

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

➤ **September 23, 2015 Open Minutes**

Motion to approve: D. Burke 2nd: S. Seale Roll Call Vote: 3 yes (GL, SS, DB) 2 Abstain (SP, JR) APPROVED

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to approve: S. Seale 2nd: D. Burke Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

CONSENT AGENDA (removed for discussion):

Personnel Actions and Purchases: *Personnel Actions* - G. Lacouture said on Page 1 of the personnel actions there is a teacher assistant listed as new/new and asked J. Wolfgang if this is a new position. J. Wolfgang indicated this is a new employee. G. Lacouture asked how is SC members, by looking at this, suppose to know if it is a new position that is not budgeted; Wolfgang indicated that no unbudgeted positions are listed on this sheet until the SC approves those positions. P. McGee said he thinks new/new is a clerical error (typo) because any new positions have to come before the SC for approval first, then posted and advertised; once these steps have taken place then the person goes on this personnel recommendation spreadsheet for SC approval. *Purchases* – G. Lacouture said he knows there was a clerical error on the dollar amount for Robinson, Green, and Beretta. B. Peryea said the dollar amount should have read \$7,946.34.

Motion to amend the payment to Robinson Green and Beretta Corporation to \$7,946.34: G. Lacouture 2nd: S. Seale
Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

Field Trip to New York City: S. Seale said it is not clear what the lodging situation would be for the students. Teachers Beth Frew and Kimberly Thibeault stated there will be four students per room, gender appropriate and the chaperone/student ratio per district protocol is 1 to 10.

Conference Leave for Mt. St. Charles Teacher: D. Burke said this conference is being paid out of Title II and asked why do we offer title payment to Mt. St. Charles. G. Lacouture stated private schools in the State of RI has access to Title II funds based on per pupil cost; in the old days, the state determined the per pupil cost, now L. Filomeno has to determine the per pupil cost. D. Burke asked if this also includes charter schools. G. Lacouture said yes; they are public schools so they get part of our allocation.

Motion as amended: Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

CONFERENCES/DISCUSSIONS – Presentation on Attendance, Tardies and Suspensions for the Woonsocket High School – C. Henderson, B. Bouley, A. Barnes

Carnell Henderson reminded the SC about the NEASC visit which starts on October 18th. C. Henderson introduced Andy Barnes, Brian Bouley and Jeff Partington who will be presenting data on tardies, absenteeism, suspensions, and climate. A. Barnes said there has been a great reduction in tardies in comparison to school years 13-14 and 14-15. There was an increase in two months of 13% to a reduction in one month of 50%; overall we reduced the tardies by 27.8% which is approximately 9,000 reductions in tardies for 2013-14 to 2014-15 school year. G. Lacouture asked if these are Grades K-12 numbers. A. Barnes said this is just for the high school; however he does keep data on the middle school and doesn't believe there has been much of a reduction; tardies were over 23,000 last year. G. Lacouture said when looking at the tardiness data was there any specific section of the city where it was more prevalent. A. Barnes stated no. G. Lacouture stated we need someone to collect this type of data so we can look at it deeply to see some of the root causes which will allow us to make an even better plan; he assumes that hiring the two individuals at the high school considerably reduced the number of tardies and maybe we need to look at this for the middle school. In addition, we also need to include data on attendance, suspensions and drop outs. B. Bouley said one of the things they found out in administration about the tardies is not a particular area but rather particular students; when we see students tardy day after day we have conversations with them and help come up with solutions like working with their parents and coming up with plans; these conversations have been really beneficial.

G. Lacouture asked if there is data regarding suspensions to see if there has been improvement. B. Bouley said last year they focused on attendance and tardies. They started working on the graduation rate over the summer with Dr. McGee and met with the staff at the Pawtucket Schools because they had some success with their graduation rate; they found going through their data, the way they report to RIDE and the way their students exit the building was helpful; he will be going again to Pawtucket this week. They also implemented Skyward ahead of us so they have a little more experience in transitioning from one SIS system to another so we will be able to get additional information from them and really look towards making sure our data is accurate and clear when we are reporting. G. Lacouture asked if he thinks by the half year he would be able to come back before the SC and give a progress report as to what you have collected. B. Bouley thinks June would be better because all this information for this year will be inputted. C. Henderson stated having these two

individuals allows Bouley to have the opportunity to do this type of work. Because of the switch from Starbase to Skyward this year they lost some of the data; having said this, they went from the beginning of last year until this time and compared data; as of October 14, 2014 they had 382 infractions that resulted in detentions; this year we had 229 infractions that resulted in detentions which is a 40% decrease. As of October 14, 2014 they had 196 infractions that resulted in in-house suspensions; this year they had 132 infractions that resulted in in-house suspensions which is a 33% decrease. The climate has changed. B. Bouley is in the cafeteria meeting with the students who are constantly late; he sets them up with guidance. Guidance is calling the parents right away and the deans of students are on the students immediately. G. Lacouture said he thinks this is something they should look into replicating at the middle school for next year.

J. Partington said in 2011 they moved from a block schedule to a six-period day; a key to the block schedule is that the students would move less during the day; in 2013/14 RIDE pushed on the evaluation system; therefore, disciplinary action for students wasn't handled in a timely manner because they had the buildings to run and have evaluations to do; this is not a reflection on administration; it's simply the fact that they are overwhelmed. The Deans have allowed them to do their jobs; to get the data they need. The hallways are a lot clearer, the tardies are dropping and they would highly recommend deans at the middle school. D. Burke asked if there are any statistics on attendance. A. Barnes said from last year to this year we are basically only down by two students a day attending for the month of September; we were at 89.7% present for the month of September. P. McGee recognized C. Henderson and his leadership team because they have done some fantastic things at the high school within the last year and a half which they will continue to do, He also thinks we are going to see some bold increases in our graduation rate as we move forward. G. Lacouture said 89.7% is the lowest attendance rate in the State of RI so it doesn't seem like we are making progress in this area; maybe the truancy court will help with this.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Discussion/Approval on the Budget Transfer Policy – 2nd Passage – G. Lacouture, B. Peryea
Motion to approve for 2nd Passage: S. Seale 2nd: D. Burke Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

2. Approval of payment to retirees regarding health benefits – P. McGee, S. Rapport
G. Lacouture recused himself from this agenda item and turned the meeting over, at this time, to Vice-Chairman Seale.
Motion to approve: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina
Attorney Rapport explained that a retiree has requested reimbursement for a certain health benefit. This benefit to retirees was not addressed under the Memorandum of Agreement with the budget commission. This particular benefit was overlooked when the Budget Commission was in place. This request for approval of payment is to keep the benefit consistent with the intent of the parties under the Memorandum Agreement. This retiree and three others were affected by the oversight. One individual is in need of the benefit now and the dollar amount which is proposed for us to pay is \$12,442.50; however, this arrangement may be extended to three other retirees (total would be just under \$50,000 if the other retirees require this benefit). S. Pawlina asked how they arrived at this figure. S. Seale said this is a one-time payment request at this time for a negotiated amount. The actual amount is higher; however, the retirees have agreed to accept this amount.
Roll Call Vote: 4 Yes APPROVED Recused from vote: G. Lacouture

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Financial Update – G. Lacouture, B. Peryea
September 30, 2015 Financial – B. Peryea explained that as of today revenues are on track for the general fund. No major differentiation from what was budgeted at this point; however, there are some concerns about the medical insurance. During the first quarter \$900,000 more for medical was spent than the first quarter last year. He thinks this will fall off but "pay as you go" is difficult to predict. The budget handout reflects this cost for the remainder of the year if this level of expense were to remain consistent moving forward. He called Blue Cross for more info and will be meeting with them in the near future while continuing to monitor the numbers. Due to pension reform that took place at the state level there was also an added expense of about \$370,000. Tuitions are under budget at this time.

S. Seale asked about the budget for supplies and materials for the classrooms, wants to know why the line item budgeted for this item is \$325,000 and they are projected to spend \$128,000. B. Peryea explained that as people placed orders this number would come down. The number is based on population by school. Each principal has their own budgeted number to use. Spending on the line item will be more accurate at the end of the year. G. Lacouture stated that in the past all funds had to be spent by the 1st of the year or it was gone. To add positions would contribute to the potential deficit. He sees red flags and suggests we should stop spending on supplies now. S. Pawlina asked why we had nothing budgeted for grounds keeping and snowplowing services. Brad said that grounds keeping was handled in-house. Earlier in the year there was a little bit of money spent to give the district some help but not on that line. As for snowplowing he will take a look and check to see. He thinks it is budgeted in another area.

If medical expenses surge, one of the biggest areas to look at proactively is capital improvements and technology. There is about \$1.7 million in capital improvements. It appears that most of the improvements will not be done by the end of the fiscal year or while school is in session. If needed, the money could be used to offset medical expenses.

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

G. Lacouture requested K. Blais to send copies of this document to the City Council for their review.

2. Discussion on non-budgeted new positions and other non-budgeted expenses – G. Lacouture, B. Peryea

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

G. Lacouture asked what a COTA is. B. Peryea said it is an assistant occupational therapist. G. Lacouture thought we budgeted for the technology positions. B. Peryea said no. The money for the two tech positions, two COTA positions and the three .4 speech language pathologists was budgeted under the professional service line; now that they have the budget transfer policy, he will transfer the money into the salary lines within the budget. The other five positions are not budgeted at all which are two teacher positions and three 1:1 TA positions; the 1:1 positions are IEP required. G. Lacouture said we have a K teacher, .5 itinerant, .5 TA budgeted but we are not using them. B. Peryea said when they did the budget projections last February they anticipated 2 Kindergarten teacher positions closing but only closed one position; however did have savings on the itinerant and TA position. This is why we have a \$110,000 gap from what we budgeted and what we are projecting out. G. Lacouture said there is no money transfer for these five positions. B. Peryea said correct. G. Lacouture said it would have been helpful to know exactly what these five positions are costing them including their medical; he understands the two TA positions because of the IEP but there is no explanation as to why we hired the other three positions. B. Peryea said it was explained to him that this was going to be presented to the SC under the consent agenda for approval. G. Lacouture stated the SC have to approve the positions first which is not part of the consent agenda; he would like to continue the way they did it when the Budget Commission was here which was separate agenda items so the SC knows where the money is being spent. Moving forward, he would like the SC to see, on a quarterly basis, what is being spent on unbudgeted positions and expenses because this is what got us in trouble during a former superintendent, who will remain nameless, and put us into a deficit. J. Rivera asked if all of these positions are filled. B. Peryea believes that the top two positions are filled, one COTA is filled, one speech pathologist is filled, and the two TA PCAs are filled; the others are in various stages of postings and we will present those positions to the SC at the next meeting officially.

Motion to receive and place on file: S. Seale 2nd: G. Lacouture (Unanimously Approved by the Committee)

3. Discussion/Approval on the 2016 WSC Annual Meeting Dates – G. Lacouture, P. McGee

Motion to approve: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina

S. Seale noted that on the previous school year calendar (district calendar) it does not indicate the summer SC meeting dates; when preparing the school year calendar he we like a footnote added indicating the summer meeting dates

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

4. Discussion/Approval on the appointment of the Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent – G. Lacouture, P. McGee

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

Dr. McGee read his letter of recommendation to appoint Ms. Linda Houle to the position of Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent.

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

5. Discussion/Approval on Bid #16-13: Replacement Pumps and Heaters – B. Peryea

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

S. Seale asked what is the emergency for this repair. B. Peryea said heat in the classrooms is the emergency; we are down to one pump that is working correctly at Coleman. In addition, this is part of our capital improvement plan which is 89% reimbursable.

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

6. Discussion/Approval on Bid #16-12: Orff Instruments and Related Items – B. Peryea

Motion to approve: S. Seale 2nd: D. Burke

G. Lacouture asked where this money is coming from. B. Peryea said grant awards. Teacher Gordon Davignon stated there will be three parts to this grant. The first part is the bid you are voting on this evening for the elementary music department; there is also an amount earmarked for the middle school and high school which will be forthcoming.

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Patrick McGee, Superintendent

Barry Field Sewage Update – Blockage in the restrooms at Barry Field. The WED and Highway Dept. discovered an old septic system that needed to be pumped out. Once it was cleared we have not had any issues.

Kids Count – Superintendent attended the Data in Your Backyard: 2015 RI Kids Count Factbook presentation on September 25th. Community partners, district administrators, and the mayor attended this annual meeting. The Factbook provides data and is presented in five sections: Family & Community, Economic Well-Being, Health, Safety, and Education. This presentation provides the community with critical data and information that helps to inform decision-making both in the district and community at-large. Some facts: 42.8% of our students live in poverty (1st in the State); 37% of our children per 1,000 are victims of child abuse and neglect (highest in the State). Data like this drives decisions and plans for our district – Social Workers.

AFT i3 Capstone Event/Washington, DC – On September 28-30 the Superintendent attended the AFT i3 Conference in Washington, DC with Jeff Partington, President of WTG. They were one of six districts in RI (i3 Districts) that attended along with districts in NY. They, along with policy makers from around the country, shared information about the implementation of our evaluation process and instrument with many districts from around the country who are struggling to design and/or implement high quality teacher evaluations. This was a great opportunity to showcase what we are doing in Woonsocket. In attendance at that conference was RI Commissioner Dr. Ken Wagner; he had an opportunity to speak with him and invited him to our district. K. Blais spoke with his secretary today and he will be visiting our district next Thursday; he will be spending about three and a half hours in our district and we have a tentative schedule for him. He would like to meet with parents, teachers, visit some schools and classrooms. We can't wait to show him and have conversations with him about the great things that are happening within our district and to let him know some of the challenges that we face.

College Crusade – College readiness and scholarship program for middle school and high school students in low-income urban districts. Mission is to increase high school graduation, college and career readiness, and college completion. They serve approximately 3,000 students state-wide per year. They offer a wealth of programs and services such as: advisory services, STEM programs, career exploration, college visits, math skills, critical thinking and writing, SAT prep, FAFSA assistance, getting to college workshops.

City of Woonsocket Job Fair – J. Wolfgang updated the SC on the job fair that was held today at the Community Care Alliance; a social service agency specializing in job training and many other things to help individuals obtain employment. There were approximately 30 different employers in attendance. A representative from the school department was in attendance and our intent, which was our intent for the last several weeks, was to try to recruit substitute teacher assistants, substitute secretaries, and substitute custodians; we are in desperate need for these positions. We have taken steps trying to recruit for these positions by advertising in the Woonsocket Call and Valley Breeze and by attending this job fair. He came back from this job fair with many applications and interests. We had nine people apply for a sub secretarial position with six applicants being bilingual minority candidates. They also had six people apply for the sub custodian position with three being minority candidates; these individuals will be given an interview by Peter Fontaine. They also had one individual who wanted to be a sub cafeteria worker. He will be attending future job fairs as they arise. Once again, our goal is inclusion of diversity in our workforce.

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

S. SEALE: He would like to revisit the budget that was presented this evening. He wants to make sure that he understood that the year-to-date projection for medical is approximately a \$2M shortfall. B. Peryea said correct; this is the projection for the whole year and this also goes for all encumbrances; he projected them for the whole year which is up to June 30th. S. Seale said currently we have a projected surplus at the end of this fiscal year assuming that these numbers remain the way they are because these projections are based upon actual year-to-date expenditures and encumbrances. B. Peryea said correct. He said J. Wolfgang indicated that there is a need for bilingual workers and asked him what is the greatest language of need. J. Wolfgang said Spanish.

S. PAWLINA: She added a statement to the recognitions and announcements by saying she is very happy that we will be represented in the Valley Breeze by a student who will be reporting all the happenings at the high school. It has been four years since the WHS has been represented in those pages. Kudos to our administration in getting a student to commit and to the student because this is a very big commitment. Thank you.

D. BURKE: He would like to add some feedback as to what S. Pawlina said about the student writing for the Valley Breeze and would like to encourage that we should also be writing in the Woonsocket Call.

Motion to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.: S. Seale 2nd: S. Pawlina (Unanimously Approved by the Committee)

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Blais
WSC Recording Secretary