

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, September 3, 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 5:03 p.m.

There were present at the Call to Roll: Member Alvarez, Member Binienda, Member Guardiola, Member Johnson, Member Mailman, and Vice Chair McCullough. Members Biancheria, Johnson and Roy, and Mayor Petty 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 Alvarez, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; By a margin of 5-0, the motion passed. Executive Session began at 5:04 p.m.

Member Biancheria arrived at 5:05 p.m. Member Johnson and Mayor Petty arrived at 5:08. Member Roy was absent.

General Business Items taken in Executive Session

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, Therapy Assistants 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, Parent Liaisons Unit.

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.

- B. Call to Order:** Open session reconvened at 6:04 p.m. Member Biancheria left the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Mayor Petty left the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

C. Pledge of Allegiance/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, and Mayor Petty.

M. Student Advisory Committee Items

E. Consent Agenda

- i. Approval of Minutes
Approval of Minutes of the [August 13, 2026](#) School Committee Meeting.

Approval of Minutes of the [August 18, 2026](#) Standing Committee for Operations and Governance.

- ii. Approval of Donations
To consider approval of a donation of 50 backpacks from UMASS Chan to benefit students at Belmont Street School.

To consider approval of a donation of various sport/gym equipment and tshirts for a field day event scheduled in September to benefit Belmont Street School. [Completed list of items is attached.](#)

To consider approval of a donation of backpacks from Kids in Need Foundation to benefit students at Belmont Street School.

To consider approval of a donation from St Mary's Parish consisting of various school supplies including notebooks, backpacks, pencils, pens, pencil sharpeners, colored pencils, crayons, markers, highlighters, and other classroom and personal hygiene supplies to support Worcester Public School students, valued at \$4,209.00.

To consider approval of a general donation in the amount of \$115.77 from Pledgeling Foundation to support Worcester Technical High School.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$100 from Steven and

Leona Joseph to support Worcester Technical High School in memory of Joseph Alfego.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$100 from Julie Grenier to support Worcester Technical High School in memory of Joseph Alfego.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$100 from Wendy & James Diamantopoulos to support Worcester Technical High School in memory of Joseph Alfego.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$25 from James & Sandra Marine to support Worcester Technical High School in memory of Joseph Alfego.

To consider approval of a donation of 32 student desks from St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Cathedral to benefit the Worcester Public Schools.

To consider approval of a donation in the amount of \$2000 from D'arren E Wuensch DBA A-Plus Education Services for used books to benefit Worcester Public Schools.

To consider approval of a [donation of 200 pairs of gently used work boots](#), of mixed sizes and styles, to support CTE programming that requires such footwear from BRUNT.

To consider approval of a donation from Cradles to Crayons of 1,000 Elementary and Middle School Backpacks filled with basic supplies to benefit Worcester Public Schools Elementary and Middle School students.

To consider approval of a donation from Coldwell Banker of 200 backpacks filled with school supplies such as notebooks, crayons, and pencils, etc. to benefit 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 accept the consent agenda as presented. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Gurdola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 8-0, the motion passed. Member Roy was absent for the vote.

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. Fred Nathan, of Worcester, spoke regarding donations and EAW contract negotiations.
2. Andrew Marsh, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
3. Gary Hunter spoke regarding gb 6-94 and in opposition and c&p 6-14.
4. Constantine Kibe, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
5. Aurora Zevorsky, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
6. Bea Sweetzer, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
7. Andrew Willis, of Burncoat High School, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
8. Joshua Croke, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
9. Sal Ramos, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
10. Dr. Kara Berg-Powers, of Worcester, c&p 6-14.
11. Shawna Sylvia, of Worcester, spoke regarding the PRISM grant in Grants and other finance items.
12. Melissa Verdier, of Worcester, spoke regarding the EAW contract negotiations.
13. Kim Wynja, of Worcester, spoke regarding the EAW contract negotiations.
14. Emily Hayes, of Worcester, spoke regarding EAW contract negotiations.
15. Jonathan Boyer, of Worcester, spoke regarding EAW contract negotiations.
16. Tim Holmes, of Worcester, spoke regarding the EAW contract negotiations.
17. Alex Ortiz, of Worcester, spoke regarding the EAW contract negotiation and c&p 6-14.
18. Melinda Martin, of Worcester, spoke regarding the EAW contract negotiations.
19. Heather Stanek, of Worcester, spoke regarding the EAW contract negotiations and c&p 6-14.
20. Ann Bureau, of Worcester, spoke regarding c&p 6-14.
21. Dina Tedeshi, of Worcester, spoke regarding the EAW contract, c&p 6-14, and gb 6-96.

J. Public Petitionc&p 6-14 (Michael Douglas)

(September 3, 2026)

For the Worcester School Committee to establish a formal district policy governing the display of flags on school grounds and within municipally controlled public school buildings. Specifically, I request that the School Committee enact a policy to prohibit the flying or displaying of any flag on public school premises that is not an official governmental banner or recognized military/veteran remembrance banner, restricted exclusively to:

1. The national flag of the United States of America
2. The official flag of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
3. The official flag of the City of Worcester
4. The official National League of Families POW/MIA flag

EXCEPTIONS CLAUSE:

This policy shall not apply to flags or banners used temporarily for direct classroom instruction (including, but not limited to, world history, geography, or foreign language classes), official school sports and spirit flags, or recognized U.S. military branch flags.

REASON FOR PETITION:

To establish symbolic uniformity, reduce community division, and ensure that public school infrastructure remains focused exclusively on core civic symbols and educational neutrality.

Michael Douglas, of Worcester, presented his public petition to the Committee.

Member Biancheria noted that this petition is a request to the School Committee and it is rare to immediately file a petition. She noted different celebrations take place in WPS and she will be making a list of celebrations that occur. She noted concern that filing this petition is limited and not all inclusive and WPS should be able to look at additional ways to express those celebrations.

A motion was made. A "yes" vote would support and refer this petition to Operations and Governance. A "no" vote would reject and file this petition. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, no; Member Biancheria, no; Member Binienda, no; Member Guardiola, no; Member Johnson, no; Member Mailman, no; Vice Chair McCullough, no; Mayor Petty, no. By a margin of 8-0, the petition was rejected and filed.

A motion was made to consider reconsideration. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez no; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, no; Member Johnson, no; Member Mailman, no; Vice Chair McCullough, no; Mayor Petty, no. By a margin of 2-6, the motion failed.

K. Report of the Superintendentros 6-11 (Administration)

(September 3, 2026)

Welcome Back - Opening of Schools

Superintendent Allen presented his report. More than 24,000 students (primary enrollment numbers, official numbers will be released in October) started the 2026-2027 school year. The Mayor and several School Committee members, and several media outlets attended Flagg Street School on August 31, 2026, to welcome students.

The annual leadership convening took place at Doherty Memorial High School. The soft launch of Stand Against Racism also took place at this event in conjunction with the YMCA. The official launch will be announced soon.

Superintendent Allen reviewed the members of his cabinet and noted that it has expanded to include the Director of Special Education, Director of Compliance and School Improvement, Director of Multilingual Education, Director of Research and Accountability, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Access, Equity, and Opportunity, Director of College and Career Readiness, and Director of Student Supports and Engagement.

Facilities, nutrition, transportation, and school safety departments worked busily over the summer and were prepared to welcome all students back this week.

Human Resources hired a total of 246 new staffers, with 144 teachers and 48 paraprofessionals included in this count. Superintendent Allen announced the names of newly appointed/hired Principals, Assistant Principals, Deans, and Focused Instructional Coaches.

Member Mailman clarified that the Stand Against Racism program is not just for sports. Superintendent Allen confirmed that this program will be present in both athletics and at the school level.

A motion was made to approve and file this report. On a voice vote of 6-0, the motion was approved. Member Biancheria, Member Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

L. Reports of the Standing Committees

gb 6-72 (Administration)

(June 25, 2026)

Response from Administration

Boundary Realignment Update Presentation

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

Results: On a 3-0 vote the item was held.

The following three (3) items were taken collectively:

gb 4-92 (McCullough)

(October 10, 2024)

To have administration review school names with magnet in the title and determine if

it is an appropriate designation and, if not, to consider replacing the word magnet with elementary or a designation so recommended by the administration.

gb 5-21 (McCullough)

(February 27, 2025)

To ensure that magnet program scheduling at BMS/BHS can be efficiently scheduled in relation to the potential 26-27 tier change for BMS.

gb 6-26 (Johnson)

(February 26, 2026)

To look at changing the distance for bus transportation from 2 miles to 1.5 miles. In an attempt to address traffic at pick up and drop off at schools moving forward, and with the new school district lines.

Results: On a 3-0 vote, these items were filed.

Member Binienda clarified with Nick Stellitano of Dillinger Associates that once all community forums are completed, revisions will be made to the draft, until the final draft is completed and presented to the Committee for review and vote. Mr. Stellitano confirmed this will be the case, noting that the next forum will be held on September 16, 2026.

Superintendent Allen noted that a variety of options will be presented and narrowed down and the best option will be considered to go forward.

Member Guardiola asked Mr. Stellitano if they were working with the Worcester Housing Authority (WHA) to ensure that we are planning adequately for the growth being seen in Worcester. Mr. Stellitano noted that his company and the WPS administration are working in coordination with the WHA and explained the process of accounting for the clearly defined housing projects in development.

Member Guardiola also asked about magnet status and legacy enrollment, to which Superintendent Allen discussed the considerations for implementation and logistics to be least disruptive to WPS students. Mr. Stellitano noted this will be a Committee decision during implementation.

Member Mailman asked questions about magnet programs versus lottery enrollment. Jacob Hiatt is the only magnet school with no geographical boundary, per Superintendent Allen. Member Maiman asked for a clarification between magnet schools and lottery based schools. She noted that parents asked for a clear understanding of how students are accepted to certain schools and programs. All schools that will not be based on geography will be listed in an upcoming draft. Jacob Hiatt will be assigned a neighborhood boundary in the future.

Member Johnson clarified that the Committee should not speak out in favor or oppose specific scenarios and the Committee should remain neutral, taking in all of the information and receiving clarification information before they vote in December.

A motion was made to approve the Operations and Governance items as presented. On a voice vote of 6-0, the motion was approved. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

N. Approval of Grants and other Finance Items

To consider approval of the [Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative \(CPPI\) Grant](#) in the amount of \$521,064.

To consider approval of the [High Dosage Tutoring Grant](#) from DESE. Funds will be used to pay stipend tutoring staff. The amount will be determined on a cost-reimbursement basis.

To consider approval of [Partnership for Reading Success Massachusetts \(PRISM\) Grant](#) to improve literacy outcomes in secondary schools in the amount of \$236,835.00.

To consider approval of the [Computer Science Engage Grant](#) to aid computer science curriculum implementation, in the amount of \$27,831.00.

A motion was made to approve the Grants and other Finance Items. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Biancheria, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Gurdiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; Mayor Petty, yes. By a margin of 6-0, the motion passed. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

O. General Business

gb 6-94 (McCullough)

(September 3, 2026)

Request that the Worcester School Committee establish a standing annual recognition of June and September as Pride Months by recognizing Pride as a time for visibility, celebration, education, and advocacy. The Worcester School Committee encourages appropriate recognition and acknowledgment.

Vice Chair McCullough clarified her position on this item, noting it is not a curriculum or a request for staff to do anything; however, this is only a request to make a standing recognition for Pride Months and is not meant to take away from any other student.

A motion was made to approve and file this report. On a roll call vote of 6-0, the motion was approved. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

gb 6-95 (McCullough)

(September 3, 2026)

[Policy JCA](#)

To update policy JCA-Assignment of Students to Schools, when appropriate in conjunction with the district realignment vote.

A motion was made to refer this item to Operations and Governance. On a voice vote of 6-0, the motion was approved. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

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

Response from Administration

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

A motion was made to refer this item to Operations and Governance. On a voice vote of 6-0, the motion was approved. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

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.

A motion was made to refer this item to Operations and Governance. On a voice vote of 6-0, the motion was approved. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

gb 6-97 (Clerk)
(September 3, 2026)

Model Policy ACL-Interaction with Law Enforcement Officers
DESE Guidance on PROTECT ACT and Policy

To consider review and approval of a new policy, ACL - Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers, as mandated by DESE and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts after the signing of the [PROTECT Act](#).

A motion was made to approve this policy and file this item. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes, and Vice Chair McCullough, yes; by a margin of 6-0, the motion was approved. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

gb 6-98 (Administration)
(September 3, 2026)

Second Meal Prices

To approve the second meal breakfast, lunch, snack, and adult meal prices for the 2026-2027.

A motion was made to approve the second meal prices for 2026-2027. On a roll call vote: Member Alvarez, yes; Member Binienda, yes; Member Guardiola, yes; Member Johnson, yes; Member Mailman, yes; Vice Chair McCullough, yes; by a margin of 6-0, the motion passed. Members Biancheria and Roy and Mayor Petty were absent for the vote.

P. Announcements

Meeting Dates:

- September 16, 2026, Operations and Governance with Realignment Forum, 6:00 p.m., Worcester Technical High School Auditorium
- September 17, 2026, School Committee Meeting, 5:00 p.m., City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber
- October 8, 2026, School Committee Meeting, 5:00 p.m., City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber

Q. Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristi Turgeon, Clerk of the School Committee