



**Teaching and Learning Subcommittee**  
**Remote**  
**December 21, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m.**  
**Open Meeting Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Beverly Hugo (Chair), Priscila Sousa, Tiffanie Maskell, Scott Wadland

**ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education Amy Bright, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education Anne Ludes, SAGE Department Head Denise Weeks, Executive Assistant to the School Committee Joanna Hastry

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Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. She noted all in attendance and said that the meeting was being held remotely, was being broadcast live on Facebook, and was also being recorded.

Public Comment

No public comment

Remote Learning Update with Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Amy Bright and Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education Anne Ludes

Ms. Ludes said that they have reached out to other departments to get some information on questions that were being asked. She said that the Technology Department has a robust Helpdesk where anyone can reach out to them with any problems, or a teacher and school can do so on their behalf. She said that there is a supply of Chromebooks at each school for student replacement, and 900 hot spots have been given out, which makes them caught up on current requests, but requests do come in daily. She said that they have a job opening for a Parent Technology Liaison. She said that the biggest funding issue will be the end of life for Chromebooks, as updates expire at the end of the fifth year of devices and we are reaching the end of that, so the department is calculating how many we will need for budgeting purposes. She said that all software is vetted to meet the criteria for student privacy. Ms. Bright said that there is a Technology Committee to look at any additional technology needs.

Ms. Ludes said that the absentee rate is a regular topic at every school check in, principals are tracking it on a daily basis and using a multi prong approach to families, with phone calls throughout the day, using the Remind app, teachers reaching out, and individualized plans made for students who need it. She said that at the secondary level they are looking at attendance at the class level since they are with different teachers throughout the day. She said that they are looking at patterns for each student. She said that overall the attendance is

comparable to the past two years, within a couple of percentage points for overall attendance and attendance for students with disabilities. She said that attendance for English Language Learners (ELL) students is lower than in the past, but has been steadily improving, although still disproportionately low in the high school. She said that they have done multiple outreaches with interpreters and translators, and some patterns are noticeable with the most pressing being students who are working full time or caring for children full time and not able to engage in school during the regular school day. She said that the high school has been working to a night school for around 30 ELL students at the end of January, they are looking at dropout indicators and attendance records for who it might be helpful for.

Ms. Bright said that there were DESE Professional Development Days with over 25 hours related to equity, diversity and inclusion. She said that there needs to be further work in this area and a better sequence for future trainings. She said that there will be a six part Anti-Racist Training in January for administrators, and there will also be trainings on the Code of Character, Conduct and Support which will need to be reviewed on a regular basis as it is implemented.

Ms. Ludes said with Chapter 70 funds they have created family engagement supports with wraparound coordinators to help provide services to families which they might need during this time. She said that the Director of Health and Wellness reported that students' and staff's social emotional health is impacted by COVID-19. She said that although student hospitalizations are on par with past years, social workers are saying you may see some of the effects through decreased engagement or full disengagement from learning. She said that some students may be doing better with less anxiety or distractions with remote learning versus in person learning, and we will need to think of what supports are needed next year with students who benefitted from remote learning and transitioning them to in person, as well as transitions for all students. She said that the Special Education Department has been working with an audiologist and a teacher for the visually impaired to help with accommodations for the remote setting.

Ms. Hugo asked who would be participating in the Anti-Racism Training and if dropout indicators are the same as in the past. Ms. Bright said that she believes everyone in the Administration Council is participating in the training, but she will have to verify that. Ms. Ludes said that there is a report on dropout indicators that will be shared in January that speaks to what students need interventions, what types of intervention have been used, and new interventions that will be used. She suggested this be a topic for the January subcommittee meeting as well. Ms. Hugo asked if we anticipate having enough staff or needing more staff for next year. Ms. Ludes said that there are a lot of programs and resources in the high school that help with staffing, such as more trade offerings and more dual enrollment opportunities, but the night school would need additional staffing and funding. She said that for the beginning of the program they are using stipends. Ms. Maskell asked about students' grades in general compared to the past few years, and spoke to the importance of parents being told if their student is not finishing their work. Ms. Bright and Ms. Ludes spoke to how it is at the individual student level for grades, and how teachers and staff work on reaching out to families including some having contracts with steps on improving. Ms. Bright said that at the elementary level they can monitor students online using Securely, which can help with redirecting students back to their work. Ms. Sousa asked if teachers are being more hypervigilant about students' mental

health, on top of all the other work they have to do, and if there are any resources for teachers to identify problems and help with a solution. Ms. Ludes said that every school has support staff in the building that work with teachers, it is probably not ever enough, and it may be harder to see cues in a remote setting such as how students are interacting with peers, their behaviors, and they are allowed to keep their cameras off if they are engaging. Ms. Bright spoke to the resources available through the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Community Development and the Community Resource Department, as well as those offices being able to reach out to appropriate community partners for additional help if needed.

#### Update from the SAGE Department with SAGE Department Head Denise Weeks

Denise Weeks shared a slideshow with updates from the SAGE Department with information on the SAGE mission, vision, the different ways SAGE is provided across the levels, screening, staffing and enrollment, and how it relates to School Committee goals. She spoke about not looking at students' grades, but creativity and problem solving instead, and how they are trying to get more information to families to know what the program is, including a presentation at the last Bilingual Parent Advisory Council meeting (BPAC).

Ms. Maskell asked what measures are being taken to increase the disproportionate number of students in the SAGE Program in some schools, giving the example of only six students in the program at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, and suggested a campaign for families to better understand what the SAGE Program is. Ms. Weeks said that the new testing method should help with this, and noted that one of the biggest obstacles is getting permission slips from parents signed, as they may not know about the program. She said they are going to start working on ways to get a hold of parents through multiple avenues, and what apps are best in terms of getting responses to use to send information out. Ms. Hugo asked what the long term goals are of the Department Head. Ms. Weeks said that her main one is closing the equity gap, including having teachers that are reflective of students, such as a teacher from the same ethnic group or background. Ms. Hugo noted that the number of students that get some sort of experience with the SAGE Program is higher than those just listed as being involved with the pull out services, as there are also enrichment opportunities within the classrooms. Ms. Ludes noted that Ms. Weeks has also had a vision of bringing SAGE Programs to the high school level as well. Ms. Hugo asked for any success stories that may show why it is important for students who need enrichment. Ms. Weeks spoke to examples of helping kids express themselves, avoiding leading to discipline problems, and boredom when being finished with work.

#### Approval of Minutes

**Motion:** To approve the October 19, 2020 minutes.

**Moved:** Ms. Maskell                      **Seconded:** Ms. Sousa

**Discussion:** Mr. Wadland said that he will be abstaining as he was not present at that meeting.

**Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (3-0-1) (Yes: Hugo, Sousa, Maskell. Abstained: Wadland)

#### Next Meeting Dates and Agenda Suggestions

Ms. Hugo said that the next meeting will be on February 1st at 5:00 p.m. with a report on dropout indicators from the high school, discussion on math in elementary and middle schools, and an update on the return to school and remote learning. She asked that members send in

any agenda ideas for the January 15th meeting, and said that in the Spring there will be an agenda item on the Civics Program.

Adjournment

**Motion:** To adjourn.

**Moved:** Mr. Wadland                    **Seconded:** Ms. Maskell

**Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (4-0-0)

(Yes: Hugo, Wadland, Sousa, Maskell)

Meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Update on the SAGE Program Presentation

Draft October 19, 2020 minutes

*These minutes were approved by the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee in Open Session on March 8, 2021.*

*These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on July 20, 2021.*