



Winchendon Public Schools

Date Approved/Released: 12/9/2021

Date Approved/Hold: _____

School Committee Chair: L. Murphy

School Committee Meeting

November 4, 2021 - 6:00 pm

2nd Floor - Town Hall Auditorium

1. Call to order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance:

Larry Murphy, Chair; Ryan Forsythe; Greg Vine; Thad King, Interim Superintendent

L. Murphy reads audio visual disclosure.

3. Public Comment: None.

4. Student Representative Report

Student Representative from Murdock High School provides update on recent events, including sporting events, the middle school and varsity cheer teams, student council and the bottle and can drive.

5. Consent Agenda:

L. Murphy introduces Consent Agenda.

R. Forsythe makes Motion to accept the minutes as presented. Seconded by G. Vine. No discussion. Vote is unanimous.

6. Superintendent's Report

a. COVID Update:

T. King gives update on COVID in Winchendon Public Schools. The mask mandate from DESE was extended through January 15. Winchendon has a 4.86% positive test rate, which is one percent more than last week. The state level is currently down to 1.7%. Pfizer recently approved the vaccine for children five and up, and WPS is currently working with Heywood Hospital to establish a vaccine

clinic. Since the interest for children twelve and up was low, the district will put out a survey to determine the level of interest for ages five and up. Children ages 12 and up, who wished to get the vaccine would be welcome at this clinic.

R. Forsythe asked about the guidance from DESE on how to measure the number of vaccinated individuals in schools to determine eligibility for the mask waiver.

T. King replies that guidance is still relatively open ended, stating that schools should document their own student population to determine percentages, but he states that WPS would be looking at vaccination cards to keep confidentially in students' health records.

b. Budget Update:

T. King provides information on the year-to-date budget for the district, noting that the Murdock High School Athletic Supplies line has encumbered a significant amount of money, which is a holdover from the previous year until town projects are completed. He also points out that salary lines are examined to see the percentage that has been spent for the year, as they should be between 15-25% based on the salary scale and time of year the budget is being examined.

c. Memorial School Leadership Update:

T. King introduces new Memorial School principal, Mrs. Chante Jillson.

Mrs. Jillson introduces herself and gives her background. She states that she would like to address the social emotional needs of the students and staff at Memorial.

d. District Improvement Plan:

T. King introduces the district improvement plan, which is described as a living document which will continue to evolve as goals are met over the school year. With a desire to be very responsive to the needs of the district, the timeline of the district improvement plan examines different audits and reviews over the next three years.

L. Murphy states that since the document presented tonight is a draft, the committee will wait until the December meeting to vote on accepting the district improvement plan. T. King continues with the presentation of the district improvement plan, describing the turnaround practice which is planned for the district, as well as the policies and procedures and the work that the DLT is currently working on.

Mr. Jonathan Landman discusses the content and curriculum at each grade level, which has been disrupted with the pandemic, causing the district to go back and ensure that students are receiving the foundations that are needed. G. Vine discusses the literacy improvement plan and strategies to adjust to the challenges that come at each grade level.

T. King states that some of the WPS principals created a space at each of the schools that is accessible to all families to provide information about specific services and support and non-academic needs. T. King finishes by stating that the plan is really reflective of the team that exists at WPS, that the leadership is part of driving the district improvement.

7. New Business:

a. Substitute Pay:

T. King brings forward the issue of substitute pay in WPS. Filling vacancies is a major issue in our district, and in response to that, Mr. King examined the sub pay in surrounding districts, finding that our rate of pay was lower than most of the other districts. He makes the following recommendations:

- i. Short term sub pay without bachelor's degree: \$100/day
- ii. Short term sub pay with bachelor's degree: \$125/day
- iii. Get rid of the 21 day requirement for subs to receive long term sub pay.
- iv. Long term sub pay: \$200/day
- v. Long term sub pay with teacher's license: \$270/day
- vi. Nurse substitutes: \$200/day

L. Murphy asks for motion. G. Vine makes motion to approve the schedule of pay for substitutes for the remainder of the fiscal year as presented b the superintendent. Seconded by R. Forsythe. Vote is unanimous.

8. Old Business:

a. Staff Vaccination Discussion:

G. Vine discusses the possibility of requiring vaccines for staff at WPS. Request is made for the superintendent to investigate the legal process of mandating vaccines for staff.

T. King explains the survey that was sent out to WPS employees asking whether they were vaccinated or if they planned to be vaccinated, and approximately 93% of respondents are vaccinated.

Stephanie Rondeau, president of the Winchendon Teachers' Association, discusses mandating teacher vaccinations and asks the committee to discuss whether or not to require student vaccinations as well.

b. Sizer Charter School Update:

R. Forsythe moves to table Sizer Charter School Update. Seconded by L. Murphy. Vote is unanimous.

9. Future Agenda Items:

L. Murphy asks that school improvement plans be placed on the list of future agenda items. T. King replies that the principals are preparing to present their plans.

10. School Committee Closing Comments:

R. Forsythe remarks that the Winchendon Support Personnel Association's contract expires at the end of this fiscal year, and the contract negotiations will begin this month. A date to begin is forthcoming.

L. Murphy remarks that he and G. Vine will begin with WTA negotiations in January.

11. Adjournment:

L. Murphy makes Motion to adjourn. Seconded by R. Forsythe. Vote is unanimous. Meeting is adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:



Liz Latoria, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Documents Attached: None