, 2024, the School Committee reduced its FY25 recommended budget by the amount allocated for Full Day Kindergarten because a decision was reached to use ARPA funds and once again the recommended budget was \$52,630,763. Members of the School Committee, the Select Board, and the Town Administrator were all in agreement to use these funds. The Town Finance Committee reviewed and voted the overall town budget in March.

Personnel-related expenses are the largest of the FY25 Budget Drivers, such as COLA's, step and lane changes, and staffing. Other budget drivers include student performance assessments and special education/human resources licenses, software programs, on-line subscriptions, a new three-year contract for school bus transportation, a four-year commitment to shift ice hockey into athletics, The Spanish Immersion transition to 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and the upcoming Superintendent search. An Article will be presented at Town Meeting for a vote to continue funding the Special Education Reserve Fund in the amount of \$150,000 which was voted by the Finance Committee pending approval at Town Meeting.

An overview of the enrollment in Wayland from FY88 to the present shows that the enrollment has remained steady. From the present through 2030, the projection is a slight decline in enrollment. From FY24 to FY25, there was an increase of 1.4 FTE's. The proposed FY25 capital budget is \$1,133,300 with funds being allocated across the district for capital projects.

## 2.2 *Open Discussion regarding School Committee Recommended FY25 Budget:*

There were no questions regarding the budget. The budget hearing was closed at 6:19 p.m.

## 3. **Public Comment:**

Betsy Cullen, 7 Coolidge Road. Prior to her public comment, her daughters spoke in Spanish to the School Committee and administrators. Ms. Cullen congratulated everyone at the table and wanted to celebrate the faculty and staff for making the transition of 6<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish Immersion a reality, adding that a dual language program enriches the experiences of all students. She is the parent of an upcoming 6<sup>th</sup> grader and recommended four things: continue the structure of the Parent Advisory Committee in the upper grades, see the students as a creative resource as they mature around their perception of the program as a way to improve the program, encourage everyone to work proactively to develop a plan to merge multiple years and not just one year at a time, and encourage us to continue the solid foundation of how to effectively deliver student services in this Immersion Program as the curriculum advances for students with Language Based learning differences.

Michelle Galicia, 20 Aqueduct Road, would like gymnastics to become a part of Wayland athletics, adding that some can afford programs outside of school, but some may not be able to, thus, parents may have to make difficult choices and some students would stop participating in gymnastics.

Todd Lyons, 10 Lodge Road, has been a coach in Wayland for ten years and he is a gymnastics Dad. He encouraged the School Committee to support a gymnastics program going forward, as high school sports can have a profound impact on students, including his two daughters, for so many reasons.

## 4. **High School Gymnastics Update** – Heath Rollins, Athletic Director:

Athletic Director Heath Rollins and the Athletic Advisory Committee have been working together to find a way to start a varsity gymnastics program at Wayland High School. There is a possibility to co-op with Weston since they are in the same situation, but the program would be unfunded next year. A gym would be subcontracted for practices and meets, but one school district has to be the host and that will be Weston who will also provide the coach. Transportation to practices will be the parents' responsibility, but transportation will be provided for away meets. Parents will cover Weston's athletic fee, but fundraising is always a possibility. There may also be an opportunity to join the Dual County League next year for gymnastics.

Upon a motion duly made by Erin Mueller, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve that Wayland join Weston in a co-op to begin a gymnastics team and to authorize Erin Gibbons to sign it.

## 5. **Acting Superintendent Update:**

### 5.1 *After School Care Working Group Update:*

David updated the School Committee about the After School Care Working Group. The group will be chaired by Brian Jones, Principal of Loker School, and will include the Director of Finance and Operations, the Wayland Recreation Director, the nurse leader of the Wayland Public Schools, 3 elementary school parents, a School Committee member, the Wayland School Community Programs Director and the Administrative Coordinator, a BASE

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Meeting – April 10, 2024

site coordinator, and a parent member of PASS. The group's focus will be to review the current offerings and possibly expanding the programming to meet families' needs.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Erin Mueller, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve Christina Rodrigo to be a part of the working group for after school care.

The first in-person meeting will be April 24 and the two following meetings will be virtual in May and June. There will be another update at the last School Committee meeting in June.

5.2 *Spanish Immersion Transition to Wayland Middle School:*

Klara Sands presented an overview of the Spanish Immersion transition to 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Wayland Middle School. This conversation began in 2015 and in 2019 hiring a bilingual staff began. This year, they are writing the curriculum as well as making visits to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes. The Middle School Spanish Immersion team includes Klara, Kathy DeLima, Cici Leffel, and Dalia Stewart, as well as other Spanish speaking staff within the school. Klara noted that the World Languages Department is bilingual, trilingual, and quad-lingual in all grades and are available for support. Additional support will come from the Guidance Department and Student Services.

The vision/plan is to write a Spanish Immersion course, including one additional Spanish course in Social Studies which will follow the same standards for English. The Spanish Immersion students will be together two blocks out of six blocks a few days a week or about 30% of the time. Since 2010, the curriculum has been proficiency based. Proficiency is a way to measure how much of a language one knows or their performance. There are three ranges or proficiency levels: novice, intermediate, and advanced. Most people are advanced in their native language. The Intermediate High range is where one hopes to graduate from high school, but depending on the number of hours spent, one can graduate in the Advanced Low or Advanced Mid-range, as time is a critical component of language proficiency. The curriculum will also follow the Massachusetts Frameworks, the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language Guidelines (ACTFL), and the Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) which is used at the high school level; Klara explained.

The four skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking – will be represented but it will depend on students' output in terms of measuring. There are also communicative standards – interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational – which all align with the proficiency standards. The five ACTFL guidelines consist of communication, communities, cultures, connections, and comparisons; Klara explained. The Advanced Placement (AP) standards are also being followed as has been for the past ten years and up to the novice level. The AP themes can include families and communities, personal and public identities, contemporary life, beauty and aesthetics, science and technology, and global challenges.

For special education students and following the continuation model, research says that special education should be delivered in the main language (English) of instruction. There is also a bilingual staff member who can perform testing in Spanish. A discussion ensued about whether dyslexic students can take Spanish. Klara noted that Individualized needs or added support are met throughout the grade levels if necessary.

The ongoing goals moving forward are getting to know the 5<sup>th</sup> graders, writing Intermediate Low/Mid Spanish Curriculum, writing the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies curriculum, exploring and ordering materials, connecting with families, as well as gathering thoughts/feedback. The School Committee asked questions about the curriculum. The curriculum is always being updated, and Klara noted that time is needed for staff to write next year's curriculum. She explained, adding that there are 40 different languages spoken in Wayland.

5.3 *Administrator Hiring:*

David provided the hiring update. The Central Office administrative and school principal searches are complete. Two of the four finalists for the student services administrative restructuring were interviewed for the Middle School and High School, and this process should be complete by mid-April. The Director of The Children's Way (TCW) search will begin as the current Director has left and will not be returning. It was asked if this would be the best time to review the structure of TCW model which was an integrated model but has since changed when it became a DESE public integrated preschool that includes sub-separate classrooms. A discussion ensued in this regard.

6. **Administrative Matters:**

6.1 *Review of Acting Superintendent Evaluation Process and Next Steps:*

The draft evaluation plan was reviewed by the School Committee that included the feedback from the members,

## MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### Regular Meeting – April 10, 2024

including the survey process. As confirmed by DESE, the Rubric form around the assessment of the goals does not have to be utilized as David is the Acting Superintendent; he will self-assess. There is a possibility for a community/staff survey, including a question about what people would like to see in the next Superintendent. The School Committee will continue in-person interviews with those staff members who work with David daily in an effort to get an understanding of David's performance. The Committee will review the final questions that will align with David's goals at the April 24 meeting. Each member reviewed their interview assignments. David will provide an update at the June 5 School Committee meeting.

#### 6.2 *High School Turf Field Update:*

Erin Gibbons provided the turf field update. Net catches have been installed at each cleanout around the field which catches the crumb rubber before it drains through. It's been a while since the field has floated resulting in crumb rubber free water coming out of the out-flow pipes. The crumb rubber that exists in that area will be cleaned out as soon as it dries. Ben Keefe will ask the engineer about the installation of the grit chamber, as the net catches or screens may be sufficient to do the job of collecting the crumb rubber. This would result in some cost savings. Ben will also work with Conservation in regard to the outstanding violation notice and work towards compliance. A temporary fence will be installed to keep individuals out of the area.

#### 6.3 *Climate Literacy Update:*

Jeanne reported that since the High School climate literacy group attended the December School Committee meeting, Sabine Von-Mering, a member of Energize Wayland, reached out to Jeanne asking about implementing more climate literacy into the schools. Jeanne followed up with Betsy Gavron and they agreed that this effort should become a future goal of the district. Some programs exist in the schools, but the request is for more curriculum integration. The School Committee discussed potential goals and the process moving forward, as David noted that the administrators will begin to develop goals during the summer. Betsy noted that Environmental Chemistry exists at the High School.

#### 6.4 *Announcement of Release with Redactions the Following Executive Session Minutes: October 18, 2023, October 24, 2023, November 1, 2023, November 15, 2023, November 29, 2023, December 13, 2023, January 3, 2024, January 10, 2024, February 14, 2024:*

Erin Gibbons announced the release with redactions of the following executive session minutes: October 18, 2023, October 24, 2023, November 1, 2023, November 15, 2023, November 29, 2023, December 13, 2023, January 3, 2024, January 10, 2024, February 14, 2024.

## 7. **Financial Matters:**

### 7.1 *Finance Subcommittee Update:*

- **Schedule for Budget Booklet:**  
The School Committee reviewed last year's budget book with some suggestions by Jeanne for this year's budget book. The School Committee recommended specific topics for the budget booklet, such as the restructuring of the Special Education department with the new roles at each school, budget drivers, personnel and new FTE's, the WTA contract, information about Full Day Kindergarten, and language about some of the capital projects, as explained by Susan Bottan. The final draft, along with new artwork, will be presented on April 24.
- **Update on FY24 SpEd Reserve Fund:**  
Susan reported that the Select Board voted and approved this transfer; it is in process.
- **Long Range Building Plan:**  
Jeanne noted that the long range building plan has been stalled, adding that the first step is for the School Committee to develop goals in terms of what is to be achieved as they will determine the scope of work. The Finance Subcommittee will draft the goals and present them to the School Committee on April 24. A discussion ensued about enrollment projections, available land, and the Statement of Interest that was submitted twice to the MSBA about two years ago and last year.

## 8. **Consent Agenda:**

### 8.1 Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated April 10, 2024, in the amount of \$338,796.98

### 8.2 Approval of Minutes: March 27, 2024, April 4, 2024

### 8.3 Approval and Declaration of Surplus Books to Sell, Recycle or Dispose of According to Laws and Regulations of the

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – April 10, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

- 8.4 Approval and Declaration of Surplus Technology Equipment to Recycle According to Laws and Regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Christina Rodrigo addressed a formatting issue on the April 4, 2024 minutes. Jeanne Downs recommended edits to the March 27 minutes.

Upon a motion duly moved by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Christina Rodrigo, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda with the edits discussed for the March 27, 2024 minutes.

8. **Matters Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

Ellen asked if the vote to approve a gymnastic coop should be re-voted since the vote was not noted on the agenda. The School Committee did not re-vote because it does not have to be on the agenda.

9. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Erin Gibbons, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 8:20 p.m. for the purposes of (a) approving executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: March 13, 2024 and March 27, 2024 with the intent to also review and potentially release with redactions said minutes and (b) discussing strategy with respect to the following litigation matter where an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee: Whitehead vs. Omar X. Easy, Ph.D., pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3). A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Erin Gibbons, Chair	X	
Jeanne Downs, Vice Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco	X	
Erin Mueller	X	
Christina Rodrigo	X	

The School Committee will not be joined by others.

The School Committee will adjourn in executive session and will not reconvene in open session.

10. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Erin Mueller, the Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:53 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Erin Gibbons, Chair	X	
Jeanne Downs, Vice Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco	X	
Erin Mueller	X	
Christina Rodrigo	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Gibbons, Chair  
Wayland School Committee

**Corresponding Documentation:**

- 1. Agenda
- 2. Budget Hearing Presentation
- 3. FY25 Draft Budget Booklet
- 4. March 27, 2024 Supt. Eval Subcommittee Draft Minutes
- 5. List for SC Interviews with Administrators re: Supt. Eval
- 6. Draft Evaluation Plan
- 7. Payroll & Accounts Payables Warrants

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Meeting – April 10, 2024

8. Minutes of March 27, 2024
9. Minutes of April 4, 2024
10. List of Surplus Textbooks
11. List of Technology Surplus
12. Executive Session Motion