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The following items will be discussed at a virtual meeting of the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports to be held on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. in Room 410 of the Durkin Administration Building:

(Consider the following items together.)

gb #9-288 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (August 28, 2019)

Request the establishment of an inclusive and transparent process for selecting and implementing a comprehensive Sex Education Curriculum that is age-appropriate, evidence-based, medically-accurate and LGBTQ inclusive in the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #9-416 - Miss McCullough/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo (December 4, 2019)

Request that the Administration consider incorporating the campaign entitled "RESPECTfully" when the Sex Ed Curriculum is established.

gb #0-31 - Mayor Petty/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Foley/Ms. McCullough/Ms. Novick (January 8, 2020)

Request that the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports recommend a comprehensive, inclusive, evidenced-based sexual and health curriculum and an appropriate level of increased classroom time for health education to the school committee for the FY21 budget.

Committee Members

Molly O. McCullough, Chairman
John F. Monfredo, Vice-Chairman
John L. Foley

Administrative
Representative
Susan O'Neil, Ph.D.

OFFICE OF THE
CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MA 01609

AGENDA #4

The Standing Committee on TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORTS will hold a meeting:

on: Tuesday, September 15, 2020
at: 5:00 p.m.
virtually in: Room 410, Durkin Administration Building

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

gb #8-356.1 - Administration/Miss McCullough/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Monfredo/Mr. O'Connell/Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Mayor Petty (February 13, 2019)

Response of the Administration to the requests to:

- explore the feasibility of implementing the Orton-Gillingham model for dyslexic students for those students in need of specific services.
- provide a summary of the Orton-Gillingham model program.
- study the feasibility of implementing the cost of this program in the FY20 Budget
- study the feasibility of including students from outside the district, on a tuition basis, if a proposed program is established in the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #9-288 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo (August 28, 2019)

Request the establishment of an inclusive and transparent process for selecting and implementing a comprehensive Sex Education Curriculum that is age-appropriate, evidence-based, medically-accurate and LGBTQ inclusive in the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #9-313 -Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria /Mr. Foley/Mr. O'Connell
(September 17, 2019)

Request that the Administration establish a committee by November to include early learning teachers to review the two year kindergarten 1 program for students who are four years old and lack the necessary readiness skills for school success.

gb #9-327 -Administration (October 7, 2019)

To consider answers to the fourteen Action Steps made by Mayor Petty and approved by the School Committee:

1. School Department to create clear and transparent process to provide the necessary, student-sensitive data needed to do a thorough review of the suspension rates in our Worcester Public Schools. This should include the last 7 years of data.
2. Worcester State University to re-engage with our school department regarding the 2014 report, "Suspension in Worcester: A Continuing Conversation.
3. Incorporate comprehensive training practices focused on understanding cultural differences, unconscious bias, understanding racial disparities, and trauma informed care for all staff. Included in this training is MGL c222. For all staff including School Committee.
4. Review of the state's school discipline statute, MGL c222, to ensure the city is in complete compliance with the law and make any necessary changes to our policies and procedures.
5. Continue to maintain an English Language Learner Parent Advisory Council that includes Community Based Organizations and Community Partners in compliance with law, which will work with both the Director of English Language Learners and the Chief Diversify Officer.
6. Review the practice of out of school suspension for students in K-2 grade and work with community partners and internal staff to create an in-school program to provide counselling and assessment services for these students, contingent on proper funding and in-kind services.
7. Create an Affirmative Action Advisory Committee that would work with the Human Resource Department and the Chief Diversity Officer. Provide a semiannual report to the School Committee, with the Human Resources Department and the Chief Diversity Officer, as to progress.
8. Create a Superintendents Latino Advisory Committee
9. Quarterly/biannual reports on the progress of the Strategic Plan
10. Review and maintain the existing suspension hearing and appeal practices so that the same WPS person is not allowed to do both hearings and appeals.
11. Hiring a Chief Diversity Officer who shall report to the Superintendent and who shall work collaboratively with the Department of Human Resources of the Worcester Public Schools.
12. Review and assist a comprehensive plan with college presidents to do focused recruitment and retention plans to hire diverse teachers and support staff.
13. Provide a semi-annual report on the work of the English Language Learner Department and programs to the School Committee on compliance with best practices and Federal DOE guidelines.
14. Work with the School Committee to consider and implement recommendations of the Mayors Commission where appropriate. Work with the Commission to benchmark projects.

gb #9-349 - Miss McCullough/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo (October 14, 2019)

Request that the Administration invite educators who currently teach or train NoticeAbility Curriculum and consider implementing it for students with dyslexia.

gb #9-384 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley (November 13, 2019)

Request that the Superintendent present an annual report on the status of education for Latino students.

gb #9-386 - Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley (November 13, 2019)

Request that the Administration provide an update on current restorative justice practices.

gb #9-388 - Mr. Comparetto (November 13, 2019)

Request an "equity audit" of the Worcester Public Schools in accordance to best practices.

gb #9-389 - Mr. Comparetto (November 13, 2019)

Request that the Administration provide an update on the efforts of the Administration to create ethnic studies programming.

gb #9-409 - Mr. Comparetto/Miss McCullough (November 26, 2019)

Request that the Administration review recommendations made by the organization Teaching Tolerance for culturally appropriate Thanksgiving programming.

gb #9-416 - Miss McCullough/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo (December 4, 2019)

Request that the Administration consider incorporating the campaign entitled "RESPECTfully" when the Sex Ed Curriculum is established.

c&p #0-2 -Clerk (January 2, 2020)

To consider a communication from Gordon T. Davis, Chair of the Education Committee, Worcester Branch NAACP, relative to a uniform districtwide policy on age appropriate touching.

c&p #0-13 -Clerk (August 19, 2020)

To consider a communication from the Racism Free Worcester Public School Group regarding nine areas of concerns.

gb #0-31 - Mayor Petty/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Foley/Ms. McCullough/Ms. Novick (January 8, 2020)

Request that the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports recommend a comprehensive, inclusive, evidenced-based sexual and health curriculum and an appropriate level of increased classroom time for health education to the school committee for the FY21 budget.

gb #0-101 - Mr. Monfredo (March 5, 2020)

Request that the Administration work with the City Administration to see if there is a building available for the expansion of a full-day pre-school program.

gb #0-125.1 - Administration/Mr. Foley (April 8, 2020)

Response of the Administration to the request to present comprehensive data showing the test scores for all student subgroups since these initiatives started. This data should show changes over the years, with a particular emphasis upon the WPS student subgroups targeted through SOA funding (Hispanic students, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities).

motion (gb #9-195.2) Mr. O'Connell (June 20, 2019)

Request that the Administration provide a report on the funding that the Worcester Public Schools receives through Education Access Channel 11 revenues, and provide information on the four positions and refer the report to the Standing Committee on Teaching Learning and Student Supports for discussion with gb #9-207.

motion (gb #9-195.2) Mr. O'Connell (June 20, 2019)

Request that the Various Grant Program section of the Budget be referred to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
Clerk of the School Committee

STANDING COMMITTEE: **TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORTS**

DATE OF MEETING: Tuesday, September 15, 2020

ITEM: Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo
(August 28, 2019)

ITEM:

Request the establishment of an inclusive and transparent process for selecting and implementing a comprehensive Sex Education Curriculum that is age-appropriate, evidence-based, medically-accurate and LGBTQ inclusive in the Worcester Public Schools.

PRIOR ACTION:

- 9-5-19 - Held for the meeting on September 19, 2019.
- 9-19-19 - Referred to the Administration for a report in November 2019.
- 12-19-19 - It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports to be considered with gb #9-416. (See gb #9-418.)

BACKUP: (Consider with gb #9-416 and gb #0-31.)

Annex A (19 pages) contains a copy of a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Worcester Youth Deserve Comprehensive Sex Ed."

Additional backup will be provided prior to the meeting.

WORCESTER YOUTH DESERVE COMPREHENSIVE SEX ED.

DRAFT



WORCESTER IMPACT ON SEXUAL HEALTH TASK FORCE YEAR THREE EVALUATION REPORT

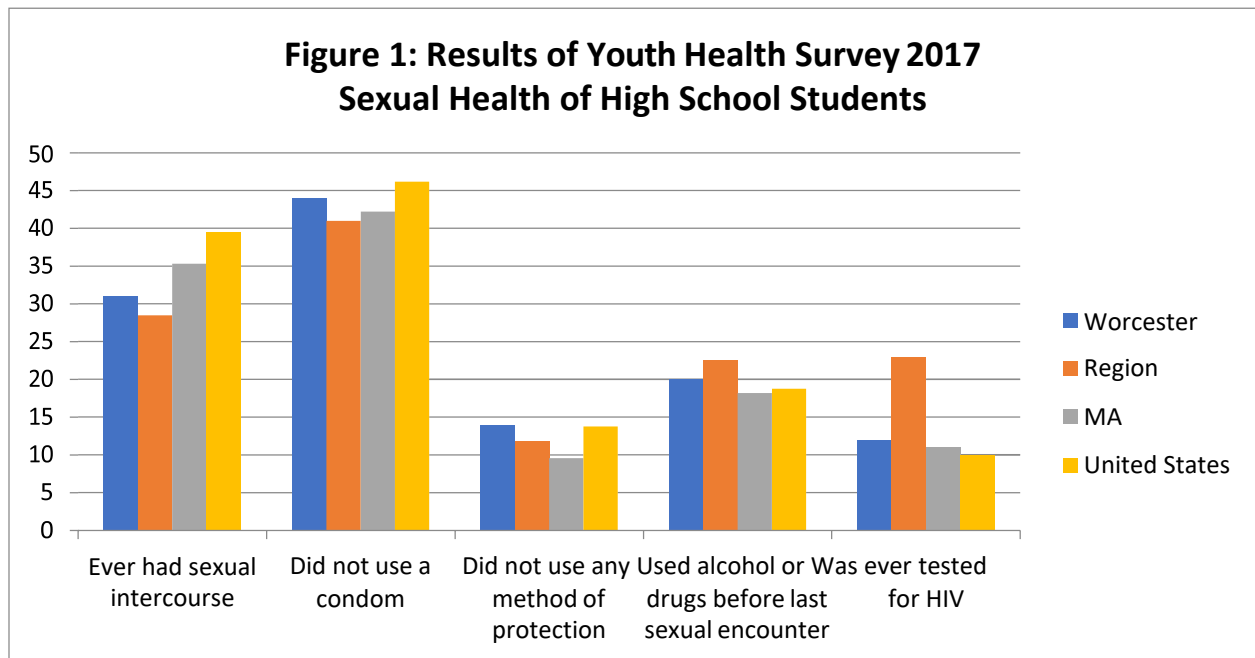
LAURIE ROSS, PHD & LEAH MEYERS
CLARK UNIVERSITY
January 2019

Introduction

Youth sexual health is without question an urgent issue in Worcester. Recent figures tell this story:

- 31% of Worcester high school youth report that they have had sexual intercourse. Of those that have had sex:
 - 52% have with more than one partner
 - 44% did not use a condom
 - 20% drank alcohol or used drugs the last time they had sex
 - 14% reported that they did not use any method to prevent pregnancy during last sexual intercourse
 - When compared to sexually active youth in the region, Worcester youth were more likely to have ever had sexual intercourse, more likely to not have used a condom, more likely to not have used any form of protection; less likely to have used alcohol or drugs before intercourse; and much less likely to have ever been tested for HIV (See Figure 1).
- There are 223 pregnant or parenting students in Worcester schools, including 55 in 7th or 8th grade
- Worcester has one of the highest teen birth rates in the state at 13.2% (2016)
- Worcester’s chlamydia rate is 1.6 times higher than the state’s. Worcester’s gonorrhea rate is 2.25 times higher than the state’s. Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) disproportionately affect young people

Compounding these public health issues is that Worcester does not offer comprehensive sexual health education in the schools.



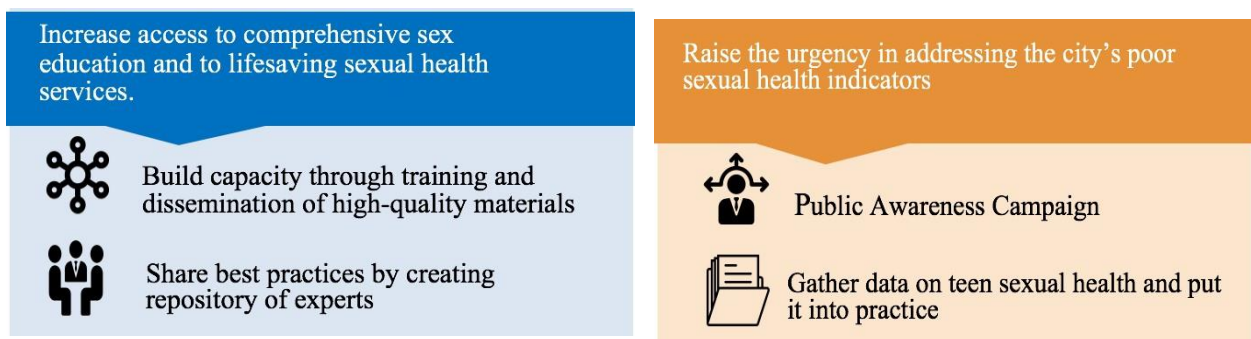
Poor youth sexual health is not a new problem in Worcester. Two needs assessments conducted by the Investing in Girls Alliance (IIGA) in 2007 and 2012 found that Worcester girls and parents rated sexual health education and intimate relationships as a top priority. In the 2007 report, 73% of girls surveyed identified peer pressure and sexual health as major challenges facing girls.

The sexual health outcome data at that time also indicated serious problems. Worcester’s teen birth rate among 15-19 year old girls was 23.2/1,000 girls, nearly twice the state rate (12.0/1,000 girls). There were health inequities along racial and ethnic lines; although Latinos comprised only 21% of the population, 56.4% of teen births were to young Latinas (Teen birth data: MA Dept of Public Health 2013 Birth Report; Worcester population demographics: 2010 US Census). IIGA’s research also highlighted the societal costs of early childbearing in terms of increased tax burden and increased likelihood of school dropout for young parents.

IIGA’s research identified two needed strategies to address Worcester’s poor youth sexual health status: 1) Use local data to understand the drivers of Worcester’s high teen pregnancy and STI rates in order to develop a strategic and coordinated approach and 2) Raise community awareness, including that of local leaders and funders, in order to develop the collective will needed to address the issue.

Recognizing these activities went beyond the scope of IIGA, IIGA and other community leaders formalized the WISH (Worcester Impact on Sexual Health) Task Force with three years of committed funding and support from the Daniel’s Foundation in 2015. WISH was created with the mission to raise the urgency and increase access for better sexual health and healthier relationships for Worcester youth. WISH consisted of parents, service providers, community leaders, and other adult decision-makers working to improve sexual health education in the city and increase youth’s access to lifesaving sexual health services.

WISH’s work to build the community’s capacity to improve youth sexual health is summarized in the graphic below:



Over the past three years, WISH has made significant progress towards its two primary goals. With the Center for Health Impact as its fiscal agent, WISH established an operating structure including a steering committee, two subcommittees (community capacity and public awareness), and general membership. This structure enabled WISH to achieve the following in just three years:

Increase access to comprehensive sex education and to lifesaving sexual health services

- 48 people were trained in Sexuality Education Cornerstone Seminar (SECs). These 48 educators were poised to reach over 4,000 youth.
- Thousands of adults—including caregivers—participated in sexual health education related activities sponsored by WISH members over the three years of the Taskforce.
- WISH assisted Worcester Public Schools in choosing an evidence-based comprehensive sexual health curriculum and trained 15 health educators in this curriculum.

Raise the urgency in addressing the city's poor sexual health indicators

- Established web presence through a social media campaign and a revamped website. This campaign included development of videos of local leaders, including clergy members, discussing the importance of comprehensive sexual health education.
- Influenced Regional Youth Health Survey process through the inclusion of new questions to better monitor improvements in youth sexual health
- Hosted community awareness events, including a poster contest for youth to develop messaging about the importance of sexual health education.
- Worcester's Board of Health voted to endorse the implementation of comprehensive sexual health education in the public schools in October 2018.

Evaluation Methods

The formal WISH evaluation started in November 2016, one year after WISH was launched. Our first task was to develop a logic model to articulate WISH's theory of change and to facilitate the tracking of strategies and outcomes (See Attachment One). We did this through a document review and discussions with WISH Steering Committee members. Once agreement on the logic model was established, we confirmed that there was evidence from social science literature and practitioner experience that WISH's theory of change could be effective. We assembled data from various sources, such as the Worcester Regional Youth Health Survey to establish baseline conditions. This initial work substantiated the validity of WISH's approach; confirmed alignment between WISH's strategies and community need; and established a baseline against which WISH's progress could be assessed.

With the evaluation foundation formalized, we then began to capture data on strategy implementation and outcomes. To monitor strategy implementation, we attended WISH Full Task Force and Steering Committee meetings. To monitor progress on WISH indicators, we reviewed data from the WISH sponsored Sexuality Education Cornerstone Seminar (SECS) training and from surveying WISH-involved individuals. In Year Two we developed and implemented a monthly survey disseminated to all Steering Committee and general WISH participants in order to capture WISH-related work that had been done. We monitored WISH's online and social media presence in order to measure local engagement and reach. We reviewed a study conducted by Planned Parenthood about Worcester voters. Finally, we administered a final Year Three survey to WISH Steering Committee and Task Force members.

Evaluation Findings

This report is organized around WISH's core indicators.

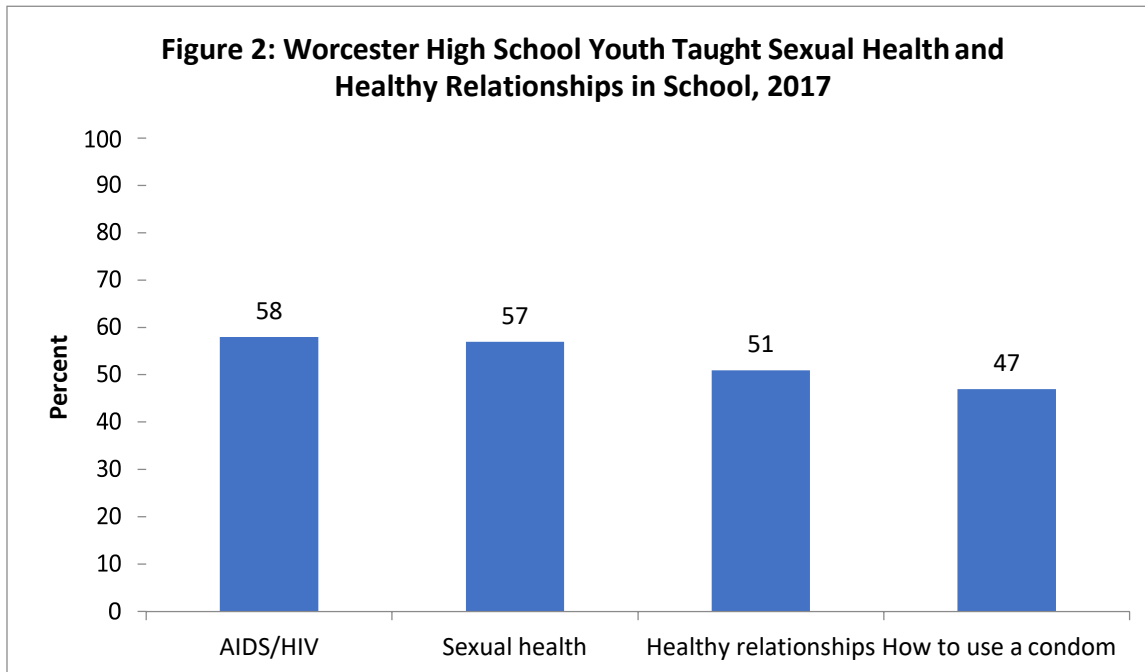
1. Number of youth and number of girls who report they received comprehensive sexual health education over the course of the year
2. Number of youth and number of girls who report that they can identify at least one adult whom they can go to for trusted information about their sexual health
3. Number of providers who report WISH as an effective resource for promoting awareness of the sexual health needs of youth in the city of Worcester
4. Number of training participants who report that they are better equipped to be an "askable adult" on matters of sexual health and healthy relationships
5. Number of training participants who report an intention to have a conversation with the young people in their lives about healthy relationships and sexual health, including talking about delay of sex and use of protection methods
6. Number of Worcester residents who report teen healthy relationships and sexual health as a top three health priority for the city

Note: due to types of data the evaluation could access, we combine indicators 2, 4 & 5 in the discussion below.

Indicator 1: Number of youth and number of girls who report they received comprehensive sexual health education over the year.

When WISH launched in 2015, WPS did not require comprehensive sexual health education for all grades, although individual schools did provide health-related courses. In addition, the Worcester Regional Youth Health Survey (RHYS) did not contain questions that established a baseline measure for Indicator One. For the first 18 months, we used one question asked on the 2015 survey to gain some understanding about this indicator, "Have you ever been taught about HIV/AIDS in school?" Over 70% of students reported having learned about these topics. **In 2017, this rate declined to 58% of students reporting having learned about HIV/AIDs in school.**

Based on the 2016 recommendations coming out of the WISH evaluation, the 2017 Regional Youth Health Survey better captured how many students were receiving sex education. This survey asked: *have you ever been taught about any of the following in school: sexual health; HIV/AIDs or other infections; healthy relationships; and condom use.*



As Figure 2 indicates, roughly half of high school students report not receiving this critical health information. Examining this question by gender, we find that students who identify as female were slightly more likely to reporting having learned about AIDS/HIV in school (59%); slightly less likely to have learned about sexual health (56%); slightly more likely to have learned about healthy relationships (54%); and slightly less likely to have learned to use a condom (45%).

Confirming student survey responses, the 2017 State of Health Education in Worcester report on health education, found that the resources and availability of health education throughout Worcester middle and high schools greatly varied. Health education was a requirement for students in 4th-7th grade but optional for 8th grade on. Parents could opt-out in all cases as well. The report found that Sullivan Middle and Worcester East Middle had lower health education enrollment rates in spite of having the highest number of students categorized as “High Need” or “Economically Disadvantaged.”

In order to increase access and limit variability in content, in year 2, WISH members and Worcester Public School (WPS) vetted potential evidence-based comprehensive sexual health curricula for the WPS. Six reviewers, including teachers and community members, evaluated three (3) different evidence-based curricula using a standardized scoring matrix. The three curricula were Reducing the Risk, Get Real, and Making Proud Choices. The scoring matrix included criteria such as, trauma Informed; engagement with local community health organizations; inclusivity of LGBTQ students; and the extent to which it was teacher-friendly. It also followed practices established by Office of Adolescent Health, the MA AIDS Advisory Materials Review Panel and the National Health Education Standards to ensure that whatever curriculum was selected was done so in the most thoughtful and intentional manner. After six reviewers evaluated the curricula, Making Proud Choices (MPC) was chosen as the most appropriate curriculum for Worcester Public Schools for both middle and high school. The WPS director of health

education was involved in this process and kept the superintendent informed of the review.

In year 3, the WPS School Committee's Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning, and Student Supports was scheduled to review MPC. On September 12th, 2018, days before this review was supposed to take place, the Worcester Telegram Gazette released an article stating the administration had withdrawn the plan for further review and the meeting of the standing committee which would have reviewed the proposal was cancelled. School committee members' discomfort with the curriculum was the reason given for the meeting cancelation.

Despite this setback, WISH moved forward. On October 15th, Dr. Matilde Castile, Commissioner of Health and Human Services, informed members of the Board of Health about the current state of youth sexual health and health education in Worcester. Members of WISH attended this meeting and several presented testimonials about the importance of sexual health education. At the end of the meeting, the Board of Health voted to endorse comprehensive sex education in WPS, calling on the School Board Standing Committee to reconsider their initial stance not to review the curriculum.

The Worcester Public Schools superintendent and Mayor Petty shared that community members and school teachers would reevaluate several options for a comprehensive sexual health education curriculum, specifically looking into the Michigan Model. WISH plans to remain engaged in this process and hopes that it can continue to provide valuable insight and support to the WPS as they revisit the evaluation of the sex education curricula to be sure that whatever is selected is inclusive, evidence-based, and comprehensive.

Indicator 2: Number of youth and number of girls who report that they can identify at least one adult whom they can go to for trusted information about their sexual health**Indicator 4: Number of training participants who report that they are better equipped to be an “askable adult” on matters of sexual health and healthy relationships****Indicator 5: Number of training participants who report an intention to have a conversation with the young people in their lives about healthy relationships and sexual health, including talking about delay of sex and use of protection methods**

We could not identify a data source that provided precise baseline or follow up measures for this indicator. The 18-month evaluation used the RYHS questions about whether students had a teacher or other adult in the school they could talk to if they had a problem and another question about if they had a parent or family member to talk to about important things to give rough estimates. The vast majority of students indicated having an adult that they could talk to (70-80%). While these questions did not allow us to understand the extent to which these conversations were about sexual health or whether the adults have accurate information, most youth reported having adults in their lives.

In 2017, students still reported having a parent or other adult to talk to about important things. Overall, 76% of students had an adult to talk to; this rate was identical for female identifying students. A new question on the 2017 survey was even more closely aligned with the indicator, asking Worcester youth if they have talked about ways to prevent HIV infection, other STIs, or pregnancy with their parents or other adults in their family, school, or in the community. Sixty-four percent (64%) responded yes to this question; a slightly higher rate of students who identify as female reported having had a conversation about these topics (67%).

That 64% of Worcester high school students have an adult they have talked to about sexual health related issues has two implications. One, WISH’s strategy to create “askable adults” is warranted. If youth are having conversations with adults about sexual health, then it makes good sense to equip adults in the community with accurate, relevant, and up-to-date information. Two, that only 64% of Worcester students are having these conversations, suggests the need for all youth to have access to this information, which confirms the need for comprehensive sexual health education in the schools. It is the only place in the community that has access to nearly all of the city’s adolescents.

Recognizing that instituting comprehensive sexual health education in the schools could be a longer-term effort, WISH worked on developing more askable adults in the community. Over the past three years, WISH sponsored SECS (Sexuality Education Cornerstone) seminar training for 48 adults on how to be askable adults. SECS is a three-day professional training that covers basic sexuality and sexual health topics. Trainees consistently reported high levels of satisfaction with this training, strong intention to have conversations with youth about sexual health and healthy relationships, and an overall sense of

being better prepared to be askable adults (see 18 month and 2 year evaluation reports for more on SECs training results).

In year three, five WISH Taskforce members who responded to the impact survey reported on educational events that targeted adults. This programming reached over 1,000 people. Programming included information sessions for caregivers, documentary viewings, and discussions. While the Annual Activities Survey of Year Three was only sent and completed by adult members of WISH, we were able to capture youth participation in sexual health education from this limited sample. WISH partners were able to reach 360 youth this year with programming about sexual identity, healthy relationships, body image, consent, STIs, protection methods, and other sexual health topics.

Indicator 3: Number of providers who report WISH as an effective resource for promoting awareness of the sexual health needs of youth in the city of Worcester

In this section, we include two sources of data to monitor progress on this indicator: 1) an impact survey administered in October-November of 2018 to determine how individuals with WISH involvement (i.e. Steering committee, taskforce, SECs training, etc.) perceive WISH and 2) data drawn from those who have utilized WISH resources, specifically WISH website and Facebook page analytics.

Impact Survey:

We received 22 responses to the final impact survey. We received information from nine WISH taskforce members (5 taskforce members did not fill out the survey). 45% of those who responded represented organizations that were not official taskforce members. All survey respondents had been involved with WISH at some point in the past three years.

Responses to the impact survey indicate that WISH served as an important and valuable resource to many and continued to be an asset, however, some respondents expressed room for improvement. Sixty-four percent agreed or strongly agreed that WISH is an effective resource for promoting the sexual health needs for youth in the city of Worcester. This figure was down from 76% in 2017. Part of the reason for this decline could be the timing of survey administration. The survey was launched just as the WPS School Board Subcommittee canceled the meeting in which the review of Making Proud Choices was to happen.

This number was higher among those more involved; 70% of all steering committee members and 69% of people who attended a full taskforce meeting agreed or strongly agreed that WISH was an effective resource. Of the 18% who disagreed, they tended to be less involved in the Taskforce, did not provide sexual health programming; and/or were not official Taskforce members. Some comments from the survey included:

- “Always good to be armed with the latest facts and figures. Also like to be out in front of rising concerns for youth and their overall health and development. Sexuality is one of them.”

- I have found some discussions helpful and others not so much. I would like to see and explore some way in which there could be more intentional organizing coming from WISH.
- I have only attended full WISH meetings and at those meetings experienced mostly review for information I was already aware of or reviews of info on the website etc.

The comments suggest that WISH may have missed opportunities for more intentional organizing alongside the review of sexual health education curricula and for the provision of even more up-to-date information.

Sixty-four percent reported that they used knowledge they gained from WISH in at least one of the following: their work, with youth in their personal lives, or with friends. This rate increased from last year in which 58% had stated using knowledge they gained from WISH. Again, this number was significantly higher amount those more involved; 80% of all steering committee members and 69% of people who attended a full taskforce meeting agreed or strongly agreed. Open-ended comments from this section included:

- “The training that Jena gave the Big Brothers Big Sisters staff was very helpful in our everyday work with the youth enrolled in our programs.”
- “The training I attended was SO full of information and has stuck with me. While I haven’t been able to officially utilize any of the training in my professional work, I have the ability to do so all the time personally in conversations with parents, friends etc.”
- “I participated in the first year of WISH meetings and felt that it was more about setting up WISH and not about increasing our capacity. I did send staff to the second year and some of our staff participated in the Planned Parenthood training which they found very helpful.”

It appears WISH’s intention to develop ‘askable adults’ in the community was largely successful.

When asked about programming for youth, adults, and community awareness in year three of WISH, we received the following responses:

- 54% of survey respondents conducted programming with youth participants on sexuality or healthy relationships in year three.
 - Year Three programming reached 360 youth, primarily female identifying students (200-300). This programming reached primarily Latinx populations (82-176) followed by black (74-135) then white (31-106).¹
 - It is encouraging to see programming reach populations most vulnerable for poor sexual health outcomes.
- 31% of survey respondents held programming for adults on sexual health, sexuality, or healthy relationships related programming for adults in the past year.

¹ It is important to note that more young people received programming about sexual health or healthy relationships through community based organizations than what is reflected through the survey results. For example, Planned Parenthood programming in Worcester reached dozens of young parents. Additionally, Planned Parenthood utilized a peer-to-peer model through its Get Real Teen Council, which reached 750 youth through workshops and close to 2,000 through 1 to 1s.

- These events and workshops reached over 1,150 participants primarily female identifying people (837-1110), primarily white (781-1105), followed by Latinx (15-265), and black (1-27).
- It continues to be of concern that adults from the same backgrounds as the youth tend not to be reached through sexual health education programming.
- 22% of participants held community awareness events related to sexuality and sexual health. These events reached over 320 people.
 - These events included a showcase of sexual health work in Worcester, LGBTQA community events, and other events hosted by various Worcester based non-profits.
- 40% of respondents who facilitated sexual health programming used WISH resources to assist them in their programming.

Web-based Strategies

In addition to in-person trainings and events, WISH also invested in online mechanisms to share information and resources. In 2018, 40% strongly agreed or agreed that WISH's online resources (Facebook and website) were helpful for finding information and/or implementing sexual health programming. This is up from 36% in 2017. Again, the highest levels of agreement were among those more involved. Among those who had been to steering committee meetings 56% agreed and 53% of those who had been involved in taskforce meetings agreed. Open ended comments included:

- "Great resources"
- "I find the videos very effective"
- "I don't provide programming so I don't use the websites for programming."

Below we offer information about 'reach' of these strategies into the larger community.

Facebook

In late 2017, WISH relaunched its social media accounts to include more advocacy, articles, and other information about the Worcester area. These changes and implementation were initially well received, however, in the recent months, WISH has seen less activity and involvement.

As of September 2018, the WISH Facebook page had 229 people who liked the page, a 22% increase in followers from the beginning of the evaluation period. Over the course of the year, WISH posted 24 times averaging one post every other week. Posts that were not boosted or that did not have paid sponsorship averaged 207 likes. WISH's boosted posts reached over 3,000 people. The following is a synopsis of the best performing posts:

Paid Posts (The following posted were boosted to increase visibility for \$5-\$20):

- On June 7th, 2017, WISH posted an article from Worcester Magazine Titled "Feature: On the Rise: STDs spark concern in, around Worcester". This post reached 3279 people (741 organic/ 2601 Paid). 59 people clicked on the link to view the article. The post was liked 12 times and shared 5 times.

- On March 22, 2018 WISH posted a Poster making contest event. This event reached 1073 (864 organic/224 paid).
- On January 9th, 2018 WISH released a statement applauding Mayor Petty for addressing sexual health and sexuality education in his inaugural speech. This post reached 381 people (159 organic /238 paid). This post has 20 likes and 2 shares.

Unpaid Posts:

- On November 15, 2017, WISH posted a TED Talk by Dr. McAdoo about sexual health. This post reached 710 and had 1133 impressions.
- On November 21, 2017 WISH reposted a Mass Live Article with the caption “check this out”. The article Governor Baker signing a law that guaranteed birth control without copays.
- On November 30th, Mattie Castiel did a PSA with WISH. This PSA reached 353 people and was viewed 136 times.
- On September 25th, 2018 WISH posted an article from the Worcester Telegram discussing the critiques to the sexuality education curriculum. This post reached 814 individuals with 1216 impressions.

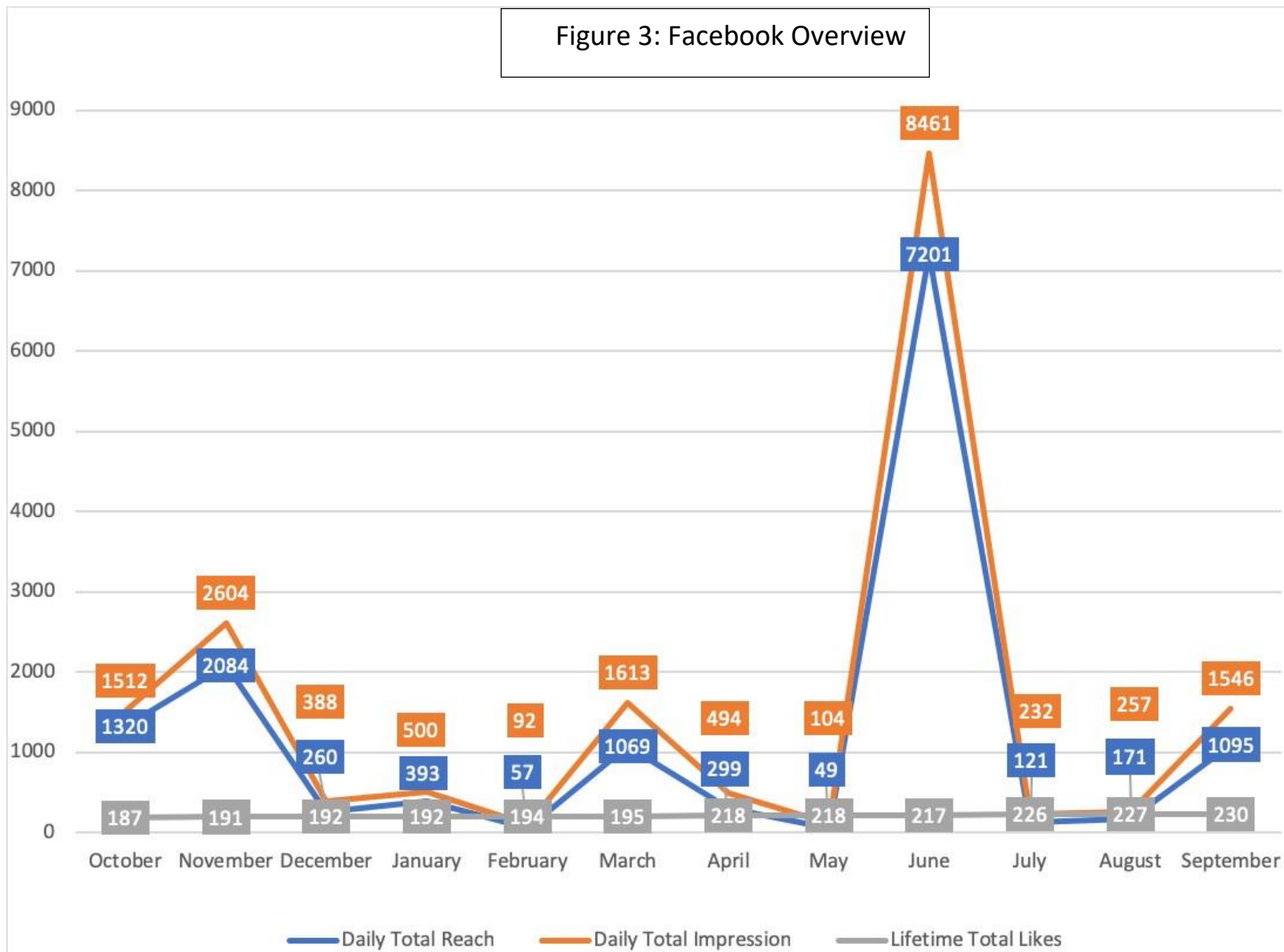
Overall, WISH has the potential to reach a large audience with content. Consistency and original posts (as opposed to posts from other sources) are important factors in whether or not a post performed well. WISH’s followers preferred local sources information including news articles, and video PSAs.

Figure 3 shows how the Facebook page reached people in the following capacities:

1. Page Likes: number of Facebook users who have “liked” WISH’s page
2. Total Reach: number of Facebook users that have engaged with WISH content by watching a video, visiting the Facebook page, or commenting on a post
3. Total Impressions: number of Facebook users who have seen something WISH-related on their newsfeeds, either through comments on a post, sponsored posts, or a page shared by a friend.

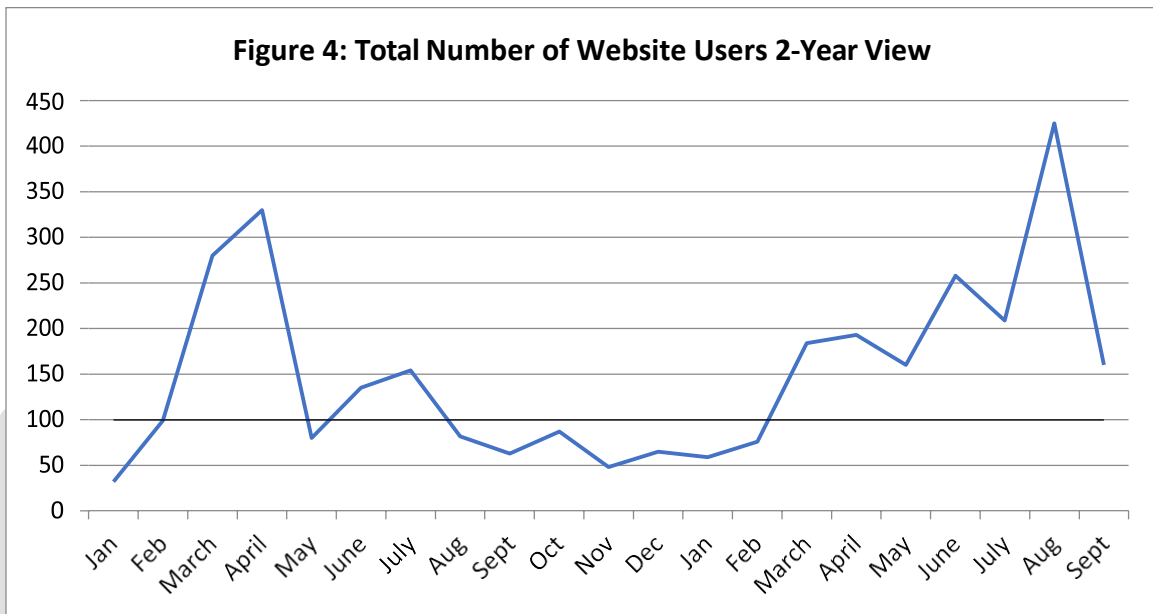
WISH saw a large increase in traffic in June, surrounding the Community Health Forum. Aside from that jump in WISH’s reach, the Facebook data remained relatively stagnant with smaller jumps in November March and April, consistent with the posts/ events listed above. By keeping posts informative and relevant, WISH can gain more followers and maintain followers.

Figure 3: Facebook Overview



Website users: Wishtaskforce.org

Figure 4 shows website users from January 2017-Sept 30th 2018.



This chart shows that while March and April of this year saw less viewers as compared to these months in 2018, May through September saw far more. As the trend line indicates, there was a net increase in website use over the past two years. This web traffic may be the effect of the events WISH hosted, especially the community health forum. This could also be due to the increased visibility of WISH during discussions about the Making Proud Choices curriculum.

Summary for Indicator Three

While WISH has done a lot of great work in the community, there are many areas where WISH has room for improvement. The most common comment on these surveys was a frustration with lack of moving forward with getting an evidence-based sexual health curriculum in the Worcester schools. These comments included:

- “Soooo hard to get sex ed in WPS. Very disappointing.”
- “I do believe we have raised awareness and increased access to sexual health services, but we still need to get a comprehensive sexual health curriculum in the WPS!”
- “Have not witnessed any serious moving forward on this initiative with the WPS.”
- “I was asked by the Mayor to review the state of sexual health in the city- it is not a pretty one and there remains much work to be done! The schools have been lacking in their approach to educating students of all ages!”

This frustration was shared by Mayor Petty. When interviewed about the impact of WISH for this report, he shared that he is going to continue trying to implement and evidence-based curriculum in the school district.

Indicator 6: Number of Worcester residents who report teen healthy relationships and sexual health as a top three health priority for the city

Over the three years, WISH hosted many successful events that raised awareness about the importance of sexual health education for youth, that educated residents, and ultimately that increased urgency about the issue. Youth sexual health was identified as one of the top four behavioral risk factors in the 2018 Greater Worcester Community Health Assessment (CHA).

This year WISH hosted two events that served to increase awareness:

- On June 30th, WISH hosted a community health forum at the Worcester Senior Center. This event showcased the work of local non-profits and agencies doing sexual health programming. Nearly 70 people attended this event ranging from individuals, families, professionals and politicians.
- In March and April, WISH hosted a poster making contest. The goals of this event were to raise awareness of WISH in the Worcester community, to provide young artists with opportunities to submit meaningful artwork, and to provide new PSA's that appeal to youth in doctors' offices and at health care providers. WISH received 15 entry's and the winner was awarded \$100 (second and third place were awarded \$50 each)

Both of these events show that residents are engaging, however, there is lots of room for expansion of these efforts.

In addition, to WISH sponsored events, WISH worked closely with UMass spreading awareness within the medical school. Most notably, WISH appeared on a panel with UMass Medical Students for Choice. The panel was centered around the status of sexual health in Worcester and how physicians can be active in the sexual health movement. This event raised awareness for WISH's goal to implement comprehensive sexuality education in the Worcester Public Schools.

Beyond the immediate scope of WISH, it is clear that voters value sexual health. In June of 2017, Planned Parenthood conducted a survey of 1,020 randomly selected registered voters in the state of Massachusetts, 200 of which were from Worcester County. The study suggested that Worcester city and county voters not only have a favorable view towards Planned Parenthood, but also that voters hold favorable opinions towards comprehensive sex education and even more so towards access to birth control methods. Their study concluded:

- 61% of voters strongly agree that a comprehensive approach to sex education is necessary, compared to an abstinence only curriculum
- 94% either strongly or somewhat agree that birth control methods are a basic, preventative health service that should be affordable for everyone.
 - Intensity behind this opinion is formidable, with more than three-quarters of voters in Worcester City (77%) and the rest of Worcester County (79%) indicating that they strongly agree contraceptives should be affordable.

- There is also strong support for a birth control guarantee as law, as 82% of overall Worcester County voters either strongly or somewhat support the passage of a law in the Massachusetts legislature guaranteeing insurance coverage for birth control at no additional cost to patients.

A final indicator of WISH's effectiveness at influencing public opinion was the Worcester Board of Health's decision to formally endorse the need for comprehensive sexual health education in the Worcester Public Schools.

Respondents to the year three impact survey noted, "Sexual health has become a city-wide conversation. Elected officials and families alike are having conversations about sexual health as it relates to Worcester youth in supportive and educated ways. We are closer than ever to having comprehensive sex ed in the schools."

Summary and Conclusion

The good news:

As summarized on page three, WISH made substantial progress toward its two goals to increase access to comprehensive sex education and to lifesaving sexual health services; and to raise the urgency in addressing the city's poor sexual health indicators. Dozens of health educators have received additional training and thousands of parents, other care givers, clergy, youth workers, and other adults have received accurate information. These two efforts enrich the existing relationships young people have with adults. Community members and WPS collaborated to select a comprehensive sexual health curriculum. Worcester's Board of Health voted to endorse the implementation of comprehensive sexual health education in the public schools in October 2018.

One respondent to the Year Three Impact survey reported, WISH came to be seen as, "a great asset to the city." Another Taskforce member stated, "Without WISH not sure it [sexual health] would be the priority it is...lowest teen pregnancy rates among Gateway cities in MA is really good."

WISH catalyzed a difficult but necessary conversation in Worcester, "In previous years, youth sexual health didn't seem to be a priority, but over the years I believe youth sexual health is gradually getting more attention." This sentiment was reinforced by another Taskforce member:

I have been in my role for a limited amount of time, but it appears that WISH has helped create urgency within WPS, the Worcester School Committee, and the Mayor's office to prioritize comprehensive sexual health education. It doesn't seem like this was an active conversation within those institutions prior to WISH.

WISH appears to have increased a sense of awareness about the importance of improving youth sexual health. The topic is gaining more attention and perhaps even becoming a "hot topic and at the

forefront”, but it has also become clear that it is not yet a priority with a clear path forward for the Worcester schools.

And so, we conclude that there is still work to do:

As stated by one Taskforce member, “I don't think Worcester prioritizes youth sexual health; however, I do think that with the help of WISH, there has been more visualization of some the needs.” Another Task Force member reported, “I understand that the health clinics have taken a more active role in schools and that we made attempts to get the schools to agree to comprehensive sexual health but that we have some barriers to overcome at the local level.” There is widespread recognition that it is very hard to get sex education in the schools due to “conservative leadership and ‘preserved’ opinions of this community.”

One Taskforce member offered a community-based perspective that suggests why the work should continue, “Most of the youth at my organization attend schools in Worcester and I have seen few changes in the level of sexual education that they receive there.” It even appears like the city may be losing ground. For example, in 2017, fewer youth reported having learned about HIV/AIDs in the schools as compared to 2015. The consensus seems to be that WISH should stay the course until the WPS adopts a comprehensive evidence-based sexual health curriculum, “I do believe we have raised awareness and increased access to sexual health services, but we still need to get a comprehensive sexual health curriculum in the WPS!”

With staff turnover and the grant cycle coming to an end, WISH’s efforts may have fallen short. In retrospect, more work could have been done with the school committee as WISH was working with the schools to select a curriculum. WISH built community awareness and networks that were able to be mobilized for recent hearings and school committee meetings, yet, if relationship building and relentless community outreach was happening all along, the WPS may have been more likely to have adopted Making Proud Choices during WISH’s three-year timeframe.

Because this work is not quite finished, Taskforce members expressed concern over the lack of funding, “I am worried about the future of WISH without secure funding and a dedicated coordinator/staff person to continue this important work.” Yet, Taskforce members still see important roles for WISH:

1. Don’t back down from comprehensive sexual health education in the schools
 - “We know that to address the prevention of STD's with the LatinX population we need the schools to be involved. WISH needs to continue to push on comprehensive sex education. We need to leverage a campaign year to put more pressure at all levels.”
 - “Continue to work with institutional partners toward implementing comprehensive, inclusive, age-appropriate, medically accurate sex ed in public schools”
 - “STI stigma, lack of information about barrier methods, lack of support/not having the words or skills to practice sexual consent or identify healthy relationships, lack of inclusion of LGBTQ young people in discourse around all these topics in an affirming way... the same issues are persisting. I

honestly think WISH (because of the partnerships within the taskforce) could be an extremely powerful engine for advocacy work to bring *high quality* AND comprehensive sex ed into Worcester public schools. I think that's where the focus should be. With appropriate funding, I also think it could be a more effective training hub of educators, parents, and young people if there was a consistent space to offer trainings."

2. Gender and sexual orientation inclusion

- "I can really see the gender continuum in all its glory these days so how do we address this in large diverse groups when discussing sexuality and sexual health so that all will have the information they need to navigate."
- "LGBTQIA* centered sexual health content, sexually explicit media and "sexting", healthy communication/consent"

3. More focus on youth as educators

- "Need for conversation on interpersonal relationships and identity. I think WISH could support strengthening existing programs by creating a way where there could be more youth peer mentors leading these kind of conversations."
- "Need to have more organizations doing peer to peer trainings, not just Planned Parenthood, we don't have enough capacity in the city with facilitators that can connect well with youth."

4. Sex trafficking

- "Very concerning to recently learn of the sex trafficking of teenagers in our city."

5. Consent

- "I think the advent of the Me, too movement raises important issues related to consent that we could elevate."

6. More tools

- "There is so much false information being spread. Some basic tools to quickly dispel myths around sexual health would be wonderful."
- "Sexting and revenge porn. WISH could help bring awareness to the issue and resources for parents and caregivers"
- "Students are still sexually active. Information could be distributed to the families interested in educating their children."

Over the past three years, WISH undoubtedly played a fundamental role in building Worcester's capacity to improve youth sexual health. There remains work to do on WISH's current goals and there are new directions to pursue. We hope the information in this report contributes to the sense of urgency to address youth sexual health and to the optimism that through collaboration this community can make a difference for young people's wellbeing

WISH Logic Model

Goal To improve educational, economic, and social outcomes for youth in Worcester by making a positive impact on adolescent sexual health and creating an environment that supports healthy relationships.

Strategies	Actions	Outputs	Year One Accomplishments	Year three	Impact
<p>Be the convener of community leaders, parents, service providers, young people, faith leaders, and others that are representative of the city of Worcester and focused on increasing opportunities and improving the educational, economic, and social outcomes for youth.</p> <p>Public Awareness Campaign/Presence to create community will and urgency to address the needs of Worcester's youth on issues of relationships and sexual health</p> <p>Bring together the information on teen sexual health for the city of Worcester—gather data and put it into practice</p>	<p>Build capacity for <i>increased access to sexual health and health relationships education and services that will impact young people</i> through training and dissemination of high-quality materials</p> <p>Share best practices by creating repository of experts in the city for sexual health and related topics</p> <p>Engage key decision-makers</p> <p>Articulate issue and why it matters to Worcester</p> <p>Generate support towards actions via a digital and print marketing campaign</p> <p>Bring together relevant data to show full scope of the issue and identify ways to improve</p> <p>Measure improvement</p> <p>Work in alignment with the Greater Worcester Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)</p>	<p>Number of youth and number of girls who report they received comprehensive sexual health education over the course of the year</p> <p>Number of youth and number of girls who report that they can identify at least one adult whom they can go to for trusted information about their sexual health</p> <p>Number of providers who report WISH as an effective resource for promoting awareness of the sexual health needs of youth in the city of Worcester</p> <p>Number of training participants who report that they are better equipped to be an “askable adult” on matters of sexual health and healthy relationships</p> <p>Number of training participants who report an intention to have a conversation with the young people in their lives about healthy relationships and sexual health, including talking about delay of sex and use of protection methods</p> <p>Number of Worcester residents who report teen healthy relationships and sexual health as a top three health priority for the city</p> <p>Metrics for community level urgency about linkages between poor sexual health outcomes and the educational, economic, and social impacts on youth</p> <p>Task force engagement of 2 key decision-makers or influencers in the city of Worcester.</p>	<p>Baseline: Health education classes in WPS include conversations about abstinence, but lack content on other sexual health topics. 21% of high schoolers and 45% of WPS middle schoolers receive health education. In 2015, 24% of high schoolers and 28% of middle schoolers reported being unsure, or not having received HIV/AIDS education in WPS.</p> <p>37.5% of survey participants reported that WISH had assisted their organization with sexual health programming</p> <p>33.3% of survey respondents have weekly programming with youth participants regarding sexual health, sexuality or healthy relationships, and 33.3% have held a workshop or training for youth participants on those topics</p> <p>37.5% of survey respondents have held more than 5 trainings for adults on youth sexual health, sexuality or healthy relationships</p> <p>66.7% of survey respondents strongly agree that WISH is an effective resource and 33.3% of respondents reported using knowledge or skills they gained through WISH in their work</p> <p>77.8% of SECS participants reported being better equipped to answer questions related to sexuality in a non-judgmental, inclusive and comprehensive manner after the training</p> <p>22.2% of survey respondents feel strongly that the WISH website is a useful resource for implementing sexual health programming at their organization</p>	<p>25% increase in the number of young people receiving comprehensive sex education</p> <p>An increase in the number of parents/guardians who report having conversations with their kids about relationships and sexual health, including about delay of sex and protection methods</p> <p>Increase in policies and/or programs being implemented that address the greater impacts of negative sexual health outcomes for vulnerable populations</p> <p>Community level urgency about linkages between poor sexual health outcomes and the educational, economic, and social impacts on youth</p>	<p>Raise the urgency in addressing the city's poor sexual health indicators (teen birth and sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates higher than the state average)</p> <p>Increase access to comprehensive sex education and to lifesaving sexual health services.</p>

ITEM: gb #9-416

STANDING COMMITTEE: **TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORTS**

DATE OF MEETING: Tuesday, September 15, 2020

ITEM: Miss McCullough/Mr. Foley/Mr. Monfredo (December 4, 2019)

Request that the Administration consider incorporating the campaign entitled "RESPECTfully" when the Sex Ed Curriculum is established.

PRIOR ACTION:

12-19-19 - Referred to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports.

BACKUP: (Consider with gb #9-288 and gb #0-31.)

STANDING COMMITTEE: **TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORTS**

DATE OF MEETING: Tuesday, September 15, 2020

ITEM: Mayor Petty/Miss Biancheria/Mrs. Clancey/Mr. Foley/Ms. McCullough/
Ms. Novick (January 8, 2020)

Request that the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports recommend a comprehensive, inclusive, evidenced-based sexual and health curriculum and an appropriate level of increased classroom time for health education to the school committee for the FY21 budget.

PRIOR ACTION:

1-16-20 - Mayor Petty announced that the Senate passed the Sex Ed curriculum bill and it is now at the House for deliberation. Superintendent Binienda requested that the content of this bill be aligned with the frameworks from DESE. Mr. Monfredo made a motion to hold the item. Mayor Petty suggested that Ms. McCullough invite representatives from the Public Health Department to the Standing Committee meetings. Mayor Petty stated that this has been an issue for too long and that the state and Administration have done nothing and the students are the ones who are the recipients of the failure to come up with a comprehensive plan. He has waited a year for the state and thinks that having the transparent discussions in the Standing Committee is the right thing to do. He opposed the request to hold the item. He stated that he wants a Sex Ed curriculum by September 2020. Mr. Monfredo withdrew his motion to hold the item and made the following motion: Request that the Administration create a plan for a Comprehensive Sex Ed Curriculum. Ms. McCullough stated that in conversation with the Clerk, that all items pertaining to the Sex Ed curriculum be taken along with this item. Superintendent Binienda believes that the Administration can write its own curriculum by grade level by June 2020 and combine it with what the law states. Mr. Monfredo withdrew his second motion. It was moved and voice voted to refer the item to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports. Referred to the Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports.

BACKUP: : (Consider with gb #9-288 and gb #0-416.)