

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2009
7:00 PM – OPEN SESSION
Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center
Multimedia Room 303

Call to Order / Moment of Silence / Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:	Marc Dubois, Chairman	Present
	Michelle Williams, Vice Chairwoman	Absent
	Linda Majewski	Present
	Anita McGuire-Forcier	Absent
	Eleanor Nadeau	Present

Dr. Gerardi requested that Recognitions & Announcements be taken out of order. The WSC gave unanimous approval for this action.

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Robert Gerardi

“Teacher of the Year Award”- Dr. Gerardi/K. Lombardo (not done at tonight’s meeting)

“Jennifer Rivera Awards: Marlene Smith, Teacher at WHS, formerly at the WMS. Ms. Smith explained that Jennifer Rivera was a girl who agreed to testify in a murder trial in Providence and was murdered by a family member of the man she was to testify against. She said that this award recognizes good citizenship and always doing the right thing. She noted that Teresa Pereira was a former WHS student who drowned saving another young person. She saved that person, but lost her own life. Mrs. Pauline Papino presented one of these awards, adding that Ms. Smith buys all the plaques herself. Various other WMS Team Leaders presented their recipients with their awards. Dr. Gerardi thanked Ms. Smith for continuing this award every year.

“Recognition Awards” – L. Filomeno: As Director of Literacy and Professional Development, Mrs. Filomeno wanted to recognize teachers that have made a contribution to our district and the national community to improve education. This is the first time these awards have been given. Beth Starring, a Technical Arts teacher at the WHS, was recognized for serving since 1998 on the NE Association of Technology Teachers, as well as serving as Vice President since 2003. She became President of this Association in November of 2008. Kara Alling and Tanya Kurt-Hoard, both WMS English teachers, were recognized for dialogue journaling in their classrooms. They have presented at national conferences twice. Debra Steeres, another WMS English teacher, was recognized for being invited to speak at a national conference for English teachers regarding integrating technology into English classes. Deanne Orr was recognized for serving as Vice President of the American Speech, Language and Hearing Association for a number of years. She has also held positions in a number of other organizations. Ann Richards and Cheryl Sexton were recognized for being selected to be presenters at a national conference. Their video was shown to the audience. July Francis, Reading Recovery Teacher Leader, was recognized for her service to the district. She will be going to another district that is continuing their Reading Recovery Program.

Dr. Gerardi congratulated Sera Dubois from Leo A. Savoie School who won 1st place at the Harris Library Poetry contest for her poem “Watches over Me” in the K-2 category and Kalasia Richer for her poem “Dear Mom” which won 3rd place in the category Gr. 3-5. Each student will receive a gift certificate for a local bookstore. He also congratulated some Woonsocket Middle School students who won awards in their poetry contest recently and announced the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners for each grade level. Gerardi thanked Jonathan Gallishaw for receiving a grant award from RIDE for the E2T2 Program. RIDE is processing an award for the Woonsocket Middle School in the amount of \$95,700. This area will be funded during the 2009 grant cycle. Gerardi also announced that Harris School has passed all of its NCLB school classification targets for the 2008-2009 school year. This is the second year that Harris has met all of its targets, which means that Harris School is no longer under any sanctions imposed by the NCLB statute. He congratulated the WMS for hosting their 8th Grade Career Fair on Monday, May 21st, to promote growth in students and to foster positive relationships. It’s also a wonderful way to establish partnerships with area businesses for future activities. Many vendors participated in this event and the turnout was outstanding. Gerardi thanked everyone who participated. He congratulated Zachary Fortier on his selection to attend the Junior Congressional Youth Leadership Council in Washington, DC this summer after being nominated by his teachers at Woonsocket Middle School. Zachary is in Grade 6, a high honor student and member of the Student Council, school band, and East Woonsocket Little League.

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau

2nd: L. Majewski (Unanimously Approved)

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:

Nicole Denton, WMS Band Director: Invited everyone to the WMS concert tomorrow night at the WHS at 6:30 p.m. She noted that some Music Booster Awards will be given out also.

Diane DiCoste, VP of the WHS Music Boosters: Asked about cuts in classes at the WMS from 7 to 6 classes. "How much are we saving? About eight teacher salaries? I noticed that you added the sports back into the budget for the WMS, but you need to put the music program back into the school day. It's just not right. We really need the music in the middle school. You're keeping 5th Grade music, but then you're telling the kids they have to wait three years until they get to the high school to have it during school again? It doesn't make sense and will really affect the WHS performance band." Dr. Gerardi told her that the music program would require an additional three teachers. He commended the WSC for putting All-City Music and Chorus back into the budget this year and pointed out that there will still be performance music before- and after-school. "They will have general music during the school day," said Gerardi. DiCoste said that a lot of kids won't be able to participate. "For a lot of these kids, we are their family. Please consider that," she said. Nicole Denton added that out of 125 band students she now has, 30 students would be able to come if there is a bus. Many of her students won't be able to come. "300 kids will be affected by three teacher positions in the budget," she said.

Darlene McGaw, Family Resources Community Action: Reported on the parent/teacher surveys that went out at Pothier and Citizens Elementary Schools regarding parent engagement. "Out of 12 classrooms, over 10 had a 90% response rate." She thanked them very much for their participation in the survey.

Pauline Papino, 8th Grade Assistant Principal, WMS: Reminded Dr. Gerardi that their NYC trip leaves at 5:15 a.m. on Friday if he wants to go.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 13, 2009 OPEN/CLOSED

Motion to approve: M. Dubois

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve Consent Agenda with the following exemptions: E. Nadeau

- *Personnel Actions (Certified Appointments): K. LeTellier & Karen Trudel removed by L. Majewski*
- *Disposal of Obsolete Textbooks – Removed by L. Majewski*

2nd: L. Majewski (Unanimously Approved)

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Personnel Actions
 - Certified Appointments/ - 2 appointments removed by L. Majewski*
 - Non-Certified Appointments
2. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000
 - Gregory P. Piccirilli/Legal Fees/Special Ed/Local
 - Joseph Nasif/Consultant/District/DNA Grant
 - STEPS /Prof. Dev. Materials/District/PRIMES Grant
 - WARD'S Natural Science/Educational Supplies/WHS/Perkins Grant
3. Field Trip/Conference Requests
 - International Society for Technology Education Conference, Washington, DC/WACTC/Perkins Grant
 - Skills USA Leadership Conference, Kansas City MO/WACTC/Perkins Grant
 - 2009 National Skills USA Competitions, Kansas City, MO/WACTC/Fundraiser
4. *Disposal of Obsolete Text Books – Removed by L. Majewski*

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

EXEMPTIONS FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

- **Personnel Appointments (Certified): Kristine LeTellier and Karen Trudel (Positions to be assigned)**

Mrs. Majewski didn't feel comfortable with recalling these people without information on the positions they would be filling. Dr. Gerardi said that he is hoping to bring back as many teachers as possible. "We know we will have positions for them, but their recall can be removed for tonight," he said.

- **Disposal of Obsolete Textbooks:**

Mrs. Majewski asked if Dr. Gerardi had checked into donating these books. "Due to the financial crisis, we have not been able to pursue that option. We will remove this item until we can get more information," he told her.

MOTION TO TABLE BOTH EXEMPTED ITEMS: L. Majewski
2nd: M. Dubois

(Unanimously Approved)

COMMUNICATIONS: Bus Appeal (Parties weren't present). No hearing held. No other communications.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Linda Majewski deferred her Uniform Committee Report to Unfinished Business #2. She announced that the School Success Coalition will meet on Monday. PAC will meet on Wednesday at the WACTC. On June 4th, SELAC will meet at Pothier Elementary School.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Caruolo Action Plan Update - Dr. Gerardi

Dr. Gerardi reported the City Solicitor has filed his response to our complaint and Attorney Ackerman has filed the papers for our case to be heard. Attorney Ackerman has secured a 2 p.m. hearing at Superior Court tomorrow on Thursday, May 28, 2009.

2. Approval of Uniform Proposal – 2nd Passage: L. Majewski

Mrs. Majewski said that more research was requested at the last meeting and she provided that information to the WSC in their packets. Some of the research was from NYC and the other was from Miami – Dade County. In NYC, each school can choose whether they want to have a uniform. In Dade County, they have a mandatory policy. She noted how they addressed the enforcement of their codes in their discipline code. "Tonight's vote for 2nd Passage will approve what the uniforms would look like," said Majewski. She spoke to Senator Picard and he thinks the bill should go through the legislature by June 30th and there is a lot of support for it.

Motion to approve 2nd Passage of the School Uniform Only: M. Dubois
2nd: E. Nadeau

Motion to Amend to approve without the inclusion of footwear: M. Dubois
2nd: E. Nadeau
Roll Call Vote: 3 yes APPROVED

Discussion took place about an opt-out policy. If a policy is not approved tonight, 90-days notice cannot be provided to parents for September. Atty. Ackerman cautioned the WSC that the policy should be thought out carefully because it will likely be challenged. Mrs. Majewski noted that she is on the Policy Committee with Mrs. Nadeau and they can start developing a policy for the uniforms.

Motion to approve the inclusion of no opened-toe footwear that must be black, brown or white only: E. Nadeau
2nd: M. Dubois
Roll Call Vote: 3 yes APPROVED

3. Approval of Teen Dating Policy – 2nd Passage: George Nasuti

Mr. Nasuti noted some revisions that were requested at the last meeting.

Motion to approve for 2nd Passage: M. Dubois
Roll Call Vote: 3 yes APPROVED
2nd: E. Nadeau/L. Majewski

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Job Descriptions and Postings – Dr. Gerardi

Dr. Gerardi said that the WSC had been provided with job descriptions that Mr. Nasif prepared for all of the new or revised positions based on his leadership capacity. He also gave them the final draft of the Woonsocket Leadership Reorganization Financial Net/Loss Chart.

He reviewed some adjustments that were made on the Leadership Reorganization Financial Net/Loss Chart as follows: 1) The Bernon Principal position was raised from a 10-month to a 12-month Position. They had wanted to move to 10-month principalships at the elementary level through attrition, but realized that most of our principals are young and it would be unfair for one or two out of eight principals to have a significantly less salary than the others for over a decade. 2) They had budgeted \$56,347 for the ELL Parent Liaison/Tester. After further discussion with Rick Richards, RIDE does not expect this to be a teacher position and that a non-union position at a significantly less salary will be in order. 3) Dr. Gerard explained that he should have used an Excel spreadsheet instead of his calculator on Page 3. Instead of saving \$402,000 by eliminating the secondary supervisor and department chair positions as he originally projected, we are actually saving \$482,720. It does not change the \$800,000 overall savings that were projected in our total budget, but does identify that almost \$300,000.00 of that savings came from this restructuring. 4) At School Committee member Majewski's request, the Guidance Department Chair Position was changed to a non-union Guidance Coordinator position, which will provide additional savings of approximately \$7,000. 5) Because a very low stipend was estimated for Athletic Director and additional savings were found in several other positions, Gerardi felt that this stipend should be revised to be more in line with the average of the state. He went on the list serve for business managers and asked what they pay their Athletic Directors for stipends. He got the following responses: Davies\$4,441; RI School for The Deaf \$4,483; North Providence \$4,822; Chariho \$5,625; Narragansett \$8,000; N. Smithfield \$12,000. Gerardi adjusted our Athletic Director stipend to \$6,000 because he felt that it was fair based on the size of our programs and the average salaries across the state. Added to the job descriptions is the position of Director of Instruction and Administration's secretary because that job description will need to be changed.

Motion to approve the Leadership Reorganization Financial Net/Loss Chart: L. Majewski
2nd: E. Nadeau

Mrs. Nadeau asked if any of the amounts can be changed that are on the chart. Gerardi said that the non-contractual ones can be changed. Nadeau preferred that the Athletic Director's stipend be set at \$5,500 instead of \$6,000.

Motion to amend the Leadership Reorganization Chart to set the Athletic Director's stipend at \$5,500: L. Majewski
2nd: E. Nadeau

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED: 3 yes. APPROVED

Mrs. Majewski had many revisions on the job descriptions, which she gave to Dr. Gerardi. Mrs. Nadeau asked if the Secretary to the Director of Instruction and Administration is a new position. Dr. Gerardi explained that this is not a new position. The person in this position filled the position of the secretary to the Deputy Superintendent, but the position was modified after the Deputy Superintendent position was eliminated. Nadeau also had a problem with the Content Area Coordinator positions for English/Social Studies and Math/Science. She doesn't see how these are going to work and how it will be better. Gerardi explained that by going with coordinators, they won't have to be in the position of evaluating their peers. Nadeau thinks we will need more people down the road when English and Social Studies and Math and Science are combined. Gerardi pointed out that the NECAP is given in the areas of literacy and numeracy. He feels that the more we can coordinate these areas, the better off we will be. They will be paid at a coordinator's level of \$79,000. Mrs. Majewski preferred that we call the Director of Instruction and Administration the Deputy Superintendent. "It is what it is," she said. Mr. Dubois said that everyone else is a director and he likes the wording. Nadeau agreed with him. She wants to get away from that name of Deputy Superintendent. "There are some scary memories there," she said.

Motion to change the title of Director of Instruction and Administration to Deputy Superintendent: L. Majewski
NO SECOND. MOTION DIES.

Motion to approve the Job Descriptions with tonight's revisions and the posting thereof: L. Majewski
2nd: M. Dubois **Roll Call Vote: 3 yes APPROVED**

NEW BUSINESS (continued):

2. Discussion and Approval of Attendance Policy for WHS – 1st Passage – Dr. Garcia (TABLED)

3. Discussion and Approval of New WMS Promotion Policy -1st Passage– Dr. McGee

Dr. McGee reviewed the proposed changes for 2009-2010. Credits required to pass to the next grade would increase from 3 credits to 4.5 credits. He reviewed how parents and students would be informed of this change if it is approved. Mrs. Nadeau didn't like where it said they can pass either Science or Social Studies. She sees all of the core subjects as being required to pass. McGee agreed with her, but they felt they should give this new policy a couple of years to see how the students are doing, and then they can revisit that issue. The committee felt that if they made it too stringent, many students would need to go to summer school and/or many students would be retained and they would have to put on another team. Nadeau feels that some students get to high school and they're lazy. "They either need to pay now or they pay later. I think it catches up with them when they get to the WHS," she said. Mrs. Majewski would like to see exit criteria for 8th graders. "Something like they either need to pass social studies or science for two years. They can't just pick one. For kids that are failing, in December I would like to see a notification to the parents by having them come in for a mandatory meeting with the team. I would also like to see the reintroduction of mid-term exams at the 8th grade level," she said. Mr. Dubois remembered that when he first got elected, all they had to do was pass English to get promoted at the WMS. He is very supportive of this change and Nadeau's and Majewski's ideas. He would like to see the policy strengthened in the next two years.

Motion to approve for 1st Passage: L. Majewski
Roll Call Vote: 3 yes

2nd: E. Nadeau
APPROVED

4. Discussion of City Braver Audit Report- Stacey Busby/Dina Dutremble (TABLED)

CONFERENCES: NECAP SCORES FOR WMS, WHS, ELEMENTARY – Dr. McGee, Dr. Garcia, L. Filomeno

Linda Filomeno reported that four schools didn't meet the Annual Yearly Progress – Bernon Heights, Citizens, 5th Avenue and the WHS. She explained the results. Dr. Gerardi commended her on the level of data analysis she provided. She used a growth model for her statistics. Mrs. Majewski asked if the WMS would be out of PS&I next year if they meet the AYP. "Yes, they will be, but not the district because we have not had growth at the WHS," said Filomeno. "If 5th Avenue School is in Insufficient Progress, will it affect Coleman Elementary?" asked Mrs. Nadeau. "It could if we don't address the needs now," said Filomeno.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Gerardi

Gerardi thanked the Mayor, City Council, School Committee and our Administration for working so hard to develop solutions to our FY09 deficit and the budget for FY10. Unfortunately, he noted, even with all our collaborative efforts, we collectively never resolved the FY09 budget deficit and he's hopeful that a judge will help the City and education department find the solution we need to move our schools forward.

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau

2nd: M. Dubois (Unanimously Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

E. Nadeau: She recognized and congratulated all the teacher and students honored tonight.

M. Dubois: He congratulated everyone. Told everyone that the WSC members appreciate all the invitations they receive to attend events at the end of the year, and asked people to realize that they can't be everywhere at once. It doesn't mean they don't want to attend. He wished Atty. Ackerman well at the Caruolo hearing tomorrow.

L. Majewski: Thanked Citizens School for inviting her to read. Thanked the staff and administration at the WHS for the fine job they did with the portfolio reviews, saying it was very well done. Asked Dr. Gerardi to let them know if there were any updates from the superintendents' meetings. She asked if another Transportation meeting will be set up once the bids are opened. Dr. Gerardi said that RIDE is having a meeting tomorrow in regards to the summer. He will get that information to her. She asked about a fiscal strategic plan for the district being developed. "It's something to think about." She asked for a copy of the Commissioner's Report also.

Motion to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.: E. Nadeau

2nd: M. Dubois (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary