

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, May 21, 2026**
At: 5:00 p.m., Executive Session; 6:00 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 Alvarez, Member Biancheria, Member Binienda, Member Guardiola, Member Johnson, Member Mailman, Vice Chair McCullough, Member Roy, and Mayor Petty.

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 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 6-0, the motion passed. Executive Session began at 5:00 p.m.

There were present at the Call to Roll: Member Alvarez, Member Binienda, Member Guardiola, Member Johnson, Member Mailman, Vice Chair McCullough, Member Roy, and Mayor Petty. Member Biancheria arrived at 5:13 p.m.

To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and/or to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel – Director of Special Education and Intervention Services– Tammy L. Murray, Ed.D.

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.

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, Paraeducators 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, Aides to the Physically Handicapped, Monitors and Drivers Unit.

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 May 7, 2026.

B. Call to Order: The return to open session was called to order at 6:10 p.m.

C. Pledge of Allegiance/National Anthem: Lauren Church, grade 11, Doherty Memorial High School will perform the National Anthem.

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.

Mayor Petty left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

M. Student Advisory Committee Items

E. Consent Agenda

i. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the [May 7, 2026](#) School Committee Meeting.

ii. Approval of Donations

To consider approval of a donation of 200 chairs from Marvell to benefit Burncoat High School.

To consider approval of a donation of \$7,500 from the family of Robert "Doc" Donahue to support students at University Park Campus School. He passed away on November 11, 2025. He related to many of the seniors, who would be the first in their families to attend college.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$650 from Greater Worcester Community Foundation to benefit Worcester Technical High School.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$50 from Fidelity Charitable to benefit Worcester Public Schools.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$20 from Victoria Davidson to support Columbus Park School.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$17.60 from Box Tops to support Columbus Park School.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$120.90 from Shutterfly

LLC to support Columbus Park School.

To consider approval of a donation of services and materials for resurfacing the gym floor at Vernon Hill from Worcester Sports Foundation. The estimated donation for the project is \$6,500 and will be completed during the summer break and scheduled in conjunction with the district's facilities department.

To consider approval of a donation from Museum of Science of Elementary/Youth Engineering Solutions kits and professional development for seven middle schools (Burncoat, Claremont, Forest Grove, NCC, Sullivan, UPCS, WEMS).

To consider approval of a donation from the Greek Ladies Philoptochos Society in the amount of \$500 to benefit Dual Language Magnet School.

To consider approval of donations from Skyline Technical Fund for the reconstruction and enhancement of the Veterinary Tech Clinic at Worcester Technical High School for the estimated cost of \$6,132,550 and in accordance with the executed Memorandum of Agreement. This project is being funded in partnership with the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University.

- 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. 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

Roy

(May 7, 2026)

Heard Street Discover Academy, 4th grader, Harley Rose Figueroa was recognized for creating "Harley's Kind Kid's Club, making her artwork and designs into shirts, bracelets etc.. to raise money, and bring awareness, to always remember to be kind and to include others. Monies she raised went to a local horse rescue farm and the

horse are trained to be used in therapeutic therapies for children and adults who have suffered PTSD and other traumas.

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. Feanna Singh, of Worcester, spoke regarding gb 6-59.
2. Nelly Medina - spoke regarding c&p 7&8; c&p 6-4 (3 mins for her petition), and gb 6-59.
3. Marleny Rodriguez, spoke regarding c&p 6-7.
4. Will Stanek, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-8.
5. Andrea Peak, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-8.
6. Maggie Casey spoke regarding c&p 6-5.
7. Angela Moore, spoke regarding c&p 6-5.
8. Debra Rao, spoke regarding c&p 6-5.
9. Eliana Delianas, spoke regarding c&p 6-5.
10. Fred Nathan, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-5.
11. Catherine Holmes, of Worcester, spoke regarding gb 6-59.
12. Francis Anthonies, of Worcester, spoke regarding gb 6-59.
13. Louis Darden spoke regarding gb 6-59, c&p 6-8, c&p 6-5
14. Dina Tedeschi, of Worcester, spoke regarding ros 6-10, and all public petitions.
15. David Webb, of Olympia, WA spoke regarding c&p 6-8.

J. Public Petition

c&p 6-4 (Nelly Medina)
(May 21, 2026)

Requests information on Worcester Public Schools' plan to educate and provide individualized social-emotional and health supports, as well as specific learning disabilities and behavioral interventions, for students impacted by the two closing alternative programs.

A motion was made to refer to the Administration. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motions passed unanimously.

c&p 6-5 (Melissa Verdier)
(May 21, 2026)

Melissa Verdier, President of the Educational Association of Worcester (EAW), will speak on behalf of the EAW membership, on the closing of Worcester Alternative School, Academic Center for Transition and New Citizen Center.

Melissa Verdier spoke regarding the closure of Worcester Alternative. Community

should have had more involvement with the process. Staff members should have been more involved. Educators, students, families need more involvement moving forward.

A motion was made to refer to the Administration. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motions passed unanimously.

c&p 6-6 (Katrin McRell)
(May 21, 2026)

Review of district voluntary transfer policy, process, and decision-making criteria.

A motion was made to refer to the Administration. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motions passed unanimously.

c&p 6-7 (Marlenny Rodriguez)
(May 21, 2026)

Specifically, what resources, specialized programs, and staffing will be provided to help truant and disengaged students re-engage with their education and address their unique social-emotional and academic needs are planned for Worcester Alternative students transitioning to the Central Mass Collaborative.

A motion was made to refer to the Administration. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motions passed unanimously.

c&p 6-8 (Heather Stanek & Lila Pope)
(May 21, 2026)

To hold the Worcester Public Schools accountable for implementing their bullying prevention and intervention plan (BPIP), as currently written, holding public meetings and soliciting caregiver feedback when the BPIP is up for renewal, and having a procedure in place to make sure that the plan is implemented equitably and consistently across the district To be transparent with caregivers during bullying investigations. To help the student doing the bullying understand why they are bullying, how to get help for underlying issues and how to restore community and safety. Finally, to implement comprehensive, mandatory bullying education, including cyber-bullying, supervision on district devices, and improving the climate and culture within WPS.

Heather Stanek shared bullying episodes her son has experienced. She emphasized the importance of implementing and following policies and procedures that concern bullying. She then asked that the community receive updates regarding the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP) policy renewal.

Lila Pope shared bullying episodes her daughter has experienced. She emphasized the need for further staff training. She also emphasized that the BPIP renewal process should allow for caregiver feedback before making changes and more emphasis should be placed on teaching students about emotional regulation, trauma, and conflict resolution.

Mayor Petty stated that every student has the right to feel safe when they walk into a school building and he agrees that consistency and communication across the district is important. He then acknowledged those who came to speak regarding Worcester Alternative School and emphasized that the Administration is committed to providing services to students in need.

A motion was made to refer to the Administration. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motions passed unanimously.

gb 6-57 (Administration)
(May 21, 2026)

Grant Presentation

To accept a [grant from the Executive Office of Education](#) in the amount of \$3,750,000 for Worcester Technical High School HVAC and Plumbing Modernization and Expansion Initiative.

Worcester Technical High School (WTHS) Principal, Drew Weymouth, thanked the committee for the opportunity to share more information about this grant. He introduced the Plumbing Department Head, Richard Sweares. Mr. Sweares explained that this grant will allow students to learn in updated, modernized, and safer systems. HVAC Department Head, Michael Giguere, stated that this grant will allow students to grow and thrive in the real world by working with environmentally friendly, next generation technologies that are modernized and highly efficient. He then shared examples of their curriculum and stated that students leave these programs certified and ready to enter the work force. HVAC student, Xavius Molina, shared their experience as a student in the program. He also shared ways this grant would help to improve their education and future career opportunities.

Member Biancheria stated her support for approving the grant.

Member Mailman asked how many students are on the wait list for WTHS. Principal Weymouth responded that there are over 700 at this time. Member Mailman emphasized that the waiting list shows these programs are important to the families within the community.

A motion was made to approve this grant. 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 6-64 (Administration)
(May 21, 2026)

To vote to execute the [Contract for Employment](#) between the Worcester School Committee and Tammy Murray, Ed.D. for the position of Director of Special Education and Intervention Services for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.

A motion was made to approve the contract. 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.

K. Report of the Superintendent

ros 6-10 (Administration)

Vision to Action...Multilingual Learners-Best Practices in Action

Jessica Mandes, Director of Multilingual Education, and District MLE Coach, Ashley McPartland gave the presentation.

Director Mandes shared the Strategic Plan Focus Areas for the office of Multilingual Education include providing equitable resources and educational programs, family and community engagement, and acquiring and retaining talent. She then reviewed Multilingual learner progress and current enrollment trends. The district currently supports or monitors over 10,000 current or former English learners. Historically, enrollment has trended up with the exception of a slight dip this year. There are more than 70 native languages represented across the district with Spanish, Portuguese, and Twi continuing to be the top three languages. The number of students who have passed and successfully met the exit criteria on the ACCESS test, known as Former English Learners (FELs), have continued to trend up with Elementary and Middle Schools showing significant growth. Director Mandes noted that standards and redesigning of the ACCESS test means that data from SY26 is starting from a new baseline so comparing scores year to year is not possible. She also highlighted the growth of the Seal of Biliteracy and pathways for students.

Ms. McPartland then shared the progress made with the five (5) essential ML practices: discourse protocols, building background, language objectives, academic vocabulary, and group work. She noted another major priority for the ML office was to ensure access to high quality learning materials through the development of curriculum maps and working with content specialists as well as increased professional development opportunities. Work with teachers to further develop these resources will continue over the summer and into the next school year. She then shared an update on the implementation of the Secondary ELS Pilot program and adoption.

Director Mandes then discussed the MLE District Taskforce which identified a significant number of Long Term English Learners (LTELs) and a need to inform all educators about the ACCESS test. A plan is now in place to focus on specialized Professional Development to support LTELs. She then highlighted the work being done with Worcester State University which helps to provide Graduate level ESL courses to our educators and together endorse a proposal for WSU to offer bilingual endorsement certification. She also noted additional supports for educators including MTEL preparation courses, New ESL Teacher Academy, and a teacher mentorship program. She then provided program updates including the expansion of the dual language program at Worcester Dual Language Magnet, now Prek-8, low enrollment at the high school level, and partnerships with colleges to create dual enrollment opportunities allowing courses taught in Spanish to count toward college credits. She

stated her goal of having a comprehensive plan by the fall of 2026 for the committee's review.

Member Biancheria praised the Multilingual Office for their work with the Seal of Biliteracy program. She asked for an example of the curriculum maps to be provided in a **Friday Letter**. She then asked how to increase student engagement and interest in the Multilingual program. Director Mandes shared ideas including internships, bigger field trips the longer students stay in the program, community partnerships, college credits, and making this program more competitive with other programs offered to students.

Member Alvarez noted that based on the presentation it is clear that Multilingual students make up the majority of the WPS student population. She then asked for more information about the ACCESS test. Director Mandes stated that it is an assessment required by law, given in January, for all English Learning students grades k-12. Member Alvarez then asked for a report on the intersection of Multilingual students and special education. Superintendent Allen stated that this report would be provided to the committee.

Member Binienda asked what supports would be provided to Long Term English Learners? Director Mandes responded that there are currently 1,847 LTELs in the district. Moving forward, the plan is to offer more in-depth professional development to help identify which supports would be most effective for students in this position. Member Binienda then asked for updates to be provided to the committee at a future date about the changes happening with the New Citizens Center program.

Member Johnson echoed Member Binienda's request for a detailed plan with the changes in the New Citizen Center. He also stated that he is looking forward to the future report on the ESL program at the Secondary level.

Member Mailman asked about staffing levels for Multilingual Education in WPS. Director Mandes stated that there are 8 MLE Coaches, an Assistant Director, for FY27 a Coordinator, as well as 208 ESL teachers. Member Mailman asked how this compares to other districts. Superintendent Allen explained that at teacher level WPS is comparable to similar districts but at the Administration level it's hard to compare when positions are named differently. He offered to provide a report comparing Springfield and WPS programming.

Member Roy asked a question regarding the ESL curriculum. Ms. McParkland explained that the Impact curriculum is for Middle School grades and Lyft is for High School grade levels. Each curriculum meets state level and International language standards and connects learners to real life experiences that are grade level appropriate.

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

L. Reports of the Standing Committees

N. Approval of Grants and other Finance Items

To consider approval of the [Unum Equitable Pathways grant](#) in the amount of \$7,000.

To consider approval of the [Summer Eats Grant](#) in the amount of \$7,500.

To consider approval of a prior year payment in the amount of \$75.00 for an employee for a school bus license renewal.

A motion was made to approve grants and other finance items. 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; By a margin of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

O. General Business

gb 6-55 (McCullough)

(May 21, 2026)

Request that the Administration provide a comprehensive update on college and career readiness efforts across the district, including the current status and impact of AVID programming. The report should outline how students and families are informed about high school offerings, including college preparatory pathways, CTE programs, and other specialized opportunities. Additionally, include an overview of current advising practices and how the district is supporting more thoughtful, individualized guidance to ensure students are selecting pathways aligned with their interests, strengths, and long-term goals. Include any relevant data, outreach strategies, and recommendations for improving awareness, access, and alignment between student interest and program placement.

A motion was made to refer to TLSS. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

gb 6-56 (Administration)

(May 21, 2026)

To authorize the Administration to enter into a five-year lease agreement to replace 6,000 Chromebooks in accordance with the [district's technology replacement schedule](#).

Member Johnson asked for an explanation about the budget increase in technology costs. Chief Financial and Operations Officer, Sara Consalvo, explained that the district is recommending an increase of \$1.6 million for FY27 and, of that amount, \$1.1 million would be for replacement of devices, leases, and includes a 23% increase of lease costs because of tariffs. Member Johnson then asked if there are still major issues with lost and/or damaged chromebooks. Superintendent Allen explained that that the 5 year plan will allow for 30,000 Chromebooks to accommodate a sufficient number of devices for students for damaged or lost equipment. He and Director of Information Technology, Bob Walton, explained that breaking up these payments to a yearly lease cost, it becomes much more affordable

for the district while spreading out costs and keeping replacements updated. Director Walton also noted that at the Middle School level, where damage was highest, breakage levels have been significantly reduced from 30-40 per week to less than 5 per week.

Member Mailman asked about the possibility of going tech free in grades K-2.

Member Mailman made a motion to receive a report on the potential savings by eliminating software & hardware at the K-2 grade level.

A motion was made to approve and file with Member Mailman's motion. 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; By a margin of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

qb 6-57 (Administration)
(May 21, 2026)

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Member Biancheria stated her support for approving the grant.

Member Mailman asked how many students are on the wait list for WTHS. Principal Weymouth responded that there are over 700 at this time. Member Mailman emphasized that the waiting list shows these programs are important to the families within the community.

A motion was made to approve this grant. 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 6-58 (Administration)
(May 21, 2026)

To request that the Superintendent, or designee, be granted the annual authorization to make the final year-end transfers necessary to balance surplus and deficit accounts for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2026.

A motion was made to approve and file. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

gb 6-59 (Administration)
(May 21, 2026)

To consider approval of the Worcester Public Schools FY27 budget.

A motion was made to approve and hold. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

gb 6-60 (Administration)
(May 21, 2026)

To review and conduct a Public Hearing on the FY27 Worcester Public Schools Budget per MGL Ch. 71, sec 38N.

A motion was made to approve and file. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

gb 6-61 (Guardiola)
(May 21, 2026)

Request the Administration provide an update on the status of school bus stop-arm camera enforcement technology for Worcester Public Schools, including whether the City of Worcester and Worcester Public Schools have opted into the Commonwealth's recently authorized school bus camera enforcement program, the timeline for implementation, projected costs and revenues, vendor selection process, and how the program would improve student safety.

Superintendent Allen noted that during the Operations and Governance meeting on June 8, 2026, the Administration would provide more detailed information about this item. He noted that it is a law enforcement contract rather than a WPS contract and the Worcester Police Department has concerns that need to be addressed.

A motion was made to approve and file. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

gb 6-62 (Johnson)
(May 21, 2026)

For administration to work with all schools on a wellness week in the Worcester public schools. Which should include assemblies and speakers. And if possible incorporate into the daily educational curriculum for the week.

Member Johnson emphasized the importance of teaching students about healthy

eating and sleeping habits and mental health and wellness. He noted that this work could be combined with what's already done at wellness week events. Member Roy voiced her support for this item.

A motion was made to refer to Administration. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

gb 6-63 (Administration)
(May 21, 2026)

To formally recognize and honor the retirees of the Worcester Public Schools for their years of dedicated service, commitment, and contributions.

A motion was made to refer to Administration. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Petty was absent for the vote.

P. Announcements

Meeting Dates:

- May 28, 2026, Standing Committee for Teaching, Learning, and Student Success, 5:00 p.m., 20 Irving Street, Room 410.
- May 28, 2026 Public Budget Hearing, 6:00 p.m., 20 Irving Street, Room 410
- June 4, 2026, School Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m., City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber
- June 8, 2026, Standing Committee for Operations and Governance, 20 Irving Street, Room 410

Q. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. On a voice vote of 8-0, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristi Turgeon, Clerk of the School Committee