

MINUTES  
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2007  
7:00 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

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**PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:**

- **Peter Fontaine, WED Facilities Director:** Mr. Fontaine spoke in order to answer some of the questions and concerns that have been raised regarding bussing. He reported that the opening of schools with regard to facilities went very well. Changes were made in the bussing this year. Things are going very well in the morning, but dismissal is not going so well. There's a lot of traffic on Cass Avenue and the buses have been having trouble making their runs on time. Dr. Macera has agreed to add a bus in the afternoon to help alleviate some of the problems. The parochial schools were given a list of changes also. There has been a change in door-to-door service, and we are getting much better use of the buses. Dr. Macera said that the adjustments were made without changing the distances. Mr. Auclair thought that we were going to be allowed to use smaller vehicles because the bill passed the legislature, but we can't use any of our vehicles because they don't have a stop arm. Dr. Macera said she is sending Mr. Fontaine to talk to someone at the state level about it. There is a provision in the law that requires a stop arm with a light on these vehicles. Mr. Fontaine noted that it's not an easy retrofit and the vehicles can't be registered until this is done. "It's not cheap and it's not easy," he added. Hopes are that this requirement can be relaxed by the legislature.
- **George Nasuti, WED Director of Health & Wellness:** He gave an update on activities going on in his department. Next week is Homecoming Week at the WHS and he reviewed the calendar of events being conducted at the WHS in regards to sports, pep rallies, and spirit activities. He also noted events that will be conducted during Breast Cancer Awareness Week.
- **Adam Gaulin, WACTC Student:** Noted that SkillsUSA is sponsoring a walk at Roger Williams Zoo to raise money for Breast Cancer on Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>.
- **Armand Dauphinais, parent:** Had questions about bussing and the fact that you must live 2.25 miles away from the WHS to get a bus. He said that the superintendent's office told him that there is a walking route from where he lives using the Kendrick Avenue Bridge that's 2.10 mi. He lives at 29 Kennedy Street and his son has an hour walk to and from the WHS. Mr. Dauphinais measured the distance by car and said it was 2.4 mi. Dr. Macera referred him to Mr. Fontaine and Mr. Legare who were both present at the meeting tonight. Dauphinais was frustrated because this situation has gone on for two weeks with no resolution.
- **Donna Houle, 130 Ward Street:** Thanked Mr. Fontaine for addressing the bussing issues. Spoke about classroom changes made at Globe Park School during the last week and her concerns about students being transferred right before the NECAP testing. "How can we expect them to do well when they have just been transferred to a new school? It's not fair," she said. Houle took exception to a comment that Mrs. Nadeau made under Good & Welfare at the last meeting about mentors being provided for the principals at the WHS and the WMS when we still don't have a reading specialist. She thinks the funds should be used to help students bring up their NECAP scores. She spoke about the Connected Math program and whether or not to vote on it when we don't have all the books in the series, not enough books for all the students, etc.
- **Linda Majewski, 51 St. Hughes Street:** Spoke about the waiver for students with medical needs for bussing—specifically for children with asthma. Suggested a waiver program for bussing students whereby if they will not use the bussing to make it available for others that might not be able to receive it.

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**RECOGNITIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Macera**

Dr. Macera reported that there were an incredible number of kindergarten students who showed up on the first day of school who were not enrolled during the summer. We also had a large number of ESL students register. "It's unprecedented in the last five years," she said, noting what changes had to be made at the schools because of it. She feels that having the NECAP testing now is just not workable. It's the state guideline so we have to follow it. It took a couple of weeks to see how the numbers of students were going to work out before the moves could be made. She commended Adam Gaulin on attending a SkillsUSA Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C., to advocate for the Perkins Act at the Whitehouse. She gave an update on the new middle schools building site. The Building Committee met on September 17<sup>th</sup>. Macera read a letter from Joel Matthews regarding the ACS site and the timeline for project completion.

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

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 8/29/07 Special Open & 9/10/07 Open/Closed**

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

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Motion to approve Consent Agenda: M. Williams**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Dubois (Unanimously Approved)**

**1. Personnel Actions**

Certified Appointments/  
Non-Certified Appointments

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

Apple Computers/Computers/WHS/E2T2 Grant  
Atlantic Elevator/Cylinder Replacement/HWS/Local  
Benchmark Education/Ed. Supplies/Savoie/Local  
Clary/Computer Hardware/WHS/E2T2 Grant  
Connecting for Children/Develop. Specialist/Even Start/Grant  
Dell Computers/Computers/WHS/ E2T2 Grant  
Epson Projectors/Projector/WHS/ E2T2 Grant  
Harvard University/Conference/Prof. Dev  
Konica/Copier Usage/District Wide/Local  
Mentor, Inc./Adult Ed./Even Start/Grant  
Monsignor Gadoury School/Prof. Dev./Curriculum & Grants/Title II Grant  
Our Lady of Victories School/Prof. Dev./Curriculum & Grants/Title II Grant  
Photodyne, Inc./Comp. Equip/WHS,WACTC/ E2T2 Grant /  
Simplex Grinnell/Fire Panel Repair/Globe Park/Local  
Tech Depot/Toner Cartridges/WHS, WACTC/ E2T2 Grant  
Touch boards/Computer Hardware/WHS, WACTC/ E2T2 Grant

**3. Field Trip/Conference Requests**

Holocaust Museum, Washington, D.C./WMS/Fundraiser  
Best Practices in Treatment, Hartford, CT/Globe Park Teachers/Self Funded  
American Speech-Language Assoc. Meeting, Rockville, MD/Speech/McFee/Self Funded

**4. Home Schooling Requests**

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**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**COMMUNICATIONS: None**  
**COMMITTEE REPORTS: None**  
**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None**

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**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1) Approval of Revised Busing Variance for Medical Waivers – 1<sup>st</sup> Passage – D. Engles, Dr. Yasigian, C. Lerner**

**Motion to approve: A. Auclair**

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

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

Dr. Macera explained that this is a first passage again because revisions were made since the last meeting. She reviewed what the revisions were. Dr. Yasigian was also present to give additional information and answer questions.

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**2) Approval of WMS Commitment Letter and Assurances Letter for RIDE – Dr. Macera**

**Motion to approve: A. Forcier**

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

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

Dr. Macera reviewed the letter for the public. Mrs. Forcier asked for Dr. Macera's views on how this will help the children improve in achievement. "It delineates what is expected for teachers," said Macera. Dr. McGee expanded on that, saying, "It's a unifying document that says we are all working towards a common goal." Mrs. Nadeau asked who the representative from the bargaining unit would be with regards to determining whether good faith efforts have been made. Dr. Macera told her it would be up to the teacher. Nadeau thought this document should be the criteria for everyone and Dr. Macera agreed, adding that this is a more formalized version of what the WED has been providing for training for teachers. Mrs. Nadeau expressed her concern that it gives a lot of power to a small group of people; however, Macera told her that there are enough checks and balances in place to keep that from happening. Nadeau felt that sometimes teachers are earmarked for personal reasons rather than for performance. **REVISION: Good faith efforts will be determined by the WMS Leadership Team in conjunction with the Central Office Leadership,..... Mrs. Williams suggested that under the heading, "REQUIREMENTS", it include ALL FACULTY & STAFF. Dr. Macera agreed.** Mr. Dubois questioned the part about allowing students to make up work and tests and whether or not we are lowering the standards for all students by doing that. "If there was a time limit and/or number of times they can make up the test or work, I would be able to support it," he said. **Under REQUIREMENTS, #3) will read – Allow all students to complete missing work and make up failed tests in no more than one month.** Mr. Auclair also thought this should be used throughout the district for all employees. He spoke about there being "pockets of excellence" in the WED; whereas, he believes there should be a "system of excellence". Dr. Macera then listed all the things she is proud of in the Woonsocket school district. Mr. Dubois asked what happens if a teacher refuses to sign the document. Dr. Macera is to submit a list of those teachers to Mary Canole at RIDE.

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**3) First Step In Mathematics/GEMS-NET/CMP II Program Review – RIDE**

Mr. Gagnon explained that the WED has plenty of booklets and textbooks for each grade for the CMP II Program, adding that there's quite a bit of professional development that is being done for its use. All the Math teachers, except one, at the WMS have been trained in CMP II. Mr. Gagnon noted that only one teacher has not taken the training because of childcare issues, but is getting help from her peers. Ms. Jennessa Allen, an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Teacher, spoke about the training for CMP II teachers and explained how the WMS came to start using the program. She said that the entire Math department at the WMS chose the program for use in the WMS. Ms. Filomeno spoke regarding GEMS-NET, saying it's currently being implemented at Harris, Coleman, Citizens and Gr. 6 at the WMS. Dr. Betty Young from URI was present to explain the program, which is being piloted in Grades 4, 5 and 6. Judy Keeley spoke about the First Steps Program.

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**4) Approval of New Paraprofessional Performance Evaluation – Dr. Bedard, L. Talamini**

**Motion to approve: M. Williams**

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

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

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**CONFERENCES: NRI Collaborative – Mr. Bud MacDonnell**

Mr. MacDonnell gave the history of the NRI Collaborative and explained what the Collaborative does. He discussed the surplus they have and the reasons for it. He also discussed future plans, such as selling the Epheta House property and the purchase of a more central location for professional development activities. MacDonnell stressed that the Collaborative has nothing to hide. Mr. Auclair mentioned an agreement that the WED entered into with the Collaborative that the WED cannot locate. Mr. MacDonnell explained that the NRI Collaborative gives tuition

reductions to the various districts out of the surplus and that this was decided some time ago to be the fairest thing to do.

**THE REMAINDER OF THE AGENDA WAS NOT HEARD BECAUSE IT WAS AFTER 10:30 P.M.**

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle  
WSC Recording Secretary