

CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01609

The School Committee held an in-person meeting with a virtual option:

on: **Thursday, October 8, 2026**
At: 5:00 p.m., Executive Session; 5:30 p.m. Open Session
Esther Howland Chamber, Worcester City Hall

MINUTES

A. General Business Items taken in Executive Session

Open session was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

There were present at the Call to Roll: Member Binienda, Member Guardiola, Member Mailman, Vice Chair McCullough, Member Roy, and Mayor Petty. Member Alvarez, Member Biancheria and Member Johnson were absent.

A motion was made to enter into Executive Session to discuss the items below and reconvene in open session. On a roll call vote: Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes, and Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 6-0, the motion passed. Executive Session began at 5:01 p.m.

Member Johnson arrived at 5:01; Member Biancheria arrived at 5:02 p.m.; and Member Alvarez arrived at 5:04 p.m.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares – Successor Contract Negotiations (Global) – Educational Association of Worcester, Units A/B; Educational Association of Worcester, Paraeducators Unit; Educational Association of Worcester, Aides to the Physically Handicapped, Monitors and Drivers Unit; Educational Association of Worcester, Therapy Assistants Unit; Educational Association of Worcester, Parent Liaisons Unit; and Educational Association of Worcester, ESL Tutors Unit.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares – Successor Contract Negotiations – Educational Association of Worcester, Units A/B.

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To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct negotiations with nonunion personnel –
Administrative Clerk of the School Committee Kristi Turgeon.

Executive Session pursuant to Mass. G.L. c. 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose 7 to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law, including the Massachusetts Public Records Law, Mass. G.L. c. 66, Section 10, and the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, Mass. G.L. c. 30A, Sections 22(f) and (g), relating to review of executive session minutes for meetings that occurred on September 17, 2026.

B. Call to Order: Open session reconvened at 5:35 p.m.

C. Pledge of Allegiance/National Anthem: The National Anthem was performed by Lauren Church, a 12th grade student from Doherty Memorial High School.

D. Roll Call: There were present at the call to roll: Member Alvarez, Member Biancheria, Member Binienda, Member Guardiola, Member Johnson, Member Mailman, Vice Chair McCullough, Member Roy, and Mayor Petty.

M. Student Advisory Committee Items

E. Consent Agenda

i. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the [September 16, 2026](#) Operations and Governance Standing Committee Meeting.

Approval of Minutes of the [September 16, 2026](#) Operations and Governance Standing Committee Meeting/Community Realignment Forum.

Approval of Minutes of the [September 17, 2026](#) School Committee Meeting.

Approval of the Minutes of the [September 24, 2026](#) Teaching, Learning, and Student Success Meeting.

ii. Approval of Donations

To consider approval of a donation from D'arren E Wuensch DBA A-Plus Education Services in the amount of \$150 for used books to benefit Worcester Public Schools history department.

To consider approval of a donation from the TJX Foundation's Operation Warm program to provide winter coats to benefit 380 WPS elementary school students.

To consider approval of a donation from Martha & Mark Kinback in the memory of Joseph Alfego in the amount of \$100 to benefit Worcester Technical High School.

To consider approval of a general donation in the amount of \$91.80 from Pledgeling Foundation to support Worcester Technical High School.

To consider approval of a general donation from Big Y in the amount of \$386 to support Midland Street School.

To consider approval of a donation from Diamond Auto Group in the amount of \$500 to support the Worcester East Middle School students.

To consider approval of a general donation in the amount of \$400 from John Street Baptist Church to support Elm Park Community School.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$510 from the Thurston E. Solomon and Everett J. Morter Memorial fund of Greater Worcester Community Foundation Inc to WTHS for the Skills USA program.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$600 from Saul A. Seder fund of Greater Worcester Community Foundation Inc to WTHS for participation in Skills USA.

To consider approval of a general donation in the amount of \$6700.65 from the Sarah Daniels Pettit and William O. Pettit Jr. Fund of Greater Worcester Community Foundation Inc to support WTHS.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$3,510, from Marcia R Katter Memorial fund of Greater Worcester Community Foundation Inc to support Worcester Public School's preschool programs.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$550 from Mary Oakley Memorial fund of Greater Worcester Community Foundation Inc to provide art supplies to Worcester Public School students.

iii. Notification of Personnel Records

- a. [New Hire Instructional Staff](#)
- b. [New Hire Non-Instructional Staff](#)
- c. [Resignations/Retirements](#)

iv. Initial filing of Recognition

v. Notices of Interest to the District or to the Public

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda as presented. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

F. Item for Reconsideration

G. Held Items

H. Recognitions

I. Public Comment-Any member of the public may address the Committee regarding any item before them for two (2) minutes. Those speaking will state their name, their residence, and the item on which they wish to speak for the record. Those speaking may do so in person or via remote participation. Those wishing to address the Committee in a language other than English are asked to notify the Clerk of the Committee in advance, so the Committee may be provided with an interpreter. Members of the Committee may not respond to the comments of the public at the meeting. [Click to view Policy BEDH-Public Comment](#)

1. Joey Ford, of Attleboro, spoke regarding gb 6-105.
2. Dina Tedeschi, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 4-5.
3. Andrew Willis, of Fitchburg, spoke regarding c&p 4-5.

Pursuant to business conducted in Executive Session, it was moved to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Kristi Turgeon for the position of School Committee Executive Administrator and Clerk of the School Committee for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.

A summary of the terms are as follows:

- Three year contract from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029
- Title change to School Committee Executive Administrator and Clerk of the School Committee
- Full year, full time position
- Current salary is \$132,426.00
- Increased for Fiscal Year 2027 and fiscal years thereafter by the same percentage as is granted to non-represented employee group as approved by School Committee.
- Termination: By the Committee with "good cause" or by the School Committee Executive Administrator and Clerk with 60 days notice
- Evaluation yearly
- Subject to CORI; Fingerprinting
- Vacation – 15 days per year and can carry over 10 to following year
- Sick Leave – 15 days per year
- Holidays – those granted to 52 week employees
- Bereavement Leave
- PTO DAYS – 5 PTO days per year
- Health and Life Insurances – on same terms as other full-time employees of the District
- Memberships in association at expense of District including Council of School
- Committee Administrative Personnel (COSCAP).

A motion was made to approve the contract for Kristi L. Turgeon, Executive Administrator of the School Committee/Clerk. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair

McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

J. Public Petition

K. Report of the Superintendent

ros 6-13 (Administration)

(October 8, 2026)

New State Graduation Requirement

Drs. Magdalena Ganas and Emily Lehman presented proposed new Massachusetts graduation frameworks, which differentiates between current state requirements, WPS graduation requirements, and the proposed framework.

The current Massachusetts law was reviewed, including the fact that MCAS, while still administered, is no longer a graduation requirement and reviewed the differences between MassCore, Competency Determination, and local graduation requirements, as well as alternative paths to graduation.

The proposed graduation requirements from the DESE final Report of the Statewide Graduation Council from June 2026 were also shared, along with the proposed graduation requirements.

Member Biancheria asked what next steps WPS is ready to take to get students from "certificate of attainment" to earning a diploma. Dr. Lehman and Superintendent Allen noted that WPS is still waiting for more information from DESE before we can accurately plan the next steps.

Member Mailman asked about MassCore and MyCap. Dr. Lehman clarified that, based on the proposed DESE timeline, the initial requirement for 2027-2028 school year will be the MassCore completion, which WPS is already doing. She further stated that, for the following school year, 2028-2029, students entering grade 9 will be required to have a MyCap plan in place.

Member Guardiola said it was important to understand that we have moved to a much broader definition of "readiness." He said he wants to make sure every WPS student has access to rigorous coursework and college or career readiness. He would like to ensure WPS, without MCAS, has a clear set of metrics to determine if students are ready to move to the next level.

Dr. Lehman again mentioned the MyCap system, whether or not the state implements it, WPS is moving toward that, to put forward an individualized and realistic plan to help students move forward after high school.

Member Binienda questioned how the state would be able to give assessments and then review and grade them before the end of the year and expressed her concerns that WPS could potentially have more students fail classes and drop out.

A motion was made to approve this report and file this item. On a voice vote

of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

L. Reports of the Standing Committees

OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE - September 16, 2026

gb 2-92 – Clancey/McCullough/Johnson/Kamara/Mailman

(March 8, 2022)

Quarterly Facilities Report

Request that the Administration provide quarterly reports regarding building maintenance to include timeframes on when work will begin and be concluded.

Results: Report approved and item held on a 2-0 roll call vote. Member Biancheria was absent.

gb 6-96 (Clerk)

(September 3, 2026)

To review policies [ECAF-Security Cameras in School](#), [IHBG-Home Schooling](#) and [JFBB-School Choice](#) to ensure that the policy manual and student handbook align.

Results: All three (3) policy updates were approved and the item was filed.

A motion was made to approve this report and file this item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMUNITY FORUM - September 16, 2026

gb 6-72 (Administration)

(June 25, 2026)

Boundary Realignment Presentation

To consider the recommendations of the district boundary and realignment report.

Results: The report was approved and the item was held for future forums.

A motion was made to approve this report and file this item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

TEACHING, LEARNING, and STUDENT SUCCESS - September 24, 2026

c&p 4-5 Andrew Willis

(May 16, 2024)

Response from Administration

A request to address the committee regarding a [gender support plan that was presented by DESE](#) that I would like the district to consider use or, at least, consider allowing at the secondary level.

Results: By a vote of 2-1 (Member Alvarez dissented), the item was approved and filed. A motion for more information was approved and will be in an upcoming Friday Letter.

gb 6-22 (McCullough)

(February 26, 2026)

Response from Administration

To get an update on the implementation of girls flag football at WPS.

Results: By a vote of 3-0, the item was approved and filed.

The following two items will be taken collectively:

Response from Administration

gb 6-75 (Mailman)

(June 25, 2026)

To review common assessments (district created) and statewide assessments (DESE created) currently by grade.

c&p 6-1 (Medina)

(March 19, 2026)

I request that WPS provide families with a comprehensive, published K-12 calendar of all district-wide and state assessments (such as ACCESS and MCAS) for the remainder of the current academic year; and request that parents and caretakers be notified of specific subjects and testing dates at least one week before the start of any assessment to allow us to prepare our students mentally and academically.

Results: By a vote of 3-0, the item was approved and filed.

Vice Chair McCullough requested more information on c&p 4-5, Gender Support Plan and Dr. Marie Morse provided the requested information, most notably, that every student comes to WPS with different needs and there is complexity to each case. The form in c&p 4-5 provides a great resource; however, we are following all DESE regulations and the students are our top priority.

Vice Chair McCullough asked if there was additional training regarding gender support at the school level. In response to a specific incident, Dr. Morse noted an apology was offered to the student in question and teacher training was provided at the high school level.

Member McCullough made a motion that Member Binienda's motion (Member Binienda made a motion to file the public petition and a secondary motion to receive a report in a Friday Letter on what portions of the DESE Program WPS has already implemented) be brought back to the full committee rather than in a Friday letter.

Member Mailman asked what training was provided to staff, to which Dr. Morse explained that best practices and best approaches training took place across all high schools. Effectiveness is being measured by student feedback.

Member Johnson spoke about flag football, noting that funding is important to this activity. Superintendent Allen clarified that flag football will be a part of FY28 budget planning with an anticipated launch in the spring of 2028.

Member Johnson asked if WPS planned to send out the assessment calendar that was provided in the back up of c&p 6-1 was going to be distributed to parents. Dr. Marie Morse noted that parents are notified through the website and Parent Square.

Member Mailman made a motion to receive a list of common assessments but Dr. Morse noted that this information was provided in the TLSS back up documents. In

response to Member Mailman's inquiry, Dr. Morse noted that WPS checks in with all teachers through feedback, and has reshaped assessment based on teacher feedback.

A motion was made to approve this report and file this item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

N. Approval of Grants and other Finance Items

To consider approval of the [FY27 Innovation Career Pathways Implementation and Support grant](#) in the amount of \$45,915.

To consider approval of the [Head Start Infrastructure Grant](#) from the Department of Health and Human services in the amount of \$385,000.

To consider approval of the [UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits Mini Grant](#) in the amount of \$5,000.

To consider approval of [7 prior-year payments](#) in the amount of \$6,165.11.

To consider a prior year payment approval to an employee in the amount of \$330.00

To consider a prior year payment approval to an employee in the amount of \$8,322.57.

A motion was made to approve the Grants and other Finance Items presented. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

O. General Business

[gb 5-107 \(Binienda\)](#)

[Response from Administration for gb 5-107](#)

(October 9, 2025)

To discuss funding for the GearUp Program at North High School.

A motion was made to approve the report and file the item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

[gb 6-4 \(Motion from Binenda\)](#)

(January 8, 2026)

[Response from Administration for gb 6-4](#)

To authorize the Administration to purchase the National Geographic's Cengage Curriculum for the Multilingual Education Department, at a cost not to exceed \$1,500,000.

A motion was made to approve the report and file the item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-69 (McCullough)

(June 4, 2026)

Response from Administration for gb 6-69

To explore the cost and feasibility of implementing a digital hall pass system in all secondary schools similar to, or the same as, the one being piloted at Worcester Tech.

Vice Chair McCullough made a motion for clarification in a Friday letter on whether Sullivan Middle School, South High School, Burncoat High School and Middle School are currently piloting this system, in addition to WTHS.

Member Mailman and Superintendent Allen discussed the usefulness of this system and what WPS is doing with the data. Vice Chair McCullough shared some feedback she had received from Worcester Technical High School. Member Binienda noted that in her experience, electronic passes created structure and order to the school day. Member Johnson asked what the cost per pupil is for this program. Member Alvarez noted her interest in this program. Member Roy asked if we purchased a specific program for the pilot.

Member Johnson made a motion to receive the cost per pupil for the digital hall pass system in a Friday letter.

A motion was made to approve the report and file the item with Vice Chair McCullough's motion and Member Johnson's motion. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-74 (Motion for update from Member Binienda)

(Jun 25, 2026)

Response from Administration for gb 6-74

To receive a report on the feasibility of expanding after school and athletics transportation services, including pricing and funding sources with a motion for an update in August 2026 from Member Binienda.

Member Mailman asked for more information about WPS efforts for transportation to after school providers. Superintendent Allen confirmed that WPS is transporting all students to after school programs and is reaching out to additional after school programs to expand this service even further.

A motion was made to approve the report and file the item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-105 (McCullough)

(October 8, 2026)

To revise Policy IJNDB--Acceptable Use Policy to include the following:

"Smart Glasses and Wearable Technology

Students may not use smart glasses or similar wearable technology in Worcester Public Schools facilities when the device is capable of discreetly recording audio,

video, or images or accessing information that could compromise academic integrity. Secret or unauthorized recording is strictly prohibited in accordance with Massachusetts law. Exceptions may be granted for a documented medical need or disability, or when expressly authorized by the district.”

Vice Chair McCullough presented this item and the concerns behind it.

A motion was made to refer this item to O & G. On a voice vote of 9-0, this item passed unanimously.

gb 6-106 (Mayor Petty)
(October 8, 2026)

Resolution in Support of Head Start Programs
Additional resolution information

To support a Resolution in Support of Head Start Programs.

A motion was made to approve the resolution and file the item. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-107 (Administration)
(October 8, 2026)

Easement Information

To approve an easement to National Grid for property situated on the northeasterly side of Oberlin Street and the northwesterly side of Woodland Street.

A motion was made to approve the easement and file the item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-108 (Biancheria)
(October 8, 2026)

Request that the Worcester School Committee establish a standing annual recognition of October as Italian-America Heritage and Culture Month by recognizing the Italian-American Culture Month by recognizing the Italian-American culture. Italian-Americans have made many contributions to the United States, especially in art, humanities and sciences. The Worcester School Committee encourages appropriate recognition and acknowledgement.

A motion was made to approve the resolution and file the item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-109 (Administration)
(October 8, 2026)

Updated ROS Schedule

To approve the updated Report of the Superintendent Schedule for the 2026-27 school year.

A motion was made to approve the schedule and file the item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-110 (McCullough)

(October 8, 2026)

Request that the Worcester School Committee establish a standing annual recognition of September 15 through October 15 as Hispanic Heritage Month by recognizing and celebrating Hispanic and Latino culture and heritage. Hispanic and Latino Americans have made significant contributions to the United States, including in education, government, business, the arts, sciences, and public service. The Worcester School Committee encourages appropriate recognition and acknowledgment throughout the Worcester Public Schools.

A motion was made to approve the resolution and file the item. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-111 (Johnson)

(October 8, 2026)

To review and update [School Choice policy \(JFBB\)](#).

Member Johnson noted that this will be looked at in January or February, along with the voluntary transfer policy, so the policies can be in place before application deadlines. He noted that he is not stating that the School Choice Policy needs to be changed, rather, just ensuring that the policy is reviewed following the completion of the alignment process.

In response to Member Mailman's question, Superintendent Allen noted there are portions of the school choice law WPS has control over, i.e. available seats in specific schools, annually. He clarified that in-district transfers are fully controlled by WPS policy.

A motion was made to refer this item to O & G. On a voice vote of 9-0, this item passed unanimously.

gb 6-112 (Clerk)

(October 8, 2026)

To vote to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Kristi Turgeon for the position of School Committee Executive Administrator and Clerk.

Pursuant to business conducted in Executive Session, it was moved to execute the Contract for Employment between the Worcester School Committee and Kristi Turgeon for the position of School Committee Executive Administrator and Clerk of the School Committee for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.

A summary of the terms are as follows:

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- Holidays – those granted to 52 week employees
- Bereavement Leave
- PTO DAYS – 5 PTO days per year
- Health and Life Insurances – on same terms as other full-time employees of the District
- Memberships in association at expense of District including Council of School
- Committee Administrative Personnel (COSCAP).

A motion was made to approve the contract for Kristi L. Turgeon, Executive Administrator of the School Committee/Clerk. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-113 (Clerk)

(October 8, 2026)

To vote to select a delegate and alternate delegate to represent the Worcester School Committee at the MASC/MASS Joint Conference November 4-7, 2026.

Member Guardiola nominated Member Kathleen Roy to be the WPS delegate to the MASC/MASS Joint Conference, November 4-6, 2026. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, abstain; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 8-0-1, the motion passed.

Member Biancheria nominated Alex Guardiola to be the alternate WPS delegate to the MASC/MASS Joint Conference, November 4-6, 2026. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Member Roy, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

P. Announcements

Meeting Dates:

- October 13, 2026, Operations and Governance/Realignment Forum, 6:00 p.m., Vernon Hill Elementary School Auditorium
- October 21, 2026, Finance Committee, 5:30 p.m., 20 Irving Street, Room 410, Worcester.
- October 22, 2026, School Committee Meeting, 5:00 p.m., City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber

Q. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. On a voice vote of 9-0, the meeting the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristi Turgeon, Clerk of the School Committee