



# WINOOSKI SCHOOLS

*We are the future.*

Winooski School Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, November 8, 2023, 6:00pm  
WSD Library Learning Commons or via Zoom  
Zoom Login: <https://wsdvt.zoom.us/j/87380690607>

Policy Title 1.0 Ends Statement: 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.

Attendees: Robert Millar, Nicole Mace, Steven Berbeco, Kamal Dahal, Isaiah Donaldson, Wilmer Chavarria

1. **Call to Order of Regular Meeting:** 6:05 pm
  - a. Meeting called to order by Robert Millar at 6:05pm
2. **Agenda Review and Adjustments:** None
3. **Recognition of Native American History Month:**
  - a. Robert Millar- Make a note beginning of Native American History month. As a board, we recognize and encourage our schools to incorporate it into instructional practices and overall student learning experiences.
  - b. Robert Millar- While this topic isn't related to Native American History, the board takes a moment to congratulate the boys soccer team on a second championship.
  - c. Robert Millar- Acknowledging co-principal Kate Grodin on her Fulbright scholarship.
4. **Public Comments:** None

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5. Consent Agenda: (5 Minutes)

- a. Minutes of Meetings
  - i. Regular School Board Meeting: October 11, 2023
  - ii. Annual WSD Board Retreat Minutes: October 14, 2023
- b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
  - i. Approval of Bills
    - 1. **Nicole Mace makes a motion to accept the consent agenda**
    - 2. **Motion passes unanimously**

6. Executive Limitations (Policy Section II): (60 minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Conditions and Activities
  - i. Discussion/Action: Policy Title 2.3 Monitoring Report
    - 1. Robert Millar- Opened up to the board if there is any discussion or questions for Wilmer Chavarria
    - 2. Isaiah Donaldson- No questions just appreciate a thorough run down, Based on your interpretation and evidence of compliance, I can see that we are in compliance and I agree. I appreciate it again.
    - 3. Robert Millar- It was timely, based on our board assessment, there were several items made related to our board self assessment related to finance and our finance policy. Perfect timing!
    - 4. No board or public comments
    - 5. **Isaiah Donaldson- Requests to accept the monitoring.**
    - 6. **Motion passes 5-0**
  - b. Policy Title: 2.4 Financial Planning and Budgeting
    - i. Discussion/Action: Quarterly Financial Management Report
      - 1. Kamal Dahal- Summarize the memo. Very small but still negative deficit projection. Ending quarter one so hard to make any kind of projection.
      - 2. Robert Millar- Any questions from the public?
      - 3. None shared.
      - 4. Facility rental- Budgeted to bring in around \$15K and have only received about \$113.
      - 5. **Nicole asked for a motion to approve the Quarter Financial report**
      - 6. **Motion passes 5-0**
    - ii. FY25 Budget Context Presentation
      - 1. Wilmer Chavarria- Shares presentation to kick off the budget process. This presentation can be accessed by clicking on [this link](#). The Board participated in multiple discussions around topics addressed throughout the presentation. They note that additional information will be shared in the upcoming budget meetings and joint meetings with the City.
- c. Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
  - i. WMHS Presentation from Board Retreat
    - 1. Jean Berthiaume reviewed current investments in the Middle High School as well as where the funds for these investments come from. Jean noted the importance of these investments to students and families as well as to keeping with the Schools

Ends Statement. The presentation can be found by viewing slides 17-19 in the State of the Schools document found [here](#).

2. 5 minutes recess called by Board President Robert Millar.
3. Meeting called back to order by Robert Millar @ 7:48pm

ii. Discussion/Action: Superintendent Report

1. Steve Berbecco– Appreciates the report and the focus on mental health
2. Wilmer Chavarria- School district has managed to not be in as much of a crisis as other schools but things are still very difficult. WSD continues to strengthen what we do have and works to tackle issues early on. A team is working with Katherine to brainstorm creative ideas to keep us on the right track.
3. Kamal Dahal- Elaborate on authority to enforce extreme measures, including school closures and incorporations.
4. Wilmer Chavarria explains that the law states that after 3 cycles, the AOE can shut down the schools if they don't come out of the designation of a school needing comprehensive support after the 2nd year.
5. **Robert Millar makes motion to accept the superintendent report**
6. **Motion passes 5-0**

iii. Discussion: Heart of Winooski Foundation

1. Wilmer Chavarria explained that the district has received several phone calls from donors inquiring how donations were used. The three people who know the most about these funds are no longer in the district, new employees do not have the historical knowledge to answer all that is being asked.
2. Wilmer notes that it is not sustainable to accept smaller donations but there is a need to keep the foundation if we were to be gifted with larger sums.
3. Wilmer is updating the School Board before the HOW foundation board convenes again.
4. The board discussed what cost is incurred by keeping the foundation up and running versus the cost to dissolve the foundation. Wilmer notes that there may be a small fee to dissolve the foundation.

iv. Discussion/Action: Budget Communications WSD Ad Hoc Committee

1. Nicole Mace- At the retreat- had conversations of community engagement. The committee looked at a modified procedure from the City Council's community engagement. A draft engagement procedure can be found [here](#).
2. First, We would first like to see if people are on board with the procedure and able to connect with one event a month.
3. There is a list of community groups that meet once a month. Each trustee would be a liaison for their group and reach out to get on their agenda.
4. The Mayor has requested that we keep them involved as there may be opportunities for both groups to go together.
5. Robert Millar suggests that a board member keeps the schedule for the board regarding attending the events and taking notes. The Deputy Mayor is the point person at the City and it seems to work well.
6. Nicole would be willing to help with this as would Isaiah.

7. The question around making this a Policy or Procedure is brought up. This can be done as an Administrative Procedure that can help clarify and codify the approach and set some goals.
- 8. Isaih makes a motion to adopt this Engagement Plan brought forward by our lovely Nicole Mace**
9. **Passes 5-0**
10. Community engagement- Nicole Mace discusses the creation of an electronic survey, in person meetings with language supports and board members reaching out to 2 groups each to obtain budget feedback prior to adoption.
11. Board to use their community outreach budget and the district to cover costs related to additional hours for work done by the district liaisons. The December 9th event will be added to the newsletter.
- 12. Kamal makes a motion to accept the community relation plan**
- 13. Motion passes 5-0**

d. Policy Title: 2.9 Race and Equity

i. Discussion/Action: ARSC/Policy 2.9 Budget Update and Future Planning

1. Wilmer states that a request was made by the ARSC in the amount of \$138,000 but the board chose not to fund the ARSC at that time. The request came back to the board and it was decided to give the ARSC the remaining unused funds from the previous year for this work in the amount of approximately 51k dollars.
2. Wilmer is coming with a final request to keep the funds as contracts have been signed and students have been promised a stipend. In addition to the original amount Wilmer is now asking for an additional \$35,000. The breakdown is as follows:
  - a. \$10, 000 allocated to BIPOC Mentor Coordinator - fully supported by our ML Director
  - b. \$16,500 to fund a potential City of Winooski and School District Partnership event this spring
  - c. \$8,500 contingency fund for additional stipends for new students taking part in the ARSC and for additional supplies such as food.
3. The board would like additional time to digest the information and proposal presented. They would like to table this topic and address it at our next meeting.

7. **Governance Processes (Policy Section IV): (45 Minutes)**

a. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies

i. Discussion/Action: Policy Second Read and Approval for Adoption

1. C7 Student Attendance
  - a. **Nicole Mace makes a motion to approve C7 Student Attendance Policy for adoption**
  - b. **Motion passes unanimously.**
2. C8 Pupil Privacy Rights

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- a. **Isaiah Donaldson moves to approve C8 Pupil Privacy Rights Policy for adoption.**
    - b. **Motion passes unanimously**
  - 3. B3 Alcohol & Drug Free Workplace
    - a. **Motion made by Sterven Berveco to approve adoption of B3 Alcohol & Drug Free Workplace Policy**
    - b. Steve Berbecco- We first had this discussion. We had talked about a work related event, and if employees engage in drugs and alcohol, would this apply.
    - c. Nicole Mace- We added language “included but not limited to”
    - d. Robert Millar- What about prescribed medications?
    - e. Wilmer states that it can get really messy if we go down that road.
    - f. Nicole Mace- note that the policy states **unlawfully**.
    - g. Robert Millar- The second sentence states **under the influence of**
    - h. Wilmer states that we can add unlawfully in the second part.
    - i. Steven Bernecco my motion stands, as is. I see the intent but I don’t like adding words into the policy. Trust the policy.
    - j. Robert asks for further discussion
    - k. Kamal Dahal- Even if we don’t add a word in, the superintendent enforces the policy. He has been pretty clear about his intent. Contextually makes sense, a reasonable person reading this would understand.
    - l. Robert asks for all in favor
    - m. **Motion passes 3-2**
  - ii. Discussion: Policy First Reads
    - 1. D1 Graduation Requirements
      - a. Nicole Mace- Language added to #6, can you explain? Does that mean that our multilingual students have different standard for graduation
      - b. Wilmer- clarifies that there are varying levels of supports and some are very targeted. These are the equivalent to an IEP and are not blanket for all students. It was expressed to Wilmer that sometimes those plans may be needed for students who arrive late, or a tailored educational experience is needed
      - c. Nicole Mace- Would we have reports for students who qualify? Like we do with IEP, etc
      - d. Wilmer states that he believes we would be. It all has to be documented
      - e. Nicole Mace- Is the Proficiency based system working with creating transcripts. A presentation to the board to give a better understanding of how proficiencies work would be helpful. Reviewing orientation systems, credits vs. proficiencies and how they are assessed should be in the presentation.
      - f. All board members are in favor of a presentation for the proficiency based system.
      - g. Wilmer would like Jean Berthiaume and Michael Eppolito to look at the policy and work with the high school teams to make sure language is accurate and useful. Wilmer recommends waiting to have a second read.

- h. Steve Berbeco- Can we use other language other than immigration factors when we do a second read of this policy.
  - 2. B2 Volunteers, Work Study Students and Student Teachers
    - a. Robert Millar opens this policy for discussion
    - b. Isaiah Donaldson- Notes that he is in favor of the language in the policy.
    - c. No additional discussion by the board.
  - 3. D5 Animal Dissection
    - a. Robert Millar opens for discussion
    - b. The board discusses the policy and the title. They note that it is in place for students that don't wish to participate and that this is a required policy.
- iii. Discussion/Action: Consideration of Student Representation Policy
  - 1. The board discussed the policy, what it might look like and the expectations for the students, the board and the administrations. The board notes that it needs to fully understand the parameters around student board members and the role they may play in voting and executive sessions.
  - 2. Nicole Mace points out that the VSBA has The Student Voice Guide, a resource for helping boards navigate engaging student voices on public school boards.
  - 3. The board will review the VSBA material and come back to this agenda item at a later date.
- b. Policy Title: 4.8.1 Governance Investment
  - i. Discussion: Board Self Assessment
  - ii. Discussion/Action: Board Policy Governance Check Up
    - 1. This item will be tabled and added to the agenda for the 11/29 meeting.

**8. Community Engagement (Policy 4.2.1): (5 Minutes)**

- a. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by Board
  - i. Isaiah Donaldson- School activity (ARSC) – met last week. It's managing well. Food has been a big hit. Last meeting felt like we were starting to get into the thick of things.
- b. Discussion: Newsletter Topics and Due Dates
  - i. Robert Millar- Steven was tasked with this for this month. Robert will be working on information for the December newsletter.
- c. Discussion/Action: Select Date for Meeting with Legislators (update annual plan)
  - i. Wilmer updates the board and lets them know that we have not heard back from all legislators at this time but we are following up with them to determine if 12/6 or 12/20 is the better date

**9. Next Agenda: (5 Minutes)**

- a. Steven Berbeco- Discussion possible action on housing. Maybe Wilmer giving a presentation on slides/data to the city council.

**10. Upcoming Important Dates:**

- a. 11/16 - Early Dismissal at 11:00 am, JFK Parent Teacher Conference (No Pre-k)
- b. 11/17 - Early Dismissal at 11:00 am, JFK parent Teacher Conference (No Pre-k)
- c. 11/17 - Veggie VanGo
- d. 11/20 - 11/24 - No school Pre-k - 12, November Break
- e. 11/29 - WSD Board Budget Meeting

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- f. 12/1 - Veggie VanGo
- g. 12/6 - WSD Board Budget Meeting
- h. 12/13 - WSD Regular School Board Meeting

**11. Adjourn: 9:29**

- a. Kamal Dahal makes a motion to adjourn.
  - i. **Motion passes unanimously**
  - ii. **Meeting adjourned at 9:29pm**