



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS

We are the future.

Winooski School Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, February 10 2021, 6:30pm
Virtual Meeting

Zoom Webinar information: <https://wsdvt.zoom.us/j/92770302999>

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: Krista Parisi, Steven Berbeco, Tori Cleiland, Sean McMannon, Liz Edsell, Mike Decarreau, Alex Yin, Colin (MediaFactory), Arica Bronz, Hussein Amuri, Kamal Dahal, Kayla Loving, Matt Gile, Amelia Thurston, Lindsay Halman, Kate Cappleman Sinz, Laura Lee, Elizabeth Wood, Evelyn Monje, Tessie Sakai, Graham Clarke, Luke Dorfman, Nicole Mace

1. Call to Order/Mindfulness: 6:34 pm

2. Agenda Review and Adjustments:

*Move superintendent's report item from consent agenda to discuss (winter transportation bid)

3. Recognition:

a. Liz Edsell

*This recognition is for board member, Liz, and recognizing all her hard work during her few short months on the school board. Each board member was able to give their thanks and recognize her efforts and hard work.

4. Public Comments: (20 Minutes)

*Kamal Dahal - I am running for the school board. Liz is doing a great job and it was nice of Liz to reach out and recommend me.

*Arica Bronz - I sent out an email earlier this week. I made a mistake back in september and didn't reach out to discuss what happened when Margaret Bass resigned from the School Board.

5. Consent Agenda: (5 Minutes)

WINOOSKI SCHOOL DISTRICT, 60 NORMAND ST., WINOOSKI, VT 05404

PHONE (802) 655-0485 FAX (802) 655-7602 www.wsdvt.org

- a. Minutes of Meetings
 - i. Capital Project Executive Committee Meeting: January 13, 2021
 - ii. Special Board Meeting: January 6, 2021
 - iii. Regular Board Meeting: January 13, 2021
- 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
 - 1. WSD-UVMMC Parking Lot Agreement

*Motion to remove WSD winter transportation update

*Motion passed

*This discussion started with Steven requesting an update for the winter transportation for the Winooski community. It has been stated that the efforts for finding drivers for the bus company on social media and Front porch forum have not been good. Sean states there are postings for bus drivers for surrounding towns but nothing for Winooski. The school will continue to advocate for this and will update next month. Alex brought up the possibility of the district buying a bus and hiring their own driver.

*Hussein - Thank you to Steven for all the research you did for this issue. I was one of the few who spoke up about the busing system.

*Motion to accept consent agenda

*This discussion started with Mike asking about the budget portion of the HRA, our health insurance, we have only used 20% of this. Sean states that people will start spending their first \$500 quickly as the insurance starts back up in January. Alex recognized all the work the district has done with Anti-racism, and the journey of middle school students and how their essays were on point and had clear and precise voices.

*Matt - Is there any way to increase the wages for bus drivers? They are having trouble finding drivers and this may be related to not being paid enough.

*Motion passed

6. Governance Processes (Policy Section IV): (90 Minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 4.4 Board Linkage with Ownership
 - i. Recognition: Black History Month
 - ii. Report/Discussion: Steering Committee for Antiracism

*Anti-racism work

This work started with a reading by Hussein and then a question was posed: “what can you do to decolonize the school district?” The board members went around and shared their ideas. Some of those ideas included language barriers, reworking policies, being more aware. The next question is how two statements are different: the pledge of allegiance and agreement and how is it similar to anti-racism work? Alex reflected on how his parents came over from Thailand and their experiences. Sean reflects on how saying the pledge reminds him of his father who served in the Army in Vietnam. It is also inspirational in the end. Liz reflects how it’s very difficult and uncomfortable it is to say the pledge. Evelyn posed a question “what would it look like to decolonize the board?” Graham reflected about the recent restorative justice circle about institutional racism and a question was brought up about where has there been institutional racism within WEA, school board, administration. He states that you have to be a citizen to be on the school board, an example of institutional racism; there are 3 newcomer students starting tomorrow being taught by white teachers. Tessie asks a question regarding getting translators for a school board meeting. She explains that language barriers are something to consider during school board meetings.

*Steering committee update: the launch date will be February 19th. The information will be put in grocery stores and convenience stores. The application will close on March 8th. Evelyn and Hussein posed a question to the board. Steven states he is appreciative of the changes made on the application. On the application, all 8 demands are listed and the two that were not accepted are labeled as such.

- b. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies

- i. Discussion - 1st Reading: School Safety Policy
- ii. Discussion - 1st Reading: District Equity Policy

*These two policies were developed by Liz and Steven. This discussion started with Mike asking some clarifying questions about the intent of the school safety policy. One piece was the definition of “security.” Steven states one of the goals for this policy is to give the board common definitions. It is important to separate policy versus procedure; safety (policy) and security (procedure). They researched a safety policy from a high functioning school district and then adapted it. Alex asked a clarifying question, “why is physically separate from emotionally?” Sean states there are two aspects that need to be considered and that’s financial and legal. Alex asked about the reasoning behind why ethnicity was left out. Liz expressed how the progress of their work has been stymied. This policy is a higher level view of safety. I feel it’s important to move forward and have discussions with people about what it means to be safe. I feel like there’s not enough buy in from Sean, the superintendent. She states it feels like an uphill battle on making progress. Sean states it’s been an uphill battle from the start. It’s the same as when the demands were presented during the late summer. He also states you don’t need a new policy to make a decision about the SRO. Sean has felt left out of the process and being able to provide his professional opinion regarding the decision of the SRO. His recommendation is to table it for a year and develop an authentic process to engage the community. Tori expressed her feelings of being stuck as discussions keeps going back to what happened in August and how the board approached the situation wrong. *The discussion started with Mike, it had all the legal references on the bottom of it. Alex asked a question about whether there is a companion between staff and students. The policy is written in the perspective of students. Mike brought up that in a statement in the policy, you need to state where we are now. This policy is important enough to be reviewed annually.

7. Community Engagement (Policy 4.2.1): (5 Minutes)

- a. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by Board
 - i. Newsletter Topics
 - ii. Weighting Study Coalition Update

*Weighting Study Coalition update: we are meeting on almost a weekly basis, have hired a lobbyist firm and going full force. The key is it’s going to be critical for the Senate to take up S13 which is the weighting study for crossover. There will be a press conference release on Monday highlighting the importance of taking up this bill. The is an equity issue and for all of Vermont. They are asking the school districts to help with the lobbyist, around \$1,500 to help with the lobbying firms.

*Liz and Steven are in the process of setting up about 16 hours of community meetings (forums) in the next few weeks. Forums are about school safety and have 2 major goals. The first is to get a sense of the Winooski community and different community groups and what safety means to them. The second is to test some of the assumptions that were made when drafting the policy of what’s important to our neighbors in Winooski.

8. Next Agenda:

- *Add a 2nd reading of the school safety policy
- *Add a 2nd reading of the district equity policy

9. Upcoming Important Dates:

- a. City-WSD FY22 Community Budget Presentation: Feb 17, 6pm (<https://zoom.us/j/97318597419>)
- b. February School Break: Feb 20-28, 2021
- c. Annual Meeting: Monday, March 1, 7:30pm (<https://wsdvt.zoom.us/j/97668912079>)
- d. Town Meeting Day: Tuesday, March 2, 7am-7pm, Winooski Senior Center
- e. Veggie Van Go: March 3 & March 10, 2021
- f. School Board Meeting: Wednesday, March 10, 2021

10. Executive Session:

- a. Labor Negotiations

11. Possible Action on Executive Session:

*no action taken

12. Adjourn: