



Winooski School Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 6:00 pm
WSD Library Learning Commons or via Google Meet
Google Meet Link: meet.google.com/szx-gwkh-oe

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: Wilmer Chavarria, Robert Millar, Kamal Dahal, Elom Essiba, Isaiah Donaldson Allyssa Ravelin, Matt Gonzalez, Cheyne Racine, Krista Parisi, Sarah Lowry, additional attendees listed under the Public Comments section below.

1. **Call to Order** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Robert Millar calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. **Agenda Review and Adjustments:** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Robert Millar I would like to table 8(C) Budget Cycle Reflection. It is better to do it after the vote anyway.
3. **Announcements and Recognition** (5 minutes)
 - a. Recognition: Black History Month
 - i. Robert Millar- February is Black History Month, this board recognizes that Black History is American history and it is more important now than ever.
 - b. Recognition: Reading and Approval of [Resolution](#)
 - i. Robert Millar reads the resolution and looks for a motion to accept the resolution and open for a discussion.
 - ii. ***No discussion.***
 - iii. ***Isaiah Donaldson makes a motion to accept the resolution.***
 - iv. ***Motion Passes Unanimously.***
 - c. Recognition: Board Vice President Kamal Dahal
 - i. Robert Millar shares appreciation and gratitude for years of service to the school board and community. Robert presents a certificate of gratitude.
 - ii. Isaiah Donaldson and Elom Essiba share their appreciation.
 - iii. Kamal Dahal reads a reflection of his time since 2022, joining in the middle of a pandemic and construction zone. "I feel a sense of belonging here in this town."

- a. Other Announcements and Recognitions
 - i. Robert Millar asks for other announcements and recognition.
 - ii. *None provided.*

4. **Public Comments:** This item is reserved for comments and questions on topics that are not included on this agenda. Time for public comment is included by default for each item below.

- a. Robert Millar shares that he will open up for public comments given the number of people and limit comments to 3 minutes per person.

b. *To hear the full presentation:* [Winooski School Board 02/12/25](#)

c. **Teachers & Community Members:**

- i. Caitlin MacLeod-Bluver
- ii. Christie Moulton
- iii. Kari Bohlen
- iv. Erin Hurley
- v. Matt Gile.
- vi. Hayden Coy
- vii. Elizabeth Wood
- viii. Rebecca Savage on behalf of Sarah Forbes
- ix. Sarah Lowry
- x. Annie Schneider Speaking on behalf of the NEA Union
- xi. Hillary Gombar (Community Member)
- xii. Carlos Spigel

d. **Students:**

- i. Gabby Dzessou
- ii. Marissa Sylvestre & Eliza Willis
- iii. Dahlia Michoma
- iv. Afia Diagne
- v. Natalie Dzessou
- vi. Mohamed Osman
- vii. Joyce Mampuya & Olivia Byamungu
- viii. Moo July Htoo
- ix. Blake St. Francis
- x. Nixandy Ferdinand
- xi. Nick Ferdinand

e. **Community Members:**

- i. Cathy Walsh
- ii. Katie Livermore
- iii. Riley Livermore
- iv. Mark Edsell
- v. Emily Hurwitz
- vi. Kathie Voight Walsh
- vii. Corali Cotrina

f. **Online Comments**

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- i. Amanda C.
- ii. Andrew Pappone –Statements on how the Executive Sessions as displayed on the agenda and the purpose behind them.
- iii. Hannah Smith
- iv. Kiera Manion-Fischer

g. Recess called @ 7:20pm by Robert Millar.

h. Meeting called back to order @ 7:30pm.

5. Consent Agenda: (5 Minutes)

- a. 2025-2026 School Calendar
- b. Minutes of Meetings
 - i. Regular Board Meeting: January 8, 2025
 - ii. Finance Committee Meeting: February 5, 2025
- c. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
 - i. Approval of Bills:
 - ii. SY 24 Audit
- d. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the consent agenda.**
- e. Isaiah Donaldson- “So Moved.”**
- f. Motion Passes unanimously.**

6. Executive Session: (45 minutes)

- a. Professional Legal Counsel 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F)
- b. Robert Millar moves the board to Executive Session @ 7:42 pm**
- c. Meeting called back to order @ 8:20 pm**

7. Governance Processes (Policy Section IV): (25 Minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies
 - i. Action: Public Hearing and Adoption of Policies
 - 1. F26 Security Cameras
 - a. Robert Millar looks for public comments
 - b. None Provided.**
 - c. Robert Millar looks for a motion to adopt policy F26 Security Cameras
 - d. Kamal Dahal makes a motion to adopt Policy Title: 4.2.2 F26 Security Cameras**
 - e. Motion Passes Unanimously.**
 - ii. Discussion/Action: Policy Second Read and Approval for Adoption
 - 1. L1 Winooski Sanctuary Schools Policy
 - a. Robert Millar shares that there have been changes from the original version, removals, and additions. Robert Millar asked Wilmer Chavarria to recap what has changed.
 - b. Wilmer Chavarria- shares the update stating there are some minor clarifications. Details can be found by viewing [the recorded meeting.](#)

- c. Isaiah Donaldson- States that his standing is clear and has been from the start. He stands by this policy. He shares that this policy has been vetted by Wilmer, Robert, and staff along with school lawyers.
- d. Kamal Dahal- Notes that some have changed in the last month since the first read of this policy. He reminds of the importance of this policy as stated in his departure letter. People and the students who come to our school need a sense of belonging and as a school board, it is our responsibility to be clear on the expectations shared with the public. We also want to make sure that we are supportive of our community and we listen to community voices because the community sent us to represent them. We are being supportive of our students and we are doing everything we can legally within our jurisdiction to ensure that safety.
- e. Robert Millar shares that Kamal made a good point that it is our responsibility within Policy Governance to not only take the information in but also get it out to the community that we should pass this policy. It does a lot, but it can't do everything. It is perfectly legal, which means that there are limits and people need to be aware that it's called a sanctuary policy but it's not magic. It can't protect everyone from everything. That is something that we must need to be aware of.
- f. Elom Essiba- As an immigrant myself, even though I have proper status, I would like to urge parents to share or give knowledge to their children on their status. This is so they know exactly and do not have fear about their status in this country. I'm Not sure how this is being communicated to the community, but I urge that there is an educational aspect of this and to really explain to the parents and students the legal and knowing rights, be aware of legal status. I am in support of this. Tonight really moved me, listening to the students. I am proud of the community for coming together tonight and supporting the students.
- g. Wilmer Chavarria shares that there is a Know Your Rights event this Saturday 11 am-1 pm to hear from a panel of people who know legally and publicly how we do all of this in the community.
- h. Isaiah Donaldson shares the school's promise or end statement and reads aloud to attendees sharing that it is what the board uses. There are a lot of things to be broken down but focus on leading healthy, productive, and successful lives. If someone felt unsafe because they felt they were going to be taken from their world or their parents' world, it is something I can't personally imagine or fathom. If you have that fear, there is no way you are going to be healthy, productive, or successful. How are you going to be the future if you can't even think you belong? This is why I live here and advocate for people to move here.
- i. Robert Millar asks if there are any additional comments from the public.
- j. None Provided.
- k. ***Robert Millar asks for a motion for approval to adopt L1 Winooski Sanctuary Schools Policy***

l. Isaiah Donaldson makes a motion to adopt L1 Winooski Sanctuary Schools Policy

m. Passes Unanimously.

iii. Discussion/Action: Policy First Read

1. C1 Educational Records

- a. Wilmer Chavarria The policy isn't new, virtually the same thing you have except the policy you are looking at is about to start the adoption process. The old one that we would like to rescind has procedures, the new one does not. I'd like to keep those separate unless legal tells us to do that, but I don't see where they would. I would like for you to leave me with the procedures. The main thing you are doing is breaking this up and taking hold of the policy, leaving the procedures to me. The main change that I will be implementing if you adopt this information is getting rid of all information that is under directory information—just leaving name and grade. Right now, all of the information is under the directory, meaning anyone off the streets could come in and get all of that information and that is not okay. That is why this is being brought to you at the moment.
- b. Robert Millar reminds everyone that we have existing policies that address things in the policy we just passed. We are going to start going through some of those.
- c. Isaiah Donaldson appreciates the separation from policy and procedure, that is the way it should be. I do appreciate you giving us your procedure list. I think the policy is straightforward but you are saying the removal of information other than name and grade. Is that something you have shared or chatted about with your other staff? Agreeing that is enough. Do you need to provide the parent's name?
- d. Wilmer Chavarria There are examples, like the yearbook, where you might need information to be public. Some things are not changing, like a parent can opt out of that. A parent can say they want to opt out of and not even share their name in the directory information. I want to have the freedom to modify procedures as I see fit if we start experiencing hurdles. I don't have to wait for the board adoption process to change things. We aren't going to get ahead of ourselves just yet, you first need to adopt the policy as is. It would not be appropriate for me to start changing things while it is still under your domain.

b. Policy Title: 4.6 Chair's Role

i. Discussion/Action: Policy 4.6 Board Monitoring Report

1. Robert Millar asks if anyone has questions. Stated that maybe going forward someone other than the board president audits, as self audits are good, but it might be best to have someone else look the information over and verify.
2. ***Robert Millar, asks for a motion to approve the Policy 4.6 Board Monitoring Report.***
3. ***Kamal Dahal makes a motion to approve Policy 4.6 Board Monitoring Report***
4. ***Motion Passes Unanimously.***

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- c. Policy Title: 4.7 Board Members' Code of Conduct
 - i. Discussion/Action: Policy 4.7 Board Monitoring Report
 - 1. Isaiah Donaldson, I rewrote the policy as it's stated, then on the bottom I didn't do the breakdown per subset. I think they have in the past, but I just took it as a whole as it is pretty straightforward.
 - 2. Kamal Dahal- I like the conclusion of this. I think you interpreted it the way it needed to be.
 - 3. **Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept Policy 4.7 Board Monitoring Report**
 - 4. **Kamal Dahal "I make a motion that we accept Policy 4.7 Board Monitoring Report"**
 - 5. **Motion Passes Unanimously.**
- d. Community Engagement (Policy 4.2.1)
 - i. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by Board
 - 1. Isaiah Donaldson- Continuing to work with the ARSC. Recently, Robert Millar , Kamal Dahal and I spoke in front of the city manager, and attendees at the community meeting. Elom Essiba and Wilmer Chavarria were both in attendance.
 - 2. Robert Millar shares that he and Wilmer Chavarria went around to four WHA properties buildings. The city was with us too, they had some interesting questions about the school, asking about cursive, etc.
 - 3. Kamal Dahal expresses his extreme gratitude for Wilmer Chavarria always being there during our budget presentation to provide additional information or context when needed.
 - 4. Elom Essiba- Three Squares Awareness Day went to the state house to testify on the House Agriculture Committee. I was able to advocate for NOFA VT, Vermont Food Bank. I also learned that 7th and 8th graders can be a page.
 - 5. Isaiah Donaldson shares that he was also at the State House for the Vermont Association of Realtors. We had the chance to have a meet and greet with representatives. They had a list of priorities, and while I was there for real estate, I announced that I was on the school board, which led to many in-depth conversations that highlighted Winooski and the work we are doing.

8. **Executive Limitations (Policy Section II):** (25 minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 2.5 Emergency Superintendent Succession
 - i. Discussion/Action: Policy 2.5 Monitoring Report
 - 1. Wilmer Chavarria I recommend that you adopt it, nothing has changed since last year–Just the date.
 - 2. **To hear the discussion of Policy 2.5 Monitoring Reporting: [Winooski School Board 02/12/25](#)**
 - 3. **Robert Millar -Looks for a motion to adopt Policy 2.5 Monitoring Report**
 - 4. **Kamal Dahal makes a motion to adopt Policy 2.5 Monitoring Report**
 - 5. **Passes Unanimously.**
- b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities

- i. Finance Committee FY 24 FMR and Memo
 - 1. Kamal Dahal gives a recap of the meeting, stating that the auditor was unable to attend the meeting. Nicole Mace had some questions regarding the numbers.
 - 2. Robert Millar asks if we should bring this back?
 - 3. Kamal Dahal- Yes, I do think that we should, I think Nicole would like to hear what the auditors say regarding the questions. There were no findings, the good news.
- c. Policy Title: 2.4 Financial Planning and Budgeting
 - i. Budget Cycle Reflection
 - 1. Tabled until next month.**
- d. Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
 - i. Discussion/Action: January/February Superintendent's Report to the Board
 - 1. Wilmer Chavarria recommends that everyone read and take a look. It is very informative. I recommend that you adopt it.
 - 2. Isaiah Donaldson- asks for information on how the most recent snow day was called.
 - 3. Wilmer Chavarria shares that he watches the weather closely, Thursday was hard because the storm started earlier than expected (it wasn't supposed to start until 3 pm) after we sent out the message about a potential early release. Students were very vocal about the call to keep the school open. Wilmer shares that someone will always have a differing opinion when snow days are called or not called and that it is a difficult position to be in.
- e. Robert Millar states we have a student matter to discuss along with a contract matter to discuss. We will need two different motions.
 - i. ***Isaiah Donaldson makes a motion to invite Kate Grodin , co principal and superintendent Wilmer Chavarria into an Executive Session regarding Student Matter. Also, making a motion to enter a second executive session and invite Wilmer Chavarria to discuss the Union Contract.***
 - ii. ***Passes Unanimously.***

9. **Executive Session:**

- a. Student Matter 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(7).
- b. Union Contract 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B).

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

- a. ***Nothing Provided.***

11. **Upcoming Important Dates:**

- a. Thursday, February 20 - Early Release, 11:00 AM, MHS P/T Conferences/JFK Inservice
- b. Friday, February 21 - Early Release, 11:00 AM, MHS P/T Conferences/JFK Inservice
- c. Friday, February 21 - Veggie VanGo
- d. Monday, February 24 - Friday, February 28 - Winter Break

- e. Monday, March 3 - No School Prek-12, Staff Wellness Day (All Staff)
- f. Tuesday, March 4 - No School Prek -12, JFK P/T Conferences at 12:30/Full Day MHS Inservice
- g. Wednesday, March 5 - Early Release, 11:00 AM, JFK P/T Conferences/MHS Inservice
- h. Friday, March 7 - Veggie VanGo
- i. Wednesday, March 12 - Regular School Board Meeting, 6:00 PM

12. **Adjourn:**

- a. *Robert Millar adjourned the meeting at 10:15 pm.*