



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

Benchmark Education/Site Licenses; PD/WMS/Local  
Blackstone Valley Office Systems/Copier Usage/WACTC/Local  
Colin Kane/Medical Reimbursement/District/Local  
Connecting for Children & Families/COZ & ASCLC Contracts/21<sup>ST</sup> Century Grant/COZ /District  
Jane Kondon/Mentor Principal/PS&I Grant/WMS  
Lincoln Environmental, Inc./RIDEM Compliance/Wells/District  
Nextel Communications/ E-Rate Service/Facilities/Local  
RIEAP, Inc. Student Services/Contract Services/WHS/Local  
RIFTHP/Professional Development/WHS/Title 1 School Improvement  
Rigby/Ed. Supplies/Gov. Pothier/Local  
RI Interscholastic League/League fees/Athletic Dept. Local  
Scott Foresman/Ed. Supplies/Gov. Pothier/Local  
UMASS/Prof. Dev. Workshop/WACTC/Perkins

**3. Home School Requests (10)**

**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**EXEMPTIONS TO CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Motion to approve the following Personnel Actions: A. Auclair**

- Appointment of Linda Pare to 1.0 Health/Nurse at WMS
- Appointment of Wayne Quinley to 1.0 PE/Health at WMS
- Appointment of Richard Emerson to Discipline Hearing Office for the District on an as needed basis

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams/E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)**

Mr. Auclair wanted clarification on these three appointments. Dr. Macera explained that Linda Pare would be assisting Terry Doire at the WMS as a nurse for half the day and teaching Health the other half. Mr. Quinley will be teaching PE one-half day and Health during the other half. When Mr. Auclair asked what "as per SC schedule" meant for Richard Emerson's position, Dr. Macera explained that he would be working on as needed basis at the same rate of pay that a substitute principal receives--\$350/day. A maximum of \$26,250 has been allowed for this position. Auclair asked for periodic updates on the hearings that have been held. Mrs. Nadeau asked when it is necessary for a disciplinary officer to step in. Dr. Macera explained that weapons, assaults, drugs, etc., are subject to a disciplinary hearing. "We will not tolerate any children within the population that is a danger to the other students and staff. Mr. Emerson doesn't want to come back very often, which is good. He will consolidate the hearings as much as possible," said Macera.

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**COMMUNICATIONS:** Mr. Auclair announced a Building Committee Meeting to be held on Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> at City Hall in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room at 4:30 p.m. A workshop will then be held with the City Council and the WSC on Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend both meetings. Joel Matthews has organized a bus trip to tour Lincoln Middle School at 5:15 p.m. on Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> for Building Committee Members.

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

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**CONFERENCES: Discussion of Universal Free Breakfast Pilot Program & Report – Dr. Macera**

Miriam Goodman reported that the pilot breakfast program lost \$9,308. It did not make money during the 6-month pilot. They believe that if the program is opened up to the entire district, the number of free and reduced lunch participants will increase and outweigh the cost of ineligible students getting the free meals. Dr. Macera explained that from a fiscal standpoint, they don't see a reason not to expand to the entire district because the benefits far outweigh any negative side. The lunch program revenue should be enough to carry the WED into the black. Bar charts were provided to the WSC showing the number of tardies, disciplinary referrals, and absences during the period of the pilot versus the year before. The number of tardies had increased, but the administration feels that it's due to students staying to finish their breakfast. "According to this data, I cannot support a district-wide program. Maybe a full-year pilot at the schools we had the 6-month pilot programs at would be better," said Auclair. Dr. Macera was very confident with Mrs. Goodman's assessment that we would be in the black. "Lunch prices were just increased also," she added. Ms. Williams supported the universal breakfast, saying, "You are trying to get someone

to help your kids read, but if your kids are hungry, nothing is going to help. Many families in this community are struggling with the rents the way they are. I know, because I am displaced and looking for an apartment. The rents are unbelievable for a piece of crap! We have to do this for our children.”

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:****1. New Policy for Life Insurance – Second Passage**

Motion to approve: M. Dubois 2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams  
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; MW/yes; AA/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. APPROVED.

Mrs. Goodman reported that the insurance company is agreeable to reinstate retirees for this year only. They will not reinstate anyone beyond this year. The administration recommended approval of this policy so that the six retirees whose policies lapsed due to a missed premium payment may be reinstated. When Mrs. Nadeau asked if an amendment was needed, Dr. Macera referred to (i) of the policy which reads, “Reinstatement is permitted by the life insurance company.” Therefore, an amendment is not needed. There are three people that are waiting for this decision and three others that the WED hasn’t heard from and have been trying to contact. Mrs. Nadeau couldn’t believe that this process has been going on for so long and nothing was done about it, saying, “There are probably many people that don’t even know that the insurance has been dropped. They will only find out when something tragic happens.” The amount of insurance coverage is \$10,000. Dr. Macera asked all retirees to keep the WED notified about their addresses so that they can be contacted in these types of situations. The department needs all addresses they may live at during the year, such as summer addresses or if they spend half the year down in Florida.

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**2. Update Home Health Services of RI regarding circumstances relative to FY2006 employment – Atty. Richard Ackerman**

Atty. Ackerman reported on the inquiry findings about services performed by Home Health Services of RI. He said he asked who hired them. “Richard Emerson, now-retired Special Education Director, hired them. In speaking with Mr. Emerson, I asked what he knew about this issue,” said Ackerman and proceeded to read a letter he wrote to Chairman Dubois with his findings. “I have no reason to doubt Mr. Emerson. It was clear to me that he was not influenced by anyone to hire Home Care Services. There had been talk that they were hired after the Chairman’s sister was not offered the position. Mr. Dubois’ sister was denied a position to a full-time nurse/teacher back in 2004. She provided services as an independent contractor during 2005 and left to take a full-time position in Providence. It’s not uncommon that the need for services arises urgently and the Director of Special Education needs to make arrangements, but the procedures should be looked into. As far as the bills that were not presented to the WSC until December, they may have been held until Mr. Ward was no longer a member of the school committee. If they had been presented while he was on the WSC, he could have recused himself from the vote. The fact that the company was owned by his brother was not a violation. It only would have been a violation if Mr. Ward didn’t recuse himself. People can speculate as to why the bills were held. I called John Ward and spoke to him face-to-face. He said he only became aware that his brother was doing business with the WED on election day of 2005. Vincent asked John why the school department doesn’t pay its bills and John told him he didn’t know and to call the WED. I asked John if he had spoken to Vincent or Dr. D’Acchioli about Home Care getting hired and he said he never had. He had not spoke to Richard Emerson either,” reported Ackerman.

Mr. Dubois asked about Mr. Emerson’s just opening the phone book and calling three or four companies. “You would think that he would call other school districts or the state first to see who they use. You never questioned him about that?” Dubois asked Ackerman. “No. I am not his superior,” answered Ackerman. Mrs. Nadeau asked how a purchase order for services amounting to over \$63,000 could be approved without going out to bid. Atty. Ackerman explained that it was his understanding that his focus during the inquiry was not the procedure of going out to bid. Dr. Macera explained how the mail is handled at McFee and how efficient Darlene Molitor, the Special Education Director’s secretary, is. “If an invoice was received, she would ask him how to handle it. The invoices for Sept., Oct., and Nov. were not date-stamped,” she said. Mrs. Nadeau asked if \$50 per hour is the going rate for this type of service. “Usually, it’s \$35 per hour, but the company required it and Mr. Emerson was in a bind. It will be more cost-efficient for the district to have a nurse/teacher in that position,” said Macera. “Wouldn’t it have made sense to have them provide the service while we went out to bid?” asked Dubois. “Yes,” said Macera. Mr. Auclair asked why it wouldn’t have raised a flag for a purchase order to be on the agenda that had no contract. Dr. Macera told him they are investigating that. “Apparently, it was standing practice with the previous administration. I am not comfortable with that,” she said. “Is it standard practice to call the state to see who owns a company?” asked Auclair. “It will be now--for everyone’s protection,” answered Macera. Mrs. Goodman added that they can use the Secretary of State’s website to check out this information, but Atty.

Ackerman stated that they don't always included the name of the company's owner. "What about the costs of hiring another union employee if a nurse/teacher is hired and at what point do the raises and benefits outweigh hiring the outside company?" asked Auclair. Dr. Macera believes that the compensation the WED gives nurse/teachers over time far outweighs the costs of using an outside company. "Their rates continue to go up. In the long run, it's far more cost-effective and the nurse/teachers can teach also. Mr. Auclair stated that he wasn't aware of this issue until the last meeting. "The rest is history," he said.

- Response from Vincent P. Ward, Owner of Home Health Services of RI—Mr. Ward introduced himself as the owner of Home Care Services of RI and read a statement in which he said he was very upset about the attacks on his brother, Mr. Nagle, himself and his business at the last WSC meeting. "All the issues brought up by the WSC proved to be the administration's falling down on the job." He provided copies of bills that were mailed on October 1st, 2006, and November 1st, 2006. "When Mr. Nagle called Mr. Emerson about these bills, he was told we needed to provide more information. We didn't know that ahead of time. We never worked with the WED before. I have fax reports showing when they were faxed also." Ward spoke about Mr. Dubois' sister, Lynn DeSheppa, and how she should have been hired full-time. "We did nothing wrong. You should all be ashamed of yourselves! Contractors and businesses should look very closely before they decide whether they want to work for this department. All you had to do was call us and this whole thing could have been cleared up. I am asking for an apology from the Committee and the administration to myself, Mr. Nagle and my brother," said Ward. Dr. Macera said that the school committee can only accept or reject a recommendation from the superintendent for someone's employment. "Only the superintendent can bring forward a candidate for appointment. Lynn was never presented for appointment," she maintained. "As to why the bill was only paid in December is very irregular. The previous bills have no date-stamp, which is also very irregular. There was no setup," she said. "At the last meeting, Mrs. Williams asked who worked on that bus. She had Mrs. Goodman read the names and Kelly Ward was named. She said, 'There!' Why didn't anyone call us and ask us if we had a copy of the contract?" asked Ward. Dr. Macera explained that she asked Carole Lerner if there was a contract. Mrs. Lerner told her she checked with the company and reported to Dr. Macera that there was no contract. "That's not your fault. Your company did provide good service and the bill was paid. This is a new administration—a new superintendent. I will be up front. I am sorry you feel offended, but there was not setup. I will not apologize for something that I didn't do," stated Macera. Mr. Ward explained that the nurse from his company was actually paid \$25/hour, but he has to include payroll taxes and Workers' Comp. and liability insurance. These are all above and beyond the \$25/hour. Mrs. Nadeau told Ward that if he had attended the meeting himself, things probably would have been different. "We explained that we weren't attacking anyone. We were doing our job and I will never apologize for doing my job! As an elected official, you know that you have to fill out a form every quarter about family businesses and holdings. That's not our law. If you were sitting here, you would have been asking those questions," she said.

Mrs. Williams read from the minutes of the previous meeting, referring to the rate information. She noted that it said she "asked" about the names of the people who worked on the bus. Williams also listed the various jobs that Lorraine Ward, Vincent and John Ward's sister, had held in the school department while John Ward was on the WSC. "And Mr. Dubois's sister doesn't get hired? Dr. Macera said that the only one who can recommend someone for hire. I will not apologize for doing my job and I did not attack you or your business! I have always conducted myself as a lady on this Committee," she stated. "I just hope that no one else has to go through this again. The investigation could have been done before bringing it up at the meeting. The bill could have been tabled until the questions were cleared up," stressed Ward. Dr. Macera told him that she felt that the bill should be paid. "The services were rendered and as a businessman, I would think you would want your money. I thought I was doing you a favor," said Macera. Mr. Auclair said that it was a very uncomfortable situation during that part of the last meeting. "I felt that the board acted unprofessionally at that meeting and, unfortunately, Mr. Nagle was on the receiving end. The atmosphere was very negative. What amazes me is that we spend 45 minutes on this at the last meeting and a good amount of time on it tonight. We spent 15 minutes on the Physics First presentation! There's no place for politics in education. We had a glitch in the system. We know about it now and will try not to let it happen again. We need to move forward from here," said Auclair. He recalled that at the meeting to appoint someone to the bus position, he made a motion to waive the nepotism policy for Lynn DeSheppa. He made it and it went nowhere, so the next candidate was hired.

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## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. Bid Awards:**

- **#07-01 High School Yearbook –**

Motion to approve a 1-year contract to Herff Jones for a total amount of \$7,766 for a Color as specified yearbook with the option to add color pages as requested at the pricing specified: A. Auclair  
2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Dubois Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; MW/yes; AA/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. APPROVED.

- **#07-05 Janitorial Supplies**

Motion to approve award to various vendors for a total of \$82,656.39 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau  
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; MW/yes; AA/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. APPROVED.

Mr. Auclair asked about whether we have the Material Safety Data Sheets available for all of these supplies. Mrs. Goodman told him they are on file at McFee.

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**2. Approval of Universal Free Breakfast Pilot Program – District Wide**

Motion to approve a 1-year pilot throughout the district: M. Williams 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau  
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; MW/yes; AA/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. APPROVED.

The new Food Service Director for Sodexo, Mark Roy, was asked to give his opinion on the feasibility of opening the free breakfast program up to the entire district. He felt that we should go ahead and do the pilot. "A child that's hungry cannot learn. We have to look at the community we live in. We are not Barrington or North Smithfield. We have an obligation to take care of the whole community," said Nadeau. Mr. Auclair asked if the WED will work to increase participation through outreach to the community. Dr. Macera said that one reason there's a problem with the free and reduced lunch, especially at the secondary level, is that there's a stigma attached. "If everyone is receiving it, then no one knows who is free and reduced. We are trying very hard to get the forms filled out in the schools and to the parents," said Macera. She told parents not to worry about the information on the forms—that it's only used to determine their child's eligibility for the program. Mr. Auclair wants periodic updates throughout the year on the figures.

- Roger Harris, RI Coalition Against Childhood Poverty: "This works. Not one school district has gone in the red with this program in the whole country. The participation has gone up during the pilot program. A child who goes hungry to school will not be able to concentrate.

Mr. Dubois said, "We fed 280,000 meals for about \$9,000. I just saw a cell phone bill for McFee for \$12,000. It's a small amount to feed two schools all year long." Mr. Auclair clarified that the pilot ran at Bernon and WMS on a 5-month pilot – not an entire year—and that the cost is going to go up.

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**3. Approval of Perkins Regional Plan FY07**

Motion to approve: M. Dubois 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau  
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; MW/yes; AA/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. APPROVED.

Mr. Andrew Riley, Director/Principal of the WACTC, explained that the Perkins Grant will provide \$376,000 to the district this year. "Without it," he said, "We couldn't operate the WACTC." He explained the approval process and how the initiatives to be funded are developed by the Regional Planning Committee and finally approved to be forwarded to the state by the superintendents of the four districts it serves – Burrillville, Cumberland, North Smithfield and Woonsocket. Mr. Auclair asked about the Culinary Arts program and the status of the classroom to house it. Riley reported that the room is almost complete. The equipment is in and just needs to be hooked up.

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**4. Approval of Vacant and New Job Descriptions**

Motion to approve: M. Dubois 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau  
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; MW/yes; AA/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. APPROVED.

Dr. Macera submitted a job posting for an Intervention Support Service Coordinator at the WHS to take the place of the ISS instructor and the posting for a Middle School Guidance Team Leader position. They are both union-based positions. One counselor at the WMS was not replaced when Jane Cotnoir retired, saving a .5 position.

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**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – Dr. Maureen Macera, Superintendent**

Dr. Macera extended her apologies to Linda Filomeno, saying she did a wonderful job with professional development. She will place the discussion of the course syllabi on the next meeting agenda. Macera reported that the WHS orientation was very successful, as well as a very smooth school opening throughout the district. She went to every school and didn't have one bad experience. She spoke about the continuing saga of renovations being done at the WACTC over the summer and thanked Mr. Riley for his patience. "The WACTC is a state-owned building. There were planned improvements to be done before the state turns it over to the district, part of which was to be a new roof." She has met with Dr. Flaherty at the state dept. after being told that there were no funds to do a new roof. It has been patched in the meantime. "Two weeks ago, Mr. Fontaine walked through the building and almost had a

heart attack because there was so much left to be done.” She thanked the custodians for working hard to get it put back together. “We are very grateful for the improvements, but we wish the state dept. would think about when school opens and not wait until the last minute.”

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Williams

2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

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### SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE

**Auclair:** Asked about the discussion of the WMS promotion policy. Dr. Macera has been trying to get in touch with Dr. Flaherty about it, but hasn't been able to get a hold of him. Auclair wants it to be placed on the next agenda. He would also like the Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Program placed on the next agenda. He suggested a 5-year financial plan to show how we are going to fund our 5-year strategic plan. Dr. Macera told him the administration is already making plans for next year's budget. They are looking at funding staff for two middle schools, but she said there are so many unknowns that it's hard to complete a 5-year plan. “Because our NECAP schools improved so much, we no longer will qualify for PS & I funding for the district,” Macera said. “Because we get less money, it doesn't eliminate the need,” said Auclair. Macera said we have a 5-year capital improvement plan. Auclair asked if the district could provide a secretary for the SELAC Committee to do the minutes and post them on the website as mandated. Linda Filomeno told him she thinks Darlene Molitor has been doing them. Auclair said that it's a state-mandated group and it shouldn't cost more than \$400 or \$500 a year to pay someone else to do it.

**Dubois:** Said that school opening went very smoothly. Thanked the administration, principals and teachers. Said that if the roles were reversed, he is sure that Mr. Ward would have become suspicious and investigated the hiring procedures in relation to Home Health Services. “I am so glad the days with the former superintendent are over. I take offense to the fact that Mr. Ward said we attacked him and belittled him. We were doing our job. We represent the public.”

**Nadeau:** Said she didn't appreciate Mr. Auclair's remarks. “I have never belittled anyone. You prefaced your remarks by saying you were belittled by Dr. D'Acchioli, but you chose not to defend yourself. I don't respect that. There's also a member of this committee that doesn't know how to be a member of this committee. Certain things that were discussed by the WSC that were confidential have been leaked and I am going to investigate it. At a previous meeting I asked Linda Filomeno many questions and I don't believe she was offended by it.” She asked Mrs. Filomeno if she was, to which Filomeno replied, “No.” “It doesn't mean I don't think she does a fine job. It's just the way I approach things.”

**Williams:** She agreed with Mr. Dubois and Mrs. Nadeau. Announced the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Shelter Walk on Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> from River Island Park starting at 10 a.m.

Motion to adjourn at 10:05 p.m.: M. Dubois

2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams/E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle  
WSC Recording Secretary