

**MINUTES
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2004
7:00 P.M. -OPEN SESSION
WACTC-ROOM 303
MULTI-MEDIA ROOM**

Call to Order at 7:08 P.M.

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Marc Dubois-Chairman	Present
Michael Bileau-Vice Chairman	Present
Allen Auclair	Present
John Ward	Present
Michelle Williams	Absent

GOOD AND WELFARE-PUBLIC:

Ms. Judith Auvlin from the Harris School PTO, petitioned the School Committee for a sponsorship to erect a reader board in the front of Harris school. This would help in communicating with parents. It would be a 4' x 6' double sided, non-illuminated board. The estimates they have received range from \$2,700-6,700. If they do not get the sponsorship from the Committee, are they able to solicit local businesses for sponsorships?

Mr. Roger Harris, a native of Woonsocket, was they're representing the Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Poverty, and he asked the Committee to consider kids who come to school hungry. There is a subsidized program, Universal Free Breakfast, and it's going on all over the country. It is not costly to the school's budget. The Federal government mandates funding for each child. This allows kids to simply pick up their food and walk away.

Ms. Marlene Smith, seventh-grade teacher at the Middle School, 15 Monica Drive, Cumberland, commented on an article in the newspaper regarding scores and was defending the Woonsocket School Department and their improvement. In the article, it states each child with an IEP counts as two students. She has fifteen to twenty students in her inclusion class and if they count as two, they are way over what the contract allows. She will be asking that at the next negotiations, leaves of absences be addressed as to who can take them and who can't.

RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Dr. D'Acchioli gave special thanks to Diane Mayers, the administration and staff of the Citizens and Pothier Schools for working cooperatively to make the Nature Trail a reality for the students. Thanks, also, went to Mr. Auclair and Mr. Bileau for volunteering and special thanks to Mr. Bileau for the use of his truck to haul debris taken from the site.

Congratulations were given to the Bernon Heights School for their hard work and dedication on their new Nature Trail. The trail was officially opened on October 19th. A ceremony took place with representation from the Audubon Society, members from the community, staff and students all in attendance.

And very hearty congratulations went to the Administration and staff of the Coleman School for the

remarkable achievements made over the past three years. Today's Journal article ran statewide and has brought much deserved recognition of the school and district.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Ward stated that there is a correction needed on the October 13th Closed minutes. There was no Roll Call to establish a quorum.

Motion to approve the open minutes of October 13, 2004 as submitted and the closed minutes with the correction of the Roll Call portion being moved to just under the Motion to go into Closed session
JW Second: MD

Unanimously approved

CONSENT AGENDA:

Personnel Actions: (See Attached)

Certified Appointments

Non-Certified Appointments

Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

Local

Ocean State School Gymnastics/Rental/Athletics/Local-\$2,362.50

Grant

ASAP Software/Software Upgrades/WACTC/Grant-\$5,225.51

Donna Christie/Stipend for Higher Education/District/Grant-\$2,700.00

Doreen Corrente/Consulting/WACTC/Grant-\$4,900.00

Peter Andreozzi/Stipened for Higher Education/District/Grant-2,700.00

Master Solutions/Software Licensing/WACTC/Grant-\$2,870.00

Field Trips/Conference Requests

Using & Understanding Data Workshop/Merrimack, NH//McFee/Title I

Home Schooling Requests: (0)

Motion to approve the entire Consent Agenda except the Ocean State School Gymnastics Purchase removed for discussion

MD Second: JW

Unanimously approved

Mr. Auclair asked why they were renting this facility?

Dr. D' Acchioli stated they cannot afford to purchase this equipment themselves and it is similar to when the hockey team rents ice.

Motion to approve the Ocean State School Gymnastics purchase of \$2,362.50

MD Second: JW

Unanimously approved

COMMUNICATIONS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Auclair thanked everyone who attended last week's Parent Advisory Council Meeting and Linda Filomeno for functioning as their recording secretary. All Principals received a notice to appoint delegates before November 10th when they will meet again in this room. The delegates will be from each PTO with alternates, teachers and administrators. He will send out a copy of the by-laws as amended. He is looking forward to the council getting off the ground.

Chairman Dubois reminded everyone of the School Safety meeting next Wednesday in this room where a number of topics will be addressed including bullying, highway safety and a representative will be in attendance from the Gay and Lesbian Coalition.

CONFERENCES:

Ms. Darlene McGraw, a member of the R.I. Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Poverty, stated they had been here over a year ago and presented the Universal Breakfast Program to the Committee then and is back because four communities have successfully launched this program. They are Providence, Central Falls, Pawtucket and Cranston. She presented the Members with the most recent information from Pawtucket who has agreed to continue the program for another year. Based on one year in Pawtucket, they still have a healthy surplus. They are asking that Woonsocket start a pilot program in one school and they suggest the Coleman School where 90% of the students are eligible now for free/reduced breakfasts. They have talked to the school's principal, Mr. George Nasuti and he has agreed to pilot the program if approved. They answered his questions and concerns. Children who eat breakfast are ready to learn. It's the right thing to do. Other districts have seen improvement in their test scores and attendance.

Ms. Maggie Rogers, who is a parent and volunteer from Pawtucket, stated that Pawtucket had similar concerns and they had an 188K surplus before and their profit has come down a little. The actual cost per child changes because they add in overhead and licensing fees. Perhaps the only additional costs would be if additional workers would be needed.

Ms. Judith Dangy, who lives in Woonsocket and formerly in Pawtucket, stated she is in favor of this program because she has seen it work.

Reverend Dorian Parker of Woonsocket stated they should have compassion enough to try the pilot for the children. There is a stigma of free/reduced meals and this program removes those barriers. If they eat, they perform better. Give them the best you can.

Ms. Sandra Kelly, a member of the campaign, stated that the Federal funds for this program is available now. This will help reduce behavioral problems as well. Kids will learn that society cares about them. She urged the Committee to support the pilot program.

Mr. Ward stated he has different numbers than they presented. He, also, has a philosophical problem with the concept that it is the obligation of society to a person rather than the other way around. The numbers projected Pawtucket would lose money and they did. They had a reduction in profit of \$14,500 due to the higher participation rates of kids who would have paid. We are contributing to obesity. Some of these students eat at home and then come to school and have French toast and honey buns. Federal law states that kids who receive free/reduced meals are invisible so he doesn't understand the stigma. If they are not doing that, that is what needs to be corrected and it doesn't mean that they should offer this to everyone with no regard. Also, the program should sustain itself and if it doesn't, then they have to supplement and that is taking books out of the hands of students. The increase in volume will cause higher labor costs. The kids who need free/reduced breakfast and or lunch have it now. In Pawtucket, there was only a 14% increase in the students they were trying to reach.

Mr. Auclair stated that presently students use a personal I.D. for all their meals that receive free/reduced meals so no one knows. The proposal is a pilot and perhaps they could try it to gather information.

Mrs. Goodman stated that most of the schools have the personal I.D. set up and as they speak, the elementary schools are being brought on-line.

Mr. Bileau asked why if it is federally funded is there a plus or minus; what is the out of pocket expense and how to kids get to school to get the free breakfast? Kids take buses, RIPTA, etc and they won't have enough time to eat breakfast.

Chairman Dubois stated that Coleman has a 90% poverty level so how is there a stigma now when most of the students are eligible now for free/reduced meals?

Mr. Ward stated that before they implement at Coleman they need to know what is the participation numbers and that once a program starts, it is very difficult to remove it. And only when it is fully implemented, will they get complete, accurate numbers.

Mr. Auclair suggested that representatives from the Campaign should request a special meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Motion to approve the Integrated Pest Management Policy- 2nd Passage JW Second: MB
Roll Call Vote (All Yes)

Mr. Auclair stated that he had presented Dr. D'Acchioli with information he had gather from Mrs. Liz Lopes-Dugay, the State representative from DEM, the enforcement agency on this matter, and it stated that they are required at the beginning of each year, to send notices to parents as to what their policy is and that there is a registry at each school and a listing summary of what was done the prior year. Mrs. Lopes-Dugay will be sending them a letter outlining this. The problem he has is that General Law 23-25-37, Section G, states that notice of any pesticide shall be given to parents and workers at that school by one week after the application. It is very specific and has other requirements and stipulations. This is not address in the policy as written. He asked if they should table this issue to continue working on it. He, also, has a Sample policy from the DEM that they could use. From the State's point of view, there is no leeway.

Mr. Ward stated that per their by-laws, a policy must be voted on at two consecutive meetings intact. He suggests they approve it and they can review the material he has provided and amend it later. This was put in place in a reactionary fashion due to the recent problems. He does not believe this is an issue when special applications are filed. Perhaps, Mr. Auclair could continue working with the Superintendent on this matter.

Dr. D'Acchioli stated that the policy should have been in place a year ago. Perhaps it is better to approve it and continue working on it. He, also, met with representatives from the Enforcement Group and they even have questions on this. He wants to see something in writing from them. Registers are maintained at each school. They are sending out letters to those who are registered.

Motion to approve the Amendment to R2-1.1 Use of City-Owned Vehicles by Employees-2nd Passage
JW Second: MB
Roll Call Vote (All Yes)

Dr. D'Acchioli stated he did some editorializing on number eight for grammatical purposes and what and where the special decal shall be placed, except in a 'loaner' situation. He, also, changed City owned to "School Department."

Mr. Auclair stated he would be meeting with Mr. Parrillo on Friday. As the regulation is written, it addresses vehicles that are taken home. Perhaps they need to modify it for vehicles used in the District. Perhaps an annual sign-off log. Drivers need to ready the regulations and comply annually for liability purposes. If they don't comply, it would be seen as willful and can't plead ignorance. There is no information regarding the mileage log. He will be amending this in the future. He will pass the change and work with Dr. D'Acchioli and Mr. Parrillo to amend this so there is a good, clear regulation.

Dr. D'Acchioli stated that he has designed a vehicle mileage form with Mr. Parrillo that would go into a binder and be left in each vehicle.

Mr. Bileau asks that common sense prevail. He doesn't want the 'no personal use' to mean that someone who is driving from one school to another couldn't stop at Dunkin' Donuts and pick up a coffee.

Mr. Ward stated that he agreed with Mr. Bileau. The simple fact is that there are other regulations regarding the inappropriate use of school assets including vehicles. This should not be a reason to get at someone they don't like. It is up to the Superintendent's discretion. When this matter first came up, it should have been brought to the Superintendent's attention per their policy.

Mr. Auclair stated that in Section 7, they should drop the 'and' before 'for any work-related matter'.

Chairman Dubois stated that he wanted to see a change in this policy before he was even aware of the incident that the vehicle was seen at a beach. He only learned of that at the Autumnfest. He still has a problem with a vehicle going home to South Kingstown.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion to approve the appointment of Mrs. Donna Valentine as the Woonsocket Middle School Principal

JW Second: MB

Roll Call Vote (All Yes)

Mr. Auclair asked Dr. D'Acchioli to read aloud the top portion of P-2-4 of the by-laws in the policy manual, which he did. Mr. Auclair stated that he calls for 75-day and six-month evaluations.

Dr. D'Acchioli asked that this policy be changed. This was written over ten years ago. Dr. Macera has an extensive evaluation program.

Mr. Ward stated he has seen the extensive documents for himself. He doesn't believe the 75-day evaluation is required for someone who is not new to the District.

Mr. Auclair stated that his goal is to address each policy and their needs to be a review of policies and regulations to keep them fresh.

Chairman Dubois stated that he is very impressed with the work that Mrs. Valentine has all ready done when she was thrown in there with the cockroach situation going on and the shuffling of administrators.

Motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Debra Ferranti an Elementary School Principal

JW No Second.

The motion fails.

Dr. D'Acchioli stated that the third item of appointing Middle School Assistant Principals was being withdrawn.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. D'Acchioli stated that the Middle School has been bug free for the past week. Griggs and Browne will continue to monitor the building according to their contract. On their website, it now contains a link to the Whitmire Micro-Gen Research Laboratories web site. This site contains the MSDS pesticide labels and information used by Griggs and Browne.

He had an opportunity to attend the annual RIPEC dinner two weeks ago. CVS CEO Tom Ryan's remarks easily applied to their schools. Everyone in this district needs to work smarter, work faster and find ways of completing their tasks cheaper.

The following two days were spent with the New England School Leaders Council, an affiliate of Brown University of which he is a member. The group discussed several topics, one of which is the Advisor – Advisee program they plan to initiate at the high school. Mr. Vachon will be making a presentation either at the November or December meeting.

At the next meeting, Dr. Macera will be seeking Committee approval for the district’s strategic plan. Dr. Macera will walk through the process and entertain Committee questions and answers. As always, Committee is encouraged to provide the Administration with questions prior to the meeting so that adequate research may be done and questions may be answered when asked.

To avoid a conflict with School Committee meetings, the November and April parent conferences dates for the Middle School have been moved up a day from the Wednesday to the Tuesday. The new dates are Tuesday, November 16 and Tuesday, April 12.

Interviews for the assistant principal candidates will be held on November 4 and 5. There are nine candidates from all levels within the district. An interview team consisting of the Middle School principal, a parent, a representative from the Teachers’ Guild, the Math Coordinator, the HR Director and a School Committee observer if one so desires. The Administration is seeking appointment on the November 17 meeting.

As reported earlier, the PAC accomplished a great deal of work on their by-laws. Elections are scheduled for their next meeting on November 10. This Committee should be very instrumental in communicating school and district initiatives and events to all school groups.

Last week, Dr. D’Acchioli, also attended the New Smoke-Free Workplace seminar. The new rules have little impact on schools, which have been operating smoke-free for quite some time. The Department of Health should soon be sending signage to all schools.

Yesterday, he attended a Career and Tech Ed conference at the State House. He reminded everyone that this district would greatly benefit through passage of Bond #4 for the improvement of Career and Technical Schools throughout the State.

Last, the RIDE has changed the way enrollments are reported and the way graduation rates will be calculated. They were, also, notified that the RIDE would be conducting hearings on the BEP. The impact of those changes and the changes proposed for the BEP will be the subject of many discussions with RIDE officials.

Regarding the question of Middle School Math books, there are approximately 1,750 Math books in Woonsocket Middle School. Every teacher has been instructed to make sure that every student has access to a book that can be brought home and used as a reference. If Committee hears that this is not happening, please provide the Administration with the name of the student and the teacher. As he has stated before, there is no reason for a student to be denied use of a Math book at the Middle School.

Regarding the use of microscopes, the Administration called representatives at RIDE. The Science GLEs have not been completed and RIDE officials could provide no indication that the new GLEs would require the use of a microscope at the elementary school level. While the district curriculum currently calls for the limited use of a microscope in grade 5, it would make no sense to purchase microscopes until after the State completes the Science GLEs.

Reminder, next Tuesday is Election Day. Encourage the citizens to vote. Also, it was noted while students will not be attending classes, some of their schools would be used for Teacher Professional Development activities.

Motion to receive and place on file said Superintendent’s Report

MB Second: AA

Unanimously approved

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD AND WELFARE:

Mr. Auclair thanked everyone for attending and those that gave the presentation. He asked Dr. D'Acchioli to provide the Committee with a list of all the committees and ad hock committees. He had mentioned to his secretary, that perhaps a link should be added to the website for a health and safety page. Perhaps this could be a duty of the Safety Committee to maintain and update it. Also, the Federal Government could be listed as well as the School Health program. Dr. D'Acchioli stated that they have tried to list the MSD's on their site and they are too big. They are listed elsewhere, but a link to the MSD data has already been added. Also, Mr. Auclair asked that when they go out to bid, it should be listed on their web page. Mrs. Goodman says they do that now most of the time. Mr. Auclair advised everyone of the programs that Bradlee and Hasbro Children's Hospitals offer for a small fee. On November 13th, at the Somerset Middle School, they will have a half-day workshop on Bullies, Pain In The Brain. On January 27th, they will be holding another on How To Talk So Your Kids Listen, at Tollgate High School from 8-9 P.M. You can call Lifespan Health at 800-927-1230 for more information. He congratulated Mrs. Valentine.

Mr. Bileau stated at the last meeting, it was mentioned about the sidewalks at the Middle School near the eighth-grade classes. He talked with the City Council and they are placing a temporary patch on it and will repair it this coming spring. He thanked Mr. Annarummo for his help with this and also, for Social Street. He congratulated Mrs. Valentine and congratulated Mr. Legare, owner of Valley Transportation, who is always in attendance at the meetings for receiving the prestigious Guard & Youth Award for his ten years of volunteering in the community. Well done. On October 16th, he was at Citizens cleaning up and on October 17th, he meet with other school committee members from other districts at Sirocco. They are having another meeting in January. The other members' problems seem like mosquito bites compared to Woonsocket's. He attended the R.I. Association of School Committees meeting. He thanked all for attending.

Chairman Dubois stated he attended the football homecoming game and they beat Lincoln and they looked good and the band sounded good. He attended the GED graduation where he did speak. He congratulated Mrs. Valentine on her appointment.

Mr. Ward congratulated Mrs. Valentine.

The Chair declared a five-minute recess at 8:50 before convening into Closed session.

Call back to order at 8:55 P.M.

Motion to convene into Executive Closed Session in accordance with RI Law: 42-46-5 (a) (8) Student Privacy Issue **MD Second: AA**

Roll Call Vote (All Yes)

Open session reconvened at 9:35.

Motion to adjourn at 9:35 P.M.

MD Second: AA

Unanimously approved

Respectfully submitted,

Denise St Germain
WSC Recording Secretary