

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2004
7:00 PM – OPEN/CLOSED SESSION
WACTC –ROOM 303
MULTI MEDIA LAB**

**Call to Order
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	Present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 11/17/04 OPEN/CLOSED: Motion to approve: MB 2nd: JW (Unan. App)

**CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to approve as submitted with the following exemptions: MD
2nd: JW (Unan. Approved)**

1. Personnel Actions:

Certified & Non-Certified Appointments: Under Non-Certified Appointments, Karen Nordby was removed by Dr. D'Acchioli. The student she was assigned to is leaving the district of Dec. 10th.

2. Purchases/Transfer Over \$2,000:

LOCAL FUNDS

American Arbitration Association - \$22,050.00
Apple Computers - \$42,414.80
Atrion Networking Corp. - \$14,361.20
Commercial Business Equip. - \$3,762.00
Dell Computers - \$2,359.82
Konica Minolta - \$3,000.00
Konica Minolta - \$5,000.00
Mt. St. Charles - \$10,000.00

Promac Arbitration - McFee
Computers - Savoie & Coleman
WMS / Switches – Technology
Duplicator Supplies – WMS
Computer – Technology
Copier Usage – WACTC
Copier Usage – McFee
Hockey Rink Rental – Athletics

GRANT FUNDS

Kids Klub, Inc. - \$33,947.00
Wilson Language Training Corp. - \$2,200.00

Contract FY05 – Social Street
Intervention Workshop – Sp. Ed.

3. Field Trip / Conference Requests:

Lakeland Regl. High School / Wanaque, NJ
WHS Fundraiser

4. Home Schooling Requests (1)

Jan & Eudalia Gonzalez for Alleyeah Perry, Gr. 3;
Aracelis Ortiz, Gr. 6; Taylor Gonzalez, Gr. 6; Cassandra
Burgo, Gr. 8; Alexandra Gonzalez, Gr. 5.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

EXEMPTIONS -- Purchases over \$2,000: Removed by A. Auclair

- **Perma Bound/ Books/ WHS:** This is a purchase of novels for English.
- **Queue, Inc. / Books/ Savoie:** Mr. Auclair was informed that this purchase is for consumables such as workbooks.
- **Rizzo Ford / Truck Maintenance/ Facilities:** Mr. Auclair said there was a request for a transmission repair on a truck. He asked if this was the same one. Dr. D'Acchioli told him "No, we have two trucks."

MOTION TO APPROVE EXEMPTED ITEMS: M. Dubois

2nd: M. Bileau (Unan. Approved)

COMMUNICATIONS: None

CONFERENCES: Universal Free Breakfast Program

Ms. McGraw, a proponent of universal school breakfast, explained the proposal. They would be looking at providing the free breakfasts at Coleman, Second Avenue, and Fifth Avenue schools. Many other proponents of this program approached the WSC in favor free universal breakfasts:

Roger Harris, a concerned citizen of Woonsocket, said he had approached the WSC before on this subject. He thought they were going to have a separate meeting to discuss this issue. "Every child needs to have a breakfast. As a child growing up, our schools had free breakfast for everyone. Some parents are working two jobs to make ends meet. They are struggling. We are asking that you help the students start off better. It would not affect the school budget at all." Mr. Ward stated that he was expecting some statistics from him and only received them this weekend. Mr. Harris said they are looking for something similar to what is being done in Pawtucket. "It would have helped if we would have had this report. I am sure we could do the same analysis," said Ward.

Judy Gantz, concerned citizen and involved with the Wiley Center: She referred to the last time this was discussed, it was brought up that the kids going to these schools are already getting breakfast. "How can anybody know that? It's imperative to eat breakfast and kids are less likely to eat junk the rest of the day. We need to make sure that the food being served is nutritious. I know what it is to be desperate and having to ask for help. Of the four food pantries here, Sacred Heart Church cannot keep up with the demand."

Alyssia Jackson, works with children & families in Woonsocket: "You received over 44 letters from parents that I work with about their concern about this issue and who could not be here because they attend classes or are working." "The parents are not asking you to take their place. They just want a little help. They are not looking for handouts. This program really works. Pawtucket had a \$16,000 surplus." Mr. Harris added that the surplus is as of the end of October of this year. Ms. Williams asked if the letters were addressed to the whole committee. Ms. Jackson said they were addressed to the chairman and the superintendent. *As it turned out, the only ones who saw these letters were the chairman and the superintendent because they thought that they had been sent to all the members of the WSC. The public was informed that if they want to send any correspondence, send it to the school department with a note attached saying it's to be distributed to the rest of the WSC members.*

Sandra Kelley, member of the campaign to end childhood poverty: "Is there anyone here who would not want a child to be well-fed? Morally, it's the right thing to do. You already have a breakfast program going in the school system. The universal program will enable you to see how many more children will benefit from it. You know the situation of hardworking families trying to get by. I need breakfast. I couldn't make it to noon without it." She referred to George Foreman and how poor he was growing up. His story is being used on PBS to reach out to marginalized people. "He didn't have enough food. He got into trouble and was sent to a camp for troubled boys. For the first time, he was getting three meals a day. He got his GED and then got into the boxing program. This is a drastic story. We are just asking that you pilot this program. The schools that have used this program are not losing money. You have the opportunity to be in the forefront of what needs to be done in RI. It's a positive, wonderful, good thing all the way around. Please do it. Hungry children do not enjoy liberty and justice for all."

Henry Shelton spoke about a center he's involved with in Pawtucket and how he got two calls recently. One call was from a high school student who lives by herself and pays rent. She eats at school and at work. The other person who called was a senior citizen. She couldn't walk to his office. She's allotted a limited number of food stamps. He pointed out that in Pawtucket schools, the cost is \$1.06 a meal and they are reimbursed \$1.47 a meal. "The only way you would lose is if Sodexo was charging more. Cranston has a different population than Woonsocket. They piloted the program and now every school has it and they are in the black. The school district can apply to the state of RI for a cost factor. WED would get reimbursed for any additional servers needed. What we propose would cut down on the amount of time required by the workers. There is no money changing hands. The amount of paperwork would be reduced." He thinks Woonsocket would be very happy with the results. Mr. Ward informed him that the free breakfast and lunch forms are one in the same. The amount of paperwork would stay the same. "Soon you would be here for universal free lunch, then free dinner and we would have a socialist economy. In many cases, kids will eat twice just because it's there. Especially if the menu it's the menu I saw with French toast and super donuts. We are taking bad food and offering it to everyone. 94% of the students are eligible for free breakfast in the area you suggested. You have set up a scenario that is impossible to fail. This is just another creeping movement towards a socialist state."

Mr. Auclair said he requested this special meeting at the last meeting. He has a problem with the whole program. "We are taking away accountability from the parents and putting it on the schools. I was one of seven children and had to go on this program. I am a single parent trying to take care of a 10-year old. You do what you have to do. Why aren't we approaching DCYF about it?" He suggested a door-to-door effort to see why people don't take advantage of the free breakfasts they are eligible for already. "I would rather give people the skills so that they can earn a decent living. Schools like Savoie, Bernon and Globe – are you certain your program would work there? You also have a bussing issue to deal with." Mr. Shelton was willing to be creative, saying that the WED could choose the schools to pilot the program at. Mr. Auclair again suggested a door-to-door survey by his people. Mr. Shelton said he doesn't have to staff to do that. Auclair suggested using students to do it. "We don't want to get into something we can't get out of," said Auclair, but Mr. Shelton insisted we could.

Linda Goulet, 4th Grade Teacher in Woonsocket: Said she knows why the kids don't go to breakfast. "They all go together. They are all like little socialists. Kids like to be together. We all go together to lunch. We can all go together for breakfast." Mr. Ward stated that if we were reimbursed for supervision, it must only be for eligible students. Ms. Goulet noted that every time it rains or snows, the kids all go into the cafeteria and it doesn't take any more supervision.

Roger Harris: "Before we got here last month, I was critiquing the WSC, seeing who was for this program. I left thinking that Mr. Auclair was the only one for it. Now I am confused. Statistics throughout the country show that this program works. Why did we choose 5th Avenue, Coleman and 2nd Avenue? Those schools are in the poorest section of the city. You can decide where to start it on a trial basis." He suggested surveying the teachers in the schools about how many kids come in without a breakfast. Many of them without breakfast are problem kids. I think it's a win-win situation." Ms. Williams said she thought the meeting would be just between them and the WSC members. "I am not totally for it or totally against it. I have been doing a lot of research. It eliminates family struggle in the morning. The kids could eat with their peers. It's a vicious circle. We have something already at those schools. I agree with Mr. Ward regarding the nutritional value part of it, but at least it's better than nothing. Piloting it at other schools such as Bernon and Globe Park would be better."

Mr. Bileau asked Miriam Goodman how much the WED was reimbursed from the state last year. She said, "About \$25,000—roughly 1/5th of the population." "I don't think it's that great," said Bileau. Mr. Shelton did. They are hoping it's 100% of the kids who really need it. Mr. Bileau said he went and watched kids eating breakfast and 8 out of 10 throw their milk away. The food service can't take it back if they don't want it and has to give it to them. There's no such thing in life as a free meal. It all comes off our back." Ms. Goulet stressed that it's an investment in the future. Mr. Dubois explained that this group was given a conference with no time limit this evening. "Even though there are other things going on tonight, this was the main focus of the meeting. I'm still torn on this issue and would like to see the menu changed. I see kids walking to school without jackets or gloves. Do we go out and buy them all a jacket? What do these kids eat in the summer?" he asked. Mr. Ward said that the teacher can contact the school social worker regarding a child being hungry to see what can be done. Dr. D'Acchioli has raised questions before but has yet to get answers. He noted that not all schools have cafeterias. Some schools have three lunch sittings. What about bussing? We use our surplus now to repair and replace equipment as necessary. He feels that more supervision would be needed because teachers only need to report 15 minutes prior to student arrival. Mr. Auclair would not support this program as presented. He suggested that the WED and Mr. Shelton meet and draw up a contract. "*Right now it's vague. We would need to have a workshop and include Sodexo also,*" thought Auclair.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Universal Breakfast Program-

Motion to Table pending a work session: A. Auclair

2nd: M. Williams (3 yes – 2 no, MD/MB against)

TABLED.

2. Approval of Job Description for Facilities Director—

Motion to approve: J. Ward

2nd: M. Bileau

Motion to amend under Duties & Responsibilities, Item #3, as follows: ***Makes recommendations for the hiring, assignment and training***

Motion to amend Item #6 under Duties & Responsibilities to read as follows: ***Evaluates opportunities for, makes recommendations and implements approved security measures for the protection....: JW***

2nd on both amendments: M. Dubois (Unanimously Approved)

Motion to amend by adding two items under Qualifications as follows: A. Auclair

6. Experience with use and implementation of Computerized Maintenance Management Systems (CMMS).
7. Working knowledge of various software programs, including word processing, spreadsheet and database software.

Amend Duties and Responsibilities as follows:

8. ***Participates in the district's Strategic Planning Process***, develops long-range plans and reports relative to building needs, ...

2nd on both amendments: **J. Ward (Unanimously Approved)**

Mr. Auclair noted that the procedures manual should be looked at because it says that the Facilities Director works under the Business Manager, not the Superintendent. Mr. Dubois said that this new posting would not require taking home a vehicle. Dr. D'Acchioli said he didn't know about that. "We will have to hire someone first," he said. "It would not be offered as a provision of employment," said Ward.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Unanimously Approved.

3. Approval of Two Non-Renewal of Administrator's Contracts

Maryann Carroll, an Attorney for one of the Administrators, asked for an executive session. Mr. Dubois asked Richard Ackerman if they could go into executive session at that time. Mr. Ackerman advised against it since it was not advertised. "Prior written notice must be given. It should offer whether they want the matter held in open session. He didn't know if the open meetings law would be violated.

Motion to Table: M. Dubois

2nd: J. Ward (Unan. Approved)

MOTION @ 9 P.M. TO TAKE A 5-MINUTE RECESS BEFORE GOING INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION: M. Dubois
2nd: M. Bileau (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Belisle
WSC Recording Secretary Substitute