



WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

45 West Main Street · Westborough, MA 01581 · 508-836-7700 · www.westborough.org

To: School Committee
From: Amber Bock
Re: HS Field Sound System
Date: August 23, 2019

Dear School Committee,

This memo provides the planning and implementation update for the High School lower field sound system. At the May 8th meeting School Committee received an update on progress to implement the new sound system. During this update we established the following planned steps:

- Three sound tests will be conducted and feedback will be welcome from neighbors
- Levels that “cap” max sound will be determined and locked in
- Protocols for announcing will be developed
- Process for reporting concerns will be put in place
- Cavanaugh Tocci (secondary sound system analysis) will conduct a fall benchmark check on sound during a football game
- Scoreboard Enterprises will continue to be used to support training on the system. They can be invited to game events if needed.
- A fall season summary report will be given to SC post season

The goal of this memo is to update the School Committee on these implementation plans.

The sound system upgrades have been completed. The speakers are independent, the directionality is adjusted, a new amplifier was installed, a lock key box was put in place to eliminate the options to adjust the sound without permission, and limits to the system have been set after testing.

Testing:

- May 23rd between 6:00pm-6:30pm for announcements at lacrosse game
- June 1st 5:00pm-7:00pm WHS graduation
- June 27th 11am-1:00pm testing, Administration, SC members, volunteers

The June 27th testing was the extended sound test. This session lasted between 30-40 minutes and allowed us to vary levels, gather data, and send volunteers out to different parts of the community to gather sound information. Drivers called in from various town streets and provided feedback as we played various recordings, music, and then had “announcers” use the mic from the press box and on the field. Participants fanned out around the field/WHs grounds and then circled out further and further on the grounds. Walkers and drivers moved out to the neighborhoods:

Ruggles/Baxter
Ruggles/Myrtle
Ruggles/Cross
Church Street
Blake Street
O'Neil
Main Street
Harrison Ave
Upper parking
Ruggles/Denny
West Street
Charles Street

Volunteers were able to report if they could hear the sound system and if so, how clearly and how loudly. Working from the sound booth, we adjusted various speakers and the overall sound level to establish a sound level that we felt would provide in-stadium listening quality with the least neighborhood impact of any sound bleeding beyond the school property. During this test we received no complaint calls. There was a Charles Street resident who heard the testing and posted to facebook wondering what game was taking place. They did not indicate that the sound was a problem, but it was audible in their home. Calls made to a Harrison Ave and Church Street resident indicated that they did not realize the sound system was in use and they did not hear it from inside their homes. From outside on Church Street a "faint level" could be heard, but no content discernable.

Following these tests the system was set and the level locked in. [Sound Levels](#)
A starting protocol is in place for announcers and for rental users. [Mewhiney Field Protocols](#)

Procedure for Communicating noise concerns:

Noise or nuisance concerns should be reported to the Westborough High School Principal on the next available school day (508-836-7720). Leave the message with the Main Office Secretary and you can expect a phone call back as soon as possible.

If it's during a Friday night athletic contest, the complaint can be made in person to school personnel who are on site assisting in managing the event.

Noise complaints can also be filed with the Westborough Police Department at any time and the WPD's School Liaison Officer will report it to the Westborough High School Administration on the next available school day.

We look forward to a positive season and will make ongoing adjustments as needed.