



Winchendon Public Schools

Date Approved/Released: 12/20/22

Date Approved/Hold:

School Committee Chair:

School Committee Meeting

November 17, 2022 - 6:00 pm

Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium

Attendance:

Ryan Forsythe, Chair; Greg Vine, Vice Chair; Larry Murphy; Alica Jordan; Thad King, Superintendent

1. Call to order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

R. Forsythe reads audio visual disclosure.

3. Public Comment: None

4. Consent Agenda:

a. Minutes:

R. Forsythe introduces the Consent Agenda. L. Murphy moves to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by G. Vine. Vote is unanimous.

5. Superintendent's Report:

a. District Leadership Team Update:

T. King introduces Nicole Heroux, Director of Pupil Services, who gives brief presentation on the district's new partnership with CareSolace in response to Winchendon students', families' and staff members' difficulties in finding support for their social emotional needs. CareSolace aids those groups in finding suitable mental health assistance based on their individual needs within 48 hours. Additionally, CareSolace offers a program that offers anonymous support to families 24/7. Mrs. Heroux shares quotes from Winchendon families who have used CareSolace, expressing their gratitude and satisfaction with the program. Discussion is had regarding the number of staff and families who have used the program and whether other districts are encountering similar mental health situations. G. Vine asks what the risk of exposure is to the district if something goes wrong with the outside providers. T. King states that the process is not new, but the approach is what is new. The relationship is established between the family and the provider, taking the district out of it. Mrs. Heroux adds that the district also has mental health providers who come in from Heywood Health.

b. Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation Grant Update:

T. King gives an update on the grant request which was recently submitted to the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation, in collaboration with the town manager's office. The plan for this next year is to remove the traditional components that the district has used the Robinson-Broadhurst funds for, such as the Chromebook initiative, which allows every student in the district to be assigned a Chromebook. This initiative will be moved to the general budget, and the Robinson-Broadhurst funds will be reserved for the High School Dual Enrollment Project, as well as an Enrichment Initiative for Grades 3-8, which is important in an impoverished community where it is often difficult for families to travel to places outside of the immediate area.

c. Ipad/Tablet Update:

T. King discusses the committee's request to be provided with tablets to use for school committee meetings. The district is making an effort to purchase those tablets, which will give the committee access to a Google drive, agendas and other electronic documents.

6. Subcommittee Reports:

R. Forsythe introduces this new standing agenda item that will allow each subcommittee the opportunity to give updates and reports regarding their work. He asks for any subcommittees that have updates to communicate those in advance so they can be added to future agendas.

7. New Business: None

8. Old Business: None

9. Future Agenda Items:

- a. ELA Curriculum Update
- b. Graduation Discussion

10. Closing Comments:

L. Murphy thanks Mrs. Heroux for her presentation and he is pleased to see the district placing such importance on social emotional learning.

G. Vine echoes those sentiments. He also thanks the volunteers who worked on election day.

A. Jordan states she is happy to hear what the district is offering in terms of mental health. She feels it is long overdue. She is also pleased to hear that students, regardless of their socio-economic background, will have access to the trips and enrichment programs the district is planning to offer.

R. Forsythe states that he is thrilled to have heard the presentation on the CareSolace program. He is also excited about the enrichment and experiential learning opportunities that the Robinson-Broadhurst funds may bring to the district.

11. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by G. Vine. Seconded by L. Murphy. Vote is unanimous. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted: Liz Latoria
Liz Latoria, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Documents Attached: None