

**MINUTES**  
**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2009**  
**7:40 PM – OPEN SESSION**  
**Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center**  
**Multimedia Room 303**

**Call to Order / Moment of Silence / Pledge of Allegiance**

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

By unanimous consent, the Recognitions & Announcements were taken out of order.

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**RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Robert Gerardi**

Dr. Gerardi congratulated the Girls' Varsity Soccer Team for winning their second consecutive Division 4 Rhode Island State Championship. The Lady Novans defeated the Tolman High Tigers 5-0 while completing their 2009 season with an undefeated record of 17-0-1. Gerardi reported that the team was led by Captains Kristin Cahill, Samantha Landry & Nicole Boucher. Senior Midfielder Brook Coderre was selected the Most Valuable Player of the Tournament. Coach Kathleen Fagnant and all of the girls represented Woonsocket High with Pride and Respect! Mark Dubois then presented them with a plaque. Dr. Gerardi then congratulated the Woonsocket High School students and 56 Woonsocket faculty members for presenting the Musical, "A little Bit of Hollywood," on Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at Woonsocket High School. Producer, Director and Choreographer Ms. Jennifer Maiello recruited the faculty members from across the district to perform "Michael Jackson's: Thriller". He also thanked everyone for displaying their best on Tuesday for Commissioner Gist's visit.

Motion to receive and place on file: A. Forcier

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

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**PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:**

**Suzanne Trinque, Rathbun Street:** Spoke about the new jobs (Teaching Partners) that the WED has created, which will deplete the pool of substitute teachers. She is a retired teacher from the school department and had been subbing while Dr. Macera was here. With her background, she wasn't even considered for one of these new positions. Trinque read a letter she had sent to Dr. Gerardi suggesting that he allow retired teachers to apply for these positions as a team, with preference being given to current subs. She went on about the benefits of allowing retirees to sub and how she was told that there was a law that prohibits the hiring of retirees unless no one else applied. She was originally hired to sub when teachers needed to attend professional development and that is what these positions were created for. Trinque complained that the district is paying subs who are already doing these duties \$75 a day and cover a class of 25 students and questioned why we would pay \$150 a day for a teaching partner to work with only small groups. She urged the WSC to rethink posting these positions.

**Lori Landry, 689 Midland Road:** She stated that she was overlooked for employment and it wasn't because she's a minority. She is a laid-off teacher assistant of 10 years with experience in education and also not hired for one of four clerical positions. "Right now, because I was laid off, I have no union backing. I qualified for the clerical position and have been subbing in clerical and paraprofessional positions, yet I wasn't hired for one of these four positions. All of my reviews have been excellent. I want to know what the reason is that I wasn't hired. Was it discrimination or negligence? A principal from the education department has an email from them that says I am adequately qualified."

**Denise Auclair, PAC Co-Chair:** She invited everyone to the grand opening ceremony at the new middle schools on November 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. "There will be tours and a ceremony. Senior citizens will be provided bussing from the high rises by Durham Bus for free."

**Linda Filomeno and Siobhan Ryan, WED Administrators:** They responded to the questions that were asked about the Teaching Partner positions, which were created out of the stimulus funds from the Obama administration. "These positions were created to provide continuity by being there on a consistent basis. They can plan lessons with the teachers before the teacher is out for professional development. They are actually co-teaching. The list of people to be appointed are all people from our district," explained Filomeno. She also explained about not being able to hire retirees unless due diligence has been done to find qualified candidates. Mrs. Forcier asked why we have to

pay them \$150 a day. Dr. Gerardi explained that it's not the same as subbing. "Also, to attract candidates, we need to offer a higher wage for the added responsibilities. They will be provided higher quality service than a regular sub. Federal guidelines must be followed and we must advertise three times before we can hire retirees," said Gerardi. "These Teaching Partners will be planning lessons along with the regular classroom teacher. We are recruiting more substitutes. With the Teaching Partners, there will already be someone there to cover for the teacher that is out," said Filomeno. Mrs. Nadeau asked if these are union positions. "No. We already ran it by the union. After this year, they can return to the substitute pool. We have to hire someone unemployed first, before we hire a retiree. These people will not get benefits. They will be working at the elementary schools, but only ones that are Title I funded," said Filomeno. Mrs. Forcier asked why Bernon Heights only has 1 Teaching Partner and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue has 1 1/2. Filomeno believes that Bernon will get two. Some interviews are still going on. "The Teaching Partners are all-district, but they have been assigned to a building so they can get used to that building," said Filomeno.

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: OCTOBER 19, 2009 CLOSED; OCTOBER 28, 2009 OPEN/CLOSED**

Motion to approve: M. Williams

2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

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

*\*Personnel Actions: Clerical Positions – Removed by Dr. Gerardi*

*\*Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000 – City of Woonsocket removed by E. Nadeau; Dell Computers, Lincoln Public Schools, Parlant Technology removed by LM*

*\*Field Trips/Conference Requests: Northeast ASCD Affiliate Conf. – removed by L. Majewski*

*\*Disposal of Obsolete Equipment – removed by L. Majewski*

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

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**1. Personnel Actions**

Certified Appointments

Non-Certified Appointments (clerical) – removed by Dr. Gerardi

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

Apple Computers/Computers/Servers/WACTC, District/Perkins, AARA/IDEA, Tech. Inv. Fund Grants

**City of Woonsocket/Focus Class/Police Detail/WHS/Local – REMOVED BY E. NADEAU**

**Dell Computers/Computers & Equipment/WACTC/Voc. Rev. & AARA/IDEA Grant – REMOVED (LM)**

Doreen M. Corrente/Consultant/WACTC/Perkins Grant

Epson/Technology Equipment/WMS/E2T2 Grant

Heinemann, Inc./Educational Supplies/Monsignor Gadoury/Title I AARA Grant

**Lincoln Public Schools/Prof. Development/Grants & Curriculum/Title I AARA Grant – REMOVED LM**

M.D. Stetson Company, Inc./Facilities Equipment/WHS/Local

NCS Pearson/NovaNet Licenses/e-Learning Academy/AARA/IDEA Grant & Local

**Parlant Technology/Technology Upgrade/WHS/Local—REMOVED BY LM**

RI Writing Project/Professional Development/Professional Development/DNA Grant

Robinson & Clapham/Legal Services/Business Office/Local

**3. Field Trip/Conference Requests**

American Speech-Language-Hearing Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA/McFee/IDEA Grant

**Northeast ASCD Affiliate Conference, Boston, MA/Mt. St. Charles/Title II Grant- REMOVED BY LM**

**4. Home Schooling Requests**

**5. Disposal of Obsolete Equipment – REMOVED BY L. MAJEWSKI**

**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**EXEMPTIONS FROM CONSENT AGENDA:**

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

- ***City of Woonsocket for Police Detail at WHS for FOCUS Program: \$4,000 (Local funds)***

Mrs. Nadeau asked questions about this detail and what is involved. Dr. Gerardi and Carole Lerner explained. Nadeau asked that Dr. Gerardi contact the police chief with a request for an additional resource officer for the two new middle schools. "We had one resource office for the high school and one at the middle school. That was cut this year to one for both schools," said Nadeau.

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- ***Dell Computers: \$23,176.34 (Voc Revenue & AARA/IDEA Grant)***

Mrs. Majewski asked about whether there is adequate storage for the equipment and security. She was assured that there is.

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- ***Lincoln Public Schools for professional development: \$4,800 (Title I AARA Grant)***

Mrs. Majewski asked why we are paying Lincoln. Mrs. Filomeno explained that the WED entered into an agreement. "It's an Early Intervention Program for Literacy for second graders and it was less expensive training for us to partner with Lincoln. The AARA funds had not yet been approved so Lincoln paid for it and we owe them the money," she said.

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- ***Parlant Technology for Parent Notification System Upgrade at the WHS: \$4,140 (Local)***

Mrs. Majewski asked Dr. Gerardi to talk about this great program for the public. He explained that it upgrades our attendance program; and we will have a better parent notification system with this program.

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**#3) Field Trip/Conference Request:**

- ***Northeast ASCD Affiliate Conference, Boston, MA for Mt. St. Charles***

Mrs. Majewski is concerned that we have to provide professional development for Mt. St. Charles teachers that don't have to meet the state guidelines and have I-Plans and do NECAP testing, etc.

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**#4) Disposal of Obsolete Equipment**

Majewski asked Mr. Gallishaw to send out letters about the auction of these computers so that people can get something who can't afford to buy it new.

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**Motion to approve Exemptions: A. Forcier**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: M. Williams (Unan. Appr.)**

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**COMMUNICATIONS: None**

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**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** L. Majewski announced that the next SELAC meeting is Dec. 3 at 6:30 p.m. at Pothier School.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None**

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**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Approval of Allstate Voluntary Benefits Program-S. Busby**

Ms. Busby explained that there was a payroll deduction for this benefit and they had a glitch in the system this summer which caused a problem. Therefore, she is requesting that all employees have the opportunity to join this program and pay it through a payroll slot. Busby believed most of it was for car insurance and property insurance. She said it was in place when she got here. Mrs. Forcier believed we probably get a discount on the rates and Allstate doesn't have to worry about it because it's coming right out of employees' checks. James Kinney and Celeste Benjamin, Allstate representatives, explained that there are more than 50 people that want to enroll. Benjamin said they presented their package to the unions and it started because the employees didn't have any

disability insurance. Mr. Kinney said the prices are the same, but the underwriting is different. "There are only three questions to answer to qualify for the program. It's a Guaranteed Issue. The questions are: Are you employed? Have you been hospitalized? and Do you have aids? That's the main advantage. People that might not otherwise qualify can get benefits. These are individual life insurance policies and there really aren't any discounts for this type," said Kinney. Mrs. Forcier thought we should look at other options and see if we can get a better discount elsewhere. Mr. Dubois said that any other company can come to us now and want our employees to join. "It's going to make more work for our employees," he said. Mrs. Nadeau will vote "No" on this because she doesn't think our payroll people should be doing their work. Mrs. Majewski said she would recuse herself if this came to a vote.

**No motion was made. No action taken.**

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#### **CONFERENCES:**

##### **CCF SCHOOL SUCCESS COALITION – Darlene Magaw & Donna Houle**

Ms. Magaw reported that Family Resources Community Action was the pilot site in 2008 for the School Success Coalition. She explained the purpose of the Coalition and listed the schools that were chosen for the pilot. Magaw discussed some of the activities they have in process and reported on the results of evaluation surveys that were given out. She also outlined the Coalition's future plans. Their next meeting will be on Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> at Family Resources Community Action.

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##### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Gerardi**

Dr. Gerardi thanked Darlene and Donna for their presentation. He also expressed his condolences to the families of Jack Guerin and Scott Grey. He thanked the school committee for showing their support for him and he's hopeful that the political headlines will not hinder the good work that they have collaboratively started in the Woonsocket Education Department. He remains committed to the City of Woonsocket and its educational community.

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau

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

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#### **SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:**

**M. Williams:** Congratulated Vimala Phongsavanh on her election to the school committee and wished her luck. Thanked the voters of Woonsocket for giving her the opportunity to serve for the last six years. "It has been a great, great learning experience." She thanked the administration because without their help, she wouldn't have been able to answer questions that she needed to answer. "It has been a cooperative working experience with the committee."

**M. Dubois:** He's glad that the Girls' Soccer Team was honored here tonight because all we have heard or seen was the event that happened at that game. "They had an undefeated season. They never got the recognition they deserved." He asked Dr. Gerardi if there is security at the new middle schools for the new computers being moved into the building. Dr. Gerardi will have Mr. Fontaine address that question. Dubois wants to know if Sonitrol is activated in the buildings. He acknowledged all the wonderful school nurses in the district who are volunteering to give the H1N1 shots in the evenings. "They are volunteering their time." He encouraged everyone to attend the open house on Saturday. Congrats to everyone on being re-elected and welcomed Vimala. He said goodbye to Michelle, adding that he was sad to see her go. "We have become good friends. It's tough being a single mom, working and giving up six years to provide a public service. Best of luck to you."

**L. Majewski:** Wished Michelle Williams good luck. It was a pleasure serving with you. Welcomed Vimala Phongsavanh. "She ran a great campaign first time out. I think she'll be an asset." Majewski asked for a copy of the NEASC Summary Report. She wants a copy of the educational consultant's review of the Title I Report. Majewski thanked everyone for putting their best foot forward during the commissioner's visit. Thanked the WACTC students for the homemade T-Shirt and loaf of bread. Extended her condolences to the families of the deceased. Thanked the Building Committee for their hard work. Congratulated the Girls' Soccer Team, adding that her daughter is on the team. "They are a great group of girls on and off the field." Majewski proposed that we have a Curriculum Committee so we are on board with proposals and grants that are coming down the pike. Mr. Dubois asked that everyone look over the list of subcommittees and email him their top three or four choices.

**A. Forcier:** Thanked the community for electing her. Said goodbye to Ms. Williams and wished her the best. Welcomed Vimala. "I was extremely impressed with the Commissioner yesterday. She was very comfortable in the classroom environment. Very natural." She congratulated the Girls' Soccer Team. Her prayers go out to the families of the two deceased. She handed out an announcement about a holiday gathering at the Graphics Room at the WACTC on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Forcier also announced that there are Villa Novan towels for sale at the high school.

**E. Nadeau:** She extended her condolences to Paul Blanchard on the loss of his mother recently. "He's a great guy and a great custodian in this building." Wished Ms. Williams well and spoke about how she grew during the six years on the committee. Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Motion to adjourn at 9:55 p.m.: A. Forcier

2<sup>nd</sup>: L. Majewski (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary