



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS

We are the future.

Winooski School Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, August 9, 2023, 6:30pm
WSD Library Learning Commons or via Zoom
Zoom Webinar information: <https://wsdvt.zoom.us/j/84754701054>
Join by Phone: 1 301 715 8592

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.

1. Call to Order/Mindfulness/Land Acknowledgement: (5 Minutes)6:32

*Meeting called to order by Robert Millar. Robert handed the meeting over to Superintendent Chavarria for board reorganization.

2. Reorganization of Board

- a. Election of President/Chair*
- b. Discussion/Election of Vice President/Vice Chair
- c. Election of Secretary/Clerk
- d. Ratification of Committees and Appointment of Members
 - i. Finance
 - ii. Negotiations (Ad Hoc)

*Superintendent welcomes the board and moves on to confirm that Nicole Mace has signed her board oath. Nicole confirms.

*Superintendent asks for nominations for board president. Isaiah Donaldson nominates Robert Millar, no further nominations made, Robert accepts. Superintendent accepts a motion to accept.

*Motion to accept is made by Kamal Dahal. Motion passed with unanimous vote. Robert Millar is not the new President of the Winooski School Board.

WINOOSKI SCHOOL DISTRICT, 60 NORMAND ST., WINOOSKI, VT 05404
PHONE (802) 655-0485 FAX (802) 655-7602 www.wsdvt.org

*Robert Millar acknowledges the vice president role that is not in the charter but has been in practice within the Winooski School Board and asks for nominations.

*Robert Millar nominates Kamal Dahal, no other nominations are made, Kamal accepts nomination.

*Motion to accept is made by Isaiah Donaldson. Motion passed with unanimous vote.

*Isaiah Donaldson nominates himself for the position of secretary/clerk, no secondary nominations are made.

Nicole Mace makes a motion to recognize Isaiah as Board Clerk. Motion passes with a unanimous vote..

*Committee ratification will need to be made due to changes to the board

- Finance committee will now consist of Nicole Mace and Kamal Dahal. No objections noted for this ratification, Robert Millar appoints them to the finance committee.
- Negotiations committee - The original members of this committee were Allison Burlock (former board president) and Steven Berbeco. Steven agrees to remain on the committee and Robert volunteers to be a member. Robert Millar appoints himself. Reorg of the board is complete.

3. Agenda Review and Adjustments: (5 Minutes)

*A request from the WEA to move Executive Sessions to earlier in the agenda is made by Superintendent Chavarria. Isaiah Donadson makes a motion to move item 11 & 12 to item 6.

*Motion passes unanimously.

4. Public Comments:

*Robert Millar reminds that this section of the meeting is a place for comments on items that are not on the agenda.

*Tom Payeur, a former employee of the district and a winner of 2019 VT Teacher of the Year would like the board to know that Courtney Poquette and Lindsey Cox have both been nominated as 2024 VT educator of the year. Asks the board to recognize these individuals for their work.

5. Consent Agenda: (5 Minutes)

- a. Minutes of Meetings
 - i. Regular School Board Meeting: June 14, 2023
 - ii. Special Board Meeting: Jul 19, 2023
 - iii. Special Board Meeting: Aug 2, 2023
- b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
 - i. Approval of Bills
 - ii. Accept Barr Foundation Grant
- c. Policy Title: 2.7 Compensation and Benefits
 - i. Accept Resignations
 - ii. Teacher Contracts
 1. Toman, Victor: WMHS Teacher
- d. Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
 - i. Superintendent Report
- e. Policy Title 2.0: Global Executive Constraint
 - i. Monitoring Report

*Nicole Mace comments on the readability, format and information in the new Superintendent Report.

*Robert Millar makes a motion to remove prior minutes for discussion. He notes that June board minutes are lacking notes for sections 2,3,&4.

*Robert also notes that the 8/2/2023 Special Meeting minutes do not mention the motion to approve the board nomination of Nicole Mace to fill the empty board seat.

* Superintendent Chavarria notes that the minutes will be corrected and approved at our next board meeting..

*Motion to accept Consent agenda minus the June 14, 2023 and August 2, 2023 board meeting minutes made by Isaiah Donaldson.

*Motion passes unanimously.

6. Executive Session:

a. Premature General Public Knowledge:

i. Grievances 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(D).

*Robert Millar makes a motion to move into Executive Sessions and invites Superintendent Chavarria, Matt Gile, and Kareen Greene to join. Nicole Mace makes a motion to move into Exec sessions to discuss two grievances with those invited by the Board President and notes Premature General Public Knowledge as the need to move to Executive Sessions. *Motion passes unanimously.

*Motion to leave Executive Session made at 8:14pm by Nicole Mace.

*Motion passes with a unanimous vote

*Motion to take 10 day grace period for public response made by Isaiah Donaldson.

*Motion passed unanimously.

*Robert Millar requests a 10 minute recess for the board.

*Meeting called back to order at 8:24pm by Robert Millar

7. Possible Action from Executive Session:

i. Potential Action: Issue a Written Board Decision to the WEA by Aug 23, 2023

8. Executive Limitations (Policy Section II): (75 minutes)

a. Policy Title: 2.4 Financial Planning and Budgeting

i. Quarterly Financial Report (Final FY23)

*Robert asks if everyone has had time to review and notes that it is a regular quarterly report. Asks if any of the board have questions.

*Nicole Mace asks if the Finance Committee met to review the memo and report. Kamal and Robert confirm that they did.

*Kamal notes that the general fund will have a favorable balance and notes additional budgets that are noted in the Quarterly Report and Memo. Exact numbers and the memo with attached report can be found by accessing [this link](#).

*Robert Millar asks about board approved fund balance from earlier this year and why it is listed under the board budget. Nicole explains that the Capital Project costs fell under board purview and that is why it was placed under the board budget line.

*KD commented on discrepancy in numbers. Sarah Haven notes that the discrepancy has been fixed.

*NM - flagging the extraordinary reimbursement line in the revenue budget. AOE made several decisions that will impact tuition that the district is able to seek reimbursement for. It looks like we are down \$140 thousand dollars in that line and this is a cause of concern for Nicole. Last fall we anticipated \$700 thousand dollars in revenue which now seems high to her. She feels the variable could swing as a result of the revised Special Education formula and it could be detrimental to the district.

*No questions on FMR by board or community members

ii. Discussion and Potential Action: WSD Antiracism Steering Committee (ARSC) and Action Teams

*Robert Millar asks for a better understanding of what the ARSC is asking for. Superintendent notes that he has the same information from the June 14th board meeting. The info and attachment from the meeting includes a link to the budget that the board is being asked to approve.

*Robert Millar questions why we are discussing this budget outside of our regular budget process and why we are using fund balance to fund this budget. The Superintendent acknowledges that this is an unusual request and notes the unusual history around how this came to be. Superintendent notes that the board has been involved in the history of this agenda item. SB notes that TC was the board representative, when she resigned her role as representative was not filled. NM offers history of creation of action teams during what was a challenging time for the board. A request was made last year to use \$107 thousand in fund balance for activities. Some discussion was brought to the board and a decision was made to not include the \$107 thousand in the budget. The Money was not spent and was not budgeted for again. Nicole remembers almost ½ of that original budget being spent.

*Nicole Mace suggests that structure hasn't served the work well because of a lack of movement and leadership. She feels this was a direct result of not being fully incorporated into decision making and leadership of the district. She notes the importance of this work and wonders if leadership of the district should spark with students regarding priorities for action in the coming year and then report back to the board with the findings.

*Isaiah Donaldson notes that he does not have an opinion or statement because of a lack of history and background

*Steven Berbeco echoes the importance of the work. Notes that it is directly connected to student voice and relays the roadblocks experienced by a lack of student voice. The committee is an effort to amplify student voice and he is in favor of supporting this work structurally and incorporating it in the leadership team and board in a way that makes sense. Financial requirements need to be an active part of the conversation.

*Kamal Dahal agrees with Stevens comments

*WC - preliminary meeting with UP for Learning, has candid request for them to buy into funding this. Not enough to say yes, need to want it to happen for it to be successful. Needs more background and experience, i.e. conversations with students. **Review video footage**

*Robert Millar notes that fund balance is for emergency use and not this type of cost. Moving forward this may need to move to the regular budget process. Fund balance for this year is very different from last as we are right where it is recommended for us to be.

*Nicole Mace notes concern on dipping into this balance and would like to see a process similar to what the Superintendent outlined.

*Contracted service with UP is in need of renewal.

*KD asks for example on use of Fund balance. Fund balance should be used for reasons below:

- 1 time emergency expense
- A project limited in scope and time
- It has been used to help lower tax rates, most recently in 2024

*Nicole notes that the auditors recommend that the school have 6 months of expenses in our fund balance in case of an emergency. It is also noted that we may be in a deficit due to changes in the special education reimbursement laws that could cause us to end this fiscal year over budget. In a this case fund balance may be needed to prevent cash flow issues.

*Robert asks the Superintendent for recommendation. The superintendent feels structures of the group might be in peril if we don't offer some funds.

*The board continues to discuss funding options and a budget for this group. They move forward with the decision to authorize use of the remaining balance of funds originally allocated to the Anti Racism Student Committee to support work in the first few months of FY 24. During this time the Superintendent will work with the committee and bring a report back to the board regarding the work and budget for the remaining time in FY24.

Motion to authorize use of the balance of funds that was allocated to support the Anti Racism Steering Committee to support their work in the first few months of FY 24 with an emphasis on continued support for meeting attendance through stipends and facilitation while the superintendent works with the steering committee to develop an action plan for our budget and moving into the future with the caveat that if the funds are insufficient we will receive a report at our next meeting with the balance and a recommendation for what the budget should be. All in favor, Motion passes unanimously.

9. Governance Processes (Policy Section IV): (75 Minutes)

a. Policy Title: 4.1 Governing Style

i. Discussion: Board Retreat

*The board agrees to hold the retreat at WSD. They plan to focus on team building, shared values between the board and school administrators, board 101, board roles and potentially have a member from the Vermont School Board Association (VSBA) join them for training.

ii. Discussion: Board Participation at 8/24 WSD Back-to-School Convocation

*Robert Millar, Board President, will speak at the convocation. The Superintendent asks for the remaining board members to commit a piece of time in the afternoon for small group work between the board and staff. This work will include picking a favorite policy and discussing within that group. Isaiah Donaldson confirms his availability as does Kamal Dahal.

iii. Discussion/Approval: 10/26-27 Board Attendance to [VSBA Annual Conference](#)

*The annual VSBA Conference is a two day event. Robert Millar, Steven Berbeco and Isaiah Donaldson confirmed attendance as did Superintendent Chavarria. The district office will register all attending.

b. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies

i. Policy First Reads

1. F3 Fire and Emergency Preparedness Drills

*No questions or concerns from the board regarding policy F3 Fire and Emergency Preparedness Drills

2. F4 Access Control and Visitor Management

*Nicole Mace has a question regarding the optional section. The Superintendent notes that it is not recommended that we add the optional section. No other questions or concerns by the board are noted.

3. C2 Student Alcohol and Drug Use

*The Superintendent recommends using the VSBA model policy.

*Steven Berbeco notes that it is common practice to refer to drug abuse as substance misuse. The board agrees with this change in language and asks that the policy is updated to reflect this prior to the 2nd reading.

4. C4 Non-English Language Background

*Nicole Mace notes that the WSD policy is different from the more detailed VSBA policy. She asks if we should be adopting the VSBA model. The Superintendent notes that this is interesting and advises the board to consider the model policy on its own and separate from the WSD policy. Nicole would like to see use of the VSBA policy in the second reading. The board agrees with this suggestion. The policy will be updated to reflect this change.

5. C15 Student Conduct and Discipline

*Robert Millar acknowledges that the school board has had recent experience with this policy. Nicole states that the WSD policy is different from the model policy. The Superintendent notes this may be a policy that the board takes a little more time to digest and research as the board may want to look at it through the equity and anti racism lens. He recommends the board accept a first read and propose a plan. Nicole suggested approving the first read of this policy and allowint the Superintendent to review the existing policy and how it fits with the school through the anti-racism and equity lens.

*The Board reviewed the new Annual Agenda Plan and Robert reviewed the cycle. The Superintendent discussed his preliminary audit of school policies and his results that resulted in first reads of 5 policies monthly through January 2024.

*Nicole Mace states that she is impressed by the audit and happy to follow this plan.

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

- a. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by Board
 - i. (Assign) Newsletter Topics and Due Dates

*Robert asks board members if they have any recent community engagements to share. None are noted. Nicole suggests this item be added to the retreat agenda to ensure they review and are on the same page regarding community activities.

*A reminder of the upcoming Winooski newsletter due date is given. Isaiah is aware and will have his submission in on time. Nicole is scheduled for the September newsletter. The board notes they will set a schedule for monthly submissions before October.

11. Next Agenda: (5 Minutes)

*no items presented.

12. Upcoming Important Dates:

- a. August 18 - Veggie VanGo
- b. August 17 - New Teacher Orientation
- c. August 24 - Back to School BBQ
- d. August 30th - First Student Day, K-5 (full day), 6th & 9th (Early Release)
- e. August 31st - First Student Day, K-12
- f. September 1st - Veggie Van Go
- g. September 4th - No School
- h. September 5th - First Day of Pre-k
- i. September 13th - Regular School Board Meeting

13. Adjourn: 10:03 pm

Motion to adjourn made by Isaiah Donaldson. Motion passes unanimously