

**MINUTES**  
**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2016**  
**Woonsocket Middle School @ Hamlet**  
**60 Florence Drive, Woonsocket, RI 02895**

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**Meeting called to order by Chairman Soren Seale at 6:30 p.m. in Open Session.**

**Roll Call by Superintendent Patrick McGee:**

Soren Seale, Chairman	Present
Donald Burke, Vice-Chairman	Present
Susan Pawlina, Secretary	Present
Paul Bourget	Present
Valerie Gonzalez	Present

Motion to convene in closed session for the purpose of discussing the job performance of a teacher assistant in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(1). This individual has been notified in writing that this public body intends to convene in closed session to discuss job performance and the individual has declined to have this discussion take place in open session: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Burke Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

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Motion to reconvene into open session at 7:00 p.m.: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Burke  
Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

Motion to seal the closed session minutes of April 27, 2016: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Burke  
Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call by Superintendent Patrick McGee:

Soren Seale, Chairman	Present
Donald Burke, Vice-Chairman	Present
Susan Pawlina, Secretary	Present
Paul Bourget	Present
Valerie Gonzalez	Present

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**PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:**

**Woonsocket High School/Area Career and Technical Center:** Leonora Hughes, Hospital and Travel Teacher and Chair of the School Improvement Team, talked about the peer mentor program that started last year which provides mentoring to freshman from upperclassman. This program is very helpful with assisting freshman with the transition from middle school to high school. Two peer mentors from the school addressed the School Committee (SC) to share their experiences. Peer mentors usually work in pairs; they start out with icebreakers and games to get to know the freshman better. As the year moves forward, the mentors are available to help with PARCC prep, and portfolios. The senior mentors also work to provide guidance to convey important messages such as the significance of working hard to get good grades on report cards.

**Tony Gabrielle, Woonsocket Resident:** He is here to represent Woonsocket Redskins Football and Cheerleading Organization, and would like to request that last year's fees be waived. He said the Redskins have been using Barry Field for over 20 years and have never been charged. They are a non-profit organization which consists of all volunteers. He handed to the SC the current Redskin's budget and noted the following: re-certifying helmets yearly is very costly, expenses also include insurance fees, website maintenance fees, and officials' fees. This money comes from registration fees. The Redskins cannot afford the \$3,600.00 bill that they received from the school department. They do fundraisers but it isn't enough. Kim Hanson, President of the Redskins reviewed the Redskin budget and noted that the registration fee is \$125 for 12 and under and \$170 for over 12, per child, per season. The gate charge is \$3 for parent admission which pays the officials' fees. The cost for officials is \$55 per game, and there will be 7 games this season. These fields are also shared with cricket players and soccer fields who do not get charged this fee or why isn't this bill split between all parties? However, they will prepare for a fee in next year's budget. Is there anything the SC can do about the bill? Chairman Seale informed Mr. Gabrielle that this request must be put on a future agenda if there is to be a vote. Redskins will be notified when this is on the agenda.

**RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Patrick McGee, Superintendent**

- Reading Week - April is National Reading Month. Here in Woonsocket our elementary schools celebrate this event annually by inviting district leaders, school committee members, the mayor, community members, local and state dignitaries, students, and parents to read to our children. This year I had the honor of reading to students at Savoie, Bernon, and Pothier and attended Citizens' Reading under the Stars celebration on April 13th. At each school I encountered students who truly enjoy reading and being read to. It is evident that their teachers have instilled a love for words and reading. At each school, students were able to explain the various reading strategies that they use when reading, such as predicting and using context clues, to name a few. Research tells us that students who are not reading on grade level by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade have a much greater chance of not graduating from high school. Our teachers are working very hard to ensure that our students are successful readers. I would like to thank each principal, staff and teachers who do such a wonderful job of promoting reading and literacy to our children and community and I look forward to reading at our schools next year.
- WHS Memorial Garden Gathering - On Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> the WHS Art Department, led by Mrs. Diane Mayers, will be dedicating a Mosaic Memorial Garden outside the high school to WHS teachers, staff and students who have passed away while in service to or studying at WHS. Each name will be etched on a handmade ceramic tile with a symbol of their WHS service or dream they left to our school and/or community.
- RI State Elks Americanism Essay Contest - It gives me great pleasure to announce that Zainab Sheikh, 5<sup>th</sup> grade student in Mrs. Eileen LaRivierre's class at Harris, has been selected as the 1<sup>st</sup> place winner in the RI State Elks Americanism Essay Contest. With this award, Zainab received a \$200.00 Educational Scholarship. The award was presented at the Coventry West Greenwich Elks Lodge #2285 on Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Congratulations Zainab!  
Motion to receive and place on file: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Burke (Unanimously approved by the SC)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

➤ **April 13, 2016 Open Minutes**

Motion to approve: D. Burke 2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Bourget  
Roll Call Vote: 4 Yes (SS, DB, PB, VG) 1 Abstain (SP) APPROVED

➤ **April 13, 2016 Closed Minutes**

Motion to approve: D. Burke 2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Bourget  
Roll Call Vote: 4 Yes (SS, DB, PB, VG) 1 Abstain (SP) APPROVED

<b>CONSENT AGENDA</b>	<b>Motion to approve: P. Bourget</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Pawlina</b>
<b>ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE CONSENT AGENDA AS AMENDED: 5 YES</b>		<b>APPROVED</b>

Personnel Recommendations:

Motion to remove Heather Barry from consent agenda and replace with name of Rhonda Bootland: S. Seale  
2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Bourget Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

**COMMUNICATIONS: None.**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Health and Wellness Subcommittee – D. Burke:** The Health and Wellness Subcommittee had their monthly meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The core committee also met last week at McFee to work on the details of the written policy. They will meet again on May 23<sup>rd</sup> to continue the work. The Agenda will be posted and all are welcome to attend.  
Motion to receive and place on file: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Pawlina (Unanimously approved by the SC)

**CONFERENCES/DISCUSSIONS – WHS Alternate Pathways Presentation – P. McGee, C. Henderson**  
C. Henderson addressed the committee to talk about the changes they are working on to provide better support to incoming freshman. They want to give immediate attention to the graduation rate and reach out to students. P. McGee and C. Henderson have done research which included school visits to explore alternative pathway programs. Evening school is the 'hot button' and they would like to further explore how to incorporate that into our school setting. There is a lot to look at but the most immediate at this time is the over age, under credit student.

This year there are 31 students working towards GED, 42 students have dropped out.

- 2013 cohort – 17 students are no longer on our roster, 10 have dropped out, and 7 GED

These students are tough to track; once they turn 18 they no longer are liable to report attendance, which affects our graduation rate.

- 2014 cohort - 11 students have dropped out, 13 GED
- 2015 cohort - 3 students have dropped out, 7 GED

There are also several students currently on the roster that are over age and under credit. There are twenty-two 17 year old ninth graders. Thirty-one 17 year old tenth graders, and thirteen, 16 year old ninth graders. Some of these students have only earned 4 credits in 2 or 3 years of school. If we don't reach out we are going to lose these students. By creating an alternative program or a PM school, we can take advantage of the opportunity to not only monitor where they are but to also help them to stay on a successful pathway. These numbers are fluid, and by offering alternatives programs earlier, we can be proactive about providing more opportunities for success. There are additional costs involved, but they will continue to work hard to figure out how to make it happen. In the past, there was a FOCUSS program which was cut. The FOCUSS program also supported students that were out serviced, which kept the students in the district and reduced spending outside the district. These discussions are ongoing and the focus is on helping these students now.

C. Henderson added his thoughts about the peer mentors that came forward to speak this evening. He mentioned their positive impact on easing the transition for incoming freshman, but aside from that these individuals have also empowered themselves. Fortunately this program was supported by P. McGee and the School Committee last year; the one-on-one program that was initiated for all freshman has been very successful. In addition, he received notice today that the school department will be the recipient of a Bronze award, in recognition of the program. Woonsocket has been selected to present at the annual conference in California this year. Woonsocket High School will be the first feeder program to present in this conference. Kudos to the teachers that willingly took on the challenge and to the students that chose to participate.

Motion to receive and place on file: V. Gonzales 2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Bourget (Unanimously approved by the SC)

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. None.
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**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Vote to terminate employment of teacher assistant – Chairman Seale noted that this agenda item is moot.
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2. Discussion/Approval to participate in the Day One Program at the Woonsocket Middle School – P. McGee  
Motion to approve: D. Burke 2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Bourget

P. McGee stated approval is needed to conduct a survey on risk behaviors. This will correspond with a poster campaign allowing students to collaborate efforts to promote healthy behaviors at the middle school level. Students will be encouraged to be proactive and also to meet with people involved in the day one program. This will be short periods of time scheduled throughout the day for students in Grades 6-8. These meetings will likely take place during enrichment to avoid missing time from core classes. The data from the survey will be shared with the district by the Day One Program support staff.

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

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3. Discussion/Approval on Bid # 17-03 – Stage curtains for the WHS – P. McGee  
Motion to approve: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Burke

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

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4. Discussion/Approval on Bid # 17-04 – Stage Flooring for the WHS – P. McGee  
Motion to approve: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: V. Gonzalez

B. Peryea stated this item will go out for bid again; will reach out to additional vendors and hopefully get a more competitive bid. No vote needed at this time.

Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

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5. Discussion/Approval on Bid # 17-05 – Library carpeting for the WHS  
Motion to approve: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Burke Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

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6. Discussion/Approval Bid # 17-06 – Floor Tile Replacement at Four Elementary Schools – P. McGee  
Motion to approve: P. Bourget 2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Burke  
B. Peryea stated the four schools to receive floor tile replacements are Bernon, Savoie, Citizens', and Globe Elementary Schools. No one bid so now we can reach out to vendors directly to solicit pricing. No vote needed at this time.

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7. Discussion/Approval for stipends for WHS Dean of Students – P. McGee  
Motion to approve: S. Soren 2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Bourget, S. Pawlina  
P. McGee said the individuals assuming these duties are teachers, not administrators. The responsibility of afterschool detention falls outside of the school day contract. Therefore, he is requesting these two teachers be approved a salaried stipend so they do not need to submit timesheets. D. Burke pointed out that this task is in the job description. P. McGee said that when the job descriptions were assembled this factor was not taken into account; this was an oversight and he wants to correct it. The fact that these positions do not require an administrative certification is already a cost savings. He would like this stipend effective April 13, 2016 since it was their intention to have it placed on that meeting agenda. The job description will be tweaked moving forward.  
Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes APPROVED

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#### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

➤ **Advanced Course Network** – Concurrent Enrollment is a program in Rhode Island that offers college credits to high school seniors who take college level courses while still in high school. The courses are taught at the student's respective high school by high school teachers who are certified in specific Concurrent Enrollment classes. As a result of Governor Gina Raimondo's Prepare RI Dual Enrollment Fund, all courses are free to students. Earning college credit is not dependent upon standardized testing at the end of the course, but rather on the student's performance in the class and the grade he/she earns. Students earn both high school credit and Rhode Island College credit for approved courses. After high school graduation, credits may be transferred to an extensive number of colleges and universities across the country, thereby getting a head start in college. The Early Enrollment Program is a program that fosters collaboration and communication between high school teachers and college professors and creates a positive educational relationship between the high schools and the college community. I am happy to announce that WHS offers a variety of Concurrent Enrollment courses for its seniors through Rhode Island College's Early Enrollment Program (EEP). Currently, 54 WHS students are enrolled in the EEP at RIC in the following courses: Introductory Biology, Introduction to the Literary Experience, History 150: Topics in U.S. History from 1877, Calculus: A Short Course, Statistics in the Everyday World, and Intermediate Spanish. Next year, WHS is looking to increase course offerings at RIC, as well as begin partnerships with URI and CCRI in the areas of Biotechnology and Writing. We strive to provide our students with opportunities to expand their learning and we are excited to announce that we have partnered with the new Rhode Island ACN. "The ACN is designed to help districts and schools create opportunities for Rhode Island high school students to envision, pursue and complete their individualized graduation pathway". Qualified students are encouraged to explore this opportunity to advance their high school credits by taking the available courses after the school day or on the weekends. This unique opportunity comes at NO EXPENSE to the student or family. The ACN courses will be offered by Rhode Island colleges and universities, community based organizations, and other school districts. If you are interested in learning more about the ACN please visit [www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov). There you will find an overview, the course catalog, and registration information. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the WHS Guidance Department. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity for your student, as this is a great opportunity for him/her to navigate through high school and prepare for their college or career choices.

Motion to receive and place on file: D. Burke 2<sup>nd</sup>: P. Bourget (Unanimously approved by SC)

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#### SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

- **Paul Bourget** – A lot of people are talking to him about the schools, students and even the graduation rates. We have partnered with the Advance Course Network, have Alternative Pathways, ELO programs, and there are so many other programs available to families. We also have an excellent website for staff, students, parents, and community. There are great things happening but we still need parents to be involved; children cannot do it alone and they need parent involvement to succeed. He invites the parents to look at the website, talk with School Committee, principals, teachers, and administration.

- **Soren Seale** – He reminded the SC members of the Rules of Order; they are supposed to go one at a time so everyone gets to comment who wants to comment before committee members re-address the same issue.
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Motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.: P. Bourget

2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Pawlina (Unanimously approved by the SC)

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Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Blais  
WSC Recording Secretary