

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1326

Monday, April 8, 2019
7:00 PM

Media Center
Wachusett Regional High School
1401 Main Street, Holden

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Christina Smith, Vice-chair
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Michael Dennis
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Stephen Godbout

Maleah Gustafson (7:08 PM)
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Asima Silva
Adam Young

Committee Members Absent:

Kenneth Mills, Chair
Robert Imber
Sarah LaMountain

Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Megan Weeks

Committee Members Participating Remotely:

None

Administration Present:

Darryll McCall, Superintendent
Robert Berlo, Deputy Superintendent
Daniel Deedy, Director of Business and Finance
Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources
Lincoln Waterhouse, Interim Administrator of Special Education
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Student Representatives Present:

Donroy Ferdinand (7:08 PM)

Rianna Massoni-Nesman

Others present, who desired to be recorded as present (see attached Attendance Sheet – attachment 1).

In Chair Mills' absence, Vice-chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. She announced the meeting was not streaming live, but is being recorded and will be broadcast on HoldenTV.com.

I. Public Hearing

Jon DiVito, Rutland, addressed the School Committee.

7:08 PM Member Gustafson joined the meeting.

7:08 PM Student Representative Ferdinand joined the meeting.

II. Chair's Opening Remarks

Former Thomas Prince School Principal Mary Cringan approached the podium, speaking briefly about Project 351 and expressing thanks for the opportunity to introduce this year's Project 351 Student Ambassadors:

Gabriela Hamburger Medailleu – Mountview Middle School

Aiden Havens – Paxton Center School

Sydney Mentzer – Thomas Prince School

Emma Jeffrey – Central Tree Middle School

Kaelin Pousland – Chocksett Middle School

At Ms. Cringan's invitation, each of the Student Ambassadors approached the podium and explained their first service project since being named Student Ambassadors. At the conclusion of the five reports, the students and Ms. Cringan were thanked for their attendance and were given a hearty round of applause.

III. Student Representatives' Reports

Student Representative Ferdinand congratulated the 8th graders for their Student Ambassador roles. He then spoke about a meeting he participated in on April 1, 2019, when Superintendent McCall and WRHS Principal Beando met with members of the high school's Think Globally Act Locally student organization to discuss implementation of composting at the high school. Student Representative Ferdinand reported a petition encouraging implementation of a composting program has 578 signatures to date. Student Representative Massoni-Nesman reported the week of April 8th will be *Kindness Week* at WRHS, sponsored by the Student Council. She also reported year-long Honors Science Projects are currently being turned in, and that spring break is fast approaching. Superintendent McCall took the opportunity to speak about his meeting at the high school on April 1st, noting how impressive the student activism piece of the proposal (composting) is. Superintendent McCall did comment that there are logistical issues that will need to be addressed in order to implement composting at the high school.

7:27 PM Student Representative Ferdinand left the meeting.

IV. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent McCall began by reporting the search for the next Administrator of Special Education will be reopened, with the intension of re-posting the position on April 9, 2019. When asked, Superintendent McCall reported he is hopeful the appointment of the Administrator of Special Education can be made before the end of the school year. Brief discussion about this position and the search ensued.

Superintendent McCall called members' attention to the online evaluation tool to be used for his annual evaluation, which he projected on the screen and walked through the various component of the evaluation tool. Member Lavoie, who is Chair of the Superintendent's Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee, added his comments about this year's evaluation process, and provided members with the timeline to complete this process. Member Lavoie reported on Superintendent McCall will share, electronically, his evaluation narrative with all School Committee members on April 12, 2019, and Member Lavoie asked members to complete their evaluation of the Superintendent by Monday, April 22, 2019. He explained the Superintendent's Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee will be meeting on April 25, 2019 to pull together a composite evaluation, which Chair Mills will use to prepare the Superintendent's 2018-2019 annual evaluation, which the full Committee will act on at the April 29, 2019 regular School Committee meeting. Due to the upcoming school vacation week, Member Dennis asked if the due date for evaluation input submissions could be extended, to which Subcommittee Chair Lavoie agreed and extended the due date for members' feedback to end of the day Tuesday, April 23, 2019. Some additional discussion took place, with some questions asked about the online tool and the evaluation process.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Superintendent McCall took the opportunity to speak about school choice, providing a brief history of this district's past participation in school choice. He explained the reasoning behind his recommendation the Committee vote to not participate in school choice for the coming school year, which is due to class sizes in some of the schools/in some classrooms and current and projected enrollment numbers. Discussion ensued, with several questions asked and answered. Several members, plus Student Representative Massoni-Nesman, participated in the discussion.

7:48 PM Student Representative Massoni-Nesman left the meeting.

Consideration about school choice continued.

7:56 PM Member Godbout left the table.

Member Michalowski requested information about why Wachusett residents choice out of this district.

7:58 PM Member Godbout returned to the table.

Final comments were made before the motion about school choice was brought before the Committee.

1. Motion: The Wachusett Regional School District will not participate in the school choice program for the 2019-2020 school year, and the Superintendent is directed to notify the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, Office of School Finance that this district will not be accepting school choice students for the 2019-2020 school year.

(A. Young)

(T. Curran)

Vote:

In favor:

Christina Smith
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Michael Dennis
Rachel Dolan
Stephen Godbout
Maleah Gustafson
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Asima Silva
Adam Young

Opposed:

Anthony DiFonso

The motion passed 12-1.

2. Motion: To authorize the transfer of \$1,964.48 from the Salaries, Substitutes & Stipend Appropriation to the Student Services Appropriation for the purchase of athletic supplies.
(A. Young)
(A. DiFonso)

Vote:

In favor:

Christina Smith
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Michael Dennis
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Stephen Godbout
Maleah Gustafson
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Asima Silva
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Motion: To authorize the Director of Business and Finance to transfer \$20,000 from the Salaries and Stipends Appropriation to the Special Education Tuitions Appropriation.
(L. Long-Bellil)
(T. Curran)

Vote:

In favor:

Christina Smith
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Michael Dennis
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Stephen Godbout
Maleah Gustafson
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Asima Silva
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the Committee.

VI. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of #1324 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on March 25, 2019

Motion: To approve minutes of the regular meeting of the WRSDC held on March 25, 2019.
(A. Young)
(A. DiFonso)

Vote:

In favor:

Christina Smith
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Stephen Godbout
Maleah Gustafson

Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Asima Silva
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Michael Dennis

The minutes were approved 12-0-1.

VII. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Vice-chair Smith reminded the Committee that if there were questions regarding the Director of Business and Finance's report that Members should contact the Superintendent; if there were questions regarding the Treasurer's Report, Members should contact the Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair.

VIII. Committee Reports

- A. Management Subcommittee (K. Mills, Chair, C. Smith, Vice-chair, S. Brown, T. Curran, M. Dennis, R. Imber, M. Lavoie)

Vice-chair Smith reported this subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting.

- B. Education Subcommittee (R. Imber, Chair, C. Smith, Vice-chair, A. DiFonso, R. Dolan, S. LaMountain, L. Long-Bellil, A. Silva)

Vice-chair Smith reported this subcommittee met immediately before this meeting, and will meet next at 6:30 PM on Monday, April 22, 2019, at the Central Office.

Motion: To approve the second reading of Draft Policy 6123 *Policy Relating to Pupil Services Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care*, waiving the reading.

(C. Smith)
(A. Young)

Vote:

In favor:

Christina Smith
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Michael Dennis
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan

Stephen Godbout
Maleah Gustafson
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Asima Silva
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion was unanimously approved.

- C. Business/Finance Subcommittee (M. Dennis, Chair, B. Mitchel, Vice-chair, M. Gustafson, M. Lavoie, L. Long-Bellil, A. Young)

Subcommittee Chair Dennis reported on the April 1, 2019 meeting of this subcommittee, and announced it is yet to be determined if the meeting scheduled for April 22, 2019 will be held, based on subcommittee member availability.

- D. Legal Affairs Subcommittee (S. Brown, Chair, R. Imber, Vice-chair, S. Godbout, A. Michalowski, M. Rivers)

Subcommittee Chair Brown reported on the April 2, 2019 meeting of this subcommittee. He announced the full School Committee would not adjourn to executive session this date, but will on April 29, 2019, when the full Committee will be brought up to date on contract negotiations with the clerical, custodial, and food service bargaining units.

- E. Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee (M. Lavoie, Chair, A. Michalowski, Vice-chair, K. Mills, M. Weeks)

Subcommittee Chair Lavoie did not have any additional report to make, in light of the earlier discussion about the Superintendent's annual evaluation process.

- F. Facilities and Security Subcommittee (T. Curran, Chair, M. Rivers, Vice-chair, A. Young)

Subcommittee Chair Curran reported this subcommittee will meet next on April 24, 2019.

- G. Audit Advisory Board (B. Mitchel, Chair)

AAB Chair Mitchel reported this Board will meet on April 10, 2019. District auditors will be present at the meeting to review the draft FY18 audit and to answer questions AAB members may have.

- H. Ad Hoc Subcommittees

- I. Building Committees

I. Mountview Building Committee

No report was made.

J. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (M. Lavoie), Chocksett Middle School (S. Godbout), Davis Hill Elementary School (S. Brown), Dawson Elementary School (A. Young), Glenwood Elementary School (A. DiFonso), Houghton Elementary School (S. Godbout), Mayo Elementary School (T. Curran), Mountview Middle School (K. Mills), Naquag Elementary School, Paxton Center School (B. Mitchel), Thomas Prince School (A. Silva), Wachusett Regional High School (A. Michalowski/C. Smith), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (M. Gustafson), Early Childhood Center

Member Michalowski – WRHS

Member Gustafson – SEPAC

Member Silva – Thomas Prince School

IX. Public Hearing

Heidi Lahey, WREA President, read a prepared statement (attachment 2).

X. New Business

There was no new business brought before the School Committee.

XI. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(T. Curran)

(S. Brown)

Vote:

In favor:

Christina Smith
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Michael Dennis
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Stephen Godbout
Maleah Gustafson
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Asima Silva

Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Sign-in sheets
- Attachment 2 – Heidi Lahey Public Address

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting
Monday, April 8, 2019

THIS ATTENDANCE SHEET IS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT WISH TO SPEAK BUT WHO WISH TO BECOME PART OF THE PUBLIC RECORD.

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND YOUR TOWN

NAME	TOWN
Linda Woodland	Sterling

Good Evening,

Heidi Lahey, 166 Bullard St Holden MA President WREA.

Although it seems certain that some version of public education funding will get passed on Beacon Hill, all the bills are not created equal. Even more disturbing, there are certain groups seeking to insert a state presence on school committees in exchange for adequate funding. On Sunday March 31, there was an opinion piece published in the Worcester Telegram that I would like to bring to the attention of this body written by ***Charles Chieppo is a senior fellow and Jamie Gass directs the Center for School Reform at Pioneer Institute, a Boston-based think tank.***

“But if taxpayers are to provide the additional funding, it is equally appropriate to take steps to increase the probability that they receive value for their investment.

One way to increase the chances that taxpayers will see a return on their new investment would be to allow the Commonwealth to appoint local school committee members commensurate with the portion of school district funding it provides.

For example, if the state provides 85 percent of the funding in a district with seven school committee seats, it should also appoint six school committee members.”

The concept that local school committees need state appointed members to insure that taxpayer money is properly spent is insulting at best. I hope that the Mass Association of School Committees makes an official response to this idea as interfering, insulting and anti-democratic.

This Thursday April 11 from 6:00-7:30 pm, the Wachusett community including teachers, staff, students, parents, town officials and residents are invited to a Fund Our Future forum with our state legislators Senators Chandler, Gobi, Representative Ferguson, and special guest Senator Jason Lewis on the topic of public education funding.

Updating Public Education funding is among the highest priorities on Beacon Hill this spring. The public hearing at the State House before the Joint Committee on Education March 22 boasted an overflow crowd and a diverse list of speakers who testified from across the state on the needs for adequate funding.

Our story as a regional is unique. We need to describe the challenges caused by the unpredictable nature of the appropriations for regional transportation and circuit breaker combined with a very tight budget.

I invite all those who have a wish for restoring lost services such as librarians in our K-8 schools, a story to tell about unmet needs of our current students, or a vision for what our schools could be if we had greater resources to PLEASE come and participate on Thursday night. Thank you.