

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 17, 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 Biancheria, Member Binienda, Member Guardiola, Member Johnson, Member Mailman, Vice Chair McCullough and Member Roy. Member Alvarez 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 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 7-0, the motion passed. Executive Session began at 5:01 p.m.

Mayor Petty arrived at 5:08. Member Alvarez arrived at 5:10 p.m.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

4. 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
5. 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 August 13, 2026 and September 3, 2026.

B. Call to Order: Open session reconvened at 6:24 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, Member Roy, and Mayor Petty.

M. Student Advisory Committee Items

E. Consent Agenda

- i. Approval of Minutes
Approval of Minutes of the [September 3, 2026](#) School Committee Meeting.
- ii. Approval of Donations
To consider approval of a donation from Operation Warm of approx 500 coats to benefit the students of Norrback Avenue School.

To consider approval of a donation from Operation Warm of jackets to benefit about 240 students at Clark Street Community School.
- 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. Kate Johnson, of Worcester, spoke on item gb 6-103.
2. Liz Leidell, of Worcester, spoke on item gb 6-23.
3. Monica Echevarria, of Worcester, spoke on item gb 6-23.
4. Diana Rodriguez, of Worcester, spoke on item gb 6-23.
5. Catherine Holmes, of Worcester, spoke on item gb 6-103.

J. Public Petition**K. Report of the Superintendent**

ros 6-12 (Administration)

(September 17, 2026)

[**WPS Superintendent Goals for School Year 2026-2027**](#)

Superintendent Allen presented five goals: one student learning goal, one professional practice goal, and three district improvement goals.

The student learning goal is to increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding benchmarks on STAR reading and math assessments from 35% to 38%.

Superintendent Allen will participate in Harvard University's Public Education Leadership Program to enhance leadership and organizational coherence as his professional practice goal.

For the first district improvement goal, Superintendent Allen will increase the percentage of schools with collaborative teams (PLCs, department/grade-level teams that consistently implement components for effective collaboration.

The second district improvement goal will be a continuation of the Grow Your Own program that began last year. This goal will design and implement a 'grow your own' school and district leadership pipeline and pathway, inclusive of community partnership and concrete pathways. By June 2027, WPS will have completed a new principal leadership cohort, a new instructional coach pipeline, and a new assistant principal / Dean pipeline.

The third district improvement goal is the second year of a multi year goal for school boundary realignment. A comprehensive analysis of the school boundaries is currently

under way.

Member Mailman asked Superintendent Allen if he considered any other student learning goal. Superintendent Allen stated that STAR data is an accurate representation of student achievement and a predictor of MCAS Success. He feels this is the best way to measure student achievement at this time.

Member Mailman asked how a review of curriculum selection fits into a student learning goal and asked Superintendent Allen to consider curriculum selection in the future.

A motion was made to approve the goals and objectives for Superintendent Allen for the 2026-2027 school year. On a voice vote of 9-0 the motion passed unanimously.

L. Reports of the Standing Committees

N. Approval of Grants and other Finance Items

To consider approval of the [Creative Experiences Grant](#) from the Mass Cultural Council in the amount of \$50,000 to support activities in the arts, humanities, and sciences.

To consider approval of the [Early College Support Grant](#) from DESE in the amount of \$525,000 to support WPS students taking Early College courses.

To consider approval of the [Early Literacy Consortium Grant](#) from DESE in the amount of \$20,000 to connect districts and educator preparation partners to support teaching and learning of early literacy.

To consider approval of a prior year payment to an employee in the amount of \$7,900 for missed salary increase.

To consider approval of [13 prior-year payments](#) in the amount of \$81,975.93.

A motion was made to approve grants and other finance items 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.

O. General Business

gb 6-23 (Mailman)

(February 26, 2026)

Response from Administration for gb 6-23

To get an update on the current structure at Claremont/Woodland St and any proposed changes.

Member Mailman noted she was disappointed in the response to this item. She was looking for more information, other than who the Principal and Assistant Principal will

be. She requests to resubmit this item as the Woodland Community deserves more detailed information.

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

gb 6-46 (Alvarez)

(April 16, 2026)

Response from Administration for gb 6-46

Request data on enrollment and participation of Hispanic/Latinx students in advanced coursework and recommend actions to increase access and support as needed.

Member Alvarez noted the report had a lot of helpful information. She mentioned that Latino students make up half of our student population and the data presented shows that our Latino students are more than capable of taking on and doing well in AP courses and other advanced coursework. She also noted the lack of enrollment of Latino students in courses outside of AP Spanish.

Member Mailman asked Superintendent Allen if there is an opportunity to target recruiting Latino students to take AP and advanced courses. Superintendent Allen said this is going to be a focus of the district this year. As a board member at LEI, Superintendent Allen is committed to increasing the number of Latino students who enroll in advanced coursework.

Member Binienda mentioned that the College Board data shows that Latino students who take Spanish first, then take Spanish Literature generally move on to participate in a larger variety of advanced coursework.

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

gb 6-99 (Administration)

(September 17, 2026)

Proposed Changes to CTE Admissions Policy

To Approve the Proposed Changes to the Career Technical Education Admissions Policy for 2026-2027.

Member Biancheria asked if eighth grade students have an opportunity to see what is offered in our high schools. She recommends that students also look at what is being offered at their home high school, in addition to other programs, specifically Worcester Tech. She also asked how we advertise what Worcester Tech offers. Dr. Emily Lehman, Administrative Director of College & Career Readiness, noted that offerings are sent to all eighth grade families through Parent Square and during the enrollment process. She noted that seventh graders were also offered "career days" to help inform decision making once the student gets to grade eight.

Member Biancheria made a motion requesting the administration look at offering open houses at various schools on varying dates, including

Saturdays.

Member Mailman agreed with Member Biancheria's motion. She also noted that WPS is doing a great job in making the WTHS lottery more equitable, as it brings stronger programming to students from all neighborhoods.

A motion was made to refer this item to Operations and Governance. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-100 (Administration)
(September 17, 2026)

Proposed Changes to Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy

To Approve the Proposed Changes to the Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy for 2026-2027.

Member Biancheria noted that WPS needs to improve in Middle School Pathways for North High School. Superintendent Allen said that the North Quadrant is a focus area to expand CTE offerings at North High School. The administration is actively working on these offerings and will be mapping out some of those plans soon. There will be an update this spring.

A motion was made to refer this item to Operations and Governance. On a voice vote of 9-0, the motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-101 (Biancheria)
(September 17, 2026)

Request administration review suggested National Awareness Days and Months to expand and improve knowledge in recognizing many areas of concern, but not limited to, additional suggestions for visibility, celebration, education and advocacy.

Member Biancheria presented her item. She does have a list of celebration areas to suggest and she will submit a list to the Clerk's Office. She listed some suggestions in hopes of strengthening conversations.

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

gb 6-102 (Roy)
(September 17, 2026)

Request administration and the Worcester School Committee to establish annual recognition of the month of May to recognize Mental Health month. The month is dedicated to raising awareness about mental illnesses, reducing stigma, and promoting mental health education and resources.

Member Roy noted that this topic is close to her heart. She respectfully requests this item be approved.

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

motion passed unanimously.

gb 6-103 (Mailman)

(September 17, 2026)

Request administration share how the district is prepared to keep WPS open and operational during a cyber security incident, including day to day operational items, such as attendance and buses.

Member Mailman presented her item. As a result of what transpired in Springfield, MA, Member Mailman requests that WPS performs an audit so we can react quickly if a cyberattack should happen. Superintendent Allen noted that WPS's IT department has been in touch with Springfield to offer support.

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

gb 6-104 (Mayor Petty)

(September 17, 2026)

Evaluation Recap

To conduct an evaluation of the School Committee Clerk.

Mayor Petty reviewed the evaluation of the Clerk of the School Committee, which resulted in a proficient rating.

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

P. Announcements

Meeting Dates:

- October 8, 2026, School Committee Meeting, 5:00 p.m., City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber
- October 13, 2026, Operations and Governance (Community Realignment Forum), 6:00 p.m., Vernon Hill Elementary School Auditorium, 211 Providence Street.

Q. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristi Turgeon, Clerk of the School Committee