

**MINUTES**  
**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 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 RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – Jennifer Rivera Awards out of order: M. Dubois No objections.***

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**RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** *(due to the number of people in attendance, only the people present for set of awards were allowed to stay in the room because of fire code limitations)*

- **Jennifer Rivera Award: Presented by M. Smith – WMS**

Marlene Smith explained who Jennifer Rivera was and the significance of the award. WMS Teachers from each team presented the award for their student.

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***Motion to take RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – Recognition Awards out of order: M. Dubois No objections.***

- **Recognition Awards: Teacher of the Year – Carolyn Martin  
Teacher Assistant of the Year – Shirley Brunelle  
Clerical Employee of the Year – Christine Lynch  
Custodian of the Year – Richard Beaubien**

Dr. Macera read excerpts from the nominations for each recipient and they were presented with the award.

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- **Recognition of Child Studies Award at WACTC to Dr. Lynne Bedard, Colleen Curis, Christine McKenna and teacher assistant Patsy Dumas by Carolyn Rabidoux, Early Childhood Coordinator**

Ms. Rabidoux explained that it took a lot of hard work over the last five years for the WACTC Child Care Program to receive national accreditation, which is a quite an honor and very few programs have.

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***Motion to take CONFERENCES- WMS report on Positive Initiatives FY07 and the RIDE Commissioner's Report Review out of order: M. Dubois No objections.***

- **WMS Report on Positive Initiatives FY07 – Dr. P. McGee, Principal**

Dr. McGee introduced Bruce Berman and Rick Ferguson of the Feinstein Academy, who gave a PowerPoint presentation and slide show on the positive initiatives at Feinstein. Justin Croteau, a student, shared a poem he wrote. The slide show highlighted the various activities that the students were involved in throughout the year, such as feeding the hungry and the Best Buddies program. This program pairs Feinstein students and elementary students up in doing activities. Feinstein students have logged in over 220 hours of community service this year.

Dr. McGee thanked Mr. Berman and Mr. Ferguson for their hard work to make their first year very successful. He congratulated the Jennifer Rivera Award recipients and named the WMS Students of the Third Quarter. McGee discussed the many after school programs that the WMS is running and introduced Cory Brien, Social Studies teacher, who explained the Student Council and Student Leadership Programs. A student got up and explained the

STAR program. Students have been writing letters to soldiers in IRAQ as part of their writing program. Dr. McGee read one. He discussed their creative communications initiatives which included students writing poems. One student who had two pieces published this year read his poem. McGee named other students who had poems published. He discussed their community service initiatives, noting that Mrs. Pauline Papino does many of those projects with the students. Papino reviewed the projects they have participated in. "The WMS is a very caring community. Many of our kids come to the WMS with very little, and I'm amazed at what they give to others," said McGee.

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• **RIDE COMMISSIONER'S REPORT REVIEW: Dr. Mary Canole, Mr. Rick Richards**

Canole and Richards congratulated the WMS on their accomplishments this year, saying there have been great changes in the student climate. Canole noted that Woonsocket has been designated as a school district in need of support for four years in a row. Presently, the WED is under corrective action. The WHS and WMS have not met the academic standards set by the State Board of Regents. Canole reviewed the report and said that RIDE is happy with the progress that has been made in the last two years, but there is still significant work that needs to be done. Richards read parts of the report, highlighting what the findings were. RIDE is concerned that the improvement is not moving fast enough. They passed out copies of the report to the WSC and the public, saying they would be happy to come back at a later date to answer questions after everyone has had time to digest it.

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**PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:**

- **Mark Lebrun, WHS Special Education Teacher:** Spoke about Mr. Nasuti stepping down as Principal of the WHS and thanked him for making his time at the WHS rewarding. "School pride is up. The school climate is healthy. The AFJROTC program is developing under Nasuti's leadership. Mr. Nasuti has forged community relationships with Landmark and The Call, for example. We have gone from 200 tardy students each day to 50." He mentioned the FOCUS and FACTS after school programs and how Mr. Nasuti has supported them. Lebrun wishes him well in his new position, but wonders why we are letting him leave.
- **Evelyn Mack, 111 Jeffers Street, Woonsocket, Founder of The Extra Mile:** Announced that they piloted a program in September called "Straight Up", which addressed STDs and Aids prevention through peer education. It was piloted in the Woonsocket Housing Development in the Fairmount area. They had over 18 students involved in the program, of which 95% were boys. "It's good for our community because there are many programs for teen moms but not much for boys." Mack thanked the WHS, Shaw's, Walmart and the Woonsocket Task Force on Substance Abuse for helping them out. The youth started a bowling league at Walnut Hill Bowl. This program is non-funded. They decided to continue the program because there is a need. "The youth care." She doesn't want people to think that it's just the school system providing all the youth programs in Woonsocket.
- **Betty Angel, parent of elementary student:** Spoke about the time change for schools and it posing a burden for elementary school parents that have to get to work. Going from 8:45 am to 9:15 am will be a hardship for her. Dr. Macera explained that students could arrive at 8:30 am and have free universal breakfast until 9:15 am. A flyer went out to parents this past week. Ms. Angel said her kids have been home due to sickness this week so she didn't receive the flyer.
- **Denise Auclair, parent:** Stated that she's an old-fashioned parent and would want something from the school nurse stating that something from the Straight Up program would be given out to kids at school. She spoke about the combination of two 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes at Harris School next year. Her child went down two reading levels in one trimester. They had him evaluated and they didn't agree with the results. She thanked Mrs. Filomeno for her help. Auclair said she asked at the SIT meeting what would happen to students that don't meet the standard and she didn't get an answer. She has heard that the Feinstein elementary students will be going to Harris next year. Dr. Macera told her that what she has heard is incorrect. "The Feinstein elementary students will remain there," said Macera. Auclair said she wasn't happy with the WMS placement policy either. Dr. Macera said that the heterogeneous grouping is based on not having wide gaps in learning levels. "It's illegal to do tracking," she stressed. Auclair suggested that the WSC go to the schools that are low performing once or twice a month. Dr. Macera told Ms. Auclair to see her to verify anything she has concerns about.
- **Ms. Talamini, Vice President, Woonsocket Teachers' Guild:** Spoke about the school funding formula in the State of RI. "Right now, we have no funding formula. RI now ranks 47<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states in the state's share of education funding." She spoke about the budget increase caps that have been instituted. "The General Assembly should enact a state aid to education funding formula." She urged everyone to call their legislators about this issue.

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**RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Macera**

Congratulated the principals of Social Street and Citizens Elementary Schools for being honored for their excellent scores on their state assessments. Congratulated the Valedictorian and the Salutatorian of the WHS Class of 2007 and all of the graduates and wished them the best. Gave special congrats to all retiring staff. Thanked the WACTC for hosting their awards ceremony at Wright's Farm last night and wished Andrew Riley well in his retirement.

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau 2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** May 24, 2007 Open/Closed

Motion to approve: M. Williams 2<sup>nd</sup>: A. Forcier (Unanimously Approved)

Ms. Williams made a correction on Page 2 under her Good & Welfare comments: "On behalf of the Woonsocket Housing Authority, I want to *thank* the WED for allowing...."

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Motion to approve Consent Agenda: A. Forcier 2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Dubois (Unanimously Approved)**

**1. Personnel Actions**

Certified Appointments/  
Non-Certified Appointments

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

Beacon Charter High School/Tuitions FY08/District/Local  
The Call/Advertising FY08/District/Local  
Dell Computer Corp/Servers/Sodexo/Lunch Revenue  
Keystone Information Systems/Software Maint/McFee/Local  
Lindenmeyr Munroe/Paper for District Printing/District/Local  
National School Boards Assoc./Membership/School Committee/Local  
Project Learn Adult & Fam. Literacy/Adult Ed. Services/Grants & Curriculum/WIA,ABE,Family Lit. Grant  
The Providence Journal/Advertising/District/Local  
RIEAP, Inc./ Student Asst. Program/WHS/Local  
Univ. of MA Medical School/Medicaid Billing/District/ Local  
Waste Management/Trash Removal/WACTC/Local

**3. Field Trip/Conference Requests**

Senior Project Institute, New Orleans, LA/WACTC/Article 31

**4. Home Schooling Requests (2)**

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**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

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**COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

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**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Approval of Job Description of Case Manager – WHS – C. Lerner**

Ms. Lerner noted that this position is paid for through the IDEA Grant.

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

**2<sup>nd</sup>: A. Forcier**  
**Motion passed.**

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## 2. Approval of Head Start Contract for 2007-08 – M. Goodman

Mrs. Goodman explained that this is a renewal agreement. She said that we buy a certain amount of slots at Head Start for our students. Mr. Auclair had concerns that it was only for low-income students. "The students that we send have special needs," said Goodman. She noted that the date on Pages 1 & 4 to take effect should be July 1, 2007, not Sept. 1, 2006, as is shown in the packet.

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

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

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## 3. Approval of Parent Involvement Policy - P8-3.4 – 1<sup>st</sup> Passage – L. Filomeno

Cindy McNeill, PAC Co-Chair, and Carmen Boucher, parent and former PAC Co-Chair, worked with Mrs. Filomeno to revise the policy this year along with the Parents Advisory Council. Mrs. Nadeau noted that for many years there was a position in the WED called a "Parent Involver" that originated out of Title 1 funds. She wanted to know when that position was done away with, but no one present had that answer. She said that person organized the parent groups and activities in the district.

**Motion to approve: A. Forcier**  
**Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion passed.**

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

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**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Macera focused on the state budget process and where we sit with it. "We requested 5% last year and were able to get 4.8%. This year we asked for 5.25%. It appears that some of the state priorities are not moving in support of education." She asked parents to contact their legislators. "The cost of living is 3.3% and I'm hoping the state will give at least 3%. That's minimal." Urged the public to contact their legislators. Thanked the WSC for their support in all that the WED is trying to do.

Motion to receive and place on file: A. Forcier

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

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## SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD AND WELFARE:

**Auclair:** He was hoping that he could ask questions of the people from RIDE regarding their report on the WMS. He would like Dr. Macera to arrange a meeting with them. He has concerns with the process. Dr. Macera will request that they do come back. Auclair spoke about the proposed funding formula, saying he doesn't feel that putting more money into education is the answer. "More important than money is putting the right people in the right place to get the job done. I like the idea of parents as partners and not obstacles." He recommended speaking with the WTG about reopening negotiations to review and revise personnel evaluations; and if it does come through as a 0% increase in funding from the state, that we discuss a step freeze and salary freeze. Spoke about how it works in the private sector. He was shocked when he saw an article by Roger Bouchard about the WED over-identifying minority students for special education. Dr. Macera said that RIDE admitted to us that the data is wrong. "It's incorrect. We have challenged that," said Macera. He would have appreciated a heads-up about it, rather than seeing it in the newspaper. Dr. Macera said she didn't even know it was in the newspaper; and many times, what's in the newspaper is not correct. "RIDE doesn't know how to correct it," she reported.

**Dubois:** Urged everyone to call their representatives because a 3% increase is the minimum of what we need to fund education. Thanked Marlene Smith for all her work with the Jennifer Rivera Awards. "It was great to see the turn-out for them." Spoke about change in start times and bussing routes. He doesn't think that all the information was shared with the public and the WSC at the time this came up for a vote. "Between the WMS and WHS, 263 students will not be getting door-to-door bussing with the new corner stops. It's not in their IEPs, but it's being provided now. I have a problem with not everything being shared at the meeting." He said he has spoken to every WSC member about trying to have one meeting a month that is just business and one meeting that is just conferences and workshops. "Do these changes need to be voted on by the WSC?" he asked Atty. Ackerman. Ackerman said that if the WSC sets up the agenda now, it shouldn't have to be voted on. "If any member disagrees, they should speak up now. If there's no policy that says you have to have the meetings structured a certain way, then I see no problem with it," said Ackerman. Dubois announced that the one meeting in July will be on the 18<sup>th</sup>. He congratulated the graduates of the WACTC and the WHS.

**Forcier:** Spoke about the length of the meetings and suggested that people call Dr. Macera or Carole Lerner if they have questions before the meeting. "That would save time." She agreed with Mr. Dubois about the state spending \$15 million for the Dunkin' Donuts Center and it doesn't have money for education. "We know better." She went to

the WACTC awards banquet and said it went great. Forcier mentioned other activities she attended. Congratulated the grads of 2007 and wished them the best of luck.

**Nadeau:** She disagreed with asking questions beforehand because she receives many questions from parents. She never wants to stifle people from asking questions. She had a question today about elementary dismissal and how the time change would affect after school activities. Dr. Macera said that they would not be affected. Nadeau said that if anyone calls her with concerns, she never reveals her sources.

**Williams:** Congratulated the employees who received awards. Congratulated the Class of 2007. She was upset about the bussing situation last week and likes to have all the information when she votes. "Will the parents be notified?" she asked. Dr. Macera said letters are going out to the parents affected and requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. She finds it difficult to accept what RIDE says as far as writing and all kids being at 100% of the standard. "Some students are just never going to be 100% proficient. I think the teachers work very hard at the WMS to get their students there, but look at the community we live in. You can't go into the home and fix the home life of the student so they will be able and ready to learn. It's discouraging." She works for the Woonsocket Housing Authority and today they had the Social Street School students come to the St. Germaine Manor to have a cookout. "It was a really, really nice day."

Motion to adjourn at 10:30 p.m.: A. Auclair

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

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle  
WSC Recording Secretary