Board Members Present: David Dunn, Glenda Ballard, Stacy Erb, Lillian Diaz-Gray, Noah Wittman, Melinda Smith, John Troy

Staff Present: Matthew Abbott, Francisco Garcia, Susan Pommerening, Halley Cade, Jessica Santos, Marcia Molinar, Elizabeth Guzman, Lauren Besser, Kirsti Smithwick, Kierstin Howard, Samantha Fabric

Guests: Sabrina Nelson

David Dunn Called Meeting to order at 6:02, Roll call to establish quorum, all board members present and accounted for.

Public Comments: Attached

Chief Executive Officer Update

a. Discussion and possible action on updates to School Operations for SY 20-21 due to COVID-19, Reopening Plan, Waivers and Resolutions for TEA

Matt Abbott present on the activities of the first day of school on August 12, 2020. Remote learning has been revamped for this year and staff and teachers are ready. 4,000 meals were distributed to families. A help desk is set up at each campus to offer assistance to families. Principals will continue meeting to de brief on the successes and challenges of remote learning daily. Wayside will be remote only until at least September 8th as currently approved by the board.

b. Discussion and possible action on Resolution and Waiver to TEA to extend reopening transition timeline for up to eight weeks for school year 20-21 due to COVID-19

Matt Abbott presented that TEA has put out a new rule to allow an 8 week transition into onsite learning for the start of the 20-21 school year. This is a 4 week extension from what was originally presented by TEA earlier in the summer. To gain access to the second 4 weeks of transition, Wayside Schools would need to submit a waiver to TEA for the second 4 weeks which would allow Wayside to decide how many scholars would be allowed on campus in this time period to ensure safety during our ramp up to more onsite learning. Matt Abbott asked for the board to consider a vote to allow Wayside to submit a waiver to TEA to create a plan for transitioning to onsite learning following all requirements.

At this time, the Wayside leadership team would prioritize onsite learning for scholars who are not engaging effectively in remote learning, scholars who are below grade level, families in need of onsite learning, and staff members scholars.

Additionally, if a waiver is approved two staff development days would be moved to October 8th and 9th to prepare for onsite learning. This would not affect the number of educational days on
the calendar, but would require the board to update and approve the new calendar with these modifications.

The board is being asked to vote on this additional resolution and waiver. The board elected to vote on all items on the agenda at the same time at the end of the meeting as they are related.

c. Discussion and possible action on 20-21 School Year Calendar and PD Waivers Days
to align with extending the reopening transition timeline for up to eight weeks for school year 20-21 due to COVID-19

David Dunn opens up discussion amongst school board members.

John Troy shared views with emphasis on working parents and special education students needing access to onsite schooling. He shared that Wayside Schools needs to do all it can to get scholars and families that have requested onsite learning back on campus in a safe way. He shared that he would be voting against the resolution and waiver for this reason because he feels Wayside has the capacity to achieve this safely without the additional 4 weeks of transition, especially given that only approximately 20% of students have requested to return to campus.

Stacy Erb asked for clarification on how the waiver affects onsite learning and Matt Abbott explained how the waiver would allow Wayside Schools to control the number of onsite scholars as we scale up versus opening up all campuses to the maxim of onsite enrollment, via parent choice, starting Sept. 8. Stacy Erb shared how the waiver may affect parents trying to plan around their scholar’s needs and their own work schedules.

Melinda Smith asked how many students could be served in the initial window of onsite learning. Matt Abbott clarified it would be a small group based on grade level and staff availability to work onsite. Matt Abbott also clarified the waiver could allow Wayside Schools to go up or down in the onsite student population in percentages based on community spread.

Glenda Ballard asks about how it will be decided which staff return onsite. Matt Abbott shared ideally it would be on an opt-in basis, but also based on the staffing needs required based on which scholars will be returning onsite. Glenda Ballard also asked about Principal readiness for onsite learning. Matt Abbott answered that Principals are preparing to the best of their ability, but that there is still much work to be done.

Noah Wittman stated he had no questions

Lillian Diaz-Gray thanked the board for their views and questions and expressed the need to consider the health and safety of scholars and staff. Additionally, she shared the positive effect of having flexibility for changes in COVID-19 spread and City and State restriction levels.

David Dunn asked for a motion to adopt the resolution to adopt the 4 week waiver resolution plan and the changes to the 20-21 school calendar.

Noah Wittman moves to adopt the waiver and adjust the calendar, Stacy Erb seconds, John Troy votes Nay, all other board members vote in favor. The motion carries with a 6 to 1 split vote.
Closed Session
The board elected not to enter into closed session

Adjourn

Stacy Erb moved to adjourn the meeting, Lillian Diaz-Gray seconds motion. Roll call vote, the board approves to adjourn unanimously at 7:01pm.