



Winchendon Public Schools

Date Approved/Revised

Dec 19, 2024

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School Committee Chair

Ken

School Committee Meeting

November 21, 2024 – 6:00 pm
2nd Floor - Town Hall Auditorium

Attendance:

D. Iannacone, J. Caitlin, Mike Barbaro, E. Marinelli, Marc Gosselin, Interim Superintendent, Liz Latoria, Business Manager

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Audio Disclosure:
4. Student Report: Friday, November 15th, 6 members of the National Honor Society attended the fall conference. Presented student workshops on wreaths across America and will be participating the wreath laying at the veterans Memorial on Friday, December 13th. Cheer team had four competitions in last few weeks, resulted in three first places, winning regionals and states.
5. MASC – Superintendent Search Update: Tracy Novick – All applications closed on the first and all applications were shared with the search committee. Received six applications. Search committee met November 4th to discuss the questions they would put forward in the interview and went into executive session which they deliberated and selected the people forward for semifinalist's interviews. Those interviews were done on Tuesday, November 12th and Wednesday, November 13th. Then the search committee deliberated the choices and put forward the following three finalists: Dr. Greg Rosenthal, Dr. Mark McLaughlin, and Dr. Marc Gosselin. Next steps are to have each member of the school committee to email Tracy on their availability during the school day, the week after Thanksgiving to visit the home districts of each of the finalists including Dr. Gosselin. Each finalist will spend a day in the district including Dr. Gosselin. The school committee needs to decide if they will have each finalist come in for a day and interview them that evening or each finalist come in a separate day and then interview all the same evening one after another. Suggestion from Tracy to not only have each finalist meet with the admin of each building, central office but to the members of the public be able to meet each candidate.

D. Iannacone – Will we receive a copy of the rubric that was used by the search committee?

T. Novick – You can if you would like, but it's putting your job description and putting it into a rubric.

D. Iannacone – Is there a way to arrange meet and greets with students during school time. Maybe an assembly where they can ask questions to each of the finalists?

T. Novick – I have seen things happen in the past where they had them eat in the school cafeteria or seen them meet with the student council. Willing to work with us on that.

Student – Search committee rep – Recommends meeting where kids like to go example the gym or during lunchtime.

M. Barbaro – Thank you for coming, my available would-be December 5th.

J. Caitlin – How many to you recommend to be at a visit?

T. Novick – With a committee of five I would recommend no ore than two.
Will email the school committee tonight or tomorrow.

6. Public Comment:

Resident – Reviewed multiple times of the October 3, 2024 school committee meeting where Dr. Landman presented his annual report. Quoted some information that was shared during the presentation and also reshared that data that was presented during the presentation. What concerns this resident more is the districts accountability numbers because it is showing them that as a district there is something inherently broken. Shares the data on this. Mentions that if they were a business person and this was an employee review that they would have concern of the employment of that person. But would want to give them the opportunity to turn it around. Urges the committee to bring in an outside consultant and do an full forensic audit of the entire district. E. Marinelli – me being someone who works in a school, turnover is not something you want to hear, especially from leadership. Hopefully we have found a school leadership that is willing to be committed to our district and our students.

7. Consent Agenda:

- a. **Minutes** – M. Barbaro approve the minutes from October 3, 2024. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is unanimous.
- b. **High School Field Trip to FPU, Rindge NH** – Vote – M. Barbaro moves to approve the High School field trip to Rindge, NH as presented. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is Unanimous.

8. Superintendent's Report:

- a. **Interim Superintendent's Update: Dr. Gosselin**, Interim Superintendent - Fall sports coming to an end. Discuss each team.
We have been engaged in a practice this year called instructional rounds with the leadership team. We go once a month to each building and meet with the principals and go into classrooms and we do observations and then have a discussion on what we saw, areas of growth and that's reported back to the teachers.

Went to Boston last week and meet members from the BARR Foundation. Focus is principal's capacity, particular to bring important initiatives to scale that will support learning and social learning.

Update from the conversation with DESE. They are allowing s to change our focus from math to supporting a goal around ELA.

Putting together our Robinson Broadhurst Foundation request for the year. Ideas people have come up with asking for support for our dual enrollment program, for investment in fitness equipment for the middle and high school to support athletics, request for our greenhouse project, business program at the middle school, graphic design lab, drone course taught at the middle school, also have request for field trips, possibly the DC field trip, Boston trip for grade 7, Hanover theater trip for grade 6 and 5, 4, 3, and natures classroom, Freedom Trail trip, Southwick Zoo for grade 1, Boston Aquarium trip K -2. Request to support Harvard Model Congress Youth Global Leadership Program.

- b. **Budget Update: Liz Latoria, Business Manager** -

Review on the budget that was given the packets. Our FY25 Title, IDEA, targeted assistant for Toy Town grants were approved. We had some carry over totals from FY24 J. Caitlin – One of the things that came up in the audit was grant tracking. How are we managing that?

Liz had to provide evidence that I've implement the things that we said we were going to do in our corrective action plan. We've implemented several processes to ensure that our time and efforts certifications are done each month the grant salaries that are paid out of federal grant funds that are documented in a template that DESE has available. The periods of performance for the grants, using a grants template where we can reconcile all funding. Also schedule weekly time to go I and enter those expenses into the spreadsheet.

M. Barbaro – looking at the carryovers, seems we are in decent shape at this point. Next, Year to Date expenses. For FY26 budget, is a bit of uncertainty where we are going to end up due to the staffing challenges we've been had. With the unfilled positions in FY25 may reflect in a higher base salary change for FY26. The unfilled positions will result in higher substitute costs.

Accounting of the Rural Aid, School Choice and Circuit Breaker funds to offset the FY25 budget shortage. Implemented the plan by using the rural aid carryover funds, which we received written permission for DESE to use to offset the FY25 shortage. This is currently being used for building maintenance and HVAC expenses. School Choice tuitions are being used for the Murdock Middle High School building heating fuel. Estimated circuit breaker funds at \$600,000 when the FY25 budget was created, but based on our first quarter receipt the district anticipates a total of 667,313 for the fiscal year. Funds are currently being used for special education tuitions. Special Education cost projections are able to offset with the FY24 IDEA grants as well as the circuit breaker reimbursement.

Overview for revolving funds. (Unofficial numbers)

9. New Business:

- a. **MASC/Mass Conference Discussion** D. Iannacone suggest motion to table 9a to the first week of December. M. Barbaro - so moved. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is unanimous.
- b. **Special Education Transportation Contract –**

L. Latoria – contract was up for renewal and research the surrounding area. Van Pool is the primary vendor in our area and reasonable priced. Recommendation is to sign with them for another 3 years with optional of years 4 & 5. This will align with the regular transportation contract which will be up for bid in the next few months.

J. Caitlin motions to approve the special education transportation contract as presented. Second by M. Barbaro. Vote is unanimous.

- c. **Project Bread Breakfast After the Bell Grant Acceptance –** Notified this week that the district was approve the project bread breakfast after the bell grant in the amount of \$3000. Plan for the funds will include the creation of a breakfast cart, or repair of a breakfast cart that already exist at Memorial. Allows all students to a healthy morning meal no matter what time they arrive at school.

M. Barbaro motions to approve the Project Bread Breakfast After the Bell Grant Acceptance as presented. Second by J. Caitlin.

J. Caitlin – Health morning meal any idea what will be provided to students as a healthy morning meal?

L. Latoria – there will be more options available. Will find out for sure what is going to be offered.

D. Iannacone – we have a motion, all in favor? Vote is unanimous.

- d. **Massachusetts Cultural Council Creative Projects for Schools Grant Acceptance –** Ms. Manion our music teacher at Murdock High School applied and approve for the Creative project for schools grant from the Mass Cultural Council in the amount of \$5000. Grant is intended to support a high school arts night which will be held on the evening of the spring concert – Will get the date for this for the next meeting – it will include a gallery walkthrough of student art displays, a fundraiser with desserts with the friends of Music Booster Club, and a collaborative concert with the Winchendon and Winds group. Also, a plan for a short-term artist and musician residency from January – May to work with students in the art music classes.

M. Barbaro motions to approve the Massachusetts cultural Council Creative Projects for Schools Grant as presented. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is unanimous.

- e. **Community Foundation of North central Massachusetts Community Enrichment Grant –** Mrs. Forsyth, Principal of Toy Town in collaboration with some teachers within the same building received a community enrichment grant from the Community

Foundation North Central Mass in the amount of \$6, 645 to support an author's night to celebrate literacy, arts, culture, and community connections. Hope for to have Nora Dooley author of Multicultural books to come for a day and a night event where she would speak to the students during the day and then have an evening event for families where we will do literacy stations and multicultural food and music.

M. Barbaro move to approve the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts Community Enrichment Grant as presented. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is unanimous.

f. Subcommittee Reports

i. **HEAL Partnership** – D. Iannacone attend the breakfast on November 12th. Couple things to report the YMCA playground ribbon cutting ceremony was held and the playground is up and running. The HubSoft opening schedule for December 6th. The Beals Memorial Library received the first in the state certification as an autism welcoming organization. Suggestions were made to create a town app to push notifications appointing a youth member of to the town of communications committee and updating the town website.

ii. **Other** – None

10. Old Business: None

11. Future Agenda Items:

a. **Regionalization**

b. **Organizational Meeting** – was suppose to be help tonight, we've postponed due to the official chair not able to make tonight's meeting.

M. Barbaro – mentions that the K. Kast the chair would like to have a meeting on December 1st to over the superintendent finalists

L. Latoria – mentions that it may be the first meeting in December. December 1st is a Sunday.

M. Barbaro – December 5th would be the reg schedule meeting.

12. Closing Member Comments:

M. Barbaro – Stabilization, continuity in the district. One of the things that I think we are proud of is that the fact the L. Latoria has come up the ranks and through all the turmoil here has stayed and moved up. We are noticing and I hope everyone else is noticing the changes that you have made. Says thank you to Liz, and glad she's staying and sticking it out. Congratulates Cheerleaders.

J. Caitlin – Good luck to the Cheerleaders. Discusses the grants.

E. Marinelli – Didn't want to repeat everything everyone just said. Just thankful and grateful. Student rep – Cheer Competition is this Sunday at Worcester State.

D. Iannacone. – thank you to team at central office. Thank you to the people of Winchendon and the community. Thanks, the student and their families.

13. Adjournment:

J. Caitlin motions to adjourn. Second by M. Barbaro. Vote is unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted:


Darcie Morin, Payroll & HR Generalist

Documents Attached: None