

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 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	Present
	Eleanor Nadeau	Present

Chairman Dubois had Dr. Gerardi report on the two votes taken in Closed Session. Dr. Gerardi reported that the WSC authorized him to write a letter to the City Council including the new FY10 Quarterly Budget Report, showing that the deficit for FY10 has been reduced to "0" and requesting a joint meeting with them to address the \$525,839 deficit from FY08 that was not resolved with the FY09 Caruolo Action. A vote to accept a recommendation regarding the placement of a student was also taken.

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE: None.

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Robert Gerardi

Dr. Gerardi reported that the NEASC Commission of Public Secondary Schools voted to accept the combined deferred FIVE-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT at its September 20-21, 2009 meeting and the Report of a Directed Visit of WHS and to continue the school's accreditation. He also reported that the Culinary Arts program at WACTC has met the Foodservice Experience Requirement for The Culinary Institute of America, which has resulted in an articulation agreement with the Institute. Students who want to attend the Institute will be able to enroll without having to gain further experience in the foodservice industry. Dr. Gerardi noted that the WED has been very concerned about the upcoming flu season and he recognized the collaborative efforts and hard work of the RI Department of Health, RIDE, our administration, our school physician Dr. Yasigian, our Head Nurse Diane Engels and all of the school nurses. He reported that this week we got the School Flu Clinic dates and times and he brought extras tonight for parents to bring home with them. Everyone has advised him that it is very important for all parents to take advantage of these school flu clinics because the state is making school access to vaccinations a priority. However, no child will receive a vaccination without the appropriate parent permission slips signed. The Department of Health mailed some forms directly to residents; but in an effort to make sure everyone has one; each school principal is sending out more and has more in the office. Gerardi asked parents to please contact their school principal if they do not have a permission slip and take advantage of this opportunity to get their children vaccinated before the traditional flu season begins in January.

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Williams

2nd: A. Forcier/L. Majewski (Unan. Appr.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 14, 2009 OPEN/CLOSED

Motion to approve: M. Dubois

2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve Consent Agenda with the following exemptions: A. Forcier

**Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000 – Apple Computers removed by LM & CCF removed by AF*

TABLED ITEMS: Judith Keeley & Nettie Alexander – by Dr. Gerardi

2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Personnel Actions

Certified Appointments/Non-Certified Appointments

CONSENT AGENDA (continued)

2. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

Apple Computers/Computers/District,WMS/Local-TIF – removed by L. Majewski

CDW Government, Inc/Software/WACTC/Perkins Grant

Connecting for Children & Families/Bussing, After School Prog/Grants & Curr./21st Century Grant – removed by A. Forcier

Dell Computers/Computers/WHS/Local-TIF

Demco/Ed. Supplies/WMS/Local

Good Shepherd School/Prof. Dev./Grants & Curr./Title II

Highsmith/Ed. Supplies/WMS/Local

Judith Keeley/Consultant/Grants & Curr/Title I AARA Grant – TABLED by Dr. Gerardi

Konica Minolta/Copier Maint. Usage/District Wide/Local

Nettie Alexander/Consultant/Grants & Curriculum/Title I AARA – TABLED by Dr. Gerardi

Standard Electric/Ed.- Supplies/WACTC/Perkins Grant

University of MA Med. School/Medicaid Admin. FY10/McFee/Local

3. Field Trip/Conference Requests

National Teachers of English Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA/District/WMS/Title II Grant

WMS Annual Trip, Washington, DC/ Team 8-1/ Parent Support Group, Fundraiser

4. Home Schooling Requests

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

EXEMPTIONS FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

2) Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000:

- **Apple Computers for district/WMS: \$14,023.00 TIF Funds**

Mrs. Majewski asked what the TIF grant was. She was told that it meant Technology Investment Fund, which is a state grant.

- **Connecting for Children & Families for afterschool program bussing: \$2,170.00 (21st Century Grant WMS)**

Mrs. Forcier asked to remove this item so she could abstain from the vote.

Motion to approve Apple Computer Purchase: L. Majewski 2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

Motion to approve the Connecting for Children & Families: M. Williams
2nd: M. Dubois (4 yes – 1 abstain) APPROVED

COMMUNICATIONS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Appointment of Assistant Elementary Principal of Fifth Avenue School – Dr. Gerardi

Dr. Gerardi read his letter recommending the appointment of Ronald A. Celio as Assistant Elementary Principal at Fifth Avenue Elementary School. This is a 10-month position. Mrs. Majewski asked that a parent be on the interviewing committee when they are interviewing for principals and assistant principals. Mr. Dubois noted that there is no full-time principal at 5th Avenue School. Dr. Gerardi said there is a substitute person there right now, but Mr. Celio will be the only administrator there.

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

2nd: M. Williams
APPROVED.

2. Dedication of WMS Hamlet Avenue Library – Woonsocket School Committee

Dr. Gerardi announced that the Building Committee has recommended to the Woonsocket Education Department that the new Hamlet Avenue Woonsocket Middle School Library be named in honor of Mary Keegan. Dr. Gerardi requested that the school committee formally vote to approve that recommendation.

Motion to approve: E. Nadeau
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes.

2nd: All Members
APPROVED

Mrs. Nadeau reported that she and Mrs. Forcier are on the Building Committee and she described the plaque that has been selected. Nadeau read the inscription that will be put on the plaque also. Mr. Dubois said that Mary is the only person whom he would consider naming a school library after. The dedication will take place during the grand opening of the middle schools. Mrs. Majewski and Ms. Williams both agreed that Mary was most deserving of this honor.

CONFERENCES: None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Gerardi

Dr. Gerardi updated the committee and the public about plans for offering the H1N1 vaccination to all of our school-aged children beginning next week. He read aloud a letter that was sent home with all students today. He also dispelled rumors that we have had clusters of confirmed H1N1 cases, saying we have had some confirmed cases but the Department of Health has not declared them as clusters of cases. He also dispelled the rumor that we are not allowing students to return to school without a note from their doctor if they have had the flu. He asked that parents please treat the flu as has been described in the information sent out. After the appropriate contagion time is over, a student can be sent back to school with a parents' note. He does not want to overload the doctors and hospitals for notes to return to school unnecessarily. Gerardi also hopes that both the Valley Breeze and the Woonsocket Call would help us to spread the word regarding this vaccination program in order that we might encourage maximum participation from our families. He will be making a similar request of our local radio stations tomorrow. Gerardi pointed out that the Woonsocket Education Department has had a long history of running a very lean and frugal system going back for over a decade. In the Woonsocket Call it was reported that the Woonsocket Education Department has the second lowest per pupil expenditure in the State of Rhode Island. Only one charter school had a lower per pupil cost and yet that means that many other charter schools spend more per pupil than we do. He was very pleased that we were able to announce tonight that the School Committee has been able to balance the budget for FY09. The School Committee has worked hard and made many difficult decisions in providing a balanced budget. He hopes that the community will appreciate that this school committee had many opportunities to ask for a supplementary tax and held off because they had faith in their newly reorganized central office staff that together we could find a way to balance this budget. He commended each and every school committee member.

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Williams/A. Forcier

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

E. Nadeau: Wished her colleagues much success in the upcoming election. "Although we have had our differences on occasion, I don't think there's any incumbent that doesn't have the best interests of the children in mind."

M. Williams: Thanked the administration and everyone who worked to discover the money to cover the deficit. Wished everyone well in the upcoming election. She thinks this committee worked well together.

M. Dubois: When Mr. Dubois was at the WHS for the debate, he noticed that the roof in the lobby area was leaking and he thought it had been fixed recently. He hopes that the company will come back to fix it. Dr. Gerardi will get Mr. Fontaine right on this. Dubois thanked the PAC for hosting the debate last night. He noted that for the past several months, the WSC has been pressured to file a Caruolo suit. "Everyone was pointing a finger at the school committee saying we were stalling for time." He is glad that we have been able to find the money to cover the deficit. Dubois pointed out that the school department has had four business managers in a short period of time and people shouldn't be surprised that something may have slipped through the cracks. He would be very happy if the four WSC members running for re-election are elected again. Dubois urged everyone to go out and vote.

L. Majewski: She welcomed Mr. Celio on board and wished him well in his new position. Thanked the PAC for hosting the debate, especially Denise Auclair and Cindy Stepanian. "They came up with some very thoughtful questions for the debate." Majewski thanked Mrs. Busby for the considerable amount of time she put in on the budget going line by line to find money. She asked Dr. Gerardi if for next year we can look at the scheduling for the NECAP testing, because only the 11th Graders are testing and the kids in other grades may not see teachers for a considerable amount of time due to the block schedule and some courses being half-year. She said it has been a pleasure working with everyone on the committee and urged everyone to go out and vote.

A. Forcier: Thanked the PAC for their hard work. "Unfortunately, Mr. Dubois' microphone wasn't working." She mentioned the GAP test, saying she thinks it's very important. She is interested in approaching RIDE about doing a pilot here for a GAP test. Dr. Gerardi said it has been brought to the new Commissioner's attention and she was surprised because they had it in Washington, DC, where she came from. Forcier congratulated everyone who worked hard to find the money in the budget. "Yes, we did have four business managers in a short period of time and Dina Dutremble was basically here to deal with the Caruolo suit and not with the FY10 budget." She mentioned that they were missing information in their packet in regards to the NEASC letter. "It's only the first page. There's no signature," she said. She reminded everyone to vote on November 3rd.

Motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.: A. Forcier

2nd: L. Majewski (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary