



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS

We are the future.

Winooski School Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 15, 2020, 6:30pm
Virtual Meeting
Zoom Meeting Information: [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
ID: 91810688360
Join by Phone: **+1-312-626-6799**

All students will graduate from the Winooski School District (WSD) college and career ready at a cost supported by a majority of the Winooski community. WSD students will lead healthy, productive and successful lives and engage with their local and global community.

Attendance: Sean McMannon, Alex Yin, Tori Clelland, Mike Decarreau, Margaret Bass, Nicole Mace, Matthew O'Neil, Courtney Bryan, Lauren Berrizbeitia, Nancy Keller, Susmita Manger, Indra Acharya, Kari Bohlen, David Solomon, Jessica Perrotte, Krista Parisi, Corali Bisbee, Vijayta Dahal, Katherine Monje, Robin Hood, Emily Jacobs, Anna Steeley, Andrew Wild, Greg Roughton, Eh Luu, Nina Miller, Sara Raabe, Mohamed Diop, Wafia Raour, Matt Gile, Rainbow Chen, Lisa Goodrich, Mary Ann Debay, Damian Stoddard, Jason Ziter, Thomas Shearer, Kristin Kollgaard, Luke Dorfman, Mark Edstell, Heather Win, Kate Grogin, Graham Clark, Stephanie Siki, Helen Tosteson, Phil Bickel, Judith Atkins, Joshua Neilson, Hiba Laaroussi, Ethan Bakuli, Andrea Boon, Claude Mayo, Kayla Loving, Christine Longmore, Colin (RETN), Nellie Maley, Hussein Amuri, Jenn Schollmeyer, Mary Carleton, Tulasha Pradhan, Liz Curry, Lola Duffort, Meghan Downey, Alison Novak, Andy Blanchet, Kristine Lott, Kristin Vincent, Callie Reinker, Bill Clark, Brittany Langdon, Brian Dalla Mura, Sarah Forbes, Tim Rich, Abdikhafar Yussef, Theirry Mugabo W'Ishema Uwilingiyamana.

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Mindfulness: 6:36pm

2. Agenda Review and Adjustments:

*Tuition waiver request, Paul Julianna (Bond person)

3. Public Comments:

*Rainbow Chen - acknowledge black lives matters-community members who will speak. Hannah

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Little/Kaitlin Little - class of 2016: WSD lacked cultural classes and policies. At the end of my education, I didn't realize the cultural bias. WSD did not give me an education of becoming an anti-racist.

*Anna Steeley - many students transferred to Adult learning with low credits (young men of color). ELL students who enter high school with low english, should enter ELL services to allow them to graduate in 4 years. At adult learning, we have 3 teachers of color and WSD didn't hire their first teacher of color until 2 years ago.

*Helen Tosteson (IA in Middle school) - discipline is sorely lacking. WSD wants to be better and we need more resources.

*Susmita Manger - class of 2016-been in the US for 8 years. Took a college class (NVU) with race and racism. I struggled speaking english, and there is a lack of colored teachers within the district. There needs to be more teachers of color-it was hard to express myself.

*Indra Acharya - this meeting should have been all about restorative justice. When you ignore voices, it makes me cry. When told I had failed a class, I was told to go to the principal's office. I sent there 14 times ("do you want to talk about it?") Was told that if I didn't like the school, I was told to leave or take the GED. For 30 days, I went to the office and had my body searched. I was called a terrorist.

*Abdikhafar Yussef - Be comfortable by not being comfortable. Our soccer team was traveling to a local school and we were winning. A player from the other team said "you guys are just monkeys doing tricks with a ball." I had no reaction and didn't want to make a scene. It was difficult because they had comfort to make such a statement in front of their fans and teammates. People at Shaws would not go to my line due to the color of my skin. The day after the game, I was only comfortable talking with Indra. We became our own personal therapists. We need to have someone on staff of color who is trained to help. We need an updated curriculum to allow us to have a better understanding of our history.

*Yatrika - in response to Leon Wheeler's facebook post. The struggle is that no current students are speaking up. I was afraid to speak up due to being treated differently if this goes badly.

*Stephie Siki - There is only 1 colored teacher and only 1 student on the board. Why are statues and flags being removed in 2020?

*Evelyn Monje - some people do not know the real meaning of the "n" word. We need an updated curriculum to assist in the understanding of our history. I have been followed around in stores in Winooski. Why aren't black lives included in the curriculum if we have to study history? No one is being taught that their voices matter. We only have 1 colored teacher, and we need more of them. Read the demands of the students of racism.

*Hussein Amuri - I am very disappointed at how our school is dealing with racism. In 2017, during a soccer game, one student is called the “n” word. There was nothing done about it. There are a lot of things being said to students and there is nothing being done about the situation.

*Andy Siki - We don't have enough colored teachers. The sports comments are very disappointing and cannot even talk about it. We cannot just say sorry and move on. Unsportsmanlike conduct is unacceptable for all sports.

*Vijayata Dahal - I had a good experience due to being a quiet person who did not talk back to them. I followed the rules and should have spoken up more.

*Rainbow Chen - demands (there are 8 of them).

*Indra Acharya - this is not the first time the board has seen these demands and we really need to put these demands into action.

*Mike Decarreau - comment from Abdikhafar Yussef, “it's easy to say it's not my problem. We are committed to learning from each other. Winooski can be a source of light.” This can definitely happen to be able to work through these issues. How can we make sure these will stay in place for a long time. We need to try to find a solution; we have a timeline that will make sense. We need representation of staff, students and board members.

*Tori Cleiland - adults should move out of the way and let students lead. The process is what concerns me and who is in charge? In terms of power, who is co-running these committees? It is the time to do this now. Students need to be a part of the committees, and needs to be about the quality of voices. Who's involved and who's not involved.

*Matthew MacNeil - I appreciate being uncomfortable. I recognize these demands and they need time to get them done.

*Margaret Bass - I am not uncomfortable at all. At the very least, we need to respond with a timeline. Ethnic studies, we need specialists of ethnic studies. We need a meeting about these demands and give them a timeline.

*Alex Yin - One immediate action is to informally apologize to the students who have been mistreated at WSD. We need to move forward on these demands so the mistreatment stops for the students. Make sure we teach the community how to be a community. Language is important.

*Wafia Faour - school board has a responsibility to find a solution to these demands. “You don't' bring a fox to the hen house.”

*Alex Yin - we will schedule weekly meetings until we feel the students are accepting the demands. I will work every wednesday and in between to make this happen.

*Margaret Bass - hurry up and not wait in response to the students. We need to give them dates. We need to give ourselves a deadline for the student demands. When are we going to respond? "I wouldn't trust us."

*Tori Cleiland - it's time to get to work and understand what they can expect from us. Students need to be involved, but not doing all the work. We have to show up and do the work they are asking of us.

*Rainbow Chen - we need resources to help implement these demands.

*Hussein Amuri - I request a Black Lives Matter flag at our school. Some half days should include videos and presenters that give staff and students a better understanding of the movement. We want the flag to be raised for the entire school year, as well as 8th grade moving up ceremony and high school graduation. Timeline for the beginning of August (Saturday morning August 1, 2020). Switching the pledge of allegiance to something new.

***Approval by all (8 demands)**

*Looking for leaders and for a broad range of students. Students and Alumni should be compensated for their time.

***Approval by all (raising of Black Lives Matter flag and 3 half days of Personal Development)**

*Next monday July 21, 2020 the board will come together and discuss the demands and prepare for Wednesday's meeting July 22, 2020.

*We will have a meeting next Wednesday July 22, 2020.

4. Consent Agenda: (5 Minutes)

a. Minutes of Meetings:

"not phones" need to be changed to "phone system."

- i. Regular Meeting: June 10, 2020
- ii. Capital Project Executive Committee: June 10, 2020
- iii. Special Meeting: June 29, 2020

b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities

*USDA is prepared to provide full funding for the Capital Project at an interest rate of 2.25% over 30 years. USDA offered to do permanent funding for the project, and will come at the end of the project. Will need interim financing until the project is complete. Investment for the bond anticipation note; authorize loan resolution with USDA and commitment to extend money for the project. Approval with USDA-standard conditions

***Approval by all**

*Investment agreement for interim banking amount for 2 years

Approval by all

- i. Approval of Bills

- c. Policy Title: 2.6 Asset Protection
 - i. Capital Project Update
 - 1. Approval: Owner RFP for Onsite Geotechnical Supervision
- d. Policy Title 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
 - i. Superintendent Report
 - 1. COVID-19 Health Update

5. Executive Limitations (Policy Section II): (20 Minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
 - i. Discussion: Financial Implications of COVID-19

*Agency of Education coming out with clarifications

- b. Policy Title: 2.6 Asset Protection
 - i. Capital Project
 - 1. Approval: Bond Resolution and Certificate
 - 2. Approval: Loan Agreement
- c. Policy Title 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
 - i. Discussion: WSD Summer Programs and Fall Reopening Plan

*Thrive-has 2 classes of 12 students each (started July 6th)

*Have had 2 weeks of virtual summer school and will start in person summer school July 20th for 1st through 5th grade. The nurse will organize health procedures for the students. Social distancing can be hard but will try to have 6 feet distancing of each student.

*Re-opening-There are 3 teams and a draft for a district wide plan; will share district wide. Teachers and staff are communicating with each other. Health and safety are a priority; facilities representation, operations (transportation and food service, disinfecting and deep cleaning), and continuity of social and emotional learning. As of right now, we are focusing on hybrid models. How do we gradually bring small groups of students back into the building to assess students to know where they are? Possibly want to give families options for learning; alternative is to do home school plans to state. We want to serve our students the best we can do. We want 2 weeks of no new cases for in person instruction. We might push the start date back based on the virus. We ordered a lot of new devices in and IT will work on those. There will be some training for staff for remote learning. Teachers are having anxiety about going back to school.

- ii. Tuition request

*Parents of Hiba Laarousi are requesting a tuition waiver for moving to Burlington. Parents have concerns about starting the school year in a different school without relationships with peers and teachers.

Approval by all (tuition waiver)

6. Governance Processes (Policy Section IV): (60 Minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 4.1b Governing Style: Encouragement of a Diversity of Views
 - i. Discussion: Black Lives Matter Flag Petition
 - ii. Discussion: Review Board Annual Agenda Plan
 - iii. Discussion: Suspension/Expulsion data

*Data from the school district with suspension data to track which students are targeted and which are not targeted. Is there bias within the student population. There is some bias within the students who are being suspended; more in the JFK than MSHS. In terms of this, there is some bias. More males were suspended versus female students.

iv. Discussion: Antiracist Action Committees update

*Confirming Anti Racism will take primary responsibility for most of the board meetings.

1. Restorative Justice
2. Review of School Resource Officer (SRO)
3. Racial & Ethnic Studies
4. Equity Audit
5. Recruitment & Hiring of People of Color

v. Action: Heart of Winooski (HOW) Board Member Representative Appointment

*bi-laws for Heart of Winooski; will be separate and a charitable foundation. Have had a lot of pro bono help from Varsity soccer coach and Emily Hecker (WSD employee). Starting to compose the organization and have 1 position from the school board to be part of this 11 member board. Should we accept donations and what will these funds be used for?

***Approved by all (appoint Matthew MacNeil to the Heart of Winooski organization)**

b. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies

i. Discussion: 1st Reading: Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students

*VSPA issued guidance to schools by the government; very well written.

*Mike Decarreau - There is nothing wrong with the statement. We should just change to Winooski and adopt the policy.

7. Community Engagement (Policy 4.2.1):

a. Discussion: Recent community activities by board members

8. Next Agenda:

*get together Monday 7/20/2020 for preparation for Wednesday's meeting. Tori and Mike will look through the first 4 demands; Margaret, Alex and Matt can go through the final 4 demands.

9. Upcoming Important Dates:

- a. JFK Summer School: Virtual started July 6th, in-person starts July 20th
- b. WMHS Summer School: All virtual, started July 6th
- c. August School Board/Winooski City Council Joint Meeting: Wednesday, August 12th, 6:30pm

10. Executive Session:

a. Labor Relations

11. Possible Action on Executive Session:

12. Adjourn: 10:00 PM