

**WATERTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WATERTOWN, MA**

**RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
149 MAIN STREET**

**MONDAY
MAY 7, 2018
7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

I. Roll Call

The School Committee Chairman, Mr. John Portz, called to order the May 7, 2018 meeting of the School Committee at 7:00 PM. Present were School Committee members Ms. Kendra Foley, Ms. Eileen Hsü-Balzer, Mr. Mark Sideris, Ms. Amy Donohue, Ms. Lily Rayman-Read, and Ms. Lindsay Mosca. Also present were Superintendent Dr. Deanne Galdston, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning Dr. Theresa B. McGuinness, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations Ms. Mary C. DeLai, Director of Human Resources Mr. Craig Hardimon, Director of Student Services Ms. Kathleen Desmarais, and various members of the public.

II. High School Student Advisors

The high school advisors, Emily Koufous and Lauren Petrillo, provided an overview of events at the high school. The advisors spoke of AP exams, senior events and the Oscars, a new event at the high school. They also described how they will select their replacements for next year. Various School Committee members thanked the advisors for their presentation.

III. Introductions: Mr. Ryan Murphy, Athletic Director

Dr. Galdston introduced Mr. Murphy, the newly appointed Athletic Director, to the School Committee. Mr. Murphy is currently the Athletic Director at Pope John in Everett and previously served in the same role at St. Clements. Mr. Murphy thanked the School Committee for giving him the opportunity to be the next Athletic Director.

IV. Public Forum – Session I

No one spoke in the Public Forum.

V. Teaching and Learning Showcase

A. Social-Emotional Learning: Team Process and Curriculum Implementation

Dr. McGuinness outlined the process that was utilized to select the elementary social/emotional learning curriculum, Responsive Classroom, which will be implemented next year. She was joined by Lowell teacher Emily Walsh and Cunniff teacher Lauren Kale, who detailed the Responsive Classroom Framework, professional development plan and implementation timeline. A School Committee member asked how long the training would be and how each teacher would be trained. Dr. McGuinness spoke of the four day training, the kickoff during the August PD days, and the ongoing support throughout the year. Another School Committee member asked about the plan for the middle school, and Dr. McGuinness indicated that a middle school team will be formed next year to determine the middle school curriculum next year for implementation in the 2019/2020 school year.

VI. Presentations and Discussions

A. Wayside Multi-Service Center – Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Two representatives from the Wayside Multi-Service Center, Anne Wong and Stephanie Sunderland along with Joe Lampman, Coordinator of Health, Physical Education and Wellness, presented the findings from the 2017 administration of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). In attendance were two WHS students who serve on the Youth Coalition who described their work and why it is important to them and to the community. The data from the YRBS indicated a downward trend in many of the categories of substance use, but there is still much work to go. Rates of teen depression and suicidality were of concern. Rates of bullying were down, and the percentages of students who report bullying to an adult were up. A School Committee member asked whether the data were valid and reliable now that the students have taken the survey multiple times. The presenters indicated that there are multiple methods for removing outliers from the survey in order to get reliable data. She also said that in speaking with high school students after the survey, they indicated that they were truthful on the survey. A School Committee member wanted to point out that depression takes on many forms, and that sometimes students might not even know they are depressed.

B. High School Robotics Team

The High School Robotics Team, QWARQS, presented about their FIRST robotics competition this past spring. They described the task of the competition and the process that they went through to build the robot. They also spoke about why they enjoyed being part of the Robotics team. A School Committee member asked the students to explain what they learned from being on the team. Their responses indicated that they are learning engineering, being part of a team, and learning about future professions.

VII. Action Items and Related Reports – Discussion and Vote

A. Approval of Gifts

- \$200.00 from WPI to WPS for payment for substitute teachers for two teachers to attend PLTW Conference 4/13/18
- \$5,000.00 from Nordblom Family Foundation c/o Parent-Child Home Program Inc. (National Body) to Parent-Child Home Program to serve two additional families in 2018
- \$1,000.00 from Peros-Peros Associates for the Peros Scholarship
- \$150.70 from Karen Schwartz, Ph.D. to the Jessica Craig Memorial Scholarship Fund
- \$25.00 from Rachel A. Kell for the WHS Robotics Team
- \$1,000.00 from Watertown Democratic Town Committee for the Grade 8 Washington DC trip
- \$100.00 from Miller/Tracy Children's Foundation for ISP NH Mountain Class Trip

A motion was made by Mr. Sideris to approve these gifts and the motion was seconded.
Motion passed 6-0.

B. Approval of Minutes

1. **April 6, 2017 School Committee Meeting minutes:** a motion was made Mr. Sideris to approve these minutes and seconded by Ms. Rayman-Read. *Motion passed 6-0.*

C. Approval of Overnight Field Trip

Mr. Dan Wulf requested approval for what would be the 11th trek to NYC with the WPS chorus, band, string orchestra, and Watertones a cappella group. The trip will take place on April 5th-7th 2019 and participants will experience a Broadway show, a dinner cruise, a visit to MoMA, and other site-seeing adventures. The cost per students is approximately \$660 and includes everything but meals. Fundraising efforts will help to bring down some of the costs.

A motion was made by Mr. Sideris to approve this overnight field trip to NYC and the motion was seconded by Ms. Rayman-Read. *Motion passed 6-0.*

D. Award of School Bus Transportation Contract

Ms. Mary DeLai reminded participants that the current 3-year transportation contract with Local Motion, Inc. will expire on June 30, 2018. Bids for a new vendor/contract were solicited and two firms responded, the incumbent Local Motion, Inc. and Eastern Bus Company. Local Motion, Inc. offered the lowest, most responsible bid despite a 10% increase in per bus per day expenses. The recommendation is to award Local Motion, Inc. with a 5-year contract for WPS transportation services. One committee member asked for clarification on the flexibility of a 5-year contract. Ms. DeLai explained that the contract keeps the district committed to the provider itself. We can change all terms as needed, and this contract does allow the district flexibility. Once this contract is awarded, further work will be done to determine the district's transportation needs and a list of final routes and stops will be delivered by the beginning of August.

A motion was made by Mr. Sideris to approve a 5-year transportation contract with Local Motion, Inc. and the motion was seconded by Ms. Rayman-Read. *Motion passed 6-0.*

VIII. Reports

A. WPS Projects and Activities

1. Building for the Future

a. Elementary Project

The School Building Committee met last week and talked a lot about costs. The architect, AI3, provided information and identified multiple options with preliminary cost estimates. The current challenge for the Building Committee is to determine what is most important and needed in the district within the financial parameters. The next Building Committee meeting is scheduled for May 16, and there will be another in early June. School Committee members stressed the importance of frequently circling back to remind ourselves that we are here to create spaces that the students and community are proud to learn in.

b. High School Project

Dr. Galdston reported that we are officially in the eligibility process for the high school project. The first deliverable on initial compliance certification has been met, and the next is to finalize the members of the building committee. Dr. Galdston hopes to be done with the eligibility process by the fall and described a variety of future deadlines which will be important. The Superintendent and the Central Office were commended for their work thus far on this project, and for the well-organized execution of such.

2. Strategy Development Team

Dr. Galdston reported that the Strategy Development Team has done a lot of work and will be able to publish draft versions of the WPS mission, core values and vision soon. The current draft of the WPS mission is as follows: *“Watertown Public Schools prepare students for life by engaging them in challenging and meaningful education within an inclusive, diverse community, investing in their futures.”* Dr. Galdston said that the vision statement is not complete yet, but will include language that WPS provides all students with as many opportunities as possible to benefit them and their future. Meetings are deep, challenging and productive. Dr. Galdston has invited many constituents to help cultivate the best possible strategy for improvement.

3. Proposed Summer Meeting Schedule

A proposed schedule was distributed earlier for consideration by the Chairman. One change has been made to reschedule one meeting which fell on a religious holiday. Some of the important dates and deadlines were reviewed. Ms. Eileen Hsi-Balzer asked any members of the Policy Subcommittee to let her know if they will be unavailable during those scheduled meetings. The schedule was agreed upon.

B. Monthly Updates

- 1. FY18 Budget:** Ms. DeLai presented the FY18 budget status. She said the report showed that the district currently had an unencumbered balance of \$706,887 or 1.5% of the original adopted budget. She feels comfortable that there will be a positive balance at the end of the year.
- 2. Enrollment:** The Superintendent reported on student enrollment numbers across the District. The overall student enrollment had decreased by one student from the previous month; class sizes had remained largely steady. She is paying close attention to the kindergarten enrollment right now. Committee members would like more information on the turnover throughout the year, and whether or not a registration surge is to be expected over the summer.
- 3. Personnel:** Mr. Craig Hardimon, Director of Human Resources, presented a report on recent personnel changes and noted the district would be joining four upcoming job fairs.
- 4. Warrants:** The Chairman presented a report on warrants recently approved for payment.

IX. Public Forum – Session II

No one spoke in Public Forum.

X. Reports

A. School Committee Chair

The Chairman noted a School Committee retreat had been scheduled for May 10, 2018 from 6:00 to 9:00 PM at the Commander's Mansion. There will be an executive session at the beginning to discuss contracts, specifically the Director of Finance and Operations. The School Committee will make budget hearing presentation to the Town Council on May 29 at 6:00 PM.

B. Superintendents

In recognition of "Teacher Appreciation Week," the Superintendent wanted to recognize the hard work that is put in by all educators throughout the district. Dr. Kimo Carter has been appointed as the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning in Weston Public Schools. She thanked him for his 13 years of service and wish him the best in his future. The Superintendent's Coffee will happen on May 23 at 9:00 AM, 4:30 PM and 7:00 PM, and she hopes to use these events to solicit further feedback about the vision, mission and core values of WPS.

XI. Next Meetings

- School Committee Retreat on May 10, 2018
- School Committee Meeting on May 21, 2018

XII. New Business

No new business was discussed.

XIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Minutes submitted by Renee Ruggiero, Executive Assistant to the School Committee