

2. **Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000 (continued)**
Konica/Copier Usage/Bernon, Citizens, Globe/Local
Scott Foresman/Supplies/Globe/Local
Sonitrol/Security Monitoring 08/Facilities/Local
3. **Field Trip/Conference Requests**
ASBO INTERNATIONAL, Toronto, Canada/McFee/Local
4. **Home Schooling Requests (4)**

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

EXEMPTIONS FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Personnel Actions: Hourly, Stipend and Extra-Curricular Positions

Mrs. Nadeau asked about the positions for the Step-Up Program at the WMS and what the difference between the Step-Up and Ramp-Up Programs was. Dr. Macera explained the difference. Nadeau asked about the director of the Step-Up Program and said she saw it somewhere on the agenda for appointment tonight. She wanted to know how that position came about and how the director was selected. Dr. Pat McGee said that the position was posted and the person applied. He was a teacher at the high school. Dr. Macera will have to get more information on it because she doesn't have it with her tonight. "Everyone has an opportunity to apply for a posting," she noted. Mrs. Filomeno added that the postings went out separately for each program. They didn't have enough applicants for the Step-Up Program so they pulled the applications of all the people who had applied for the summer school program to see if anyone was interested. Nadeau asked what the 12-month, assistant principal at the WMS does in the summer. Dr. McGee explained that the Ramp-Up Program will better prepare students for the next grade. "Mr. Porricelli oversees the program. The assistant principal doesn't run the program and is at the school working on other activities to ready for the next school year," said McGee. Dr. Macera added that the assistant principal is also responsible for the discipline. "You need to have an administrator for that. I believe Mr. Porricelli also teaches. An administrative certificate is not required for the director's position," she explained.

Motion to Approve: M. Dubois

2nd: M. Williams/ A. Forcier (Unan. Appr.)

COMMUNICATIONS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

(Because of the lengthy agenda, Mr. Dubois limited each topic to 15 minutes for discussion.)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Health & Wellness Policy – P4-7.1 – 2nd Passage –K. MacBeth/A. Auclair

Mr. George Nasuti said that he reviewed the policy this month and wanted clarification on some issues involving fundraising and concession stands. Dr. Macera said there are state laws with relation to nutrition and wellness. "Atty. Ackerman will look into this after he comes back from vacation in two weeks," said Macera. Mr. Auclair's understanding is that any time we are holding a school-sponsored event, it's considered school grounds. He asked Dr. Macera if, realistically, she can implement this policy. "There will be some transitional issues, but we will work through them," she said.

Motion to approve: A. Auclair

2nd: M. Williams

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes Motion passed.

2. Approval of Cyber Bullying Policy P2-21.1A – 2nd Passage – J. Gallishaw -----TABLED

3. Approval of Elementary Handbook – 2nd Passage – M. Tincknell NO CHANGES

Motion to approve: A. Forcier

2nd: A. Auclair

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes.

MOTION PASSED.

4. Approval of WMS/WHS Handbook – 2nd Passage – P. McGee/ G. Nasuti, C. Henderson

Dr. McGee said that there are two additions that the WSC asked to be included: 1) **Parent Involvement** was added under **Academic Placement**; and 2) **Wearing pants inappropriately** has been added under **Dress Code**. Mr. Auclair stated that he has been asking for a change to the promotion policy and has been told that the change he proposed to include all four core subjects can't be done because of the PS&I status of the middle school. Dr. Macera said she told him that the grading needs to be looked at. She is concerned about students not having any chance of recouping grades so they can be promoted. "We have to look at all the secondary level policies and how they impact the drop-out rate," she said. Auclair said he has been asking for over a year and a half. When he went to see the GED courses in the city, the kids there said they thought they were doing fine in the 8th grade and when they got to the 9th grade, they hit a wall. He also has concerns about academic placement. Dr. Macera spoke about the 0 to 100 grading system that needs to be looked at. "To put 110 accelerated students in one cluster is tracking and I would have to get permission from the state to do that," said Macera.

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

2nd: M. Williams
MOTION PASSED.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Revised FY2008 School District Budget – Dr. Macera, M. Goodman

Dr. Macera met with the Mayor last week. "This is not the ideal budget. It's very, very difficult. I'm very grateful to the negotiating teams for the unions because they all agreed to a big change in Blue Cross. It has dramatically improved our experience. We saved \$800,000 because of it. We had to close a \$1.9 million budget gap and are anticipating that we will realize approximately \$100,000 in savings because of the bussing bill that was passed. Bringing more students in from out-of-district and using administrative interns will save us even more money. The most troubling to hear is that 21.5 teacher assistants will need to be cut," said Macera. Mr. Auclair said that Dr. Macera was supposed to explain the expenditures for substitutes. "We are looking at the data in regards to teacher assistant substitutes and teacher substitutes. We are doing away with building monitors and should be able to save on subs by being creative. We will have a plan for the WSC in August," she said. Macera spoke about using retired teachers as subs as long as they are paid an hourly rate and not hired in a .4 position. That way, we won't be required to provide benefits. Mr. Auclair questioned the loss of housing aid reimbursements because of cuts in the capital improvement budget. He also mentioned approaching the unions about reopening the contract negotiations. Mrs. Nadeau asked about the 21.5 teacher assistants being cut and if it's also due to the restructuring of special education at the WMS. Dr. Macera told her that 12 of the teacher assistants were cut due to the restructuring. Mrs. Forcier was also concerned about the cuts to the capital improvement budget and asked about potential funds coming to us as a result of the lawsuit against the NRI Collaborative. If we do get a monetary settlement, she would like it to be earmarked for capital improvement. Dr. Macera said she will have to see what happens and whether there will be any restrictions put on the funds.

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

2nd: M. Williams
MOTION PASSED.

2. Follow-up Discussion Concerning the WMS Commissioners Visit Report & PS & I – (Q & A)- R. Richards, & Dr. Canole

Mr. Auclair said he read the letter from the Commissioner regarding the writing. Mr. Richards said there are a lot of good things going on in the building, but the concern is about maintaining. Auclair believes that change has to come from the top down. He asked what authority the WSC has in overseeing the performance of the WMS in light of its PS&I status. Richards explained that Chapter 16 of RI General Law outlines the responsibilities of the superintendent and the school committee. "Under PS&I, we have authority over the superintendent, but we don't have authority over the school committee. Because we are in Year 5 of PS&I, we are becoming progressively more in control. We are negotiating with the superintendent. If things don't improve, we may be looking at doing something with the individuals who may be responsible for this lack of improvement," said Richards. "How can we work together?" asked Auclair and suggested having a retreat during the summer. "We look forward to being invited, but it would have to be a request from the board—not an individual," said Dr. Canole. Mrs. Nadeau asked about a letter of recommitment. Dr. Canole said it's a strategy that the school dept. can use, but we don't have to have one as long as we provide some level of assurance that all parties commit to do what is necessary to turn the WMS around. "I attended all the face-to-face meetings and I understand our marriage between the state and the school department. Why isn't the school department allowed to track students?" asked Forcier. "It's fine for some particular courses to have an advanced class. Heterogeneous grouping is very beneficial to all kids," said Canole. "Why, for some courses, it's okay and for others it's not okay?" asked Ms. Williams. Mr. Richards explained that when you track students, they

remain with their fellow students regardless of the subjects they take. "In grouping, you can pull students from any level if they are good in any particular course. It's not a permanent situation for that student," said Richards.

3. Approval of Assistant Principal for Pupil Personnel Services (Sp. Ed) for WMS and Feinstein Learning Academics at Second/Social St. – Dr. Macera, C. Lerner

Dr. Macera read her recommendation of Mr. Richard Ferguson for this position. Mrs. Nadeau asked where he would be located. "He will be located primarily at the WMS. It's a new, 12-month position. There are over 450 IEPs at the WMS. Mr. Berman will be a Leader Teacher at the Social Street Feinstein Academy and Carol Frisk will be the Leader Teacher at the Second Avenue site," said Macera.

Motion to approve Richard Ferguson: A. Forcier
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes.

2nd: A. Auclair
MOTION PASSED.

4. Approval of Superintendent's Authority for Waivers for Union & Non-union Employees carry-over vacation time when the interests of district are best served. - Dr. Macera

Dr. Macera explained why these waivers are needed. Mrs. Nadeau asked if the employees involved are 12-month employees. "Some of them are and some of them are not," answered Macera. She said that, in one instance, a very important grant had to be done and the secretary was needed to type it, but had to take her vacation time or lose it. Mr. Dubois said that he would approve her request as long as the vacation days cannot be converted to cash.

Motion to approve: A. Forcier

2nd: M. Williams

Mr. Auclair suggested only approving her request for this year so it doesn't become past practice. He can support it as long as it has a time limit to it. Dr. Macera noted that this happens every year. Dubois told her that if it happens next year, it will have to come before the WSC for approval.

Motion to Amend to limit the superintendent's ability to give waivers for carry-over vacation time when the interest of district are best served to one year only: A. Auclair

2nd: E. Nadeau

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. APPROVED

5. Approval of WED Waiver Request to Commissioner McWalters relative to the date of full implementation for the Approved Changes to Special Ed Regulations from FY2008 to FY2009 – Dr. Macera

Dr. Macera explained her reasons for this request. She thinks the Commissioner will respond within two weeks.

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

2nd: A. Auclair
MOTION PASSED.

6. Appointment of Woonsocket High School Principal – Dr. Macera

Dr. Macera thanked the Screening Committee, which included 16 members from a good cross-section of people. She read her recommendation letter for Dr. Lourenco Garcia, who is currently Assistant Principal at Tolman High School in Pawtucket. He would start on August 9th if he is approved. Dr. Garcia is on vacation in Cape Verde until then, but accepted the position over the phone with Dr. Macera and via email.

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

2nd: A. Forcier/ A. Auclair
MOTION PASSED.

7. Approval of Revised Capital Assessment Plan – Peter Fontaine, Dr. Macera, M. Goodman

Mr. Fontaine reviewed the revised budget. Mr. Auclair asked that he and Mrs. Forcier be involved in the process in the future because they are on that subcommittee.

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

2nd: E. Nadeau
MOTION PASSED.

CONFERENCES:

1. Mr. Tim Duffy – RIASC – Functions of School Committee

Mr. Duffy, Executive Director of the RI Association of School Committees, passed out reports for the last year to the WSC members. He explained that RIASC represents the interests of school committees on the state level. They deal with the legislators on their behalf. Duffy spoke about collaboration for health benefits and other ways they can help districts save money. They helped with the passage of transportation legislation that allows districts to use less than a full-size bus for small numbers of students. Mrs. Nadeau had a question about the SALT Report, but Duffy told her that Mr. Richards was the person to answer it and he had already left. "I think that what RIASC does is great, but most of the classes they offer are on a Saturday morning. I'm a single parent and I'm not going to give up my Saturdays with my daughter. Why don't they provide DVDs and other ways for members to participate if they can't make it on a Saturday?" asked Williams. Mr. Duffy said there are some workshops held at night, but most school committees meet during the weeknights. "Then why not videotape these training sessions so we can see them that way?" asked Williams. Mr. Duffy told her he would take that suggestion back and look into it. Williams asked if every district in the state is a member. Duffy told her, "Yes. We have told some that pay out of their pocket that it's reimbursable by their school department." Mr. Dubois asked if the WSC can see the operating expenses before they vote on this. Mr. Duffy said that he can provide that for them.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Macera thanked the WSC for supporting the budget and her other items and appointments. She reported that they have already begun discussions with the bargaining units regarding teacher assistant evaluations.

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Williams

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD AND WELFARE:

Forcier: Congratulated Dr. Garcia on his appointment and thanked Mr. Duffy for coming here tonight. She said that if people don't have time to participate in professional development for the school committee they shouldn't run for the position. *(She then left because it was her wedding anniversary.)*

Nadeau: Asked if anyone had a schedule for the high rises yet for the new middle school informational meetings. Cindy MacNeil has been working with the Mayor's office. Cindy said they have not gotten back to her. Dr. Macera will call the Mayor tomorrow. Mrs. Nadeau would like that information as soon as it's available. Nadeau thinks that RIASC serves a purpose, but disagrees with Mrs. Forcier about how to be a member of a school committee. "I don't think any course teaches you the nuts and bolts of how to be a member of a school committee. You have to do the work. I went down and networked with the other school committee members and learned about programs that worked for them."

Williams: Agreed with Mrs. Nadeau. "I haven't taken a course with them because I am not going to sever my Saturday morning with my child for that. Mrs. Forcier doesn't have a full-time job like I do."

Auclair: He feels that professional development is needed for all people in the education department. "They can't teach you common sense, but they can teach you how to govern. I can't tell people to attend or not to attend, that's their choice. I will be out next week and won't be able to attend the meeting about the site contamination." He put in some requests for documentation about the NRI Collaborative. Hopefully, he will have it before the meeting that's going to be held. Dr. Macera said that the former superintendent shredded all the meeting minutes of the NRI Collaborative, but she is trying to retrieve as much as she can. Auclair mentioned that he wanted to see the WSC minutes where they agreed to enter the Collaborative, but Dr. Macera said she doesn't believe that ever happened. "We have to believe that our education system can work exceptionally well. That's my vision," said Auclair.

Dubois: Wished the Providence Journal reporter well in her new position, adding that everything was always accurately reported. He took offense to what Mrs. Forcier said about if a school committee member can't attend professional development, then they shouldn't run for the office. "We put hours and hours into being on the school committee. I have a very busy schedule and have two jobs. I want to better our future and not attend every professional development workshop that comes along." He spoke about the screening process for the WHS principal, saying that a secretary was on the Screening Committee and was ridiculed by a member of this WSC who wasn't present. "This WSC member said, 'What are you doing on this committee, you're just a secretary!' I took offense to that also. The secretaries know more about what's going on than some of the administrators do." He announced that the next meeting will be held on August 8th.

Motion to adjourn at 9:45 p.m.: E. Nadeau

2nd: M. Williams/A. Auclair
(Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle
WSC Recording Secretary