

**Wayland School Committee**  
**11/10/22**  
**Minutes**

Attending:

Chris Ryan, Chair  
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair  
Jeanne Downs  
Erin Gibbons  
Jess Polizzotti

Also Attending:

Omar Easy, Superintendent  
Kevin Bresnahan, Murphy, Hesse, Toomey and Lehane, LLP  
Michael Long, Long, Dipietro and Gonzales, LLP

Chris Ryan called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm and noted it was being recorded by Waycam.

Chris reviewed the format of the meeting and the guidelines for public comment. He noted there would be a second public comment period at the end of the meeting.

**Public Comment**

- Jeff Sklar, 18 Brooks Road, commented on Dr Easy's student-centric approach and some of the things he has addressed including math grades and teacher bullying.

Chris gave background information as to the purpose of the meeting noting that it is not a disciplinary meeting but is a continuation of a prior meeting in executive session that discussed complaints received concerning the Superintendent during a meeting October 13, 2022 and the failure to complete evaluations of direct reports. He noted that the Superintendent elected to have the meeting tonight in open session.

**Public Comment (continued)**

- Kim Reichelt, Coolidge Road, commented that evaluations were not on the agenda and commented on bullying.
- Jen \_\_\_\_\_, 58 Orchard Lane, noted her full support for Dr Easy and his commitment to the education of all students. She commented that Dr Easy was hired with the expectation he would be making changes.
- Carla Stafford, Rolling Lane, commented that she was part of the interview process and that students have benefitted from Dr Easy's decisions.
- Marchella Lee, 421 Old Connecticut Path, and Jordyn Lee, WHS sophomore, commented that Dr Easy is supportive and here to make things better.
- Jackie Johnson, 42 Claypit Hill Road, resident and SpEd teacher. She asked why the meeting was beginning with public comment.

- Tony Laing, former METCO director, commented that his evaluation had been completed. He also commented on the complexities of being a black male leader in Wayland.
- Scott Walters, 160 Draper Road, spoke in support of Dr Easy.
- Latoya Rivers, METCO director, read comments from METCO parents Tiasha Stevens and Susan Young who couldn't be at the meeting. Their comments included support for Dr Easy and the things he has implemented in Wayland, allowing Dr Easy to lead, and how race is playing a factor in the complaints.
- Robin Sklar, Brooks Road, asked a point of order regarding a School Committee member's participation in Dr Easy's review. She also commented on Dr Easy's student-centric approach and his listening to teachers.
- Craig Gruber, 18 Sears Road, commented on concerns with Dr Easy and his leadership.
- Caroline Han, DEB Director and METCO Academic Dean, commented that there will be a level of harm done no matter the outcome of the complaints and the School Committee can control that level of harm.
- Nicky Duffy, resident and Wayland teacher, asked that people keep an open mind until what is actually happening is known.
- Catherine Radmer, 22 Woodridge, commented that Wayland is committed to diversity. She noted the divisiveness and lack of trust with the current Superintendent.
- Stephanie Barnard, Boston, commented that her daughter does not feel welcome in Wayland and while Wayland says one thing, it does something else.
- Kim Reichelt, Coolidge Road, made a procedural comment noting that the School Committee is bound by the language on the agenda.
- Kristrina Rodriquo, Katie Ripple (Squirrel Hill Road), and Stephanie Miller (High Rock Road), commented on the lack of services students got in the ILC at the beginning of the year and Dr Easy's inconsistent responses to staffing needs and parent concerns.

### **Committee Discussion**

Chris gave a summary of where the Committee is at this point. He noted that on October 26, 2022 in Executive Session, a summary of the complaints concerning the Superintendent were presented. The School Committee voted to conduct an independent investigation. The Committee then had a lengthy discussion regarding putting the Superintendent on administrative leave and made a motion to continue that discussion on November 10, 2022.

Dr Easy made a statement giving the timeline of his notification of the complaints and the October 26, 2022 meeting to discuss them. He also noted what was discussed in the October 13, 2022 Administrative Council meeting emphasizing the need to create a safe working environment where bullying is unacceptable. He asked that the Committee not put him on administrative leave. He asked that a full investigation be done.

Attorney Long made a statement addressing some of the aspects of the complaints and due process.

Jess commented that she had concerns with the information presented at the last Executive Session. A discussion ensued with Jess, Chris, Attorney Bresnahan and Attorney Long regarding discussions that had or hadn't taken place leading up to this meeting.

Jeanne commented that the leave issue left her with questions. She noted that creating a safe work environment for all our employees is essential and while leave made logical sense, she wasn't sure it was in the best interest of the district and the students we serve.

Chris commented that is the Committee's responsibility to do what is right for the district. He noted that if the multiple complaints received about how people were treated (shaming, bullied, hostile) were true, it is not okay.

Ellen commented that bullying is a problem. She noted that the complaints about the October 13, 2022 meeting, the lack of Dr Easy being forthcoming to the Committee about the non-completion of full performance reviews, and creating a culture of fear were concerns.

Dr Easy questioned the inclusion of HR items in the scope of the investigation. He also noted his reasons for wanting this meeting in open session including transparency regarding the issues.

Chris again summarized the purpose of the meeting.

Erin updated the Committee on the selection of the investigator noting that they are ready to start next week. She emphasized the need to let the investigator work their process. The name of the investigator will be shared once a contract is signed.

*Erin left the meeting at 5:40 pm and returned at 5:42 pm.*

The School Committee discussed a possible motion. A discussion ensued about including the completion of evaluations as part of the investigation. Ellen noted that some evaluations were not done fully and one was not done at all.

The following motion was made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Greico: As discussed, we engage in the investigation of the complaints made pursuant to the School Committee vote on October 26, 2022 with Dr Easy continuing his job as Superintendent, with the caveat that if during the investigation it is determined by the investigator that there is interference, the School Committee will take steps to address it.

#### **Public Comment**

- Maryanne Wohlfarth, Woodland Road, commented on personal legal issues with the Superintendent.
- Tulani Husband, Claypit Hill Assistant Principal, commented on her perspective of the October 13, 2022 meeting. She noted that not everyone is assuming positive intent.
- Kori Rogers, Happy Hollow teacher, commented that not putting Dr Easy on leave sets a precedent for the district.
- Jeff Sklar, 18 Brooks Road, commented on what he sees as inconsistencies in the complaint process.
- Robin Sklar, 18 Brooks Road, commented on the lack of fairness in the complaint process.
- Bob LaSoyas, Orchard Lane, questioned how anonymous complaints can be used.

- Lorana Wilson, Boston, commented on Dr Easy's support with her child who was bullied.
- Maggie Hill, Marshall Terrace, commented that she was pleased with SpEd in Wayland. She offered to help collect anonymous feedback from staff.
- Bijon O'Middler, 56 Orchard Lane, commented that he was surprised the Committee was contemplating leave for the Superintendent, the cost of the investigation, and the feelings of students of color at the high school.
- Mark Lidell, HS METCO Coordinator, spoke in support of Dr Easy and his handling of the racist comments made against a HS basketball player last year. He also commented on bias and making it a standard going forward.
- Laytoya Rivers, METOC Director, gave her perspective on the October 13, 2022 meeting, a culturally competent investigation, and bias.
- Alexia Obar, Dean Road, noted this is a time of change and we should learn from the past.
- Carole Plumb commented on the meeting structure and the perceived need for an investigation.
- Edna Vasaloski, Glezen Lane, commented on the problem with hearsay, whether the investigation would be independent, and unsubstantiated allegations.
- Kim Reichelt, Coolidge Road, thanked Dr Easy for requesting the meeting be open. She noted her concern with adding other things to the investigation.
- Sejal Srinivasan, Covered Bridge Lane, commented on the scope of the investigation and ensuring Dr Easy knows the allegations raised. She noted the importance of coming back from this as a district.
- John Pierce, North Group Consultant, commented on bullying, reporting protocols and accountability.

*Erin left the meeting at 6:35 pm and returned at 6:36 pm*

- Philip Nelson-Valent, Boston, commented on representation of African American students in our schools as well as his concern with the scope of the investigation.
- Michael Hendrick, West Plain Street, commented on the conflicting comments regarding the October 13, 2022 meeting.
- Rob Desmond, 52 Plain Road, spoke in support of Dr Easy and commented on the disagreement among the Committee.
- David Rafferty, 6 Appleton, commented on Wayland wanting change, his uneasiness with certain aspects of the process, and how Dr Easy has helped with inequity.
- Catherine Radmer, 22 Woodridge, noted the inconsistency with putting a teacher on leave due to a complaint but not the Superintendent.
- Craig Gruber, Sears Road, commented on the need for the investigation to be independent with no interference. He also commented on the precedent being set not putting the Superintendent on leave.
- Caroline Han, DEB Director and METCO Academic Coach, commented that the Committee's motion is vague and open ended. She also cautioned on using coded language.
- Richard Davis, Boston, commented that his child knows who Dr Easy is and feels the Committee should be doing the investigation.
- Sarah Peterson, West Plain Street, is worried about SpEd. She advocated for the teachers to speak directly to Dr Easy.

The Committee moved to a vote on the earlier motion made. Erin noted that she didn't think we needed a motion. She supports an independent investigation to hear an independent account of what happened. Ellen reminded everyone that we were not voting to put Dr Easy on leave.

Upon the motion made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the Committee voted (4-0-1) to as discussed, engage in the investigation of the complaints made pursuant to the School Committee vote on October 26, 2022 with Dr Easy continuing his job as Superintendent, with the caveat that if during the investigation it is determined by the investigator that there is interference, the School Committee will take steps to address it. (Erin abstained.)

**Adjournment**

Upon a motion duly made by Erin Gibbons, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Ryan  
Chair, School Committee