

WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2014
7:00 PM – OPEN SESSION
Woonsocket Middle School @ Hamlet
60 Florence Drive, Woonsocket, RI 02895

Meeting called to order by Chairman George Lacouture at 7:00 p.m. in Open Session.

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:	George Lacouture, Chairman	Present
	Soren Seale, Vice-Chairman	Present
	Daniel Chattman	Absent (At this time)
	Susan Pawlina	Present
	Jose Rivera	Present

Woonsocket Middle School @ VillaNova Chorus – Under the direction of Chorus Director Mr. John Burns, the WMS 6th Grade Chorus students sang the National Anthem and Ride on the Wind.

Motion to take agenda out of order for the appointment of legal counsel and the presentation and the proposal of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK): J. Rivera 2nd: S. Pawlina Roll Call Vote: 3 Yes (SS, SP, JR) 1 Abstain (GL) APPROVED

G. Lacouture stated they will start their motion for legal counsel, then they will go to the presentation of FDK, then they will go back to good and welfare, and then to the vote on the proposal of FDK.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion/Vote to appoint Interim Legal Counsel – G. Lacouture, G. Donoyan

Motion to appoint Legal Counsel: S. Seale 2nd: G. Lacouture

G. Lacouture noted the legal firm Brennan, Recupero, Cascione, Scungio, and McAllister has been appointed to be their attorney for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2014.

Motion to appoint Legal Counsel: S. Seale 2nd: G. Lacouture Roll Call Vote: 4 Yes APPROVED

2. Presentation of Full Day Kindergarten Proposal – G. Donoyan

G. Donoyan thanked everyone for attending this very important meeting of the School Committee. Before the presentation started, Mayor Lisa Baldelli-Hunt made some initial comments on FDK. The Mayor thanked the School Committee and other individuals who were very helpful in bringing this proposal to everyone this evening. She stated that 70% of the RI kindergarten students attend FDK and 30% are not in FDK; Woonsocket is the only core urban community that does not offer FDK. As Mayor, she has promised us that in order to implement FDK we would not have any tax increases, have teacher assistants in the classroom, and would not move forward with a 5/6 academy; these were the concerns that the community had and she has listened to those concerns and together they formulated a plan to bring this proposal to us. She has worked closely with the department of education, RIDE, the subcommittee of the School Committee to develop this comprehensive and fiscally sound FDK proposal. If this proposal passes establishing FDK is not a victory for any one person or group; it's a victory for the people who believe in education and a victory for our children, the future of our city, and our state. G. Donoyan addressed everyone here and said as Superintendent of Schools she recognizes that Woonsocket has been under tremendous strain; the fiscal nature of what they are talking about many people think it is an additional strain to the community; we are extremely empathetic and we understand; they do not want to harm any local taxpayer; they are very proud to have worked with the mayor, the mayor's office, RIDE, Budget Commission, State of RI. This is the final comprehensive plan; it meets with every stakeholders issue; most importantly it benefits our youngest students.

At this time, Superintendent Donoyan and Carolyn Dias, Budget Commission Member who is also the former Chief Fiscal Officer for the RIDE, gave a FDK PowerPoint presentation. G. Donoyan presented the educational piece of FDK and C. Dias presented the fiscal aspect of the presentation. At the end of the presentation G. Donoyan addressed the School Committee and said shortly the Committee will be making a very important vote to restore something that is very important to the children in Woonsocket and to everyone else. Now is the time to bring back FDK. As you just saw and that C. Dias has explained the additional revenues that would come to our district to support other programs as well; FDK closes the achievement gap. Of course, this is a huge benefit to our youngest learners but the benefit is also to the city of Woonsocket; taxpayers are not going to be affected and it brings value to this community. She implores the School Committee when they take their vote to take this under advisement, please vote for and approve to bring back FDK. This PowerPoint presentation can be found on the Woonsocket Education Department's website at www.woonsocketschools.com.

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:

Nikol Thomas, Village Road – Her son said he wants to go to school all day.

Pauline Riel, First Avenue – Many of you have seen her face before because she is here again as a long time Woonsocket resident, low income retired senior, homeowner, therefore pays for all the taxes, and a retired city employee so she was hit last year. With so many people for FDK she has to speak on behalf of the taxpayers; the city doesn't have any money to provide me with all the lights or my neighborhood with all the lights and there are potholes everywhere; many of her friends as well as herself have donated pens and paper for the schools; she is 100% for education but not to take money that they don't have to start a new program. The state keeps saying it is broke so how can we believe that they are going to fund; if they don't have the money to fund it how are you going to keep FDK open; we have heard all year long that the schools don't have proper books; she can't see starting a new program when they are failing in the others. She is here as a taxpayer and a low income retired senior citizen and is asking Ms. Dias how can she be open minded on the Budget Commission when you are here defending FDK; she doesn't mean to be disrespectful but doesn't feel that anybody is really looking at the taxpayer and thinking about us.

Alissa Barata, Mt. St. Charles Avenue – She owns her two family, is a taxpayer, has three children, and would love FDK for her little one; she is for FDK and education is the number one priority for the kids in Woonsocket. She also thinks there should be no layoffs of teachers and we need a lot more teachers.

David Gaulin, Woodland Road – The last time he was here was right before the Budget Commission came in, the city was broke and they were going to close the schools because we were underfunded; everyone in this room was yelling fight the mandates; this is a non-mandated program, the state is broke, the city has a Budget Commission; other communities have FDK and wish we could too but we are under the Budget Commission so why would we put this responsibility on the city at this time. He said to the Budget Commission Member that she has said we are over funded because we get a lot of state aid; we are finally getting more aid coming in and we are going to thin the aid to the existing programs right now to add this program; he would love to have the FDK but we are a community that can't afford it right now especially after all the taxes they just received. He knows the Budget Commission will make the final decision and hopes they are not biased.

Sara Desjarlais, Leading Street, Johnston and Deborah Duquette, Canning Street, Cumberland – Sara is an ESL teacher at Coleman and Deborah is a Kindergarten teacher at Bernon. Sara said FDK will help provide an extensive time in learning the socialization skills which are a big part of what the ELL populations needs; with FDK they will be able to teach the important concepts that they are expected to teach and not rush through it; Deborah thanked everyone for working on this educationally sound plan because it will give the kindergarteners exactly what they need and it will also help them improve their scores not only in kindergarten but as they get older through the grades; as they have shown in the presentation it is also fiscally sound and there will be a surplus each year. She has taught FDK and half day kindergarten; with half day they barely get through what they are suppose to cover in the curriculum; the skills you learned in kindergarten is not what we teach now; we are teaching what you have learned in first grade; this is expected throughout the state and country; to have these kids competitive we need to give these kids the opportunity; FDK gets them more prepared for school; it teaches them a routine and for some it is the first time they are separating from their parents so we help ease them into that transition; children are more fatigued going from a half day kindergarten to 1st grade so they lose more academics this way. We have a reading achievement gap; in writing, her high kids are writing one to two sentences which is good for half day kindergarten; when she had a FDK class her high kids were writing four to five sentences with a beginning, middle, and end to their stories; what a huge difference; so we have seen the gaps in reading now you have seen the gaps in writing. As we know bullying is increasing; kids are not learning how to socialize in kindergarten because the academics are pushed on them so much now that in a half day program we have to take away from that socialization because of the shortness of time.

Estelle Bubble, Third Avenue – Stated she lost her previous home after the taxes went up. She understands FDK is good; she's been at the schools and has also worked in the cafeteria. On the other hand, as a taxpayer, a home owner, and a owner of a car, FDK is not good; it is not mandated; how long is it that our taxes will not go up; is it 2, 3, or 10 years. Kids have behavior problems because at home they should be taught how to interact with kids; being on the computer all day is called being an instant babysitter and not a parent. The state gave us some money then all of a sudden they gradually stopped it; are they going to stop it this time; nobody knows this. How many kids will be in a classroom; 40 kids per 1 teacher in a class. Some schools don't even have paper or ink; she knows this because she has been there; teachers buy their own supplies for their classrooms; she has seen this and teachers pay a lot for their supplies without getting reimbursed. Some students can't take books home because there are not enough books so everything is photo static copies; whether it is a book or paper it still costs the taxpayer money and we just don't have it. All she hears is FDK; as taxpayers we are the ones dishing out the money; if you say the state well where does the state get their money and its from us workers; enough is enough and we just can't do it.

Brenda Fontaine, Brook Street – She has six children, owns her house, and she and her husband both work two jobs; her three oldest children went to FDK because they lived in a different town; she wanted to be a stay at home mom so they moved to Woonsocket because the prices of the houses were lower at that time; since then she has gone back to college and has a full and part-time job so her family can get out of Woonsocket to get a better education for her children; she is a taxpayer and her children deserve

an education; she feels that with all of these budget cuts there is nothing to fund here and our children deserve this; every child deserves a great education so they can better themselves for our future.

Nicole Burke, Bentley Street – She has two boys; one is in kindergarten now and one will be in pre-K this September; her problem with not having FDK is that she cannot work; her son goes to school only for 2 ½ hours a day; as a taxpayer she is willing to give every single cent to give these children the chance that she has not been able to achieve herself which is to give them the head start in math; she wants to give them that chance.

Mary Beth L'Esperance, South Main – She is a taxpayer in Woonsocket; her three children graduated from WHS and all of them went on to college; she is also a 1st grade teacher and she would like to reiterate what the kindergarten teachers have said that much of what they do in kindergarten is very much reflected in 1st grade; routines are important and she does not have an assistant to back her up; it is true that they do build up stamina in a FDK. Many of us have said that we didn't have FDK but times were very different. In 1st grade we spend 1 ½ hours reading, then there is writing, and math. There is no playing in kindergarten anymore; kindergarten under the common core is very stringent; they have to be reading before they leave, it is no more letters, and no more time for sand tables. If we do not have the math concepts solid in kindergarten it will be more difficult in 1st grade; if you are behind already coming into 1st grade it is very difficult to catch up; do what's right for the kids in Woonsocket and in the long run she thinks this would be a money saving issue because we will not have as many retentions and probably not as high of a dropout rate if these kids were ready to go.

Anna Cano Morales, Latino Policy Institute – She is not from Woonsocket, she lives in North Providence; she is the chairwoman of the Central Falls School Board of Trustees; she felt it was important enough to visit our neighbors in Woonsocket, the mayor, RIDE, superintendent, and school committee members for really putting together a comprehensive plan for the children; it is a wise investment and it sounds very fiscally sound. The Latino Policy Institute at Roger Williams University put out a report last August that looks specifically at Latino students and English Language Learners (ELL); your population is 8% of ELLs and 72% free and reduced lunch; those are challenges but also opportunities; this is actually an investment; it is an economic development policy that you have put together because the city is in its cusps of revival; Central Falls knows what this feels like and it was painful and continues to be painful. She commends everyone for their hard work. Last time she was here she was on stage as a regent in 2011; she was on the Board of Regents for elementary and secondary education; she remembers that the people who were here took the opportunity and came up to us; they were a group of parents that said please help they are cutting FDK; is there anything that you could do. She is happy to be back and commends everyone for their hard work and hopes we do the right thing.

Jeffrey Partington, President, WTG – Here to advocate again for two items, FDK and a resolution to the ongoing substitute problem within the district. The Woonsocket Teachers' Guild has always held the position that we are firmly in support of FDK as it is in the best interest of education in Woonsocket as long as funding is not siphoned off from other programs in the district as we are already at a subsistence level compared to all other districts in the state; we have also been strong advocates for fully funding the Funding Formula, or getting additional state funds to be used for this purpose; we are happy that this presentation tonight demonstrates a higher state contribution and that local funding is not further strained to sustain this needed initiative. He appeared before you for the first time in February to raise the issue to you, and since then the situation has only deteriorated; we need this situation fixed; he is asking the School Board to raise the pay of teacher substitutes to \$125 for the balance of this school year, and re-advertise for substitutes at the higher rate; while it is easy to ignore the short term effects as classes will get covered, the long term effects are detrimental to education and retention of quality professionals within the district. The simple fix is to raise the pay of substitutes for the balance of this school year, and re-advertise for substitutes at the higher rate; we raised the point that splitting classrooms costs the district 2-3 times the amount of raising the substitute pay; administration's answer was to forbid splitting classrooms; as the failed policy will not produce additional substitutes, now teachers lose preps to cover classrooms; preps lost for each classroom costs approximately \$125 per day and causes stress on the classroom teacher who loses a prep almost every day. He has been told it does not happen, but potentially in dire situations all teachers that are pulled to cover are itinerants; reading teachers, resource teachers, or service providers are leaving their regular positions to substitute; this means that the children who deserve the services that this district provides, will not receive those services and it will impact academic performance long term; the teachers are also concerned because the evaluation process now depends on student learning; being pulled to substitute interferes with this and causes unwarranted angst on the staff; to illustrate our point, for the next two days we have instructed our members to send you an email detailing how they are being pulled from duty, giving up a prep, or being pulled from their regular assignment to cover classes; while he does not know what the next two days will bring, he is hopeful that this will give them a clear picture of the stress this system is under day to day.

Leanne Barrett, RI Kids Count – She said she has handouts of a written testimony and trend line and passed it out to the committee. She is the senior policy analyst and they work on children's outcomes across the state. She came here tonight because Kids Count strongly supports the plan to restore FDK in Woonsocket Public Schools; they have been tracking this issue for the past 10 years; as our mayor has correctly pointed out, Woonsocket is the only high-poverty core city that does not offer universal FDK, although it has offered universal FDK in the past. On her handbook we will see a trend line which shows the steady increases Woonsocket made between 2000 and 2004 when we went to FDK and then came back down in 2011; the other 3 core cities which are Central Falls,

Pawtucket, and Providence are at 100% FDK, Woonsocket is now at 3% enrollment for FDK and the state is at 70%; even the state is behind in the nation; the latest census statistics show 76% of our nation's kindergartners are enrolled in FDK; this number keeps going up each year just like we have; we are making steady progress and it would be fabulous if Woonsocket could come back in with FDK and push us ever farther along; FDK is one of the best investments that we could make. Children from low-income families are typically 18 months behind their peers at age four; research shows that FDK can close the real and significant preparation gap and build a strong foundation for later academic success. We urge you to adopt the plan to restore FDK in Woonsocket and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Dr. Donovan for United Way – Dear Chairman and members of the School Board: On behalf of United Way of Rhode Island, I am writing to express our support for re-implementing full-day kindergarten in Woonsocket. One of United Way's key strategic goals is to promote and invest in high-quality learning opportunities for Rhode Island students. Research shows that quality early learning increases educational opportunities and prepares students to enter school ready to succeed. Our focus is on strategies that improve academic achievement in Rhode Island, we work to support and enhance early education, quality child care and afterschool and summer learning programs to ensure school readiness for all children in Rhode Island. In 2012, United Way supported the Full-Day Kindergarten Accessibility Act as part of our larger public policy strategy to support high quality child care and early learning opportunities for Rhode Islanders. According to research, children who participate in early childhood education programs graduate from high school at a significantly higher rate and are 2.5 times more likely to continue on to higher education. There's no question that a strong education is the most effective way to break the cycle of poverty. United Way of Rhode Island respectfully requests your consideration of this important program to provide children access to full-day kindergarten and ultimately increase their success in school and in life. Thank you for your time and consideration, Dr. Adam Greenman, Interim Director, Community Investment, United Way of Rhode Island.

Ms. Lanphoutacoul, Woonsocket – She has been residing in Woonsocket for approximately 20 years; she said dear Honorable Mayor Baldelli-Hunt, School Board, and audience that this is her first time and she shouldn't have waited this long to hear what activity is going on in our city of Woonsocket; she decided to come tonight because it is the right thing to do for support; she is a taxpayer, full time productive citizen, and works at a training school for correctional for more than 10 years; she is excited to hear that we have more funding to help support FDK; she wants to be sure that this is for regular and special education school; it's time we get education back for our children, for our city, for our future; she wants to make sure that we work very hard together, as a team, to support our city; it is time to make it positive and strong; she wants to support education for our children; if there is anything else that can be helpful please let her know and she will do her best, volunteer or anything else, to help our city and the children of our city.

NEW BUSINESS:

3. Discussion/Vote on the Full Day Kindergarten Proposal – G. Donovan

Motion to receive: S. Seale

2nd: D. Chattman

S. Seale said he wants to make sure that the revenue increases that were in the presentation were there because we are going to FDK and not due to some other natural increase. C. Dias said the fiscal analysis represents what the revenue would be if we go to FDK; if we decide not to go to FDK those revenues will not be available to the city. S. Pawlina asked if the IDEA early intervention money which is \$330,000 will only be used for that and not take away from any other programs that are in place. C. Ursillo stated that early intervention goes under the umbrella of IDEA which is federal money that comes from RI and is distributed throughout the state; this money must be spent on non-disabled children; it is specifically targeted to put into place those kinds of interventions that would boost children's academic levels and prevent a referral for special education services; it does not touch the monies that are dedicated for children with disabilities.

D. Chattman said there are also going to be pros and cons for this; for those people who are against we are getting the money from the state for FDK; there are fears that it will cost the people of Woonsocket and raise taxes. He asked why would these people have these fears that we will be taxed for FDK. C. Dias stated the state's education funding formula calculates per student how much the community will get; therefore the revenues that you are seeing in the presentation is what will be added to the school budget once the FDK program is fully implemented by FY18; because the formula is structured this way and in light of the proposal that was brought forward, at this point in time we are getting a surplus; not only do you not need to add any local dollars but we will be getting additional state dollars to add to the school budget to help support other activities in our school district; the proposal is not requiring any additional local dollars, if anything it is adding additional state education dollars to the school department.

J. Rivera said he has no questions about finances because it's clear enough where the funds are coming from. He has some logistics he would like to bring forward to the public and the rest of the Committee which is the number of students per classroom; Coleman has been under scrutiny by the fire department in the way that it is structured for the kindergartners and 1st graders; we need to know what to expect if Coleman has FDK and he will have the professionals answer this question. In addition the lunches are being federally reimbursed; we would J. Spagna clarify exactly the way the funding works for the lunch programs. He asked G. Donovan to specify the number of classes per school and the capacity per classroom. G. Donovan said we follow the collective bargaining agreement and there is no way possible that we would put 40 children in a classroom; we would never do this; as it stands right now we have the regular number of students per classroom; the capacity study from NESDC shows that there is room in each of our

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Giovanna Donoyan, Superintendent

Dr. Donoyan recognized Woonsocket High School Senior Piotr Linek who will be this year's recipient of the 2014 Rhode Island Red Sox Scholarship for the Woonsocket High School; this honor will be awarded to the 25 Rhode Island high school seniors selected by the Red Sox Foundation, the official team charity of the Boston Red Sox, on Sunday, May 4, 2014, which is Rhode Island Day at Fenway Park; each of the scholars will receive a \$1,000 scholarship award. April Cheever and Austin Ferrenti were the recipients of the Rhode Island General Treasurer Gina M. Raimondo's Young Leader Award; the award ceremony took place on April 16th at Ximedica, a biotech company in Providence; April and Austin were recognized for their outstanding achievement in math, economics, and business-related courses, as well as their commitment to their community and established leadership skills. Teachers Claire Laquerre and Nancy Koczera were honored to attend the ceremony at the request of Austin and April, who recognized them as being teachers who have had the greatest impact on their success. Heather Neil (Title II Technology Specialist, Instructional) presented at the "Tech Forum 2014" sponsored by TechandLearning.com in Newton, MA on May 2; she was 1 of 3 members on a panel presenting on personalization of learning.

Motion to receive and place on file: S. Seale 2nd: D. Chattman (Unanimously Approved by the Board)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- **April 23, 2014 Open/Closed Minutes** - Motion to approve: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina
Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina
ROLL CALL VOTE ON ENTIRE CONSENT AGENDA: 5 YES APPROVED AS SUBMITTED

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

SCHOOL BOARD REPORTS: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Discussion/Vote on the Elementary and Middle School Handbooks – 2nd Passage – P. McGee, C. Lopardo

G. Lacouture stated that the Committee will vote separately on the handbooks.

Motion to approve the Elementary Handbook for 2nd Passage: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

Motion to approve the Middle School Handbook for 2nd Passage: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina

Motion to table the Middle School Handbook for 2nd Passage pending further review of the Student Placement: S. Seale

2nd: S. Pawlina Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes TABLED (WMS Handbook)

2. Recommendation to Hire Chief Information Officer – G. Donoyan

Motion to approve: S. Pawlina 2nd: S. Seale Roll Call Vote: 5 No NOT APPROVED, MOTION FAILS

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Discussion/Vote on the Woonsocket High School Handbook – 1st Passage – P. McGee, C. Henderson

Motion to approve handbook for 1st Passage: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina

S. Pawlina stated at the last meeting we moved the passing grade from a 60 to a 70; however the handbook shows letters grades of A, B, C, D, and F; it appears the D with the range of 60 to 70 is still in the handbook. C. Henderson said they should have the proposed changes with the handbook.

Motion to table pending clarification: S. Seale 2nd: G. Lacouture Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

5. Discussion/Vote on the Woonsocket Budget Commission's Design of the Human Resource Department at WED – G. Donoyan

Motion to approve: G. Lacouture 2nd: S. Seale

G. Lacouture said the HR position is an 80/20 split and asked if the other position is an 80/20 split. G. Donoyan said no. He asked if that position is just for the school department. G. Donoyan said yes.

Motion to approve: G. Lacouture 2nd: S. Seale Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

6. Discussion/Vote on the appointment of the Secretary to the Director of Curriculum – P. McGee

Motion to appoint secretary: G. Lacouture 2nd: S. Seale

G. Lacouture said he would assume that this person is under the same parameters of all non-union and that this contract would expire on June 30th. G. Donoyan said as you know the Budget Commission sent out letters; she looks forward to working with Mr. Scungio to put together non-union contracts. S. Seale asked if this position was already budgeted. G. Lacouture said yes.

Motion to appoint secretary: G. Lacouture 2nd: S. Seale Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

7. Approval to post for Principal Positions – G. Donoyan

Motion to approve: G. Lacouture 2nd: S. Pawlina

G. Lacouture stated that this request has to also go before the Budget Commission. J. Rivera asked how many principal positions there are. G. Donoyan stated at the present time we have two formal resignations which are two elementary principals. S. Seale asked if these are the principals who resigned based upon the letter that was sent by the Budget Commission. G. Lacouture said it is hard to say definitely; he can't speak for them.

Motion to approve: G. Lacouture 2nd: S. Pawlina Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

CONFERENCES: None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Giovanna Donoyan, Superintendent – Passed.

SCHOOL BOARD GOOD & WELFARE:

G. LACOUTURE: He said he would be remiss if he didn't say anything about the handling of a situation that happened two weeks ago; every non-union personnel in the school department was given a letter not renewing their contracts as of June 30, 2014; there were 35 people; this was probably one of the lowest days of his tenure here as a chairperson; neither the superintendent nor himself was informed about this disastrous situation; the letters were sent by the chairwoman of the Budget Commission with the approval of the Budget Commission; we have lost some administrators, partially because of this or totally because of this, good administrators, well needed administrators; the damage has been done. The Committee was in the process of developing a system to do what the Budget Commission did but they could not wait to hear what we were doing. He talked to Chairperson of the Budget Commission this evening about trying to rectify the situation which immediately takes effect July 1st; as of July 1st, according to what has been done, no administrator or non-union person has vacation, sick, or personal time; some have accumulated in or around the maximum that is allowed in the teacher's contract; the reason being is that prior superintendents and school committees allowed those people to exercise their rights under the union contract; he was one of those people when he left the classroom. They have basically gone from 160 to 0. The School Committee wants to be pro-active in this approach but people have to know that as long as there is a Budget Commission, your School Committee's hands are tied; we can recommend all we want and the Budget Commission is going to do what they want; he is hoping that with his discussion with Mrs. Dutremble today there will be a way to make some common ground that the Budget Commission will agree to and that the school department will agree to, not just the School Committee.

D. CHATTMAN: He is truly happy that they will have full day kindergarten. He is not sure if everyone understands how important education is to some; personally, growing up in a household where one parent was from 3rd grade and another parent was from 8th grade, you realize the effects the lack of education did to them financially and to him and his siblings. He was so surprised when he walked through the door to see the parents here who are in support of full day kindergarten because all he has been hearing is negativity on how we don't need it; well maybe they don't have kids, grandkids, nieces, or nephews so maybe they don't understand as well as people who do have kids. He said he is so happy and can't wait to see the results because he thinks this is the seed that can get this community going again; we will see good things happen because of this.

J. RIVERA: Passed.

S. SEALE: He said the chorus was very good and thanked them for singing the national anthem. The Budget Commission sent out a letter to a little over 30 administrators; he doesn't disagree in principle on the content or the need to address the issue but the way it was done was unfortunate; no one doubts that the Budget Commission runs the city or has the final say in the city. It was brought up a few months ago that the supply account is being expended; he has to trust what people are telling him; some people got the word and some didn't; so we have addressed this again; he asked what is the time frame for delivery to the teacher when supplies are ordered. J. Spagna said it depends on the availability of the supplies that were ordered, when the actual order goes through and if it is an order over a certain dollar amount we have to get approval by the Budget Commission before we can order; he would like to know who needs supplies because he is not hearing anything from the principals at this point. S. Seale said he is still concerned with the

issue of substitutes and agrees that we need to look into substitute compensation, possibility of permanent substitutes, and fixing the AESOP system in the near future. He also wants to address the school uniform policy in the near future; he knows that many parents are worried that school is coming to a close, handbooks are being published, and many people are unhappy with the uncertainty of the uniform policy; the uniform policy as it is currently written is the current uniform policy but we are going to look at it to make sure it is, in fact, the best policy for the district. Lastly, a policy they received in their packets was regarding certificates of achievement rather than a diploma; he asked if we have an estimate on how many students will receive a certificate rather than a diploma. L. Bedard said approximately 8 students which includes both the WHS and WACTC.

S. PAWLINA: She said that if the principals are not saying they are out of supplies then we have a serious communication problems as well as a serious supply problem; currently, Citizens' is out of copy paper; she knows this and if the principal is not telling you then that's a problem; before April vacation there were problems at Bernon and Harris; teachers are not getting the supplies they order; we sat up here and told them to order supplies; how are we going to fix the communication problem and how are we going to get the supplies to where they need to be. J. Spagna said it could be a timing issue as to when we can get our requisitions approved; when they heard that there were concerns over paper shortages, he looked into it and there are 300 cases of copier paper in central receiving; there is a process for each school to request paper and it has not been done; his staff in accounts payable took the initiative to find out exactly how much paper every school needed to get through to the end of the year; paper is being delivered to the schools. G. Donoyan said this issue popped up around February and demanded the principals that they go out and do an inventory of the supply closet and also check in with every single teacher; she thinks some of the issue may be that they don't know what the actual process is in ordering supplies; teachers did ask for some very important resources like an elmo which is not really a supply; that is an equipment; we are talking about regular school supplies so what teachers want and what we can give them are two different things; she wishes that if the teachers are complaining that they do not have something that they would actually complain to their principals who have all the right in the world to come back to us to request these things; we are not hearing this from our principals; she said they will keep checking in on the principals and the teachers and report back. S. Pawlina said we are at a critical point that we should not be with the lack of substitutes, substitutes pay, and dividing children in different classrooms and overloading classrooms because there is no substitute; at the end of the year we know there tends to be a higher rate of absenteeism; we need to look at this now not in the future; we need to make sure that every day every child is getting the best education they deserve in our schools so they need to stay in their own classrooms; we need to fix the substitute problem now. FDK is very important; we needed the foundation for the WED to build us into the outstanding educational department it can be; this is just one of the many things we need to move forward; another was moving the passing grade back to 70; this is what we need to do to turn WED around; another was expanding our honors program for our middle school students to turn around our education department; every piece fits into another piece; when people move into a community they ask how is the education department; we want to turn around and say we are top notch, we are doing all we can to provide the best services that we can provide; some of this has a dollar attached to it and other things have no cost whatsoever; all of these things brings a huge reward or a big return back to our city; this is what all day kindergarten represents, a block, a foundation, a starting point; this is what every other layer of our system is built on which is the first step; she is proud to say that they took a vote tonight for the third time in ten months, not only by them but the prior school committee as well, and saw the benefit of what FDK is not only to our school department but to our community.

Motion to adjourn at 9:33 p.m.: S. Seale

2nd: G. Lacouture (Unanimously Approved by the Board)

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Blais
WSC Recording Secretary