

**MINUTES**  
**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, MAY 24, 2007**  
**7:20 PM – OPEN SESSION**  
**Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center**  
**Multimedia Room 303**

**Called to Order by Chairman Marc Dubois**  
**Moment of Silence**  
**Pledge of Allegiance**

<b>Roll Call:</b>	Marc Dubois, Chairman	Present
	Allen Auclair	Present
	Michelle Williams	Present
	Eleanor Nadeau	Present
	Anita McGuire-Forcier	Present

**Motion to take CONFERENCES out of order: M. Dubois No objections.**

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**CONFERENCES:**

- **Fifth Avenue Report on Positive Initiatives of FY07 – D. McNeil – Principal**

Principal McNeil introduced Pat Morrison of the SIT, who spoke about Fifth Avenue's Math initiatives. They have celebrated Math with such activities as a Math night and have a Math Word of the Month. Kathryn Mall discussed other initiatives to improve school behavior and academic performance. Students of the Month for academic achievement or progress were chosen and rewarded with a Happy Meal from McDonald's. They were also invited to a "Lunch with the Principal". Three free "Reading is Fundamental" distributions were held, as well as a Family Ice Cream Social. The Social was held last week and the chorus performed. Principal McNeil noted that the school received a recycling award at the State House and thanked their custodian, Ron Couette, for his help. She displayed the awards they have won and spoke about her experiences as a first-year principal and the progress she has seen from the beginning to the end of the year. McNeil introduced the school's new mascot – the firefly. She had a jar of fireflies on the table. Mrs. Nadeau said she is really impressed with the job McNeil and her staff is doing, adding that she attended Fifth Avenue School as a child and it was trip back in time for her when she visited the school.

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- **Air Force ROTC – Year in Review Presentation – Lt. Col. Richards, Sgt. Pinckney**

Sheets were distributed on their Year In Review and the patch they designed. Mike Degree, Cadet Commander reviewed what they have done during the last year. Sgt. Pinckney outline future activities for the coming year. Mr. Auclair asked Degree, "As a WHS student and AFJROTC member, what is the perception of the unit at the WHS?" Degree answered, "We consider ourselves as a family. Last year we got remarks about our uniforms from other students. Now, we are looked at as the brave ones. We are able to step out of the box and strive to be the best we can be." "What has been your experience?" asked Auclair. "It has drastically changed my opinion of how I want my life to go and pointed me in the right direction," said Degree. Mr. Dubois told him how well spoken and polished he is and asked him his future plans. Degree said he wants to become a police officer in Woonsocket.

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**PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:**

- **Diane Engels, School Nurse Chairperson:** Spoke on behalf of the appointment of the Director of Athletics and Wellness and how important the position is. She spoke about the increase in overweight children and the many issues facing our kids today.
- **Cindy McNeil, PAC Co-Chair:** Spoke about concerns parents have about the gang-related fight in Woonsocket this week. "Do you know how many gangs are in Woonsocket and is the WED doing anything to eliminate them?" Mr. Dubois said that the WED just approved an anti-bullying and non-violence program for the WMS. He spoke to Dr. Macera about getting the program started this year, rather than waiting until September. They are going to start immediately at the WMS. He stressed that the incident did not happen at school, although some of our students were involved. Dr. Macera said she has scheduled a meeting with the Woonsocket Police and

anyone else who's interested to map out a strategy immediately. Mayor Menard has contacted her. "It's a community-based issue. We are getting full cooperation from the Police Dept. She said the meeting is at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday at McFee.

- **Carmen Boucher, parent:** Wanted clarification about the school budget, saying she was at the City Council meeting and the school budget was discussed. She was concerned about the administrative positions on tonight's agenda. Boucher believes that support is needed inside the classrooms. "We can have 20 supervisors, but who is in the classrooms with the children?" She can't advocate for higher funding on one hand and approve more administrative positions on the other. Dr. Macera told her that Woonsocket has the highest percentage of money that goes to the classroom in Northern RI. "The Director of Athletics, Wellness and Health went to part-time due to funding. Now, we are losing the Health Huts. The funding comes from the retirement of Bruce Villeneuve and the combination of a 12-month principal taking on a larger school and putting on an intern. The Supervisor for the VLA is self-funded due to the cost savings from out-of-district placements. The WACTC position is due to a retirement and is a state-funded position. We are the leanest on administration in the state of RI. We are the only urban district in the state that is in a deficit," said Macera.
- **Mary Keegan, Oakley Road:** Asked about the job sharing policy and what it's for. Dr. Macera explained that there are a number of teachers in job shares. She has some concerns about it when it does not allow for consistency for the children. Keegan said that this was done years ago and it didn't work then. Macera said it's an advantage for such positions as occupational therapists and speech therapists, most of whom prefer to work part-time.
- **Denise Bouley, SELAC Co-Chair:** Announced that their last meeting will be held June 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Pothier School. She reviewed the agenda and asked if the Citizens Action Committee will be going ahead with the middle school bond. Macera told her they were. Bouley asked about the plans going forward and the historic building that was part of them. Macera said it's still part of the project and the guardhouse is also.
- **Marlene Smith, WMS Teacher:** Said that the incident involving WMS students didn't happen at the school, but she feels that the use of cell phones by students at school contributes. "It's becoming a big problem. The students know a lot better how to use text messaging than we do. Most of the kids at the WMS are good students. It's a minority that cause the problems." She strongly recommended the WED impose a semi-uniform such as T-shirts only to start with.
- **Linda Majewski, 51 St. Hughes Street:** She thinks some kind of uniform at the WMS might eliminate some problems. Spoke about where students in the accelerated program would be placed and how it is determined where students are placed within clusters. She thinks a workshop should be held to address these questions. Dr. Macera said that on June 13<sup>th</sup>, the WMS is presenting positive initiatives where these issues will be discussed. She said that there are accelerated classes at every grade level.
- **Corey Brien, WMS Teacher:** Commended the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and their principals on the Move Up Day to the middle school. Harris, Globe and Coleman students were well under control. He recommended that there be more of a continuum between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and suggested some professional development time be devoted to that.
- **Michelle Williams, Woonsocket Housing Authority:** Ms. Williams asked to remove herself from the WSC and speak as a part of the public. "On behalf of the Woonsocket Housing Authority, I want to that the WED for allowing the Authority to hold its first Senior Prom." She thanked the custodians for preparing everything, Carnell Henderson for all his help, and the students who volunteered and named them. She held up the big article that was in Saturday's Woonsocket Call.
- **Eleanor Nadeau, Woonsocket School Committee:** "It has been brought to my attention by many, many people that the tone of our meetings is not going in a good direction. The meetings are going too long and they aren't able to get the WSC Good & Welfare. The business part of the meeting is being neglected. I think we are short-changing the business part of the meeting and maybe we should put in some restrictions."
- **John McLaughlin, So. Main Street:** He agreed with Mrs. Nadeau. He wants to hear what the WSC members have to say and where they stand on the issues.

Mr. Dubois agreed that up until two months ago, there were some business items that they didn't get to. He is certainly open to moving the WSC Good & Welfare up on the agenda so that it can be heard. Mr. McLaughlin asked why the presentations couldn't be made in the multi-media lab without the WSC and be videotaped for the public and the WSC to view later. "The public is turning the meeting off and that's not good. The hard business needs to be

dealt with and prioritized. The presentations are nice, but tape them and put it on TV," suggested McLaughlin. Mr. Auclair recommended that the WSC think about taking charge of their own agenda because the superintendents and staff put a lot of things on the agenda. "The agenda is the way the WSC communicates to the public," said Auclair. Dr. Macera was open to whatever suggestions the WSC wanted to put forth. "The WSC wanted to approve job descriptions. They can be put on the Consent Agenda. Some of the items are put on by the WSC members. If you want all appointments put on the Consent Agenda, that's fine," said Macera.

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**RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Macera**

Thanked Rep. Roger Picard for getting a new RI state flag for the WACTC. Recognized him for his support of the WMS bond and legislation for bussing in small vans. Recognized those involved in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Move Up Day. Congratulated the WACTC on a very successful golf tournament to raise funds for students traveling to Kansas City in June to compete.

Motion to receive and place on file: A. Forcier

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

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** May 9, 2007 Open/Closed

Motion to approve: M. Dubois

2<sup>nd</sup>: A. Auclair (Unanimously Approved)

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Motion to approve Consent Agenda with the following exemption: M. Williams**

- *Purchases/Transfers over \$2,000:*  
Keystone Information Systems, Inc. /Software Upgrade/McFee/Local – removed by A. Auclair
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: A. Auclair/E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

**1. Personnel Actions**

Certified Appointments/  
Non-Certified Appointments

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

*Keystone Information Systems, Inc. /Software Upgrade/McFee/Local- REMOVED*  
New England Mechanical/Compressor/WHS/Local

**3. Field Trip/Conference Requests**

Skills USA National Competition, Kansas City, MO/WACTC/Perkins Grant

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**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**EXEMPTIONS TO CONSENT AGENDA:**

**PURCHASES/TRANSFERS OVER \$2000:**

- *Keystone Information Systems, Inc. for \$55,680 for Software Upgrade*

Mr. Auclair thanked Mr. Gallishaw and Mrs. Goodman for answering all his questions about this expenditure. "Apparently, Keystone won't work with the old software," said Auclair. Mrs. Goodman said that we have asked that the state reimburse some of the cost for the upgrades. Auclair asked if this software and School Dude are compatible. Goodman said it could be made compatible.

Motion to approve: A. Auclair

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

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**COMMUNICATIONS:**

- **Discussion / Approval Student Placement Protocol – WMS – June 13, 2007**

This discussion will be incorporated into the June 13<sup>th</sup> report by the WMS on their FY07 initiatives. Mr. Auclair wanted to know if this should be put into our policy. He thinks it should be considered. Dr. Macera said that student

placement based on test scores, grades, etc., is an administrative function. It has always been done by the counseling staff everywhere she has worked. "Currently, it's a protocol—not a policy," she said.

**Motion to have a workshop on this topic: A. Auclair**

**No 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion fails.**

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• **Discussion /Approval of Delta Dental Contract Renewal – June 13, 2007**

Mrs. Goodman reviewed the renewal contract and did not recommend accepting at this time in hopes of getting a better rate if we wait.

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**ESL Advisory Committee:** Ms. Williams attended the second meeting of this committee, which is in its infancy stage right now. They were concerned about parents who don't speak English trying to help their kids with homework. She thinks this school district needs to do a better job of letting them know what services are out there for them.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**1. Approval of Automated External Defibrillator Policy – 2<sup>nd</sup> Passage**

Dr. Macera had the nursing staff look over this policy, as well as the RI Interlocal Trust. The Trust does the training. Mrs. Nadeau asked if everyone is eligible for the training. Dr. Macera said that the training is open to everyone as far as she knows.

**Motion to approve: M. Dubois**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams**

**Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. Motion passed.**

**AF was not present for the vote.**

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**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Approval of Appointment of Director of Athletic, Physical Education and Wellness**

Dr. Macera read her recommendation of George Nasuti for this position. Ms. Williams asked how many other districts have this position. Macera listed No. Providence, Providence, and Cranston to name a few. Macera gave the reasons why this position is so important, adding that we are partnering for a large grant which may totally fund this position. Williams doesn't think Mr. Nasuti has the qualifications that the people at the Health Hut have to address the issues that they address, saying she couldn't support this position and this amount of money. "It seems these qualifications were written for this particular individual," claimed Williams. Macera said that Mr. Nasuti will work with the nurses, who are qualified to address the issues that the Health Hut dealt with. "If this position isn't funded, I don't know how we will supervise the physical education/health teachers, etc. We need someone to do all that. If we don't have this position, our kids cannot play intramural sports. In my opinion, it's a vital position," said Macera. Williams was surprised that Nasuti applied for this job because he seemed very happy with what he's doing now. She found it "odd". Mrs. Nadeau said her problem was not with Mr. Nasuti. "We are approving new positions and we don't have a finalized budget yet. Can we wait until we know what we will be getting?" asked Nadeau. Macera explained that she is presenting other savings of \$400,000 in the way of a bussing proposal later on tonight's agenda. "I know what happens when we get short-changed by the city or the state. I am very concerned that we will have to cut teacher assistants if that happens," said Nadeau. Dr. Macera stressed that we have to have a Director of Athletics for our teams to play and we have a retirement. We also have the opportunity to go for federal grants to help pay for it since the Health Huts are leaving. "The perception of the City Council might be that if we are hiring all these people, we must be hiding money somewhere," suggested Nadeau. "Politics have no place in education. These are not new positions. One is a self-funded positions and saving us thousands of dollars. Part-time is not enough for an Athletic Director. It's too big a job. I think people need to deal with the reality, which is that someone retired. They need to be replaced or we cannot participate in intramural sports. We have operated very fiscally responsibly. I will not run this district in a deficit," stated Macera. Mr. Auclair thinks the position is needed. "Our money should be spent in raising student achievement. I have proposed self-evaluations for the WSC and administration. I have proposed oversight workshops. If the WSC chooses not to participate in management oversight and self-evaluation, then I have to trust in the judgment of our superintendent," said Auclair. "As society changes, new jobs are created. Who would have thought the city would ever have to hire a recycling coordinator? Also, if we table this and Mr. Nasuti takes it, we will have to scramble to get a new high school principal for September. I will support this position," said

Dubois. "I will support this also. Our kids need other activities to be involved in," said Forcier. The salary for this position is an elementary principal's salary plus a stipend to pay approximately \$93,000/year.

**Motion to appoint George Nasuti to the position of Director of Athletics, Physical/Health Education and Wellness: A. Auclair**

2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Dubois

**Roll Call Vote: 3 yes – MD, AA, AF / 2 no – EN, MW  
Motion passed by a 3 to 2 vote.**

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**2. Approval of Appointment Secondary Supervisor Alternative Learning Programs**

Dr. Macera read her recommendation of Mr. Michael J. Ferry to be appointed to this position.

**Motion to appoint Michael J. Ferry to the position of Supervisor of Secondary Alternative Learning Programs:  
A. Auclair**

2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams

**Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion passed.**

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**3. Approval of Appointment Director/Principal Woonsocket Area Career & Center**

Dr. Macera read her recommendation of Dr. Lynne Bedard for the position of Director/Principal of the Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center. Mr. Auclair asked how the duties of Master of Teaching and Learning feed into this position. "How will she be capable of running this building and being Master of Teaching and Learning for the WHS and the WACTC at the same time?" asked Auclair. Dr. Macera stated that a stipend from the state pays for that part of the job, but the funding may not always continue. The duties will continue, however. "Dr. Bedard has established the learning walks at the WHS and the WACTC," said Macera. Mr. Dubois said he supports this appointment and wished Mr. Riley well in his retirement.

**Motion to appoint Dr. Lynne Bedard to the position of Director/Principal of the Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center: A. Forcier**

2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams

**Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion passed.**

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**4. Approval of Job Description of Assistant Principal for Spec.Ed. & Student Support Services – WMS/Feinstein**

**5. Approval of Job Description Special Education Grade Level Case Manager – WMS**

Dr. Macera explained that these are state-mandated positions and will be IDEA funded. Carole Lerner said that RIDE is very much in support of these positions to facilitate the restructuring at the WMS. RIDE is providing the funding for all of these positions. There are three case manager positions—one for each grade level at the WMS.

**Motion to approve both job descriptions: M. Dubois  
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion passed.**

2<sup>nd</sup>: A. Forcier

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**6. Approval School Start Times Adjustment with Amendment to Bussing Contract**

Mr. Jonathan Gallishaw stated that he had many meetings with Peter Fontaine and Bill Legare regarding this change. He reviewed what the proposed changes would be. The WMS and WHS students can be combined on the same bus to save money. Also, corner stops will be instituted. The mileage requirements do not change. "How do corner stops affect the students?" asked Nadeau. Gallishaw explained that students would walk to a corner instead of the bus having to make multiple stops on one street. Mr. Auclair was concerned about who will be there when students are getting on the bus if teachers leave at the same time as the students. Dr. Macera explained that the common planning time is for four days only. She has discussed with the principals that these days be staggered so that there will always be supervision. Auclair asked about a written protocol for this and Macera told him that the principals will get together and write something and a letter will go out to the parents. Auclair also had questions/concerns about both age groups being on the bus together and potential problems. Mr. Fontaine stated that he had this same position in Lincoln for 15 years. He recommended putting both age groups on the same bus and it went very well. "Most of the problems were with the middle school age kids. The high school kids got the middle school age kids to calm down so that the driver didn't have to pull over because they want to get home quicker. We also have cameras on the buses, which will help out. Mr. Legare has been bussing Blackstone/Millville students for years. They have middle and high school in the same building and he also said that bussing the two age groups together works out

very well. Mr. Auclair would like a report during the year on how things are going. "We have a different population here than in Lincoln or Blackstone," Auclair pointed out. Forcier said it would make her life a lot easier because the 10-minute difference will give parents the time to drop off kids at both schools. "I don't have a problem with it at all. In many urban cities, kids take public transportation. I think we will have parents complaining about an 18-year old boy on a bus with a 13-year old girl," said Williams. Fontaine said that they will monitor the situation. Children with a physical disability will still have door-to-door service. Auclair asked how this would affect the private and parochial schools we bus. Macera said she had a meeting with them and it was very satisfactory. Mr. Dubois asked how many stops are made on Park Avenue now. He was told that two stops are made by the regular ed bus. "How many stops will there be on a long street now?" asked Dubois. Mr. Legare said that elementary students will have to walk a maximum of two blocks to a stop, while high school students will have to walk a maximum of four blocks. "I think that's very fair. I'm thrilled that the WMS/WHS will be starting later. Many high school students work late and I think it will help with the tardiness problem," said Dubois.

**Motion to approve: M. Williams**  
**Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion passed.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau**

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## **7. Approval of Job Sharing Policy P2-4.1for Woonsocket Education Department – 1<sup>st</sup> Passage (TABLED)**

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**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Macera spoke about the cooperation between the WPD and WED regarding the recent incident. There will be a meeting on Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. at McFee with the WPD and the PAVE group. RIDE will be coming to the meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup> regarding the WMS report.

Motion to receive and place on file: A. Forcier

**2<sup>nd</sup>: A. Auclair (Unanimously Approved)**

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### **SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD AND WELFARE:**

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**Dubois:** Last month there were WMS students that had pipe bombs found in their home and blamed it on getting the instructions on the Internet at school. These students didn't even have access to the Internet. This recent incident didn't happen at school. He said he received a letter last month that the WSC meeting has to be advertised in a daily newspaper locally. Dubois asked Atty. Ackerman to look into that and mentioned that we couldn't hold a meeting recently because it wasn't advertised in time. He spoke about the mix-up this week and wants to see if we could advertise in the Valley Breeze. Atty. Ackerman said it has to be a generally circulated newspaper and he doesn't think a weekly newspaper would qualify. He suggested getting the agenda to the newspaper earlier and then if there's a problem, it can be corrected in time.

**Forcier:** Attended a play at Citizens Memorial on violence today and it was excellent. She was recognized with Mr. Auclair through the RI Board of Regents and the RI Board of Secondary Education for completing the program on leadership.

**Nadeau:** Asked about a month ago if a hard copy of incident reports can be included in the WSC packets. She needs that because she is in the process of moving and doesn't have her computer hooked up yet. She thinks the idea of T-shirts is a great idea at the WMS. As she sat in traffic one day on Hamlet Avenue, she realized that the dress code is not being adhered to. The issue of cell phones in school has to be addressed also. "They need to be kept in their lockers. We need to stress the discipline there. I don't think it's being addressed the way it should be."

**Williams:** Asked if the students in the VLA program are able to do portfolios. Dr. Macera told her they can do portfolios and common tasks. Williams congratulated 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue School on their positive initiatives, saying she thought it was ironic that we are approving a Health and Wellness Director and they are awarding Happy Meals to kids. "Maybe we should think about Subway or something else." Spoke about the discipline at the WMS and the inconsistency of it. The things she hears from people in the community are not good. Dr. Macera said she needs specific information to do anything. In regards to the cell phones and dress code, Macera feels that the parents have to cooperate. Williams has seen the girls walking down Hamlet Avenue also and feels the dress code needs to be enforced.

**Auclair:** Asked Atty. Ackerman about which agreements between RIDE and the WED need WSC approval. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> he tried to organize an Ethics Workshop and one had one member respond so he cancelled it. He will try to reschedule. He is looking to organize a focus group on homework K-12. People can contact him if they are interested. He went to GED classes at Family Resources and asked the students why they dropped out in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. He said it's because many of them are passed along through the elementary and middle school and then when they get to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, they hit a brick wall. Some were in 9<sup>th</sup> grade for three years. "We say we don't use social promotion, but in actuality, we do."

Motion to adjourn at 10:45 p.m.: A. Forcier

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

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle  
WSC Recording Secretary