



Winooski School Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 6:00 pm  
WSD Library Learning Commons or via Google Meet  
Google Meet Link: [meet.google.com/szx-gwkh-oe](https://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, Sarah Haven, Isaiah Donaldson, Emily Bowers, Nicole Mace, Elom Essiba, Annie Schneider, Rebecca Savage, Matt Gile, Lucas Dunn, Brenton Litterer, Christina Lauterbach, Maybeline Lopez, Katherine Blair, Marc McQuinn, Lindsey Cox, John McKelvy, Rachel Howes, Sara Raabe, Cheyne Racine, Jessica Perrotte, Kelley Freeman, Michael Eppolito, Adam Hurwitz, Katherine Blair,*  
*Virtual Attendance: Jessica Handrik, Catherine Burbo, Brittany Marks– unable to record all of the attendees, nineteen displayed at Call to Order.*

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. Nicole Mace requests that the agenda be updated to note the Scholarship Committee Update to Scholarship Committee Recommendation.
3. **Announcements and Recognition**
  - a. Robert Millar acknowledges that the following:
    - b. Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month
    - c. Jewish American Heritage Month
    - d. Mental Health Awareness Month
  - a. Other Announcements and Recognitions
    - i. Isaiah Donaldson recognizes Sara Poland and the K-2 students at their beautiful Spring concert.
    - ii. Elom Essiba recognized Mapenzi Selemani for going to Washington, D.C., for the Poetry Out Loud competition.
4. **Public Comments:** This item is reserved for comments and questions on topics not included on this agenda. Time for public comment is included by default for each item below.

- a. John McKelvy, Secretary of the Winooski Education Association, shares a statement speaking on behalf of Jacie Barber, the WEA President, regarding emails of survey results on a vote of no confidence in regards to an administrator.
  - b. Annie Schneider shares a statement regarding the NEA's stance on the results of a survey regarding administration and employee concerns and feelings.
  - c. Robert Millar shares a public comment from Ben Patrick. Robert reiterates that he is sharing on behalf of a staff member and that this is in no way a reflection on how the board feels.
5. **Consent Agenda:** (5 Minutes)
- a. Minutes of Meetings
    - i. Regular Board Meeting: April 9, 2025
  - b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
    - i. Approval of Bills
    - ii. Food Service Contract Renewal Approval
  - c. Policy Title: 2.7 Compensation and Benefits
    - i. Jacqueline Lomazzo, Long Term Substitute, JFK Elementary
    - ii. Richard Merriman, Long Term Substitute, K-12 Music Arts
    - iii. Karen O'Brien, Teacher, WMS
    - iv. Amanda Schroth, Long Term Substitute, PreK
  - d. Policy Title: 4.2.5 Auditor
    - i. Approval of One-Year Extension of Auditor Contract
  - e. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the Consent Agenda
  - f. Isaiah Donaldson "So Moved."
  - g. ***Passed Unanimously.***
6. **Governance Processes (Policy Section IV):** (45 Minutes)
- a. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies
    - i. Action: Public Hearing and Adoption of Policies
      - 1. PG2.6 Asset Protection-
      - 2. Robert Millar asks for comments or questions from the public and board.
        - a. ***None Provided***
      - 3. Robert Millar looks for a motion from the board to accept final adoption of PG2.6 Asset Protection
      - 4. Isaiah Donaldson- "So Moved."
      - 5. ***Passed Unanimously.***
    - ii. Discussion/Action: Policy Second Read and Approval for Adoption
      - 1. PG2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
        - a. Robert Millar states last time we discussed this, we put together a committee to look into this a little bit more- you received a memo regarding this. Policy 4.6 was also looked at, there was a recommendation. We will discuss it at a later time.
        - b. Nicole Mace states that the highlighted change to publicly, that is currently part of the policy. Nothing new, just was not spelled correctly.
        - c. Isaiah Donaldson asks for clarity on Line 11, the estimated value of \$500. Where are we getting that number from?

- d. Nicole Mace clarifies that if the District receives a gift of more than \$500, the board would be notified.
    - e. Robert Millar gives an example of HydroQuebec donating to the school, it would be included in the Superintendent's Report.
    - f. Robert Millar asks that we change the "A...B" to numbering like the other policies to stay consistent.
    - g. Robert Millar asks for a motion to accept a second read and approve for adoption, PG2.8 Communication and Support to the Board.
    - h. Emily Bowers "So Moved."
    - i. Nicole Mace "As proposed to be amended?"
    - j. *Passed Unanimously.***
  - iii. Discussion/Action: Policy First Read
    - 1. PG2.9 Race and Equity
    - 2. Robert Millar: No questions from the board. It coincides with Wilmer's recent report.
- b. Policy Title: 4.5 Agenda Planning
  - i. Discussion/Action: Internal Monitoring Report
    - 1. Robert Millr, Thanks to Emily for taking this on after only having a couple of months on the board.
    - 2. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the monitoring report on Policy 4.5.
    - 3. Nicole Mace- "So Moved."
    - 4. *Passed Unanimously.***
- c. Policy Title: 4.2.4 Legislation
  - i. Discussion: Legislative Update
    - 1. Wilmer Chavarria shares an update with H454, is a big bill with all of the things that you have heard about, including the way we finance education, the proposed funding formula, also the redistricting and redrawing of the lines. He encourages the board to read the Vermont School Board Association document on where the Senate stands. Wilmer shares his opinion and agrees with mostly what they are trying to do, but not everything. Trying not to lose the big picture while still understanding how it will affect Winooski
    - 2. Nicole Mace shares a couple of updates regarding the Senate. The Commission on the future of public education has requested, through the chair, on numerous occasions, to offer testimony on the Senate bill, and has not been taken up on the offer. In particular, the commission has already entered into a contract to engage in statewide public engagement on this question. The House approach would have created a subcommittee of the commission to look at district boundaries and require them to work closely with public engagement experts, who have expertise in equitable public engagement practices and how to reach populations that don't typically come to commission meetings. It is disheartening, as a person who has spent a lot of time on the commission, this perspective was not welcome in the committee room.
    - 3. To hear the full discussion: [Winooski School Board- May 14, 2025](#)
- d. Policy Title: 4.2.1 Community Engagement

- i. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by the Board
  - 1. Isaiah Donaldson- Waking Windows, 18 years it ran, and this was the last year running the event.
  - 2. Nicole Mace gives a brief update on the Champlain Housing Trust board and sitting on a committee that is involved in a campaign. The group is doing preliminary work on the O'Brien Center renovations. Plans are to expand the library, health centers, and improve accessibility of the building. Likely to start next calendar year. Tenants will remain the same.
  - 3. Robert Millar notes that the VSBA was hosted here. It was great and great to connect with other board members around the area. There is one more policy governance networking event next month.
- e. Policy Title: 4.8 Governance Investment
  - i. Discussion: Board Learning
    - 1. To hear the discussion on Board Learning: [Winooski School Board- May 14, 2025](#)
  - ii. Discussion/Action: Board Retreat
    - 1. Robert Millar enters into a discussion of dates to hold a retreat.
    - 2. Krista Parisi asks board members to share dates that they are or aren't available.
- f. Policy Title: 4.9 Board Committee Principles
  - i. Scholarship Committee Recommendations
  - ii. Elom Essiba states they received four applications. The recommendations they are bringing to the board align best with the board's policy. We are recommending to the board that the scholarship be awarded to Pascaline Furaha and Bridget Rogers. All four applicants aligned with the board policy in the college and career-ready, healthy, productive, and successful lives, but Pascaline and Bridget stood out for their engagement in their local community.
    - 1. Pascaline Furaha has volunteered as a youth leader in her church for three years. She also provides assistance to neighbors seeking housing.
    - 2. Bridget Rogers has helped coach basketball. She is preparing for her career in early childhood education by providing babysitting services to members of the community, as well as working in a daycare as part of her CTE program.
  - iii. Elom Essiba states that in future years, she hopes a question will be added to the application, specifically requesting students to address the pillars of the board's end statement. We think that will help the board to have even greater insight into how applicants meet the scholarship criteria.
  - iv. Isaiah Donaldson asks what the amount of the scholarship is and what it can be used for
  - v. Nicole Mace states that it is \$500 per recipient and it is open to be used for tuition and textbooks, among other items. The scholarship committee provides some guidance and direction.
  - vi. Isaiah Donaldson asks if there is potential for an additional scholarship for a student who is hitting all the pillars, but taking a career path rather than heading to college?
  - vii. Nicole Mace shares that the scholarship committee gives us the applications they want to share with the board, and we don't know all who apply.
  - viii. Elom Essiba asks for clarification if the board is presenting the scholarship at graduation.
  - ix. Wilmer Chavarria states that we will be happy to find out the expectation. Let's reach out to Karen Greene to find out what the expectation is.

- x. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the recommendations of the committee.
- xi. Isaiah Donaldson- “So Moved.”
- xii. *Passes Unanimously.***

7. **Executive Limitations (Policy Section II):** (20 minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
  - i. Discussion: CTE Presentation
    - 1. Adam Hurwitz shares presentation with Jessica Handrik (virtually) regarding acceptance rates between the Center of Technology Essex (CTE) and the Burlington Tech Center (CTE).
    - 2. To view the presentation regarding enrollment and acceptance rates at CTE and BTC: [Winooski School Board Meeting- May 14, 2025](#)
  - ii. Discussion/Action: **May Superintendent’s Report to the Board**
    - 1. Passed Unanimously**
- b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
  - i. Discussion/Action: Finance Committee QFMR and Memo
    - 1. Nicole Mace shares the Q3 through May 8th, projecting a \$717,000 surplus. The FMR includes a little more than quarter 3, wanting to see if the surplus was still trending. Personally, given all the uncertainty, landing this year with a projected surplus makes me feel better about navigating the times ahead.
    - 2. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the quarterly financial management report.
    - 3. Emily Bowers- “So Moved.”
    - 4. *Passed Unanimously.***
- c. Policy Title: 2.9 Race and Equity
  - i. Discussion/Action: Internal Monitoring Report
  - ii. Wilmer Chavarria states there is a little change in interpretation at the beginning. The way the data is presented is different, trying to match the way the board is doing it. It is broken up into sections of the policy. Reporting compliance at the end.
  - iii. Nicole Mace shares that last year, brought up concerns of how we are monitoring not just workforce diversity but opportunities for growth for our non-white employees. In looking at the data, I wasn’t sure what indicators would assist with tracking that type of information. To me, it would be troubling to have a pattern of diversity in employment, but it is in the lowest paying, lowest responsibility, lowest opportunity for growth positions.
  - iv. Wilmer Chavarria I agree it is important to measure that. Some data can give you some clues, staff lists and functions, we can extrapolate from that. But when we have openings, they tend to be the lowest paid. The opportunities that are more available for our community to access. The highest paid, we don’t usually have available positions for them because they tend to stay for a long time. When we do have those positions available, we do a robust outreach, advertising hiring process to ensure we are not directly or indirectly closing the doors or denying opportunities to our community

members or people who reflect the demographic composition of our students. We have a lot fewer opportunities to do this than the lower-paying jobs.

- v. Nicole Mace shares previous opportunities where we had programs to help diversify the workforce and offer opportunities through a licensure appreciation program for support staff. Suggests it would be interesting to look at the demographics of hiring.
- vi. Wilmer shares that it is up to the board to decide how we want to continue with this, what we want to hone in on.
- vii. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept Wilmer's Internal Monitoring Report on Policy 2.9 Race and Equity.
- viii. Isaiah Donaldson- "So moved with pleasure."
- ix. ***Passed Unanimously.***

**8. Board Self Evaluation:** (Policy Title: 4.8 Governance Investment)

a. Evaluation Process Discussion

- i. Robert Millar shares Debbie, from the VSBA, uses this particular tool for board evaluations that could serve a purpose for us. At the end of the meeting, the board talks for 5-10 minutes and evaluates how the meeting went based on a document shared by the VSBA. He believes it is a rolling document that is added to meeting after meeting. It culminates in an end-of-year report. Between this and the Board Monitoring Report, we would be able to evaluate our performance as a board.

b. Meeting Reflection

- i. Emily Bowers shares her opinion that the board is really good at focusing on the meeting. It may not need to be every meeting, if it is a super long or short meeting, did we do our due diligence? Were all board members prepared and participatory? If we follow the agenda, pretty relevant to each meeting, I think the first three we could do on a case-by-case basis.
- ii. Isaiah Donaldson shares that evaluating on a regular basis is a good thing. In addition to the rolling document, is the idea that everyone does this on their own after the meeting?
- iii. Robert Millar states that this would be best done as a group.
- iv. Nicole Mace shares that we can do an annual effectiveness review individually. I agree with Emily, not necessary to go through every question. Our entire agenda is organized around policy.
- v. Emily Bowers shares that reformulating the questions, did every board member understand what was provided? Did they have a good understanding? Did they have the resources needed to ask questions either before the meeting or during? Were discussions taken into consideration?
- vi. Isaiah Donaldson shares that this could go hand in hand with Policy Governance education.
- vii. The board will bring this topic back for the retreat.

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

- a. Board representation at graduation.

**10. Executive Session:**

- a. The Board finds that “premature general public knowledge would clearly place the board or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage.”
  - i. Labor relations agreements with employees. 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B).
  - ii. Robert Millar looks for a motion to enter executive session and invite Wilmer Chavarria and Sarah Haven to join.
  - iii. Isaiah Donaldson “So Moved.”
  - iv. ***Passed Unanimously.***
    - 1. Enters Executive Session @ 8:13 pm
    - 2. Return from Executive Session @ 8:30 am
  - v. Nicole moved to approve the side letter for the WEA teachers’ unit.
  - vi. ***Passed unanimously.***

**11. Upcoming Important Dates:**

- a. Friday, May 16th, Veggie VanGO
- b. Monday, May 26th, No School Prek-12, Memorial Day
- c. Wednesday, June 4th, MS Camp Abnaki Trip
- d. Friday, June 6th, Veggie VanGo
- e. Wednesday, June 11th, Regular Board Meeting
- f. Friday, June 13th, Last Student Day

**12. Adjourn:**

- a. Meeting adjourned at **8:31 pm**