



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS

We are the future.

Winooski School Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 6:30pm
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: Nicole Mace, Wilmer Chavarria, Isaiah Donaldson, Carsen Small, Mike Decarreau, Eli Phillips (virtual), Robert Millar, Kamal Dahal, Ken White (virtual), Sarah Haven

1. **Call to Order of Regular Meeting:** 6:30pm
 - a. Robert Millar calls the meeting to order @ 6:30pm.
2. **Agenda Review and Adjustments:**
 - a. No adjustments brought up by the board.
3. **Public Comments:**
 - a. No public comments.
4. **Consent Agenda:** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Minutes of Meetings
 - i. Regular School Board Meeting: November 8, 2023
 - ii. Special Board Budget Meeting Minutes: November 29, 2023
 - b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities

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- i. Approval of Bills
- c. Policy Title: 2.7 Compensation and Benefits
 - i. Teacher Contracts
 - 1. Wakefield, Louisa - Pre-K Classroom Teacher

***Motion made to accept the consent agenda by Nicole Mace**

***Motion passed unanimously.**

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

- a. Policy Title: 2.4 Financial Planning and Budgeting
 - i. Presentation/Board Q & A: Session 4
 - ii. Wilmer Chavarria states that there are updates - only given a couple of hours ago.
 - iii. Nicole Mace recaps each section: District Budget, Education Spending, The Role of the Board, Resident Role & Timeline of Budget Adoption. She notes that we are about ½ way through the process. January 10th the board will vote to accept a budget. Then the board gets out into the community and shares the information with the community in preparation for voting on Town Meeting Day.
 - iv. Robert Millar shares our Ends Statement with the board and attendees.
 - v. Sarah Haven and Wilmer Chavarria reviews and shares the Budget Key Factors for FY '25. Wilmer notes that the focus will be on the Homestead Tax Rate, how it is calculated and what that means for the citizens of Winooski. Please use [this link](#) to watch the board budget video with this information.
 - vi. Wilmer notes that Options 1, 2 and 6 have been removed from the Budget options at the board's requests.
 - vii. He also notes that, hours ago, the state shared that they are not using calculations from 2022 they are now showing 2087 for weighted long term membership as opposed to the 2100 they had in the original calculation. This results in a 100K loss of dollars, rather than \$1 million.
 - viii. A discussion with the board, administration and budget buddies around the delay in knowing the final yield as well as the delay in the CLA numbers was had. Wilmer states that he will follow up with the City to determine when we might see the final CLA numbers and asks if the board wants to make adjustments to the excel spreadsheet with a change to the tax rate to 1.65% in light of the delay in getting the actual CLA numbers. The board requests to see this change.
 - ix. Kamal Dahal asks for clarification regarding the factors of the CLA if reassessment isn't completed.
 - x. Isaiah Donaldson- your taxes will potentially rise with the assessed values going up, if the rate stays the same. On a home that is assessed for \$244K- using a 1.49%- the tax rate would be \$5,593
 - xi. Nicole Mace- If taxpayers don't see a CLA of 100, tax payers are going to see an increase in their taxes.
 - xii. Robert Millar states that we need to pull back and not put numbers out there until we get finalized numbers.
 - xiii. Wilmer Chavarria states that we will no longer use the current spreadsheet. We have updated information that will be plugged in.

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- xiv. Wilmer shares Option 5 Example Investments. The board and budget buddies participated in a discussion regarding funding for these investments and where that money will come from. They discussed the different scenarios that have been shared and had discussions around how tax increases have affected those that live in Winooski. The full discussion can be found by accessing the recording of the [12/13/2023 board meeting](#).
- xv. Nicole Mace - The community survey should be out. Looking to review some of the results. I just want to make sure we have time to look at the information
- xvi. Sarah Haven - The auditors are not confident that the audit will be done on time. They are struggling to finish up with the Capital campaign.
- xvii. Nicole Mace says to share that she would recommend statutory deadlines and that the report can be completed without the audit. It will require an additional board meeting.

***Robert Millar calls for a 5 minute break at 7:33pm**

***Robert calls the meeting back to order at 7:39pm**

- xviii. Policy Title: 2.7 Compensation and Benefits
- xix. Discussion/Approval: Monitoring Report
 - 1. Robert Millar opens this up for discussion
 - 2. **Isaiah Donaldson makes a motion to accept The Monitoring Report.**
 - 3. **Motion passes unanimously**
- b. Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
 - i. Discussion/Action: Superintendent Report
 - 1. Robert Millar asks for discussion on The Superintendent's Report.
 - 2. Isaiah states that he would like to again share appreciation for the way Wilmer shares the information
 - 3. **Isaiah makes a motion to accept the superintendent report**
 - 4. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6. 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. B2 Volunteers, Work Study Students and Student Teachers
 - a. Robert Millar opens for discussion and looks for a motion to approve
 - 2. D5 Animal Dissection
 - a. Robert Millar opens for discussion and looks for a motion to approve.
 - b. **Kamal Dahal makes a motion to approve Policy D5 animal dissection**
 - c. **Motion passes unanimously**
 - 3. D6 Class Size
 - a. Robert Millar opens the policy up for discussion and looks for a motion to approve
 - b. Nicole Mace Have we established a class of 15 per cluster or class? Does this policy do anything? Setting reasonable targets? Do these numbers still work? My understanding, we have fewer than 15 students in some high school classes. How is this monitored? Wilmer Chavarria reviews the monitoring process. The full discussion regarding policy D6 Class size can be reviewed by viewing [Board Meeting Recording 12/13/23](#).

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- c. **Nicole moves that we move to adopt policy D6 class size without the appendix.**
 - d. **Motion Passes unanimously.**
- ii. Discussion: VSBA's Guide to Student Voice
 - 1. Robert Millar- Open this Policy up for discussion.
 - 2. The board discusses the importance of student voice and the most effective way to incorporate student voice into Board meetings. They discussed onboarding, a cultural shift for the board to make it more youth friendly and ways to engage with youth and increase a desire for them to become involved in board work
 - 3. Nicole inquires about student involvement with the student voice committee.
 - 4. Kamal Dahal- We did not. We did have an open meeting at the library with that hope, there were students passing by. We did not have the opportunity to have that conversation. That committee was set up specifically to have this policy here, at least, to start that conversation and not to let that conversation get lost. What I am seeing, it's not about how we are going to have them, it's about the option of us having the student representative on the board. I think we have had multiple training sessions in the previous board; I was part of some of the training sessions where they have provided more detail on how to incorporate a youth voice. It wasn't necessarily about having students on the board body, but in general, how to include the youth voice into the board discussion. Conclusion I drew, having a student representation on the board on a more permanent basis, other than just inviting them once and a while, being able to give them a voice themselves in the various issues that we discuss, if they choose too.
 - 5. Wilmer Chavarria States that Kamal has a point, even if it's not in a formalized way, students do have opinions about a lot of things that go on here. Students are awakened when you talk to them. Maybe including them in things beyond the board meeting. If we are going to formally add a student to the board, Wilmer will meet with administrators and teachers, right up a policy, students would get paid for being there; I need to know that you are ready. This will need to be in a policy. If you do decide to do this, I need to be told via policy.
 - 6. Isaiah Donaldson- If we do go forward with and adopt this policy, the way it's reading, it's a minimum of two consistently. We have a lot of work to do in terms of getting to a point of meeting that minimum and being able to achieve that accountability for us, but also for the student.
 - 7. Wilmer Chavarria if it is something that you want to do, don't let the amount of work deter you. Set a deadline for yourselves. Set some expectations of what you're gonna have achieved by that deadline. Then maybe you will feel comfortable considering this policy, if the majority of the board wants more time to consider this policy.
 - 8. Robert Millar I don't want this to get lost- This could be great and we could make it work, it could be really good but it's never going to replace doing some of the things we are talking about to make this work. like actually going and talking to the students. I think that is where this conversation gets muddled is that interplay of some people just "we need a student on the board," and others " we need a student voice," which is always going to be bigger than that. Just like going

and getting input from community at large is more than just putting on one event now and again.

9. Nicole Mace - Just because we don't have a student at the board table, doesn't mean we don't have a voice from the students. I am interested in how students use their voice in this district. Because we asked the question, it is a value we have for this district. There are things that happen that can be a natural opportunity for board members to come in and speak to the students
 10. Wilmer Chavarria -The students may ask how come they are not on the board? If no one says it, that could be a message too. You will know, students, they will tell you things.
 11. Kamal Dahal- Important piece is the training and education around the structure of the board and how we govern.
- iii. Discussion/Action: Policy First Read
1. PG 4.1.8 Student Representation on the Board
 - a. Nicole Mace asks to table the policy until April, with the goal of getting more information. The board has some discussion around this and agrees to table the policy and bring it back to the board in April.
 - b. Policy Title: 4.9 Board Committee Principles
 - i. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
 1. Discuss/Approve: December 7, 2023
 2. **Robert Millar asks for a motion to approve the Finance Committee Meeting.**
 3. **Motion Passes unanimously.**

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

- a. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by Board
 - i. Robert Millar - Opens it up for community activities
 - ii. Isaiah Donaldson- Nicole Mace and Superintendent Chavarria, we were on stage and had a good turn out, good issues raised. Overall, I think it was a hit. Provided lunch and childcare. Cool to see students, I recognized, doing the childcare.
 - iii. Nicole Mace- It was really great. Thanked the students for childcare and Wilmer for providing the food. We handed out surveys, I put it into a spreadsheet. Good community voice. We were able to coordinate with parents and students who have been asked to get input for the new chief of police. People stayed after that. Acknowledge participation with Robert and the mayor with real concern for the 300 Main ...
 - iv. Isaiah Donaldson- I can't go into detail, but I have been involved with helping some people. How can myself or others be involved in helping or facilitating??
 - v. Nicole Mace continue to call attention to that this is happening. Families were told they wouldn't be displaced, they are being displaced. Possibility of a replacement ordinance, "if you take away family housing, you have to replace family housing..."
 - vi. Robert Millar Publicly thanked Nicole Mace and Isaiah Donaldson for the event. It was a great new way to approach things.
 - vii. To hear the full discussion- [Board Meeting Minutes 12/13/23](#)
- b. Discussion: Newsletter Topics and Due Dates

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- i. Robert Millar turned in the recent newsletter piece
- ii. Kamal Dahal will write the next newsletter, due January 8th.
- c. Update: Meeting with Legislators scheduled for Board Budget Meeting on Wednesday, 12/20/2023
 - i. Robert Millar reminds the board that 3 of our 5 state legislators will be at the 12/20/2023 board meeting.

8. Next Agenda: (5 Minutes)

- a. None.

9. Upcoming Important Dates:

- a. December 14 - Early Release at 12:15pm/No Pre-k
- b. December 15 - Veggie VanGo
- c. December 20 - Board Budget Meeting
- d. December 22 - January 1 - Winter Break, No School Pre-k through 12
- e. January 5 - Veggie VanGo
- f. January 10 - Regular School Board Meeting

10. Adjourn:

- a. **Motion made by Isaiah Donaldson to adjourn.**
- b. ***Motion Passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm***