

**MINUTES**  
**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2005**  
**7:00 P.M. -OPEN SESSION**  
**WACTC-ROOM 303**  
**MULTI-MEDIA ROOM**

**Call to Order at 7:07 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	Present

**GOOD AND WELFARE-PUBLIC:**

Mr. Roger Harris from the R.I. Campaign to Eliminate Child Poverty and which handles the Universal Free-Breakfast Program, which would be provided for every student at every school in Woonsocket. He has been here before and can provide more information if that is needed. He has suggested a pilot program last time at one of the elementary schools but is asking that the pilot program be started at the Middle School. The Middle School has a lot of problems and perhaps with allowing Universal Free-Breakfast that could help to alleviate some of the problems. He has heard stories from his own nephews. This program is happening in Providence and it is working and they have a surplus. Each school that has it has a surplus. He asked that there be a vote on the next agenda.

Chairman Dubois stated that per Dr. D'Acchioli a couple of weeks ago, Terry Curtin from Connecting Families, has offered to step up and work with them on menus, etc. Mr. Harris stated he did know her and would call her tomorrow.

Mr. Richard DiPardo, 70 North Main Street, President of the WTG, stated that on the agenda, Edward Randall was being placed as the Assistant Baseball Coach at the Middle School. He stated that when this position was posted, it only stated it was for an assistant baseball coach and didn't designate where the job would be. Teachers at the Middle School were not aware of this. He asked that Chairman Dubois intervene and ask Mr. Villeneuve to make the postings more clear and post where the position is when available.

Ms. Evelyn Robinson stated she works in the community and she teaches a jump-rope program that they will be invited to their first clinic on-site. They are seeking sponsors and in 2003, they taught 153 students. It is a great program. She, also, agreed with Mr. Harris about the Universal Free-Breakfast Program.

Mr. Pedro Vargas, 14 North East Street, stated his daughter attends the Middle School and there have been a lot of discipline actions and has a lot of concerns. He asked for suggestions for things he could do to help. He would like to be involved. Mrs. Valentine spoke with Mr. Vargas and Mrs. Valentine suggested he attend their PTO meetings. His and other parents' input is very valuable and they are currently gathering a list of parents to be involved with the PTO.

**RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Dr. Macera commended Alffi Reinoso, 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Citizens’ Memorial, for his honesty and integrity. It was an easy decision for Alffi to alert the Principal of a situation, because he knows the importance of a safe and bully-free school. Also, Omer Sisic and Steven Nicholas, both 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Citizens’ Memorial, for his hard work and determination. He has proven to the entire staff that perseverance is well worth the effort. He has exceeded and surpassed expectations and continues to do so each and every day. She commended Ms. Barrette’s class for writing the new Citizens’ Memorial pledge as follows: I will be a responsible person in my community; I will come to school ready to learn; I will follow directions and act in a respectful manner; and I am determined to be successful.

At Globe Park School, they sponsored a parent-strategy night where teachers worked with parents and students on strategies to increase reading comprehension. Approximately, sixty people attended and the staff members who planned this event were Sheila Lennon, Gary Ficca, and Nicole Lapole with additional staff that ran the workshops that evening including Don Poli, Corrine Capalbo, Carol Lobel, Kathy Lemay and several others. Dr. Macera thanked the North Smithfield Subway on Rte. 146 who provided that food for the event.

With the assistance of Pat Dubois, Linda Filomeno and Miriam Goodman, they have been able to secure two additional grants from the State. The first is the Progressive Support & Intervention Title I Grant Award in the amount of \$183,050 for special projects in Math and coaches and support for the elementary level. This is in addition to their Title money. The second is the Comprehensive School Reform Grant in partnership with Brown University for the Woonsocket High School and WACTC. She thanked all the participants involved in getting these very competitive grants.

**Motion to receive and place of file**  
Unanimously approved

**MB Second: JW**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion to approve the Open and Closed Minutes of February 9, 2005**  
Unanimously approved

**MB Second: JW**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Personnel Actions:** (See Attached)  
Certified Appointments  
Non-Certified Appointments

**Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000**

**Local**

- Alternative Ed. Programming, Inc./Drop OutPrev.Services/WHS/Local
- American Arb. Assoc./Promac/McFee/Local
- Konica/Copier/Citizens/Local
- Mentor, Inc/PIP Class/District/Local
- Restructure Co., Inc/Promac/McFee/Local
- Simplex Grinnell/Video Recorder/WACTC/Local
- Sonitrol/Security Installation/WACTC/Local
- TASA/Testing Material/Professional Dev./Local
- Trapeze Software Ohio, Inc/Software fees/Technology/Local

**Grant**

ASAP/Software/Technology/District/Grant  
Century Consultants/Software & Training/Technology/Local/Grant  
Keough Kirby Assoc, Inc./Accident Policy/WACTC/Grant  
Pearson Learning Group/Management System/Grants & Curr./Grant

**Article 18**

Apple Computers/Computers/Printers/ District/Article 18  
Dell Computers/Computers/Technology/District/Art. 18

**Field Trips/Conference Requests**

NAFEPA Conference, Wash, DC/McFee Admin/Title I & V  
RI Interscholastic Conference, Hyannis, MA/Athletic Dir./Title V  
National Science Teach. Assoc. Convention, Dallas, TX/Mt. St. Charles/Title II  
Advanced Placement Summer Institute, St. Johnsbury, VT/Mt. St. Charles/Title V  
NASSP Convention, San Francisco, CA/WHS/Article 18  
ISTE/NECC, Philadelphia, PA/Technology/Local

**Home Schooling Requests (2)**

Mr. Ward asked that the NASSP Convention request be left out for discussion.

**Motion to approve the Consent Agenda except for the item removed for discussion**

**MD Second: MB**

Unanimously approved

**Motion to approve the NASSP Convention Request**

**JW Second: MB**

Mr. Ward asked why Mr. Vachon would be attending a convention dealing with high school restructuring when he will be retiring at the end of this school year. Dr. Macera stated that this is part of the Comprehensive Reform Grant with Brown University dealing with new high-school regulations. It is the next phase of restructuring and the money must be dispersed in August and the new principal has not been designated as of yet. They are only paying for the registration and Mr. Vachon is covering the rest.

**The motion was unanimously approved.**

**COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Mr. Bileau stated that they have decided against an elevator at the McFee building and they are looking at alternatives to spend those funds on and will keep the Committee posted.

Mr. Auclair reminded everyone that on March 16<sup>th</sup> at the Harris School, there would be a Parent-Advisory meeting at 7 P.M.

Ms. Williams reminded everyone that on March 16<sup>th</sup> in this room, there would be a Minority-Concerns meeting at 7 P.M.

**CONFERENCES:**

Dr. Macera and Pat Dubois gave their presentation on the AYP update. The information was, also, given to the Committee members on CD. AYP is the Adequate Yearly Progress report and this shows the progress they are making as required by NCLB with the State’s formula which are different for all elementary, middle schools and high schools in English Language and Math. MS. Dubois gave a slide presentation and stated that this information is a tool for principals and it is how strategy is planned. Most of their

elementary schools have met or beaten the State's numbers. The Middle School has met the English number and needs a little work in the Math area, which will be helped by the grant they just received. The High School is exceeding the numbers in both areas. Dr. Macera stated she has asked the State for another 200K today for coaches at the Middle School. This would be above and beyond their Title programs. RIDE was very positive about the request because they have been pleased with how they have spent monies in the past. Both she and Mrs. Dubois will be going to Washington to meet with representatives.

**Motion to receive said report and place on file**

**MB Second: JW**

Unanimously approved

Mrs. Valentine gave her presentation on the upcoming SALT visit and stated she is looking forward to the visit and has been on five visits herself. ( **SEE ATTACHMENT #1**). The committee members are volunteers and she reviewed the committees and the purpose of the SALT visit. Nineteen members will be coming for this visit in April.

**Motion to receive said report and place on file**

**AA Second: MB**

Unanimously approved

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Chairman Dubois stated the Mr. Grabowski met with Dr. Macera today and all parties agreed to postpone this matter until the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Motion to approve bid award #05-06 Centrex System to Verizon in the amount of \$36,514.56 for a one-year contract**

**JW Second: MB**

Roll Call Vote (All Yes)

Dr. Macera reviewed the documents explaining the Federal and State Mandates within the Education Department. There are seven categories targeting roles and responsibilities for Superintendents and School Committees as mandated by law. ( **ATTACHMENT #2**). Also, she reviewed their self-assessment, which they supplied to the State regarding compliance. ( **ATTACHMENT #3**). This clearly identifies the State and Federal mandates for them and there is a lot to absorb. She asked that they review and perhaps can request a workshop and include folks from the State to attend.

Mr. Auclair asked that next time they complete the self-assessment, the School Committee should have some input.

**Motion to accept said report and place on file**

**MB Second: MW**

Roll Call Vote (All Yes)

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Dr. Macera commended all the Directors of the Central Office for their efforts over the last four weeks during very taxing times. They have been deeply involved in the budgetary process, reviewing and cutting and getting extra funding, non-renewals and displacement letters and lots of meeting where heart-wrenching decisions had to be made. In Human Resources, on-line para-pro testing has been set up. Ms. Lombardo did a great deal with that. They have a high number of successes with that test. Regarding Special-Ed, they have had over fifteen discipline hearings and planning the extended-year program for over the summer and training in autism. They are, also, helping other Districts with this issue. She is doing an audit of all initiatives in the District and visiting classrooms and reviewing the instructional practices in place based on Professional Development offered. She wants to visit every classroom. She is focusing on the Middle School right now. In June, she will prepare a report of her findings of success delineating

specific areas which will require more in professional development.

**Motion to receive and place on file said Superintendent's Report**  
Unanimously approved

**AA Second: JW**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD AND WELFARE:**

Mr. Auclair stated he attended the Health Fair for Harris and Social Street schools and took his daughter and two nephews and they had a great time. Hopefully, this will go on at other schools. It is a positive experience. He attended a workshop at Globe Park about the Parents and Teachers of Explosive Kids Project hosted by Dr. Ross Green from Mass. General. It had a lot of value and hopefully, this will be shared with all schools. The program has to do with identifying needs of a student and their lack of dealing with situations and they get frustrated and their IQ's go down and its difficult to teach them when this happens. He asked Mrs. Goodman about a bid that he didn't see on the website and thought all bids were now going to be advertised there, as well. Mrs. Goodman stated that the checklist in all bid folders would now have that to be completed on all future bids. Mr. Auclair asked if the sub-committee of the School Committee that handles finance/budgets could send a representative to meet with the City & State and discuss the budget. They could meet with Dr. D'Acchioli and Administration, as well and they could try and hash out some of the issues. Mrs. Goodman stated that the Committee usually has the budget in February but this year, that didn't happen because there were a few items in dispute and they have been resolved and will be on the next agenda. Mr. Auclair thought if they were asking the City for an increase, it would help to have a representative there at the discussions. Mr. Ward stated that the best process is to let Administration to Administration meet with the Mayor and other Administrators. Best to try and keep politics out of it. Mr. Auclair stated that in talking with Dr. D'Acchioli and the Planning Sub-Committee that they need to meet with the City Council soon to ask for land to be allocated for a future middle school even if the funding isn't readily available. Free land in Woonsocket is disappearing fast. At the last Parent-Advisory meeting, it was asked how substitutes are trained and brought up to speed. Dr. Macera stated there is a new-hire orientation and they have permanent subs. Also, the Principals and Vice-Principals oversee the subs and they hear about it right away if there is a problem with a sub. The biggest stumbling block is the rate of pay. There has only been one increase in the last six years and other Districts pay a lot more. Mr. Auclair sends his prayers for a speedy recovery to Mr. Legare.

Mr. Bileau thanked Mrs. Valentine for coming and giving her presentation on the upcoming SALT visit. The visit will help in showing them what are good, bad, and what is needed. It is a good school. There are over sixteen hundred students and he is very comfortable walking through that school. There are about one percent of students causing problems and that is what you read about in the newspapers. He invited parents to visit the school and to not always believe what you read in the papers.

Chairman Dubois sent his prayers to Mr. Legare and asked that Administration send a fruit basket or flowers on behalf of the School Committee. He congratulated Mrs. Valentine for her presentation and wished her luck on the upcoming SALT visit. He, also, attended the Health Fair at Harris last Saturday and there was a great turnout this year. He is anxious to see his 'Got Milk' photo. In Dr' D'Acchioli's absence, he will be emailing him asking him in the future if there is a meeting of significance as there was last week at the Middle School, Dr. D'Acchioli is to call the Committee or call him and he will contact the Committee members about such a meeting. He heard about it on the radio. He took offense at the Chairman and the head of the Safety Committee that he was not invited. Only one Committee member was invited and this is nothing against him but all the members are receiving calls from parents and should be included.

Mr. Ward expressed his wishes for a speedy recovery for Mr. Legare. His condition is severe and is still in a hospital in Maine. He is always at the meetings. Mr. Ward stated he, respectfully, disagrees with the Chairman about the Middle School issue. He recalls at their last meeting, he suggested that the Chairman take a greater interest to work things out with the Administration. School-Committee presence at a meeting changes the tone of a meeting. People either hold back or say things just because a member/members are there. Operationally, he never took the position that the School Committee should interject themselves because it does change the relationship between the leadership and the staff. He had mentioned a while

back that last year, he was accused of spying because he arrived at a meeting by accident. Even after six years, he himself was not confident the Superintendent would have an open relationship with the staff but the relationship was open and good. It would be different if the School Committee was there. That is his personal opinion. While he consumes his lunch, he reviews interesting legislation and there are some that will affect school-committees authority and suggested they review this issue. Mr. Ward had some questions about recycling and its cost, especially with the Lunch programs. Mrs. Goodman stated that they use hard-plastic trays and the paper and catalogs that are discarded is a larger issue. Mr. Fontaine is looking into this issue. Mr. Ward agreed with Mr. Bileau about the news in the papers and the 'Wave of Violence At Middle School' headline. One parent came out with a complaint and the media has got hold of it and won't let go. He has seen a parent taking the role of the universe revolves around my child and my child can't be wrong. He read Mr. Vachon's report about how students will arrive to school and stand around and won't come inside and then they are late. Mr. Vachon has called their parents right in front of these kids and it has no affect. What else is done? Mrs. Valentine stated that when she was there at the High School parents were called, followed by an in-school suspension, then an out-of school suspension with a parent conference and once some of the parents are made aware of the situation, they get some help with the problem and some they don't. They try and show the parents the ramifications on their grades.

Ms. Williams, also, wished Mr. Legare a speedy recovery. Recycling was discussed at the PAC meeting she attended and they discussed the Styrofoam used at Globe Park. They have over four hundred student. Also, milk cartons can be recycled and they are simply thrown away right now. Styrofoam cannot be recycled and they need to look at something else. The Minority Concerns meeting will be on March 16<sup>th</sup>. She met with Dorothy and Karen from Kids First and emailed the Committee members the information. They have lots of free workshops, ways for teachers to get healthy, Lunch 'N Learn and they invited Principals, School Committee, teachers and Administrators to teach them a new way. The PTO is working on a Nutrition Road show and Caught You Eating Healthy where kids eating healthy foods like an apple are rewarded rather than being rewarded with candy. She has seen the new juice containers in the vending machines and the retro look will appeal to middle-school kids and they cost the same as soda at a dollar each. They use seltzer water and juice in them. She spent today painting at Globe Park and ask volunteers to come out and help them tomorrow starting at 8 A.M. It was just her and a professional painter today.

**Motion to adjourn at 9:05 P.M.**  
Unanimously approved

**MD Second: MB**

Respectfully submitted,

Denise St Germain  
Secretary to the School Committee