

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2009
7:30 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	Present
	Linda Majewski	Present
	Anita McGuire-Forcier	Absent
	Eleanor Nadeau	Present

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:

Donna Houle, 130 Ward St., Change Leader for RIPIN: Announced that a welcome back meeting for the School Success Coalition will be held at the Woonsocket Harris Public Library on Monday, August 17th. She gave her phone number out for people to call and RSVP about their attendance.

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Robert Gerardi

Gerardi announced that Jintana Souvannavongsa, a Graphics & Printing Design student at the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center, was elected SkillsUSA State President for 2009-2010. She will be attending a national leadership conference in Washington, DC in September. He noted that Jintana also came in fourth in the National SkillsUSA Prepared Speech competition in Kansas City in June and congratulated her on her accomplishments. He announced that the WED has been awarded USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program funds for the 2009-2010 school year and thanked Marc Roy and Sodexo for all their hard work on these grants. Gerardi also thanked Deacon Scurrey from St. James Baptist Church and Marc Roy for all of their work in getting the Summer Food Service program up and running. While Deacon Scurrey and Gerardi got much of the media credit for the resurrection of this program that feeds needy students in the summer, it would not have happened without Marc Roy's hard work, coordination and willingness to support it.

FBLA Business Department Award: Dr. Garcia

Dr. Garcia, WHS Principal, and Eileen Passano, WHS Business teacher, recognized Alex Kithes, soon to be senior at WHS, who placed 7th in the country at the Future Business Leaders of America's National competition held in California. Alex submitted his business plan to the National Committee and after being named one of the top 12 candidates, he presented his plan before a committee of judges and audience. Alex attended the National Competition with 11 other students from the FBLA chapter along with Ms. Passano and Ms. Shaw. The students participated in workshops to help prepare them for both college and the work force. Dr. Garcia and Ms. Passano presented Alex with an award for his achievement.

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Williams

2nd: L. Majewski (Unan. Appr.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 24, 2009 OPEN; July 15, 2009 OPEN; July 24, 2009 CLOSED

Motion to approve: M. Williams

2nd: M. Dubois (Unanimously Approved)

CONSENT AGENDA:

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

- *Certified Apptmts. – Mr. Dubois said that one name was withdrawn from the appointments. (Joy Erickson)*
- *Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000: Dell ASAP Software & Konica Minolta removed by L. Majewski*

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Personnel Actions

Certified Appointments/Non-Certified Appointments

2. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

Allied Auto Parts/Educational Supplies/WACTC/Voc. Revenue
Auto Zone/Educational Supplies/WACTC/Voc. Revenue
Barnes & Noble/Educational Supplies/Harris, Bernon/Title I Grant
Dell ASAP Software/Virus Protection Software/Technology/Local
Frank J. Newman & Son, Inc/Ventilation Hood Systems/Bernon,Citizens,Globe/Kitch. Equip. Asst. Stimulus Grant
Konica Minolta/Copier Usage/Harris,McFee,WHS,WACTC/Local
Lady of the Lake Learning Systems/Professional Development/Professional Development/Wallace Foundation Grant
Heinemann/Professional Development/Harris,Bernon/ Title I School Improvement Grant
Industrial Refrigeration Corporation/HVAC Repairs/WACTC/Local
Kone Elevator/District Elevator Service Maintenance/Facilities/Local
Scholastic/Educational. Supplies./ Bernon, Citizens', Harris/Title I School Improvement Grant

3. Home Schooling Requests

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

EXEMPTIONS FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000:

- ***Dell ASAP Software, Virus Protection Software, Technology, Local***

Mrs. Majewski asked if this was just a yearly fee or if it was something else. Mrs. Busby told her it was an annual fee.

- ***Konica Minolta, Copier Usage, Harris-McFee-WHS-WACTC, Local***

Mrs. Majewski wants a list of the companies currently servicing the district's copiers. Mrs. Busby told her that Konica now services most of the district.

MOTION TO APPROVE EXEMPTED ITEMS: E. Nadeau **2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)**

COMMUNICATIONS and/or COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Revised FY10 Budget

Dr. Gerardi reported that at the joint City Council/School Committee Meeting on August 5th, he explained that the letter he sent the Auditor General which stated the purpose of the joint meeting. It was the first of three steps that we must take in our corrective action plan. That step was to explore any legal budget reduction that either committee had to resolve our projected budget shortfall. The Mayor, Gerardi and their staff members met to discuss a plan to reduce the WED's FY10 budget that included the following three reductions: 1) a request of the RI Commissioner of Education for a waiver of the 330-minute day regulation allowing us to lay-off approximately half of our Grades 1 through 8 teachers, saving approximately \$4.3 million; 2) the elimination of all general education student busing, including non-public transportation, for an additional \$1.3 million; and 3) the transfer from the Governmental health group of RI to RIMICK, which the Mayor's attorney projects could possibly provide a one-time savings of \$1 million. After reading the Commissioners' waiver denials that he received hours before the meeting, it became clear that this plan would not work and, in fact, our budget would be increased by approximately 6 staff members. The Mayor's attorney has been working with us on the health care issue, but that has not yet come to fruition. Gerardi received a recommendation from Councilman Ward that we close the WACTC because of the unfair funding practice of the state at a potential savings of \$2 million. However, Mrs. Busby identified that this could not be done for this school year because of the ARRA assurances that we sent in stating that the stimulus money would be used to save jobs at the WACTC. Therefore, this recommendation may be something we want to consider for FY11. This meeting also revealed that the Rubine Supreme Court Decision would allow the school committee to set the level of basic education programming for our community at our discretion allowing the WED to bring back most extra-curricular activities. Dr. Gerardi and Mrs. Busby prepared an updated budget based on the reasonable and legal reductions and increases that were discussed at that meeting and recommended approval. If approved, they will then be able to

move forward with the second step of our corrective action plan. If they do not accept the revised budget, more budget workshops will need to be held to determine our final revised budget. Dr. Gerardi had Stacey Busby review the increases and decreases to the revised budget. Dr. Gerardi noted that they decided to put back in the high school sports, but since we have been receiving donations, the middle school sports will not be included. Those donations can now go towards the middle school sports. Dr. Gerardi reviewed the totals on Page 2 of the revised budget and compared the total budgets for 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010. He added that they tried to bring the FY10 budget into line with the money that has been allocated to us.

Mr. Dubois told the audience that the WSC has met with Dr. Gerardi at length individually this week and in closed session tonight. "Based on the Rubine case, if we reinstate the athletics, we would not lose the Caruolo case. We might just lose the funds that have been appropriated for athletics," he noted. Mrs. Nadeau totaled the cost of the six positions that the state won't pay for but says we must have and compared this cost to the cost of adding sports back in. "Why should we punish our kids if they won't grant us waivers for these positions?" she asked. Mrs. Majewski felt that athletics are an integral part of the curriculum. "We have a lot of intervention from the state, but very little support," she said. Nadeau asked about further concessions from the union. Dr. Gerardi said he would be glad to write another letter to the union to see if there are further concessions that can be made.

Motion to approve the Revised FY10 Budget: M. Dubois
Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. 2nd: M. Williams
APPROVED

2. Approval of ELEM/WMS/WHS Handbooks – 2nd Passage – Linda Filomeno/ Dr. McGee/Dr. Garcia

Mrs. Filomeno said she met with Mrs. Majewski to go over the changes made to the Elementary Handbook. The dress code was made stricter, as Mrs. Nadeau had requested, because it won't be feasible to institute the uniforms for this school year. Mrs. Majewski thanked Filomeno for her time and effort. Mrs. Nadeau was glad that the dress code has been tightened up, but now stressed that it needs to be enforced. Mr. Dubois reported that Senator Roger Picard told him that the Governor did sign off on the dress code bill for Woonsocket recently. He doesn't think that, in these fiscal times, it would be a good idea to tell parents, who probably have bought their kids school clothes already, that they now have to pay for uniforms. There were no other changes to the middle school and high school handbooks.

Motion to approve all three handbooks: L. Majewski
Roll Call Vote: 4 yes 2nd: E. Nadeau
APPROVED – 2ND PASSAGE

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion/Approval of FY10 Corrective Action Plan – Dr. Gerardi

Gerardi announced that, since the first step of approving the revised FY10 budget was approved, we will now be entering Step 2 of the three-step correction plan. Therefore, he recommended that the WSC authorize him sending the Mayor and the City Council a letter stating that this is our final budget for FY10 and we are requesting that they raise the revenue to fund it. If they do not raise the revenue, we will be obligated to follow the legal process which could ultimately result in a Caruolo Action.

Motion to approve: E. Nadeau
Roll Call Vote: 4 yes 2nd: M. Williams
APPROVED

2. BID AWARDS:

- #10-02 Janitorial Supplies

Mrs. Majewski asked why there are so many different companies providing these supplies and whether they all provide different types of supplies. Mrs. Busby explained that there could be one company that could provide all the supplies, but another company may be able to provide a certain product at a lower price for the quantity that we need.

Motion to approve to various vendors for a total of \$159,815.52: M. Williams
2nd: M. Dubois Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED

- #10-03 Athletic Supplies

Motion to approve to various vendors for a total of \$11,845.20: L. Majewski
2nd: M. Williams/E. Nadeau Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED

- **#10-05 Athletic Medical**

Mrs. Majewski asked if these supplies included a defibrillator. Mrs. Busby will check. Mr. Dubois believes we had one donated to the district last year.

Motion to approve to various vendors for a total of \$3,934.98: M. Williams
2nd: E. Nadeau Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED.

3. Approval of Job Descriptions: LEA Rep/Transition Coordinator & Data, Media Internship Facilitator – Dr. Gerardi

Dr. Gerardi explained that with each of these positions, the jobs are not new but the responsibilities have been modified enough that they felt it was important to change the job description to reflect the added responsibilities. Mrs. Majewski asked about the Data, Media & Internship Facilitator and whether someone was in this position and their duties have been changed. Dr. Gerardi told her that it's not a new position and is grant-funded so, as with the LEA Coordinator, it's a one-year only appointment. "There's a person that has been doing the job, but he/she has to be re-appointed every year," said Gerardi. Majewski asked Carole Lerner about the LEA Rep/Transition Coordinator position. Lerner explained the role of this position. Majewski also asked questions about the Special Education Department Organizational Chart that she had asked Lerner to provide. Lerner explained that the LEA Coordinator would be posted as a one-year, grant-funded position. Mrs. Nadeau asked if we have to continue these positions if the grant funds go away. Lerner said that we need these positions and there are guidelines and obligations to fulfill whether they are grant-funded or not.

Motion to approve both job descriptions: M. Williams
Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. 2nd: M. Dubois
APPROVED

4. Appointment of Administrative Positions – Dr. Gerardi

- **Assistant Principal – WHS (10-month)** *Dr. Gerardi read his letter of recommendation for the public.*

Motion to approve the appointment to Steve Boss: M. Williams
2nd: E. Nadeau Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED

Mrs. Majewski was concerned that the administrative staff at the WHS is made up primarily of men. She would like a name of someone that girls could go to regarding sensitive issues (i.e. sexual harassment) if they feel uncomfortable talking to a man about them. Dr. Gerardi told her that they looked and looked but could not find a female for this position. Dr. Gerardi recommended that the two female administrators at the WACTC be utilized in instances such as she mentioned, if necessary. Garcia also mentioned that the Dean of Students, Elaine Card, is always available. Mrs. Nadeau asked who was taking the 12-month position that Mr. Benjamin left vacant. Dr. Gerardi announced that Carnell Henderson is moving into that position. Nadeau said that Garcia is very fortunate to have such a great team in place.

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- **Content Area Supervisor of Math/Science – Secondary** *(Gerardi read his recommendation letter.)*

Motion to approve the appointment of Kathleen DiModica: M. Williams
2nd: L. Majewski Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED

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- **Content Area Supervisor of English/Social Studies – Secondary** *(Gerardi read his recommendation letter.)*

Motion to approve the appointment of Colleen Pendergast: M. Williams
2nd: M. Dubois Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED

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- **Content Area Supervisor of Unified Arts – Secondary** *(Gerardi read his recommendation letter.)*

Motion to approve the appointment of Claire Dumas: M. Williams
2nd: E. Nadeau Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED

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- **Coordinator of Guidance Services - WHS/WACTC** *(Gerardi read his recommendation letter.)*

Motion to approve the appointment of Ruth Plante: M. Dubois
Roll Call Vote: 4 yes. APPROVED 2nd: M. Williams/E. Nadeau

Mrs. Majewski asked if the Guidance Coordinator has a caseload. Dr. Gerardi said that the previous director didn't have a caseload. Majewski made the recommendation that Plante continue to work with the seniors that she counseled for the last three years and write recommendations for them. She doesn't want them to be left hanging. Dr. Gerardi didn't see a problem with that; however, Richard DiPardo spoke to Dr. Garcia after this discussion and told him it would be a conflict of interest for the Guidance Coordinator to have a caseload. When Dr. Garcia raised this issue, Dr. Gerardi was confident that something could be worked out that won't violate the teachers' contract.

- **Assistant Director of Special Education - District (TABLED)**

Dr. Gerardi reported that they are still interviewing for this position and asked that it be tabled.

5. Discussion/Approval of Administration and Non-Union Personnel Evaluation Forms and Timelines – Dr. Gerardi

Gerardi noted that in two days he will have completed his first year as the Superintendent of the WED. He's looking at the evaluation forms in place for the administration and non-union employees and realized that some of the forms will need updating. The non-union employee forms are appropriate and the instructional leader administrative forms are aligned to the current ISLIC standards. Gerardi is concerned that our non-instructional administrators do not have forms that are more appropriate for them. He doesn't have new forms for approval yet, but he will evaluate the employees he can with the appropriate forms and report back to the school committee when he has updated the other forms. Gerardi said that although his evaluation was to be done within 18 months of hire, he welcomes an evaluation sooner if the WSC so desires.

6. Approval of WACTC/WHS Fundraiser – Dr. Gerardi

Dr. Gerardi explained that this is an annual event and recommended approval of this request.

Motion to approve: M. Williams
Roll Call Vote: 4 yes.

2nd: E. Nadeau
APPROVED

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

8. Discussion of Academic Levels WHS – Dr. Garcia (TABLED)

CONFERENCES:

Back to School Celebration – Linda Filomeno/Jackie Dowdy: Ms. Dowdy explained that this will be the 5th year that this event has been held in Woonsocket. The date is August 22nd, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Coleman Elementary School. She thanked everyone for supporting this effort. She distributed fliers to everyone in audience and invited teachers, the WSC members, and the administration to participate in the event. Volunteers can arrive between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m.

Berc Institute/Principal Leadership Retreat -Wallace Grant – L. Filomeno/RIDE: Ms. Filomeno explained what the Berc Group is and the STAR Classroom Observation protocol to improve teaching and learning that instructors and administrators are trained in. A two-day training will be conducted on August 20th & 21st in the WHS Library for staff in the district. These all day sessions are being funded by a Wallace Foundation Grant.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Gerardi

Gerardi reported that Mrs. Forcier chose not mobilize the concerned parents to attend the Board of Regents meeting because the court decision for FY09 temporarily solved our problems that were going to be raised at that meeting. He noted that the WSC had the opportunity tonight to replace extracurricular activities that we thought we had to cut. He's certain that everyone feels that this is a move in the right direction for the sake of students, and now we will have to wait and see what the courts determine as to our decisions. Gerardi is optimistic that by being legally responsible, our financial concerns will ultimately be resolved.

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

M. Dubois: Stated that the positions approved tonight were part of a restructuring plan in which other positions were eliminated and combined. He noted that we are still saving money besides. Dubois recognized the passing of Pearl Plante, who was a teacher in the district and did many fundraising activities. "It's a terrible loss." He extended his condolences to her family and husband Paul Plante.

L. Majewski: She extended her condolences as well to Paul Plante. Asked that all the agenda items have some backup information in the school committee books. She noted that one item on tonight's agenda didn't have any backup for it in their books in case they had questions about it. She thanked CCF for their work at the middle school for summer camp. Thanked Mr. Nasuti, coaches, parents and students for raising funds to support the sports programs. Congratulated Alex Kithes on his achievement. Wished him well in his senior year. Asked for the job descriptions for the new RIDE positions the department is required to add.

E. Nadeau: Congratulated Alex Kithes. Congratulated everyone appointed at tonight's meeting. She noticed that many of the new hires are on Step 1. She's glad because they bring a lot of enthusiasm and energy and the district is saving money by not having to hire teachers who are at higher pay steps.

M. Williams: Congratulated the new staff appointed tonight and extended her condolences to the Plante family.

Motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.: L. Majewski

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

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary