



# WINOOSKI SCHOOLS

*We are the future.*

Winooski School Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, August 12, 2020, 6:30pm Virtual Meeting Zoom  
Meeting information: <https://wsdvt.zoom.us/j/93932485262> Join  
by Phone: +1 929 436 2866

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: Bonny Rocheleau, Sean McMannon, Krista Parisi, Mary Carleton, Rachel Howes, Bret Kernoff, Jason Mayo, Stefanie Hamble, Tim Rich, Mike Decarreau, Nancy Keller, Judy Atkins, Kyle Blindow, John McKelvy, Nancy Johnson, Daryl Coutts, Hannah Handoff, Patrick Cafferky, Lindsey Cox, Matt O'Neill, Courtney Bryan, Alex Yin, Ennis, Sarah McGowan-Freije, Callie Reinker, Yatrika Dhamala, Tiffany Gold, Belinda Fenton, Sue Messier, Karen, Brenda Ticehurst, Hussein Amuri, Indra Achayra, Jacie Knapp, Jessica Perrotte, Robin Hood, Rick Herbert, Heather Win, Angela Moulton, Danielle McGowan, Rainbow Chen, Jean Berthiaume, Melissa Mintzer, Nicole Mace, Steve Hauke, Sarah Forbes, Mikayla Elemen, Kayla Loving, Dhani, Matt Gile, Elizabeth Wood, Lindsey Halman, Katherine Monje, Margaret Bass, Mohamed D., Andrea Boon, Ethan Bakuli, Evelyn Monje, Kate Grodin, Nina Miller, Matthew Webb, Tori Cleiland, Regan Charron, Emily Jacobs, Jess Bruce, Eh Luu, Andrea Wheeland, Savanna Bechard, Luke Dorfman, Kari Bohlen, Sara Raabe, Chris Majistrali, Mugabo Theirry, Stevya Mikuzo, Andrea Thibodeau, Alison Novak, Stephie, Lydia Mongeon, Vijayata Dahal, Caitlin MacLeod-Bluver, Randy Argraves, Vincent St. Amour, Tom Payeur. Bill Clark

**1. Call to Order:** (5 Minutes) 6:39 pm

**2. Agenda Review and Adjustments:** (5 Minutes)

\*Adjustment: consent agenda: policy between staff and students-move from 4d. Down to 6c.

\*Remove executive session

**3. Public Comments:** (5 Minutes)

\*Sue O'Brien-worked for 24 years in Winooski; I didn't see the actions that are being taken into account. I witnessed the changes as hiring extra teachers, space for students to pray and alter the menu to take into account no pork. I am shocked that this is happening within our district.

**WINOOSKI SCHOOL DISTRICT, 60 NORMAND ST., WINOOSKI, VT 05404**  
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\*Bret Kernoff-I am starting my 11th year at Winooski; we are facing a pandemic and how hard it must be to plan the preservice. The school is putting coverage needs ahead of the safety of the staff. As you may be aware, FMLA only covers 12 weeks of leave. The school district is not providing health safety over family. Please find a way to protect us.

\*Mary Carleton-I am a 4th grade teacher and I submitted a letter from my doctor. It states that if you exhaust all your leave time, please contact Sean McMannon. I was denied from the school and was upset that I was denied and care too much for my students and have medical conditions out of my control and want to feel appreciated.

\*Kyle Blindow-PE teacher and coach for 8 years: I am committed to the school. My favorite part of my job is seeing all students in the elementary school and Middle school. 25 people or more per hour is too much. The children are also being exposed to more staff than they realize. We have to realize I am still seeing hundreds of students a day.

\*Hussein Amuri- Senior at WSD: I don't see how it's getting us college and career ready lives.

\*Elizabeth Wood-ELL teacher for grades 2-3. I taught summer school in person. There was stress from COVID regulations and trying to teach our students. Provide our staff to teach under conditions for their safety. In person remedy does not exist and the school board should call an emergency meeting before the students come back.

\*Andrea Boon-Classroom teacher and parent in Winooski. Regular in person instruction cannot be accessed safely. The hybrid model cannot safely teach students. We believe this model will not be better for our students and would appreciate discussing this with the board before students come back.

\*Matt Gile-I was taken out of class to the office of the guidance counselor and police officer. I was asked about my older brother and then became aggressive and threatened to arrest me if I didn't comply. No one asked my parents to question me; I felt no one was there in school to protect me. They thought having the guidance counselor there was okay.

\*Mugabo Theirry-I wanted to highlight that the school has a history of being complicit about the story Matt Gile shared. The amount of authority the officer has in the school. As we move towards anti-racist school, there is no room to have someone who doesn't do their job.

\*Matt Webb-I am speaking as president of WEA: your teachers and staff are not happy about reopening plans. 70% of the responses tell us they are not comfortable with reopening. Women do not want to be told they are hysterical. I am grateful when people have shared their contributions to me.

\*Kari Bohlen-3rd grade teacher at JFK and JFK teacher building rep: I was adamant I wanted to

return to the classroom but not after teaching summer school. The Hybrid model will not keep students and staff safe with regulations. It is unacceptable that my colleagues with underlying conditions are being denied alternative remote learning. My fear is I will fail district policies and someone will transmit COVID to a loved one or another student.

\*Chris Magistrale-SPO position: the people we have doing this job are borderline teachers. They stand up for kids and removing the SRO is not the best decision for our community and district. Jason and Dave treat the kids like teachers and we are understaffed. We need to look at this based on each situation.

\*Hussein Amuri-I respect you so much. How is this preparing us for the future? Something happened to him by the cops. How is this helping us? Having an SRO is traumatizing to us.

#### **4. Consent Agenda: (5 Minutes)**

##### a. Minutes of Meetings

\*Comment doesn't have a reference-last sentence needs to have a reference.

i. Capital Project Executive Committee: July 15, 2020 ii. Special Meeting: July 20, 2020 iii. Special Meeting: July 22, 2020 iv. Regular Board Meeting: July 15, 2020 b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities

i. Approval of Bills c. Policy Title 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board

i. Superintendent Report d. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies

\*Approval by all

#### **5. Governance Processes (Policy Section IV): (30 Minutes)**

##### a. Policy Title: 4.6 Chair's Role

i. Action: Election of Board President/Chair

\*The workload is overwhelming, so my decision as board chair is to relinquish my chair to someone who can help us move forward in a proactive manner

\*Sean-I would like to recognize Mike as a chair president. I have served with him for seven years. This job is hard and having a fulltime job and a family can be very challenging. You have put countless hours into this job. Thank you for your hard work.

Nominations: Tori Cleiland for the position of the president of the board.

Tori-I believe that the world has changed drastically and I am committed to have a culture of anti-racist district. The world is wide enough for all to have their own experiences. This district is

moving towards anti-racism.

b. Policy Title: 4.1b Governing Style: Encouragement of a Diversity of Views

i. Action: Board Response to Winooski Students for Anti-Racism (WSA) Demands

\* The leadership team and WSA met together in small groups and as one big group.

\*Sean-I was able to read through it once. We came to a lot of agreements: 1 and 4-8 are in agreement in all those. 2 and 3 are still in disagreements with both teams. Number 3: there still needs to be education around the position of the SRO before the board can make a decision before the budget comes in November.

\*Stephie-we are still working on some parts but have come to an agreement on most of the demands. We looked at the recommendations and heard the reasoning behind them.

\*Evelyn-we met with the leadership team for 2 days to discuss the demands. We looked at the recommendations and made changes and met on tuesday evening to discuss them. In the future, we can work together on equal playing fields.

\*Mike-Thanks for all the work for all this. With 1, and 4-8 we are in complete agreement. With 2, I got the legal aspects for his piece. I would like to fine tune it before we support it. With 3-with the contract being an issue, and we have heard mixed reactions and we need to look to the broader community. I recommend we approve 1, 4-8, move them forward and get started. With 2-3, set a path to fine tune them before we can move forward.

\*Margaret-I want to ask a question, how high or nonexistent is the possibility of a decision being overturned based on the community? I support it, but I've heard from parents of color and white parents that the school is safe with a police officer present. I don't have a problem with the demand itself, but if we approve this demand and the community goes to the police department and school district to complain, can the pressure of the community overturn the decision? I am 100 percent in favor of not having an SRO. In my opinion, I am less inclined to hear some of the comments I anticipate in a community forum. My suggestion is to expand the petition and vote in Winooski makes a whole lot more sense.

\*Alex-I agree with Margaret regarding the SRO. We need to educate our bigger community if we are going to replace him with 2 additional staff members. I grew up in a community without an SRO and I did alright. How does the end statement fit in with the SRO? I am ready to pass these demands. If we are going to go against the end statement, then we need to change our end statement.

\*Matt-I want to complement the WSD and the WSA for making agreements on the demands. I think we can put forth the demands 1, 4-8 and continue to work on the 2-3 demands.

\*Sean-if you chose to not include the SRO in the MOU for the next school year, you need to make a decision by November for voting. We may not necessarily hire additional people but it is a means of training the right people.

\*Rainbow-we are not going anywhere. Anti-racism is not going anywhere. I plan on being a teacher in the very school I was taught in.

\*Hussein-Thank you for acknowledging there may be backlash.

\*Stephie-we are not just talking about removing the SRO but other changes as well. The WSA is ready to make that happen.

\*Motion to adopt the 8 demands as written: not approved by all members (3-2)

\*Motion to adopt the 8 demands as number 2 be rewritten and looked over by legal: approval by all

\*Sarah McGowan-Freije-why is the board not hearing from the community in which we elect them to represent?

\*Evelyn-we made these demands public and got 270 signatures from the community. Many of the kids within the community are not feeling safe having a police officer present in the school.

\*Let's get the three groups together and discuss challenges regarding number 2. We meet on September 12th for the board retreat.

\*Mike-most of the demands are in regards to happening within the school.

## **6. Executive Limitations (Policy Section II): (25 Minutes)**

### a. Policy Title 2.6 Asset Protection

#### i. Capital Project Update

\*Sean-there was a detailed update to my report. The foundations for the middle school, gym and elementary school pods are being poured. We are feeling good about the progress being made.

\*Mike-Everyone who is working on this project is doing well dealing with issues along the way and things seem to be moving well, especially being on budget.

#### ii. Discussion: RFP for Financial Advice for Capital Project Interim Financing

\*Sean-due to the financial packages we are looking at, we are advised to look around for the best financing options available. PFM financial has been selected to move things forward.

### b. Policy Title 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board

#### i. Discussion: WSD Reopening Plan

\*Tori-I would like to recognize that there is no one right plan for reopening school. It is nerve racking and a fearful feeling from staff about the reopening. The superintendent board met together to determine the best plan for the school.

\*Sean-we started this in late June. We have two teams, one from JFK and one from MSHS. These teams have been meeting regularly and it's been challenging due to data coming from the State. The JFK team has a solid model with two groups going two day a week, and Middle School has a similar plan for the students. The High school is determining the best plan for our students. There is a website where all information will be available for the hybrid model and additional information for families and staff. This will be going out to families and staff members by friday evening.

\*We are going to go 6 weeks with the hybrid model and then evaluate how it's going before making a change if needed. If they see certain data, we would either move to all in person or fully remote. This model is not perfect, and there is no perfect solution. I am worried about staff and students coming back into the school building together. I'm worried about the long term effects on public education.

\*Mike-what are the conditions of going hybrid model to fully remote?

c. Adopt New Policy #4312: Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students

\*For number 7: remove the words "academically focused" and number 8: remove "communications between students and teachers from 10pm and 6 am."

Motion to accept changes highlighted here: approval by all

## **7. Board-Management Delegation (Policy Section III): (20 Minutes)**

### **a. Policy Title 3.3 Delegation to the Superintendent**

i. Discussion/Action: Board Decision or Delegate Authority to Superintendent to select and implement school reopening models

\*Mike-I am by no means an authority to choose a school reopening model, but if something needs to change the board needs to be updated.

Motion to delegate superintendent: approval by all

## **8. Next Agenda: (5 Minutes)**

## **9. Upcoming Important Dates:**

a. First Student Day - 9/8/2020

b. Regular School Board Meeting - 9/9/2020

**10. Adjourn: 9:55pm**