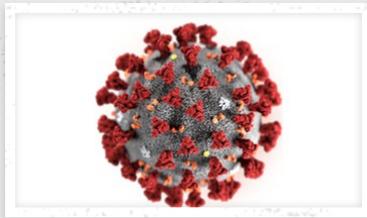
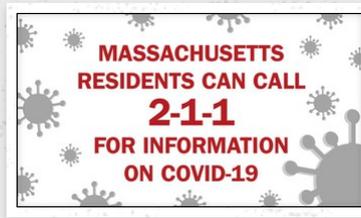


SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

JUNE 18, 2020



Click [here](#) for Walpole Public Schools COVID-19/Remote Learning information.



Dial 2-1-1 to get the latest updates on [#COVID-19](#) prevention, symptoms, testing & treatment. It's free & open to callers 24/7. Operators . uent in Spanish are available, with interpreter services for more than 150 other languages.



For all Walpole related news and announcements regarding coronavirus please visit and bookmark:

<https://www.walpole-ma.gov/covid19>

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A sec. 20, the public is not be allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. Members of the Public will be able to view this meeting on Walpole Media Cable Access the following day. Citizens with a question or comment should email mmortali@walpole.k12.ma.us. We will do our best to get back to you as soon as possible.



All votes taken by the School Committee in a remote participation meeting are done via roll call.

DISCUSSION AND VOTE REGARDING "REBEL" NAME

After listening to approximately three hours of comments from the public on Tuesday night, during which every individual who signed up to speak was allowed to speak (some individuals signed up to speak and chose not to do so and others joined the meeting to speak but voluntarily dropped off during the course of the meeting), on Thursday night, the School Committee, Dr. Gough and Mr. Hahn thoughtfully and passionately discussed the Rebel name and its connotation in the Town and the world at large. All comments, emails, testimonies and communications on keeping and changing the Rebel name were heavily weighted by each of them, and the School Committee in no way controlled who submitted comments or chose to speak. Please see the full recorded meeting held on Thursday night [here](#).

After discussion, the School Committee unanimously voted as follows:

- The School Committee reaffirm its past votes of 1988 and 1993 barring the use of confederate symbols on Walpole Public School grounds and further, permanently retire the use of the name Rebel and its swords, in association with any Walpole Public School team, club, or organization; and,
- That the School Committee through the Superintendent, High School Principal, and Athletic Director prohibit the production of any new gear, merchandise, or apparel bearing the name Rebel by any organization, affiliate organization or group associated with the Walpole Public Schools; and,
- That the School Committee acknowledge that this initiative is the first step in a much wider process of community dialog, listening, and action to prevent racism and discrimination within the District; and,
- That the High School leave unaltered the championship banners hanging in the high school gym, trophies in cases in the high school foyer, and the Press Box at Turco Field and further that the school seek out and display banners and trophies chronicling the athletic achievements of the Walpole High School Hill Toppers, to be hung and displayed alongside them where possible; and,
- That a School Committee Commission on Renaming be formed, including but not limited to students and alumni of color, the high school principal, athletic director, varsity coaches, the METCO director, members of the student council, members of the student body at large, a representative of the alumni association, the director of the PRIDE program, a representative of the Gay Straight Alliance and a representative of the fine arts department. This commission shall be formed to contain at least 50% representation from Walpole High School students and recent alumni. Their task is to explore and recommend several names for Walpole High School's new Mascot; and,
- That the aforementioned School Committee Commission on Renaming will make its recommendation of several names to the School Committee, who will then charge the current students of the Walpole High School to vote on the Commission's recommendation; and,
- That the School Committee expend no additional funds from either the current or the FY21 budget for the renaming effort, and the School Committee commit to refrain from seeking additional town funds for this endeavor; and,
- That large scale infrastructure, such as the high school track, patio of the snack shack, be dismantled and replaced in accordance with their normal replacement and repair

replacement; and, that the replacement of currently used uniforms and gear be done in accordance with current replacement schedule unless community or corporate donations can be leveraged to speed the process; and,

- That a working group be established, consisting of representatives of every booster group, and athletic team, as well as interested parties and private citizens from the community to explore options to leverage private funds and corporate sponsorships to speed this effort; and finally,
- That the School Committee resolve and affirm that this place called Walpole is filled with truly good and decent community-minded people, and encourage the town to come together around its new mascot and moniker.

This decision was not taken lightly and the School Committee understands that this is the first step of many to be undertaken. Mr. Buckley stated that the common thread of values, kindness and respect are not Rebel values alone, these are the values of Walpole. The School Committee thanked all of our students, families, alumni, staff and neighbors who have respectfully submitted their comments. For those who may not understand this decision, we recommend that you watch the video from Tuesday's Community Forum Meeting [here](#). The powerful testimony from each speaker is representative of the need for change.

Mr. Buckley indicated this is not a victory for either group, it is the very beginning, the smallest step. Wider and more difficult conversations now need to be held. The love of Walpole supersedes the fondness of a team name.

It is the School Committee's hope that the Town will now band together to grow stronger, more resilient and united.



WALPOLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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