

School Committee Meeting

November 5, 2020

Executive Session

6:00 P.M.

Remote Open Meeting

Approximately 7:00 p.m.



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

School Committee

Date: 2020-11-05

Time: 6:00 PM

Building:

Location:

Address:

Agenda:

Purpose: Open Session

Meeting Called By: Linda Engelson on behalf of the Chair

Notices and agendas are to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meetings excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Legal Holidays. Please keep in mind the Town Clerk's hours of operation and make necessary arrangements to be sure your posting is made in an adequate amount of time. A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting must be on the agenda.

All Meeting Postings must be submitted in typed format; handwritten notices will not be accepted.

Topics of Discussion:

		THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD REMOTELY ON MICROSOFT TEAMS
6:00 p.m.		Executive Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">To discuss strategies with respect to collective bargaining and non-represented personnelApproval of Minutes
7:00 p.m.	A.	Call to Order
	B.	Public Comment <p>For public comment, please use the live chat feature on the Microsoft Teams link which will be posted on the Superintendent's Blog and sent out via Connect Ed prior to the meeting. In lieu of the live chat, you may send an email in advance of the meeting to schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us. This email will be included in the next packet.</p>
7:05 – 7:10 p.m.	D.	Consent Agenda (A) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Approval of Minutes (October 29, 2020)
7:10 – 7:40 p.m.	E.	Reports <ol style="list-style-type: none">StudentsDirector of Student ServicesAssistant Superintendent

This Agenda has been prepared in advance and represents a listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting. However the agenda does not necessarily include all matters which may be taken up at this meeting.



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

		4. Chief Financial Officer 5. Superintendent 6. Liaison/Sub-Committee
7:40 – 8:30 p.m. 8:30 – 9:00 p.m. 9:00 – 9:10 p.m. 9:10 – 9:20 p.m. 9:20 – 9:40 p.m.	F.	Old Business <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elementary Space Refresher (I) 2. District and Superintendent's Goals Introduction (I) 3. Fall Reopening Update – (I) 4. Second Reading and Approval of Tabled Policy JLCB – Immunization of Students (A) 5. Second Reading and Approval of Tabled Policy AC – Non-Discrimination and Harassment (A)
9:40 – 9:50 p.m.	G.	New Business <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High School Volunteer Program (I)
	H.	Information/Correspondence <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Email from Marianne Downing - RE: High School Staffing situation for Hybrid - questions and ideas 2. Email from Sarah Bishop - RE: Return of Grades 3-5 3.
	I.	Routine Matters <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bills & Payroll Warrants 2. Calendar
	J.	Future Business
9:55 p.m.	K.	Adjourn

**Times are approximate



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

School Committee

Date: 2020-10-29

Time: 7:00 PM

Building:

Location:

Address:

Session: Open Session

Purpose: Open Session

Version: Draft

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

John Parks, Tom Wise, Erin Gaffen, Carla Nazzaro and Shawn Brandt

Members - Not Present:

Chuck Robinson

Others Present:

Superintendent John Doherty, Assistant Superintendent Chris Kelley, CFO Gail Dowd, Director of Student Services Jen Stys

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Linda Engelson on behalf of the Chair

Topics of Discussion:

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Wise opened the meeting and announced the School Committee was meeting in a virtual setting, fully remote via Microsoft Teams, practicing social distancing and in accordance with the Governor's suspension of certain open meeting laws. The meeting was being recorded and broadcast live on RCTV. The Chair called attendance:

Mr. Parks – here
Mr. Wise – here
Mrs. Nazzaro – here
Mrs. Gaffen - here
Mr. Brandt –here

Dr. Doherty – here
Mrs. Dowd – here
Mrs. Kelley - here
Dr. Stys – here

Mr. Wise called open session order at 7:30 p.m. and reviewed the agenda

A. Public Input

Mr. Wise explained that for public comment, please use the live chat feature on the Microsoft Teams link which will be posted on the Superintendent's Blog and sent out via Connect Ed prior to the meeting.

In lieu of the live chat, you may send an email in advance of the meeting to schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us This email will be included in the next packet.

B. Consent Agenda

- Accept a Donation from SNL University
- Accept a Donation to the Parker Instrument Fund
- Approval of Minutes (10.15.20)

Mr. Brandt wanted to recognize the generosity of the community as exhibited by the donations being accepted tonight.

Mrs. Nazzaro agreed and shared that the donation to the Parker Instrument Fund truly benefits the students.

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Brandt, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, Mr. Wise, and Mr. Brandt

C. Reports

Director of Student Services

Dr. Stys reported on the SEPAC meeting held this week. There was good participation and the current members will remain on the board except for Mrs. Morgan. Dr. Stys thanked Mrs. Morgan for her contributions and hard work over the past year. SEPAC continues to look for support people for the Friends of SEPAC to work as liaisons to the schools. We continue to work with staff on reading strategies and continuing throughout the year. The SEPAC will be forming a subgroup to determine what professional development opportunities they would like to have for parents.

Dr. Stys said that the staff continues to reach out to families for compensatory services that they may require. The services provided are very individualized.

She assured the community that the staff continues to work on the Program descriptions.

Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Dowd reported that the MERV-13 filters are in and the maintenance staff has begun replacing the MERV-8 filters on the roof top units. She gave a shout out to the facilities and maintenance staff. We continue to work with the bus companies due to a shorter school year and less days in school. We are in a similar situation as in the spring and want to maintain continuity of service. Dr. Doherty and Mrs. Dowd are on the SEEM Transportation Team. Mrs. Dowd next reported on the DESE Report for Creating a Diverse Workplace which has been reviewed by the Central Office Leadership Team. This document will be used as a guide for the District Improvement Plan. Mrs. Dowd provided a Chapter 70 Foundation Update. She said that there has been no clear guidance at this point. She added that the October 1st enrollment data is a crucial piece in determining funding. She encouraged eligible families to apply for free & reduced lunch benefits because this also impacts the funding.

DESE, Lawrence General Hospital and Abbott Labs are teaming up to offer BIMAX Antigen Testing in schools. Our nursing staff would perform the tests on symptomatic students with parental permission. Reading Public Schools will not be participating in Phase I but will be following the program.

Mrs. Nazzaro asked how long phase I would last. Mrs. Dowd is not sure of the number of tests available.

Mr. Parks asked about the lifespan of the MERV-13 filters. Mrs. Dowd indicated it will be shorter than other filters and facilities will be monitoring our equipment for wear. We

have ordered more filters for December. Mrs. Dowd added that the maintenance staff is replacing the filters in the rooftop units and the custodial staff is handling the unit ventilators in the classrooms. The classrooms need to be empty to replace the filters, so this process is a little slower.

Mr. Wise asked about the status of the Student Opportunity Act. Mrs. Dowd said that in preliminary conversations the funding has been pushed back to next year. This also affects circuit breaker.

Superintendent

Dr. Doherty said that since the change in title for the HR Director there has been an uptick in interest. He hopes to have someone in place in the next several weeks.

The MIAA cancelled all winter athletic tournaments and we hope to hear on the winter season shortly.

Dr. Doherty next reported on the shortage of substitutes and the impact. We currently have about 20 people interested in subbing for us. A protocol for coverage has been developed. At this point the building principals have been covering classes. November 3 is a synchronous learning day for all, no school on November 20th for elementary/HS conferences and professional development at the middle schools. November 25th is an 11:00 a.m. dismissal for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Dr. Doherty expressed concerns about students not following the health guidelines outside of school and encouraged all families to follow good safety practices.

Liaison Reports

Mr. Parks reported that the RMHS back to School night went very well.

Mrs. Gaffen reported on the SEPAC meeting who will be holding a virtual support night for parents on November 5th. The next business meeting will be held on December 8 and as Dr. Stys shared the SEPAC is seeking volunteers to act as school liaisons.

Mrs. Nazzaro shared that the RCTV Board is holding its annual membership meeting tonight. They may add a board member.

Mr. Wise shared that the committee will be meeting on Monday at 5:00 p.m. to begin the Superintendent Search Process.

D. Old Business

Reopening Plan Update

Dr. Doherty reviewed the timeline sharing that grade 3 cohort A and grades 9 & 10 will begin in person learning on Monday. Grade 3 – cohort B and tentative plans to have grades 4 & 5 - cohort B begin on November 9th. He held three community forums last week that were well attended at which he answered as many questions as possible. He reviewed the staff vacancies saying there was a tremendous response to the job share opportunities and thanked the community for its support. He thanked Dr. King, Ms. Leveque and Mrs. Hendrix for the work they have done hiring and coordinating the job share applicants. He also thanked the HR Administrative assistants for doing a great job processing the applicants. We are currently working on solutions to fill the high school vacancies.

Mr. Parks asked if there have been additional requests of leaves at the high school. Yes, there have been 2. We have been able to provide the appropriate accommodations for one and the other will be a leave.

Mr. Wise read a question from Mr. Coram.

"Are there paras that are assigned to the high school, but not being used in the half-hybrid status, that could be temporarily ""loaned"" to the elementary schools so they can start up?"

The answer was no we cannot.

Second Reading and Approval of Policy ECAF – Security Cameras in Schools

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, to accept the second reading and approval of Policy ECAF – Security Cameras in Schools.

Mr. Parks began the second reading of the policy.

Mr. Brandt moved, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, to waive the further reading of the policy. The roll call vote carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, and Mr. Wise, Mr. Brandt.

Dr. Doherty said we have added the sentence requested that was in the MASC policy.

The roll call vote carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, Mr. Wise, and Mr. Brandt.

Second Reading and Approval of Policy JLCB – Immunization of Students

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mrs. Gaffen, to accept the second reading and approval of Policy JLCB – Immunization of Students

Mr. Parks began the second reading of the policy.

Mrs. Nazzaro moved, seconded by Mr. Brandt, to waive the further reading of the policy. The roll call vote carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, and Mr. Wise, Mr. Brandt.

Mr. Parks said that he is still not comfortable with the enforcement of this policy but after discussions with Dr. Doherty he feels better and can support this policy.

Mr. Wise asked if the note at the bottom of the policy is needed and asked the committee to discuss.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Wise asked if the second reading should be tabled to clean up the language.

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Brandt, to table the vote on the second reading and approval of Policy JLCB to allow for further review and update with Massachusetts General Law 76:15 until the meeting on Thursday night. The roll call vote carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, Mr. Wise, and Mr. Brandt.

Discussion of Policy Placement of Political Ideology

Dr. Doherty reviewed other policies that this subject would be better aligned. Mrs. Gaffen looked at the 5 policies referenced and feels it would be best aligned as part of the Bullying Prevention Plan rather than the referenced policies. Mr. Brandt agreed that it was not a great fit in the referenced policies and agrees that the Bullying Prevention Plan would work. Mr. Parks concurred.

Dr. Doherty pointed out that the Bullying Prevention Plan is a procedure and the addition of political ideology would not require a School Committee vote.

Mrs. Nazzaro feels we need to provide safe spaces for our students in our schools and would like to see it in this policy. Dr. Doherty indicated that he would not be able to enforce this in Policy AC.

Discussion continued on the placement of political ideology. Mr. Wise asked Mr. Parks to read the motion for Policy AC.

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Brandt, to accept the second reading and approval of Policy AC – Nondiscrimination and Harassment.

Mr. Parks began the second reading of the policy.

Mr. Brandt moved, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, to waive the further reading of the policy. The roll call vote carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, Mr. Wise, and Mr. Brandt.

Mrs. Nazzaro asked that the language in the policy be consistent. Dr. Doherty will go back to legal counsel for the reason the wording around protected classes differs throughout the policy.

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Brandt, to table the second reading and approval of Policy AC until the meeting on Thursday night. The roll call vote carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, Mr. Wise, Mr. Brandt and Mr. Robinson.

Enrollment Update

Dr. Doherty updated the committee on the October 1 district enrollment.

E. Old Business

None

F. Public Comment

None

1. Routine Matters

a. Bills and Payroll (A)

b. Calendar

2. Information/Correspondence

3. Future Business

Mr. Wise reminded the committee that they will be meeting Monday, November 2 at 5:00 p.m. to start the Superintendent Search process.

4. Adjournment

Adjourn

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mrs. Gaffen, to adjourn. The roll call vote carried 5-0. Mr. Parks, Mrs. Gaffen, Mrs. Nazzaro, Mr. Wise, and Mr. Brandt.

The meeting adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

NOTE: The minutes reflect the order as stated in the posted meeting agenda not the order they occurred during the meeting.

Link to meeting video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YmVxXnfipZM>

John F. Doherty, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

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Fax: 781-942-9149



Christine M. Kelley
Assistant Superintendent

Jennifer A. Stys, Ed.D.
Director of Student Services

Gail Dowd, CPA
Chief Financial Officer

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: John F. Doherty, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: November 2, 2020

TOPIC: Elementary Space Refresher

At our meeting on Thursday night, Dale Gienapp will provide a refresher on the Elementary Space Planning project.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

John F. Doherty, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: John F. Doherty, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: November 2, 2020

TOPIC: District and Superintendent's Goals Introduction

At our meeting on Thursday evening, I will provide an overview of the DRAFT 2020-2023 District Improvement Plan and Superintendent's Educator Plan for the 2020-21 School Year. The plan is attached for your information and review. The Committee will vote on the plan at the November 19th meeting

If you have any questions, please contact me.

READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**District Improvement Plan
2020-2023 School Years
Superintendent's Educator Plan
2020-21 School Year**

DRAFT

John F. Doherty, Ed.D.

10/29/2020



Reading Public Schools District Improvement Plan
Strategy and Goals for Improvement of Student Outcomes (2020-2023 School Years)

Our Mission

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

Our Vision

It is the vision of the Reading Public Schools to instill a joy of learning by inspiring, engaging and supporting our youth to become the innovative leaders of tomorrow. We will accomplish our vision by focusing on a few key strategic initiatives that lead to a meaningful and relevant curriculum, innovative instructional practices, strong analysis and thoughtful dialogue about evidence, a collaborative and team approach to learning and teaching, and a safe and nurturing learning environment. The overall physical and behavioral well-being of our children will be our top priority as students will not learn if they are not physically and psychologically safe. Education will truly be the shared responsibility of both the schools and the community, with families playing active roles in the schools and being full partners in ensuring the success of their children. In the interest of the entire Reading community, the school district and town government shall work cooperatively and collaboratively. As educators and members of our community, we believe that implementing this vision is our ethical responsibility to the children of the Town of Reading.

Our Theory of Action

If the Reading Public School District strategically allocates its human and financial resources to support high quality teaching, prioritizes a commitment to the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students, emphasizes the hiring and support of effective staff who have the capacity to collaboratively learn, thoughtfully analyzes measurements of school performance and provides differentiated support, then students will make effective progress and be appropriately challenged, graduating from high school ready for college, career, and life as contributing citizens in a global society.

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective A
Redesigning School
(2020-2021 School Year)

Based on our work since March, 2020, the school district will build a foundation of teaching and learning practices, infrastructure changes, assessment practices, and operations efficiencies to prepare schools for current conditions and future challenges in a post-pandemic world.

Strategic Objective B
Coherent Instructional Systems
(2020-2023 School Years)

Based on qualitative and quantitative data analysis, the school district will evaluate and refine standards-based instructional systems to meet the needs of all learners.

Strategic Objective C
Supportive and Safe Learning Environment
(2020-2023 School Years)

Based on quantitative and qualitative data analysis, the school district will review our equity and social justice practices, analyze student social emotional growth, and refine systems of support to ensure a healthy and successful learning community while meeting the unique needs of students.

Strategic Initiatives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Fall Reopening Plan for School District which adheres to DESE, DPH, and CDC regulations. • Implement Fall Reopening Plan which includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procurement of appropriate PPE, Technology, Online Curriculum, and Professional Development ○ Addressing the foundation needs (laptops, wireless hotspots, food insecurities) of all students ○ Supporting the Social and Emotional Learning needs of students and staff ○ Proper cleaning, disinfecting, and maintaining of HVAC systems according to industry standards ○ Following proper health and safety guidelines • Continue to strengthen remote learning practices with staff and students. • Practice flexibility when phasing from one model to another. • Identify assessments for both in person and remote learning that will be used for analysis and select district baseline data to establish targets for improvement for future years. • Implement a continuous student support cycle: identify at risk students, select evidence-based interventions, enact interventions, and monitor student progress/growth. • Continue NEASC work at RMHS • Work with stakeholders to develop a vision of the graduate (May, 2021). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue implementation of a five-year curriculum overview and examination cycle in all curriculum areas with adjustments made, if necessary, on an 8 year cycle. • Develop and implement a five-year special education program review cycle. • Develop entrance and exit criteria for students entering district special education programs as appropriate. • Completion of curriculum guides, PreK-12. • Complete implementation of social studies curriculum standards. • Review and pilot curriculum material in Grade 6 mathematics. • Commit resources to focused and aligned professional development opportunities on meeting the needs of diverse learners for administrators, teachers and support staff. • Implement Universal Design for Learning across the school district. • Work with TAP Committee to review new teacher evaluation rubrics for implementation in 2021-2022 school year. • Select and implement a high-quality universal screening assessment for K-5 students. • Using DESE guidelines develop and implement a process on Dyslexia Screening. • Implement revised elementary standards-based report card. • Develop and implement a plan to improve early literacy skills, K-3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an equity audit of the school district. Using the results of the audit, an action plan will be developed. • Complete PK-12 SEL curriculum guides. • Align K-5 SEL report card standards. • Provide Professional development in SEL, trauma, equity and diversity. • Develop student programs that focus on equity and diversity. • Develop plan for family and community awareness and engagement of SEL standards and practices. • Revise middle school and high school handbooks to reflect updated policies and equity practices. • Develop an explicit decision-making process for determining student access to Tier 2/3 interventions for behavioral health (IP) • Build a more supportive school climate (PBIS) to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline while promoting a supportive school culture (restorative practices) • Develop and implement a plan to recruit, select, and retain a diverse workforce in the school district. • Develop a leadership academy for aspiring school leaders. • Work with public safety to review efficacy and implementation of all safety drills. • Continue elementary space needs and enrollment study and prepare recommendations to the School Committee and Community for approval. • Work with Town Manager to continue to develop a capital plan that focuses on health and safety issues.
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Interim Outcomes

- Based on baseline data from the 2020-2021 school year, there will be 2% increases in state assessment results in Grades 3-8, 9, and 10 by cohort from Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 2 to Year 3.
- Based on baseline data from 2020-2021 school year, there will be 2% increases in identified local assessments in Grades 1-5 by cohort from Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 2 to Year 3.
- Based on baseline data from 2020-2021 school year, there will be 2% increases per surveyed grade in the student learning environment scores as evidenced by the PRIDE survey, MCAS survey, and other student climate data from Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 2 to Year 3.

- Based on baseline data from the 2020-2021 school year, there will be 2.5% increases in % student participation from Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 2 to Year 3 in AP Exams and an increase in participation of 5% from Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 2 to Year 3 of students of color.
- Develop/Identify one common district assessment at each grade level (K-8) per subject area at the end of Year 1 and begin implementation of assessments in Year 2.
- During the 2020-2021 school year, 10 percent of our teacher interviewees will identify as people of color, 15 percent in 2021-22 school year, and 20 percent in the 2022-23 school year.

Final Outcomes

- During the 2020-2021 School Year, we will measure the success of our hybrid/remote learning by surveying and conducting focus groups with parents, students, and staff.
- During the 2020-2021 School Year, we will maintain an average of 90% engagement by level on remote learning as measured by daily attendance.
- From the 2020-2021 school year to the 2022-2023 school year, there will be a decrease in the achievement gap by 10% on state and local assessments between high needs subgroup (special education, English Language learners, and economically disadvantaged) and the general population of students. As a baseline use the 2020-2021 data.
- An improvement of 5% in state and local assessments including Next Generation MCAS state assessments (% meeting/exceeding and growth), SAT scores (using 2020 as baseline), AP Scores (% student participation and scores), and local assessments.
- An 10% increase of cohorts of students reaching expected benchmarks on the K-2 AMC assessment.
- From the 2020-2021 school year to the 2022-2023 school year, there will be an increase of 5% positive overall response in student learning environment scores as evidenced by the PRIDE student survey and other student data.
- From the 2020-2021 school year to the 2022-23 school year, there will be an increase of 5% positive overall response in school leadership, shared decision-making, and school climate as evidenced by the PRIDE staff survey.
- By December, 2020, the following will be completed: publishing of Curriculum Guides in all grades/major subjects; creation of Centralized Teacher Resources with curriculum resources including but, not limited to planning materials, pacing guides, common assessments and learning progressions.
- By December, 2020, there will be a five year cycle for special education program review.
- By December, 2020, there will be program descriptions for each special education program with entrance and exit criteria for some programs.
- By, Fall, 2021, the capital project for school security will be completed and there will be updated safety drills and protocols in collaboration with public safety.
- By, June, 2023, decisions will be made on the elementary space needs and enrollment study.
- By May, 2021 a vision of the graduate for the Reading Public Schools will be approved by the Reading School Committee.
- In the 2022-2023 school year, we will retain 90% of our current teachers of color.
- By the Fall, 2023, all schools and the district will be designated as "Substantial Progress Towards Targets" or greater on the current Massachusetts State Accountability System.

Superintendent's Goals

Goal #1-Professional Practice Goal (Aligned with Strategic Objective C)

During the 2020-21 school year, the Reading Public Schools will begin a three-year plan to develop and implement a talent diversification and leadership development strategy. The success of this plan will be evidenced by an increase in pipeline development, recruitment, and retention of staff of color. Through the implementation of this plan, we will see an increase in staff of color by 300% (6 to 24) by the end of the 2022-23 school year.

Goal 1-Professional Practice Goal: Planned Activities <i>Describe actions the educator will take to attain the professional practice goal.</i> <i>Activities may apply to individual and/or team.</i>				
Action	Supports/Resources from School/District ¹	Lead	Timeline or Frequency	Status
1. Hire a Human Resources Director	FY21 Operating Budget	Superintendent	December, 2020	In Process
2. Create a diversity hiring committee consisting of teachers, paraeducators, and administrators.	Meeting Time	Superintendent	February, 2021	Planned
3. Develop a value proposition for potential staff of color. The value proposition is a set of attributes that candidates and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in an organization. These include tangibles (benefits, compensation, career pathways) and intangibles (culture, support, system, and mission).		Diversity Hiring Committee	March, 2021	Planned
4. Conduct an internal audit of our current talent management process which includes an assessment of diversification for pipeline development, recruitment, and retention.		HR Director Diversity Hiring Committee	March, 2021	Planned
5. Pipeline Development a. Increase the number of student teachers in the district and student teachers who are individuals of color, PreK-12.		Principals	January, 2021 September, 2021	Planned

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Increase the number of paraeducators in our district who are individuals of color. c. Provide paraeducators with Bachelor's Degrees access to teacher preparation professional development. d. Develop education coursework for Seniors who may be interested in pursuing a teaching degree. 	Professional Development Funds	Principals	September, 2021	Planned
	High School Coursework Reallocation	Assistant Superintendent	September, 2021	Planned
	Recruitment Funding for Services	High School Principal	September, 2021	Planned
6. Recruitment				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prioritize recruitment through LinkedIn, Talent Ed, Indeed, and other recruiting websites. 		HR Director	March, 2021	Planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Audit all recruitment materials, including the website, job descriptions, and job postings to ensure the district's commitment to diversity is clearly communicated. 	Recruitment Funding for Services	HR Director	January, 2021	Planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Identify and participate in job fairs that focus on recruiting teachers of color. 		HR Director Principals	March, 2021	Planned
7. Retention				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct qualitative data gathering through surveys or focus groups with teachers of color to ensure that they feel valued. 		HR Director	March, 2021	Planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Use the educator evaluation process and the mentor program to support teachers progress. 	FY22 or FY23 Funding	Principals	Weekly	Ongoing

c. Publicly recognize teachers.		HR Director	June, 2021	Planned
8. Based on the audit, adjust our talent practices and create a long-term diversification strategy.		Superintendent	June, 2021	Planned
9. Develop an Aspiring Leadership Program for Teachers.		Superintendent	June, 2022	Planned

Goal #2-Professional Practice Goal (Aligned with Strategic Objective B)

During the 2020-2023 School Years, we will improve our literacy evaluation process, enhance our reading instructional strategies, and structure our progress monitoring more effectively for students who are struggling readers. Based on our work, we will see progress as evidenced by reviewing previous case studies of students who struggled with Tier 2 interventions and comparing the following: an increase in identifying struggling readers earlier, students demonstrating growth on their IEP literacy goals, and fewer out of district placements with significant learning disabilities.

Goal 2-Professional Practice Goal: Planned Activities

Describe actions the educator will take to attain the professional practice goal(s).

Activities may apply to individual and/or team.

Action	Supports/Resources from School/District ¹	Lead	Timeline or Frequency	Status
1. Training with Dr. Orkin and Crafting Minds for Team Chairs and School Psychologists, Reading Specialists, Special Education and Curriculum Administration and selected principals consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development virtual workshops regarding characterization, morphology, categorization, executive functioning, and using learning standard entry points. Developing a consistent battery of sensitive reading assessments for initial evaluations & reevaluations to target specific areas of reading (i.e., phonological awareness, 	FY20 Budget	Director of Student Services Assistant Director of Student Services	June, 2020	Completed

¹ Must identify means for educator to receive feedback for improvement per [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)\(d\)](#).

decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary) & use results to drive specific reading instruction				
2. Select and implement a high-quality universal screening assessment for K-5 students.	FY21 Budget	Assistant Superintendent	December, 2020	In Process
3. Using DESE guidelines develop and implement a process on Dyslexia Screening.	FY21 Budget	Assistant Superintendent	June, 2021	Planned
4. Determine & implement consistent progress monitoring practices for various specialized reading instructional practices (i.e., phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary).	Inservice Time	Assistant Superintendent	2020-2021 School Year	In Process
		Director of Student Services	2020-2021 School Year	In Process
5. Identify specific reading benchmark assessments to be given 2-3 times a year & train staff how to administer the benchmark assessments for the Bridge program.	In service Time	Director of Student Services	2020-2021 School Year	In Process
6. Coach staff to chart & share progress with families & use it to drive instructional practices	In service Time	Director of Student Services	2020-2021 School Year	In Process
7. Initial Training in early literacy as part of the Crafting Minds Training of Sped Teachers, Reading Specialists, SLPs, School Psychologists, Team Chairs, Principals, and Administrators. It introduces the subtypes frameworks, related assessments, and works through case studies. In addition, there is a module that addresses Orthographic Mapping and trains participants in the use of the phonological awareness screening test (PAST) and instructional routines to build students' sight word recognition.	FY21 Budget and Grants	Director of Student Services		

8. Order Reading materials to ensure that appropriate target instructional practices are utilized at every level.	FY21 Budget and Grants	Director of Student Services	2020-2021 school year	Planned
9. Provide appropriate training to staff in how to implement new reading programs and assessments.	FY21 Budget and Grants	Director of Student Services	2020-2021 school year	Planned
10. Work with the District SEPAC to develop parent trainings in the basics of reading.	In Service	Director of Student Services	2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years	Planned
11. Implement an evaluation protocol based on the Crafting Minds training to be completed by the special education team when a specific learning disability in the area of reading is suspected or part of a three year re-evaluation.	In Service	Director of Student Services	2020-2021 school year	Planned
12. Hire a Special Education Literacy Coach which will be focused on improving reading practices in all special education programs and settings.	FY22 Budget	Director of Student Services	Pending SC and TM approval, 2021-2022 school year.	Planned
13. Implementation & Coaching with Crafting Minds – In the second year staff examine the use and familiarity with key assessments (addition training is available as necessary in the administration and interpretation of the CTOPP, RAN, TOWRE & GORT). School-based coaching will also be provided to support the use of the graphic organizer for newly assessed and existing students with reading goals. Coaching can extend into instruction. One key goal of this year is to collect school-based and district-wide data regarding the subtypes of student with reading goals in order to make data-driven decisions when	FY22 Budget and Grant Funding	Director of Student Services	2021-2022 School Year	Planned

investing in curricula, training, and supplemental resources.				
14. Sustainability & Connecting to General Education with Crafting Minds - Over the course of the third year responsibility for interpretation will be released to teams. General Educators will receive training in common learning profiles, needs, and accommodations/modifications for students with reading goals. Ongoing coaching for those delivering small group and specialized instruction as necessary.	FY23 Budget and Grant Funding	Director of Student Services	2022-2023 School Year	Planned
15. Communicate updates regularly via meetings and newsletters.	School Committee and SEPAC Meetings	Director of Student Services	Ongoing	In Process

Goal #3-District Vision of the Graduate (Aligned with Strategic Objectives A, B, and C)-Over the next school year, I will work with Reading educators, parents, local officials and community members to learn about and develop a vision of what skills, knowledge, and dispositions Reading students should attain and develop during their preK-12 years in our schools. Through these conversations, we will develop and receive approval of a district vision of the graduate which will be used as a vision statement for the Reading Public Schools and for the NEASC Accreditation Process.

Essentially, we will ask our stakeholders these three questions:

- What are the hopes, aspirations, and dreams that our community has for our young people?
- What are the skills and habits of mind that our children need for success in this rapidly changing and complex world?
- What are the implications for the learning experiences we provide in our school systems?

Goal 3-Professional Practice Goal: Planned Activities

Describe actions the educator will take to attain the professional practice goal(s).

Activities may apply to individual and/or team.

Action	Supports/Resources from School/District ²	Lead	Timeline or Frequency	Status
1. Build understanding and ownership among district's leadership team, School Committee, and Community as to the need and sense of urgency in this activity.	Meeting Time	Superintendent High School Principal	November, 2019- January, 2020	Complete
2. Create a Vision of a Graduate Design Team from all sectors and stakeholders that will be involved across all phases to build a sense of urgency and create excitement across the community	Meeting Time	Superintendent High School Principal	November, 2019- January, 2020	Complete
3. Define the overall timeline	Time	Superintendent High School Principal	November, 2019- January, 2020	Complete
4. Convene the VOG Design Team	Time	Superintendent High School Principal	February-April, 2020	Complete
5. Study the implications for your students in light of the changing economy, workplace, and society	Meeting time for VOG Design Team	VOG Design Team	November, 2020- February, 2021	Planned
6. Draft a prioritized set of competencies, including 21 st	Meeting time for VOG Design Team	VOG Design Team	November, 2020- February, 2021	Planned

² Must identify means for educator to receive feedback for improvement per [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)\(d\)](#).

century skills, mindsets, and literacies				
7. Draft visuals that convey a compelling story	Meeting time for VOG Design Team	VOG Design Team	November, 2020-February, 2021	Planned
8. Reach consensus about a selected visual to share with the broader community	Meeting time for VOG Design Team	VOG Design Team	February/March, 2021	Planned
9. Continue to discuss this work in the broader community and elicit their ideas for the Vision	Community Meeting Times	VOG Design Team	March, 2021	Planned
10. Collect feedback from the community and share with the Vision Design Team as they draft the Vision	Community Meeting Times	VOG Design Team	March, 2021	Planned
11. Decide what revisions are necessary	Meeting time for VOG Design Team	VOG Design Team	March, 2021	Planned
12. Submit recommendation to the School Committee for approval	Meeting Time	VOG Design Team	April, 2021	Planned
13. Publish and leverage the adopted Vision as the Compass for the development of the district improvement plan, RMHS NEASC visit and the design of educational experiences for students	Time	Superintendent of Schools	April, 2021	Planned

Goal #4-School Physical and Psychological Safety-During the 2020-2021 school year, we will continue to build and implement an infrastructure and a set of policies and procedures that will support the physical and psychological safety of our staff and students. The evidence to support a successful completion of this goal will be a positive response in the 2020-2021 staff survey of PRIDE in related attributes and a positive response in the student climate survey of the YRBS and DESE Climate Survey.

Goal 4-Professional Practice Goal: Planned Activities <i>Describe actions the educator will take to attain the professional practice goal(s).</i> <i>Activities may apply to individual and/or team.</i>				
Action	Supports/Resources from School/District³	Lead	Timeline or Frequency	Status
1. Develop a District Wide Safety and Crisis Committee which will include teachers, building level and central office administrators, and public safety.	Time	CFO Director of Student Services	March, 2020	Complete
2. Develop and implement protocols for COVID-19 Infections in the schools.	Time	Superintendent Director of Nurses	Ongoing	In Process
3. Complete MOU with Reading Police Department	Student Services Legal Counsel	Superintendent Police Chief	August, 2020	Complete
4. Work with Public Safety to review drills and drill schedule during pandemic to assess effectiveness and impact on student social and emotional needs.	Time	Superintendent CFO Police Chief Fire Chief	2020-2021 School Year	In Process
5. Facilities Department develops a cleaning/disinfecting protocol and ongoing ventilation maintenance program which includes, but is not limited to installation of MERV-13 filters, misting disinfecting, installation of lexan shields, floor markings,	FY21 Budget and Grants	CFO Director of Facilities	2020-2021 School Year	Ongoing

³ Must identify means for educator to receive feedback for improvement per [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)\(d\)](#).

and daily cleaning/disinfecting of all areas.				
6. Provide Professional development in SEL, trauma, equity and diversity.	Inservice Time FY21 Budget and Grants Donations	Assistant Superintendent	2020-2021 School Year	In Process
7. Complete Safety and Security Project	Capital Funding	CFO Director of Facilities	November, 2021	In Process

John F. Doherty, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

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Christine M. Kelley
Assistant Superintendent

Jennifer A. Stys, Ed.D.
Director of Student Services

Gail S. Dowd, CPA
Chief Financial Officer

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: John F. Doherty, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: November 6, 2020

TOPIC: Policy Updates

This memo will update the Committee on questions and comments that were brought up at the October 29, 2020 School Committee Meeting regarding Policies AC and JLCB.

JLCB-Immunization of Students

The first sentence has been adjusted to reflect the MGL Ch. 76:15. I have attached the redline version of the changes. In addition, I have attached the state guidelines for immunization and the calendar for immunizations. In discussions with Director of Nurses, Mary Giuliana, the school nurses complete an annual survey for the state on immunization compliance, due in January. Any students who are not in compliance require medical or religious exemption, which must be received in writing annually. Parents who have exemptions are given notice that their students may be excluded from school in the event of an outbreak.

In addition to Kindergarten, varicella and meningococcal vaccines are required in grade 7, and new this year, the meningococcal vaccine is also required in 11th grade.

We track this information so that in the event of an outbreak (ie measles, pertussis) any unimmunized students can be isolated. We do agree that flu is a different situation, and that we should educate and encourage families to be vaccinate, but not necessarily exclude. Any families who question the vaccine may request a religious exemption.

Also, the following information is from the state:

Will influenza vaccine be required every year or just for the 2020-2021 school year? Influenza vaccine is now a required vaccine for school attendance and will be required as of December 31 for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 each school year.

AC-Non-Discrimination and Harassment

In conversations with Attorney Michael Joyce, he clarified the following regarding Policy AC and the attached in regard to the Title IX Grievance Procedure:

1. The Title IX Sexual Harassment procedure does not apply to a field trip outside of the U.S. This provision is required under the new Title IX regulations. If something did occur outside the U.S., we would be required to dismiss it under the Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedure and address it under the Civil Rights Procedure.
2. In terms of investigating the Superintendent if accused of sexual harassment, page 7 of the Title IX procedure provides as follows: “Any Formal Complaint against an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor’s authority.” Practically speaking such a complaint would be referred to the School Committee Chair, who would likely engage a third party to conduct any necessary investigation. Given the language above, there is no need to address this with any further specificity.
3. For Policy AC: Here are the protected classes: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability. The previous version did use the term “sex” in the first paragraph but substituted “gender” for that protected class later in the policy. The terms are interchangeable from a protected class standpoint. I have attached an updated version that uses the protected classes language more consistently throughout.

Political Ideology

In conversations with Attorney Brunt, she felt that political ideology would best fit in Policy JI, students rights and responsibilities. I have attached the current policy. She is working on making recommended adjustments to the policy for a future review.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS

~~No s~~Students shall be admitted to school ~~entering school for the first time, except upon presentation of a~~
~~whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school district, will be required to present a~~
physician's certificate attesting to immunization against communicable diseases as may be specified from
time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made
on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the
child, or by the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the
religious beliefs of the student or parent/guardian.

SOURCE: MASC August 2020

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 76:15

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

**Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has updated the
Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements to include a documented seasonal dose of the
Influenza Vaccine. This requirement will remain in effect until rescinded by the Governor.**

Approved by the Reading School Committee on

Grades Kindergarten – 6^{¶†}

In ungraded classrooms, Kindergarten requirements apply to all students ≥5 years.

DTaP	5 doses; 4 doses are acceptable if the fourth dose is given on or after the 4 th birthday. DT is only acceptable with a letter stating a medical contraindication to DTaP
Polio	4 doses; fourth dose must be given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
MMR	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

NEW – Influenza Requirement

Influenza	1 dose; seasonal influenza vaccine for the current flu season (July-June) must be received annually by December 31 st . New students entering between January 1 st and March 31 st must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry. Depending on the child's flu vaccination history, ACIP may recommend a second dose of flu vaccine in the same season. In these cases, the second dose is recommended but is not required for school entry.
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§ Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel. School requirements are enforced at the local level.

¶ Meningococcal vaccine requirements (see Grades 7-10 and 11-12) also apply to residential students in Grades Pre-K through 8 if the school combines these grades in the same school as students in Grades 9-12.

† Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

See following pages for Grades 7-10, Grades 11-12, and College (Postsecondary Institutions)

Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if over 18 years of age.

Grades 7 – 12[†]

In ungraded classrooms, Grade 7 requirements apply to all students ≥12 years.

Tdap	1 dose; and history of DTaP primary series or age appropriate catch-up vaccination. Tdap given at ≥7 years may be counted, but a dose at age 11-12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule. Td or Tdap should be given if it has been ≥10 years since last Tdap
Polio	4 doses; fourth dose must be given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable
MMR	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

NEW – Influenza Requirement

Influenza	1 dose; seasonal influenza vaccine for the current flu season (July-June) must be received annually by December 31 st . New students entering between January 1 st and March 31 st must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry.
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NEW – Meningococcal Requirements

Grade 7	1 dose; 1 dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) required. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement.
Grade 11 [‡]	2 doses; second dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) must be given on or after the 16th birthday and ≥ 8 weeks after the previous dose. 1 dose is acceptable if it was given on or after the 16th birthday. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement.

Meningococcal Vaccine Phase-In Schedule

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
1 Dose MenACWY	Grade 7	Grades 7-8	Grades 7-9	Grades 7-10
2 Doses MenACWY	Grade 11	Grades 11-12	Grades 11-12	Grades 11-12

§ Address questions about enforcement with your legal counsel. School requirements are enforced at the local level.

†Medical exemptions (statement from a physician stating that a vaccine is medically contraindicated for a student) and religious exemptions (statement from a student, or parent/guardian if the student is <18 years of age, stating that a vaccine is against sincerely held religious beliefs) should be renewed annually at the start of the school year.

* A reliable history of chickenpox includes a diagnosis of chickenpox, or interpretation of parent/guardian description of chickenpox, by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or designee.

‡ Students who are 15 years old in grade 11 are in compliance until they turn 16 years old.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

File: AC

The Reading Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status. The Reading Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

The Superintendent shall designate at least one administrator to serve as the compliance officer for the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to responding to inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; M.G.L c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The Reading Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of Reading or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability.

In addition to designating at least one administrator to handle inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies, the Superintendent shall adopt and publish one or more grievance procedures for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment and retaliation under the protected classes identified in this policy. If an individual interested in filing a complaint that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability, their complaint should be filed in accordance with the District's grievance procedures for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

The student handbooks and grievance procedures shall identify the name, office address and telephone number for the compliance officer(s) for the above-referenced statutes and this policy and be posted on the District's website.

ADOPTED:

REVISED:

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI: 42 U.S.C. 2000d; 34 CFR 100.3(a),(b); EEOA: 20 U.S.C. 1703(f); Title IX: 20 U.S.C. 1681; 34 CFR 106.31, 106.34, 106.35; Section 504: 29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR 104.4; Title II: 42 U.S.C. 12132; 28 CFR 35.130; IDEA 2004: 20 U.S.C. 1400; 34 CFR 300.110; NCLB: Title III, Part A, Sec. 3121(c)(1)(C); Title X, Part C, Secs. 721, 722(g)(4); Mass. Const. amend. art. 114; M.G.L. c. 71A, s. 7; c. 76, s. 5; 603 CMR 26.03 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011; MLG c. 71, s370; 42 USC s. 2000c et seq.; 42 USC s. 2000d et seq.; 20 USC s. 1701 et seq.; M.G.L c. 71, Sec. 84.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights--including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his/her rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make, rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on March 26, 2007

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:82 through 71:86

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Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: John F. Doherty, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: November 2, 2020

TOPIC: Email Correspondence and Other Information

Please find attached for your information, copies of email correspondence and information received by School Committee members and Central Office Administrators from community members as well as other pertinent information. We have included our responses, if applicable, as well.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Engelson, Linda

From: Doherty, John
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2020 3:20 PM
To: Marianne Downing; DG School Committee
Subject: RE: High School Staffing situation for Hybrid - questions and ideas

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good Afternoon, Marianne,

Thank you for the email. I am happy to hear that your children are getting a strong remote and hybrid learning experience. This is a testament to the incredible job that our teachers are doing with their remote learning instruction and the plan that we developed to provide a strong learning experience for our students this year, regardless if they were fully remote, hybrid, or in person.

As I have mentioned in several communications, forums, and School Committee meetings, our strategy has been from Day 1 to make sure that our remote learning was synchronous and engaged students with curriculum tools and a learning platform that was aligned to the frameworks. I also made it clear from the very beginning of this journey that this plan was fluid and may change depending on the nature of the pandemic AND the staffing available. This model is a staffing heavy model and I have communicated that information from the very beginning. I also said on several occasions that I did not know how much staffing we would need, including at the high school because this was the first time we had ever implemented a block schedule, with cohorts, and with satellite classrooms.

When we realized that we were not filling our positions, we went to the teachers to explore other models that we could use. At the High School, we determined that the modified hybrid with the livestreaming was better than any other model we could implement given that any other model would have led to more asynchronous learning. When you look at other school districts, the amount of in person time is similar to what we are offering and the remote learning time is more asynchronous.

My answers to your questions are below. I would encourage you to schedule a time to meet with me. Several other high school parents have taken that opportunity and it has led to some productive conversations. Please let me know what works for you and I will schedule a time.

Thank you.

John F. Doherty
Superintendent
Reading Public Schools
82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
781-944-5800

From: Marianne Downing <mariannedowning@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2020 2:12 PM
To: DG School Committee <SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>; Doherty, John <John.Doherty@reading.k12.ma.us>
Subject: High School Staffing situation for Hybrid - questions and ideas

CAUTION: This email originated from **outside of Reading Public Schools**. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address and know the content is safe.

Dear Dr. Doherty and School Committee:

I have held off for months sending any communications regarding the status of hybrid learning, the hybrid plans, and staffing. So many other communications to you in the packets (and I've read them all) have eloquently conveyed anything I could possibly have said. And, of course, I recognize how hard everyone has been working to make the best of a difficult situation. I can honestly say, the remote learning now being implemented at both middle school and high school levels is worlds ahead of what was done last spring, just as promised. The teachers have been fantastic and both my kids are progressing in their learning. I appreciate all that has been done so far.

That being said, what I saw at last night's school committee meeting, as compared to past school committee meetings and the community forums, has finally given me an impetus to express my serious concerns about the ability to get to full hybrid at the high school. I also have deep concerns about what appears to be rather inconsistent information being given about staffing needs for hybrid learning at the high school. It is making me despair that my 10th grader will ever get more than the **mere 27 days of in person learning** he is now slated to get during FY21 (based on if this hybrid model of a max of 4 days per month, continues all year).

TIMELINE

Let me list a timeline to show my confusion and concerns:

- August-Sept 2020 – in multiple community forums I attended via Zoom, Dr. Doherty was asked questions that are a variant of: Does our hybrid model require any extra staffing and can we switch or change our model to work with available staffing? His answer was consistent: ***NO, our hybrid model DOES NOT REQUIRE EXTRA STAFFING (emphasis added)***. I believe this was brought up as a question even in school committee meetings during this time, with a similar answer. **Please see my comments above.**
- At the 10/15/2020 SC meeting, Dr. Doherty's update included a slide showing that RMHS needed 6 paras needed and two Long term sub (LTS) teachers. Several SC members pressed Dr. Doherty for more details on these numbers and whether this was all that was needed for RMHS and he could not say he knew for sure, that more investigation would be needed and he would get back to the SC. **At the time, I did not know the exact numbers. I met with the building principal and we mapped out the staffing needs, which led to my comments last evening. As I mentioned above, the hybrid model, with block scheduling, and satellite classrooms made the task more challenging.**
- At the 10/20/2020 community forum, I asked Dr. Doherty several questions. One was, could regular ed paras from the high school (or other high school staff) be moved to elementary to resolve the issues keeping gr. 3-5 from opening. He said very specifically, *there are no regular ed paras at RMHS, only special ed paras*, and that they do not move staff between school types like that (HS to ES). He said all 6 paras needed for RMHS were special ed paras. I then asked him, if we need 6 special ed paras, how come the RPS job postings only show a listing for 3? He said, the three also represent what is needed for the 6 and that we are not even getting applicants for the three. He never did say why we don't advertise for all 6 (at the time) open positions. **We do not have regular education paraeducators at the high school. These are temporary job share positions for satellite classrooms. In addition, we sometimes have multiple positions for the same posting because they are identical positions. This is the case with the 7 special education paraeducator positions at the high school.**

- During the 10/29/2020 school committee (SC) meeting, Dr. Doherty presented a slide stating that, to implement the hybrid learning plan fully at RMHS, RPS needs to hire 7 special education paras, 10 regular ed paras, and at least three long term sub (LTS) teachers. While I understand new leaves and resignations can happen all the time, especially for teachers, it was quite shocking to hear, apparently all of a sudden, that RPS has only just determined (or made public) that RMHS needs TEN (10) regular ed paras (in addition to the 7 special ed paras) , for a total of seventeen (17) paras, to be able to fully implement hybrid. He did not state whether these regular ed para openings were due to resignations or a new need. He indicated that he and the RMHS principal were working on a solution to this need. **We are working on a solution which I am unable to share at this time. See above for further information.**

QUESTIONS

The above leads to a series of obvious and serious questions:

1. Why did Dr. Doherty state that RMHS has no regular ed paras, when apparently they do? Either these 10 paras are/were existing positions where the staff person resigned or took LOA sometime between 10/15/2020 and 10/29/2020, or they are newly created for the hybrid model. Which leads to.....**See above. We do not normally have regular education paraeducator positions at the high school. These are temporary job share positions.**
2. If in fact RMHS normally does not have regular ed paras, but these are new, additional paras needed for hybrid, then why did Dr. Doherty repeatedly tell parents the hybrid plan for RPS required no additional staff? Because it does appear that this plan needs additional regular ed paras at RMHS. Which leads to.....**See above to my rationale.**
3. If, in fact, the hybrid plan does require new staff at RMHS, in particular at least ten more regular ed paras, why was this not communicated publicly or known/realized before 10/29/2020, over 2 months after the hybrid plan was submitted to the state? If Dr. Doherty honestly did not know that until this week, but this need was known to others before now, there appears to be a serious staffing communication issue in getting such important information promptly to the Superintendent. **As I mentioned above, I have made it very clear throughout this pandemic that plans needed to be fluid and flexible. What we had to communicate to the state was which model we were using, not how we were going to implement it.**
4. Is RPS serious about trying to fill these seventeen (17) para positions? If so, why does the RPS job posting page still list only 3 special ed para positions and no other para positions? Why aren't any of the remaining 4 special ed para positions or any of the 10 regular ed para opening listed on the RPS jobs posting page? Which leads to....**See above for answer.**
5. What are the scope, hours, and responsibilities of these additional 14 para positions (addition 4 special ed and 10 regular ed paras) that are not yet posted? Coverage of classrooms, study halls, lunch, something else? How many hours per week? Can there be some way to handle at least some of this coverage with any existing RPS staff instead of hiring additional paras? See below. **We are short staffed throughout this district as I mentioned last evening. We do not have any staffing that can be transferred to the high school.**

IDEAS FOR SOLUTIONS TO THE ABOVE ISSUES

Of all the concerns raised above, the one that could be taken care of with nearly zero effort, cost, and time, is to simply **post the positions**. Even if it seems difficult to fill them, post them anyway. Without knowing they exist or what hours are involved, we can have no chance of them ever being filled. Look what happened with making the job share happen with elementary positions. Publicizing positions is easier once RPS clarifies and publicizes the parameters of the positions (hours, responsibilities, etc.) . RMHS parents, like elementary parents, will do all we can to get the word out, but potential candidates need to know more about the scope of these positions. **An email went out earlier today describing the need at the high school, very similar to what we did last week for the elementary and high school.**

If RMHS hybrid implementation is being held up for lack of staff for lunch coverage, satellite coverage, or study hall coverage, **can any other RPS/town employees have hours reconfigured or even offered additional hours, to help with at least some of such coverage?** Even positions like part-time clerical staff, crossing guards (I think these are town employees?), cafeteria staff (during study halls), adult and community ed staff, and/or extended day staff, could be individuals who may very well have time during the school day. Perhaps these employees might welcome a chance to get in some more relatively low contact work hours for added pay and the prospect of reaching enough hours to qualify for health care benefits? **We have looked at several other options, including our furloughed food service and extended day staff. We have not had any success. I would also like to emphasize that this is not just a Reading issue. Every school district is having staffing shortages.**

(I mention adult and community ed because right now there is very little in person adult and community ed happening, and very few classes running, etc. – might these individuals have time in their day to monitor a study hall or even a satellite room?).

Furthermore, because these are positions that deal with high school students, there would seem to be far less close and direct student contact needed as compared to elementary students. Such personnel seemingly would be there primarily for the safety of having sufficient adults somewhere in the room, right? And if the room is a huge one, like the field house, cafeteria, or PAC (for study halls), the social distancing would be significant enough that maybe more people would consider becoming RPS employees.

Assuming it does not create collective bargaining issues, why not think outside the box, as noted above, and try offering extra hours/money to current RPS staff (or town staff) who already have shown their willingness to work “in person” in their current roles? Perhaps you have exhausted this route already? **As mentioned above, we have.**

Please consider and address my questions and know that I appreciate all the communications and efforts thus far.

Thanks for reading this email and considering my thoughts.

Marianne Downing (parent to a gr. 8 Parker student and a gr. 10 RMHS student)
13 Heather Drive

Engelson, Linda

From: Doherty, John
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 3:24 PM
To: Sarah Bishop; DG School Committee; rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us
Subject: RE: Return of Grades 3-5

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good Afternoon, Sarah,

Thank you for the email. I agree that we want all of our students in our full hybrid model. Unfortunately, the staffing vacancies that we have had at the elementary level have slowed down our timeline.

We have had tremendous response from our job share requests and we hope to have Grades 4 and 5 in soon.

Thank you for your patience.

Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Take care.

John F. Doherty
Superintendent
Reading Public Schools
82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
781-944-5800

From: Sarah Bishop <nickersonsm@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 7:50 AM
To: Doherty, John <John.Doherty@reading.k12.ma.us>; DG School Committee <SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>; rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us
Subject: Re: Return of Grades 3-5

Good morning,

Great news on getting Grade 3 back! But, how about Grades 4 and 5? Are we any closer? It's difficult to accept any further delay as the data mounts regarding the demonstrated safety of in-person education.

*Jeffrey Riley, commissioner of DESE, told lawmakers. "This is a key distinction. I want to say as we look across the world, we are seeing, in Europe for instance, we're seeing second spikes that are happening, but schools are remaining open because like here in America and certainly here in Massachusetts, **we are not seeing the spread take place, the clustering take place in schools as was initially feared.**"*

<https://www.boston.com/news/education/2020/10/28/massachusetts-education-commissioner-schools-in-red-zones-should-remain-open>

We were supposed to launch our hybrid model 8 weeks ago. To still have my daughter learning full-time in my basement is just no longer acceptable.

Regards,
Sarah Bishop

From: Doherty, John <John.Doherty@reading.k12.ma.us>

Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 3:00 PM

To: Sarah Bishop <nickersonsm@hotmail.com>; DG School Committee <SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>;
rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us <rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>

Cc: Hendrix, Julia <Julia.Hendrix@reading.k12.ma.us>

Subject: RE: Return of Grades 3-5

Good Afternoon, Sarah,

Thank you for the email and the feedback. We will certainly look at all options that make sense for the health and safety of our staff and students.

I am more than willing to meet and discuss this further.

Take care.

John F. Doherty
Superintendent
Reading Public Schools
82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
781-944-5800

From: Sarah Bishop <nickersonsm@hotmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 2:53 PM

To: Doherty, John <John.Doherty@reading.k12.ma.us>; DG School Committee <SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>;
rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us

Cc: Hendrix, Julia <Julia.Hendrix@reading.k12.ma.us>

Subject: Re: Return of Grades 3-5

Dear Dr. Doherty,

Thank you for your thoughtful and detailed response. I have no doubt that much time and effort has gone into your planning.

However, 2 out of 10 days in the classroom does not make sense, is not balanced and is not an acceptable solution. It is far less than the number of in-person hours of instruction *already* underway in *all* of our surrounding towns. It is also inequitable as to what Grades K, 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8 are set to receive within our own town. How can you propose a model that creates disparity within a single school system, as well as compared to our peer communities?

RPS does not meet the criteria for being fully remote, yet that is exactly what Grades 3-5 still are, with no set date to return.

We need the 11 Paras because of the Satellites, and if we reduce spacing, we should need less people and be able to get our kids back sooner. Masks, hand hygiene, proper disinfection and ventilation - absolutely agree with it all!!

Flexing on spacing, in combination with all of the above, is being implemented in other schools and I ask that the data be explored and re-considered by you and the SC.

What hybrid model(s) are being considered for these grades that do not sacrifice the number of in-person hours of instruction?

I know there is parental support for the Plexiglass - can you survey parents and have a conversation with the teachers (3 feet with partitions vs. 2 day, asynchronous) to gather data and feedback? I'm sure the cleaning could be figured out.

Thank you very much for your time. I am very aware that these are challenging times but I'm confident that we can do better for our children.

Sarah Bishop

From: Doherty, John <John.Doherty@reading.k12.ma.us>

Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2020 5:40 PM

To: Sarah Bishop <nickersonsm@hotmail.com>; DG School Committee <SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>; rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us <rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>

Cc: Hendrix, Julia <Julia.Hendrix@reading.k12.ma.us>

Subject: RE: Return of Grades 3-5

Good Afternoon, Sarah,

Thank you for the email. We are all disappointed that we are not able to bring back Grades 3-5 with our current hybrid model right now. However, it is important that 6 foot physical distancing, along with hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting, proper ventilation, wearing of masks and our cohort model is essential for the health and safety of our staff and students. This plan follows CDC guidelines and has been supported by our local Board of Health and our school nurses. The plan that we have put together allowed us to have a balance of safety and in person learning. To change this plan now may result in more staff requesting leaves of absences which would create additional vacancies. What has been a barrier to us has been that we have unfilled positions that are not allowing us to bring back additional grades. In order to bring back Grades 3-5 with our hybrid model, we would need to fill 11 tutor/paraeducator positions and 1 teacher position.

We feel it is critical to bring back students in person at least a couple of days every other week, which is why we are looking at alternative hybrid models. This would require our teachers to teach both in person and remote at the same time, which is extremely challenging for teachers and is not optimum for students. We are working with Grade 3-5 teachers to implement a hybrid model that makes sense with the staffing levels that we have.

Having barriers to allow less physical distancing is not an option. We did originally look into this early on in our planning, but it has been discouraged to go this route because the plastic barriers actually would accumulate droplets which would need to be cleaned constantly and would not necessarily prevent the spreading of germs.

I am more than happy to meet with you and discuss your concerns further. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

John F. Doherty
Superintendent
Reading Public Schools
82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
781-944-5800

From: Sarah Bishop <nickersonsm@hotmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2020 7:45 AM

To: Doherty, John <John.Doherty@reading.k12.ma.us>; DG School Committee <SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us>; rdgschoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us

Cc: Hendrix, Julia <Julia.Hendrix@reading.k12.ma.us>

Subject: Return of Grades 3-5

CAUTION: This email originated from **outside of Reading Public Schools**. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address and know the content is safe.

Dear Dr. Doherty and School Committee members,

As the parent of a 4th grader at Birch Meadow, to say that I was disheartened and disappointed upon reading the Fall Reopening 18 update would be an understatement. I have tried to remain patient and understanding of the changes and course corrections of this most challenging and unique school year. Until now.

It is completely unacceptable to our children to implement a hybrid model whereby they are only given 2 out of 10 days of in-person learning. I can't imagine a scenario more disruptive to their social, emotional and academic well-being than to further divide them into sub-sets and have them now adapt to live streaming too. My daughter's teacher has done a phenomenal job of creating a wonderful classroom culture, despite all the challenges of remote learning. And, now your new model is going to divide them up even further. Some in-person. Some at home. Some live teaching. Some remote. This is NOT how our children learn. It's more like a game of musical chairs.

These little people have done a tremendous job over the past month of rising to the challenges of remote learning, as you and your team were charged with figuring out how to safely return them to their classrooms. This solution falls way, way short of expectations. They deserve better.

We are trying to solve for a problem that was created by implementing a satellite classroom model - when, the real issue itself seems to be this satellite model and staffing for it. Let's be honest, if the open positions aren't filled now, are they really ever going to be filled? We need to rethink this model. Now.

My understanding is that DESE guidelines are desks spaced 3-6 feet. Yes, the CDC recommends 6 feet, but it's not required. Why are we not considering flexing on the 6 feet requirement? Other peer communities, such as Andover, are flexing to accommodate more students opting for Hybrid learning. Have you surveyed peer

communities for benchmark data and presented that to the Union? It is my distinct impression that Reading stands alone in its satellite classroom model.

Have you considered desk partitions at the elementary level, or at least for Grades 3-5? I know of many families who would be willing to self-fund. Or, at least to spearhead a Go-FundMe campaign to raise the necessary money. Let's redefine the problem and then come up with solutions.

From my conversations with friends across town, there seems to be a widespread support, at lease at Grade 3-5 level, for a Parental Petition to get our children back to school. But, it shouldn't have to come to that. We completed many surveys this summer - I'd respectfully request that you re-survey this subset to gain a sense of strong desire parents have to, at the absolute very least, get our children 4 out of 10 days of in person learning. And, please use that data to argue for what is best for these kids.

Regards,
Sarah Bishop

2020-21 School Committee Calendar Topics

Please note that this calendar may change depending on the status of the current health crisis and/or availability of presenters and topic material in consultation with the Chair

An Asterik indicates office half hour for this session at 6:30 p.m. All meetings will be in the RMHS Schettini Library unless noted.*

Date	Topic	Group
July 9*	Discuss Elementary Space Plan Reorganization	Administration School Committee
July 26	RMHS Class of 2020 Graduation	
July 29 Remote	Back-to-School Plans Superintendent Search Process	Administration School Committee
August 6 Remote	Preliminary School Reopening Plan Vote	Administration
August 20 Remote	First Reading Policy EBCFA — Face Coverings First Reading Policy IHBHE Remote Learning Executive Session	School Committee School Committee
August 27 Remote	Executive Session School Reopening Plan Second Reading Policy EBCFA — Face Coverings Second Reading Policy IHBHE Remote Learning	Administration Administration School Committee School Committee
September 1	Primary Election	
Sept. 10 Remote	Book Discussion Reopening Plan — Athletics & Extra-Curricular	School Committee Administration
September 23	Financial Forum	Finance Committee
September 24	Fall Reopening Update Equity Book Discussion FY20 End-of-Year Summary Preliminary Discussion of District Improvement Plan	School Committee
October 1 Remote	Superintendent Search — Interviews of Selected Proposers	School Committee
October 7	Financial Forum II	Finance Committee
October 15 Remote	Appointment of Superintendent to Collaborative Boards First Reading of Policy ECAF First Reading of JLCB First Reading of Policy AC Approval of RMHS Student Handbook	Administration School Committee School Committee School Committee Administration
October 21	Financial Forum III	Finance Committee
October 29 Remote	Fall Reopening Update Second Reading of Policy ECAF Second Reading of JLCB Second Reading of Policy AC Enrollment Update	Administration School Committee School Committee School Committee Administration

November 2 Remote 5:00 p.m.	Superintendent Search Process	School Committee
November 5 Remote Social Media Coordinators Gaffen Nazzaro	Elementary Space Refresher District and Superintendent's Goals Introduction Second Reading of Tabled Policy JLCB Second Reading of Tabled Policy AC	Administration Administration School Committee School Committee
November 19 Remote	Curriculum Update District and Superintendent's Goals – Vote	Administration Administration
November 23 Remote	Superintendent Search Process	School Committee
December	Finance Committee/Select Board FY22 Budget	
December 3 Remote Social Media Coordinators Wise Parks	RMHS Guidance Presentation and Update School Calendar School Improvement Plan review	RMHS Administration Administration
December 17	Quarterly Personnel Report Quarterly Financial Report FY22 Prebudget Presentation Superintendent's Evaluation Process	Human Resources Finance Finance Administration
January 7 Social Media Coordinators Robinson Brandt	Public Hearing FY22 Budget FY22 Budget Discussion FY21 Capital Plan	Administration
January 14	FY22 Budget Discussion – Regular Day & Special Education	Administration
January 21	FY22 Budget Discussion Public Hearing on FY22 Budget Questions	Administration School Committee Administration
January 25	FY22 Budget Discussion Final Vote	Administration School Committee
February 11 Social Media Coordinators Gaffen Parks	Kindergarten Update Portrait of Graduate Update	Administration Administration
February	Finance Committee	FY22 Budget Presentation
March Social Media Coordinators Robinson Nazzaro	Finance Committee Town Hall – 7:30 p.m.	FY22 Budget Meeting Vote TM Articles
April 8 Social Media Coordinators Wise Brandt	Superintendent Evaluation Cycle	School Committee

April 29	Superintendent Evaluation Process School Choice SOA Plan Presentation and Discussion	Superintendent Superintendent Superintendent
May	Finance Committee Meeting	Finance Committee
May 13 Social Media Coordinators Gaffen Nazzaro	Capital Update	Finance
May 27	SEPAC Presentation Quarterly Personnel Update Quarterly Financial Update	SEPAC Human Resources Finance
June 6 (RMHS Field House)	Graduation	School Committee
June 10* Social Media Coordinators Robinson Wise	FY 21 and 22 Budget Superintendent Evaluation	Administration School Committee
June 17	Teacher Recognition Declare Surplus Equipment Curriculum	Teachers Finance Administration
July 1	Reorganization Discuss Elementary Space Plan	School Committee School Committee