



Winooski School Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, October 8, 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: Robert Millar, Sarah Haven, Nicole Mace, Allyssa Ravelin, Katie Livermore, Emily Bowers, Cheyenne Racine, Eliza Willis, Gabby Dzessou, Joyce Mampuya, Jesse Moukoueke, Dahlia Michoma, Natalie Dzessou, Olivia Byamungu, Craig Dwyer
Virtual Attendees: Caitlin MacLeod-Bluver, Arij Reza

1. **Call to Order** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Robert Millar calls the meeting to order @ **6:01pm**
2. **Agenda Review and Adjustments:** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Robert Millar asks to swap all of #6 with all of #7.
 - i. **No Objections.**
3. **Announcements and Recognition**
 - a. Welcome Katie Livermore, New Board Member
 - i. Katie Livermore confirms she has taken her Oath of Office.
 - b. Global Diversity Awareness Month
 - c. Budget Buddy Recruitment
 - d. Other Announcements and Recognition
 - i. **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. Eliza Willis- Students think it is important to have a representative at the school board meeting. Eliza shares personal experience in middle school doing something similar and there are other students who are also interested.
5. **Consent Agenda:** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Minutes of Meetings
 - i. Regular Board Meeting: September 10, 2025
 - ii. Special Board Meeting: September 29, 2025
 - b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
 - i. Approval of Bills:
 - c. Policy Title: 2.7 Compensation and Benefits
 - d. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the Consent Agenda.

- e. Emily Bowers- “So Moved.”
- f. **Passed unanimously.**

6. Governance Processes (Policy Section IV): (60 Minutes)

- a. Policy Title: 4.1 Governing Style
 - i. Action: October 2025 Internal Monitoring Report
 - ii. Emily Bowers put this month together. She shares that we are very transparent as a board, there is nothing going on in the background in terms of this policy.
 - iii. Nicole Mace moves to approve Policy 4.1 Internal Monitoring Report
 - iv. Robert Millar explains that this is a self evaluation to the board, ensuring we are doing things according to our own policies, similar to Wilmer’s monitoring report.
 - v. **Passes Unanimously.**
- b. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies
 - i. Action: Public Hearing and Adoption of Policies
 - 1. B8: Electronic Communication Between Employees and Students
 - 2. D8: Selection of Library Materials
 - 3. F5: Behavioral Threat Assessment Teams
 - ii. Robert Millar opens up a public hearing on all three policies up for adoption.
 - 1. Matt Gile shares he thinks the library policy is great and thanks the board for taking it up.
 - 2. Katie Livermore shares that the selection of materials won’t be affected, it seems more of a curriculum thing, referring to the Mahmoud v. Taylor. Asks Wilmer for confirmation that the debriefing he references in his report won’t impact our selection of library materials policy because it’s dealing more with curriculum, not curriculum policy?
 - 3. Wilmer Chavarria shares that they overlap because of the advice we have been given by legal counsel, that is being given to the whole state as well, and has repercussions to the libraries as well. Currently, not following that advice until we have a clear legal picture of things we absolutely have to do that have been recommended. Right now, choosing to debate some of that interpretation. We are being responsible for the procedures we have in place within the limits of the law. Confident we can defend ourselves against potential challenges because we are doing the right thing. It has implications on everything, including the library. One of our health teachers, Jaycie Putlitz, joins Wilmer in drafting a procedure to opt out things, such as, sex ed to curricular things. That is something that has not yet been settled on what the districts are supposed to do. We are trying to get ahead of the game to craft a procedure that Vermont doesn’t have yet. Policies being passed today are important for how family or parental rights interact with our responsibilities.
 - 4. Katie Livermore hopefully this policy will be a piece in promoting the approach we would like to have.
 - 5. Robert Millar closes the public hearing and looks for a singular motion to accept for final approval policies B8, D8 & F5.
 - 6. Nicole Mace “So Moved.”
 - 7. **Passes Unanimously.**
 - iii. Discussion/Action: Policy Second Read and Approval for Adoption
 - 1. PG.2.1 Treatment of Students, Parents/Guardians & Community
 - 2. Wilmer Chavarria states no changes, just formatting things.
 - 3. Nicole Mace makes some references about changes in bullet pointing, capital letters, asking Wilmer if he is comfortable (as this was copied from the website). It has been in place for a long time, happy with the language? Suggestions?
 - 4. Wilmer Chavarria We are trying to stay true to policy governance as much as possible to the basic policies to high level policies. There is so much you can say about treatment,

transparency, guardians & community- that is all the work we do. There are things we could do, but focusing on what is there and giving feedback. No issues with what is said there.

5. Robert Millar would like to see the change in the formatting, typos. Substatements don't need to be, it's part of the same thing (all referencing numbers 5 and 6).
 6. Robert Millar looks for a motion to approve PG.2.1 Treatment of Students, Parents/Guardians & Community second read and approval for adoption..
 7. Emily Bowers "So Moved."
 8. **Passes Unanimously.**
- iv. Discussion: Policy First Read
1. PG.2.2 Treatment of Staff
 2. Nicole Mace states that the language from the Carver book is the only difference, retaliate versus discriminate. Nicole likes the model language better.
 3. Robert Millar shares that there are things that the old board added, the contract language, the emergency language, used the term wrongful conditions. More comparisons of the old boards added language, etc.
 4. Nicole Mace Discrimination is a legally defined term. We have other policies in place that define. I believe the intention should be retaliation or retaliation. Discrimination is prohibited in a lot of other ways- in what other policies? This should be guarded against retaliation for employees speaking up.
 5. Katie Livermore It is just clearer to me, what does that mean to discriminate? It is retaliation we are talking about.
 6. Robert Millar clarifies it narrows it in a way. Retaliation could include discrimination at any number.
 7. Emily Bowers asks clarifying questions about volunteers being staff.
 8. Nicole Mace shares it is an interesting phrase paid and volunteer staff.
 9. Robert Millar shares it is from the model language but he would like to clarify.
 10. Wilmer Chavarria shares that he doesn't isolate definitions between paid and volunteer staff. He will for the next read.
 11. Emily Bowers shares that nothing needs to be expanded on but stating that the rules will be different on whether you are paid staff member or volunteer.
 12. Nicole Mace recaps that we are going to change discrimination to retaliate and in Wilmer's future monitoring report, give some definition around what is sub paid staff versus volunteer.
- v. Discussion/Action: Rescind Policies
1. Discussion/Action: Rescind 6173 and Directing Procedure Creation (D24)
 - a. Robert Millar looks for a motion to rescind 6173 and direct Wilmer to create procedures.
 - b. Nicole Mace "So Moved."
 - c. **Passed Unanimously.**
 2. Discussion/Action: Rescind D22 (Replaced by D8)
 - a. Robert Millar looks for a motion to rescind D22 and replace with D8
 - b. Emily Bowers "So Moved."
 - c. **Passed Unanimously.**
- c. Policy Title: 4.2.1 Community Engagement
- i. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by the Board
 1. Nicole Mace Appointed to be part of the Office of New Americans Study Committee, also co-chairing educational credentials sub committee that will be opened to noncommittee members, particularly about licensure, pathways.
 - ii. Discussion: Preparation for City-WSD Joint Meeting
 1. Robert Millar - Our next meeting, they will be coming to us here at Winooski.

2. Wilmer Chavarria - Review the MOU's, supposed to tell the other entity if we are changing anything. We do want to add photos of our students on the light poles down Main Street. In return, we would provide electricity or something.
 3. Nicole Mace shares that in the past, we have had to discuss plowing or our School Resources Officer. Asks if there are anything major we should be expecting?
 - a. Wilmer Chavarria shares that he sees the city asking for an increase in rate for our District Liaison Officer.
 4. Wilmer Chavarria shares that he will provide a slideshow and Robert Millar can appoint people to present.
 - a. Emily Bowers volunteers.
- iii. Discussion: Redistricting Updates
1. Robert Millar They will be having one of their all day meetings here on the 28th. In the evening they will be having a public input meeting from 6-8pm.
 2. Katie Livermore Senator Gulick posted a survey that everyone should fill out.
 - a. Wilmer Chavarria shares that we can put in the weekly newsletters to families.
 3. Nicole Mace shares that her and Robert attended the VSBA meeting, they are looking for input from boards to decide on what they want their future to be. We are the smallest and most vulnerable, we need to state our case. They want to have Chittenden county as one, but that is 22,000 students and it won't happen, they will be broken up. We should encourage members of the community to go to the event on the 28th. Do our own reflection and outreach, come back and have an agenda item on November 12th to say what we want.
- d. Policy Title: 4.4 Board Linkage with Ownership
- i. Discussion/Action: Student Members of the Board
 - ii. Robert Millar- The history we had a student member of the board for a long time, historically; some time around the pandemic, that went away. As things got better, there have been discussions about bringing it back. There was a committee that was set up, it had an unclear goal. There was a lot of turnover on the board, Robert Millar ended that committee. One of the parts of policy governance is you don't have too many committees. In November of 2023, the discussion went back and forth; A lot of discussion came down to if one student member was the best way to get information from students. We consulted the VSBA. We decided to table the language in December until April and then it was not revisited. We always intended to come back to this discussion.
 - iii. Emily Bowers How sustainable is it to have a student on the board? They are 16 or 17 years old with extra curricular, etc?
 - iv. Nicole Mace Not a good time to deal with it during budget, but we had a lot of students around the table. Inviting them to be budget buddies, after the budget is approved, spend time to look at a policy and discuss. We need to nurture students as part of the budget process first. If we could debrief with students it would be helpful to determine what made them come. We provide food and rides, is it sustainable?
 1. Katie Livermore agrees it is something we should pursue in January.
 - v. Robert Millar clarifies even without the position, we have had feedback from students regarding volleyball, food, and discipline, for example.
 - vi. Caitlin MacLeod-Bluver teaching Ethics class, what a better way then to be involved with changes coming down and the school board. I shared some of the history. I have been to some meetings both at Winooski and in Hardwood. We had so many students from ARSC due to Wilmer's strong relationship with these students. These students have strong voices. I would love to see a formalized mechanism. What students aren't coming to ARSC? What student voices aren't being heard. I would say a 2 student board would be beneficial, one Senior and one Junior. It could be part of their Ethics Capstone.
 - vii. Robert Millar asks the board if they would like a formal motion or be part of the January.

- viii. Nicole Mace shares that this should be in January because committees will have to be formed, etc.
 - 1. The Board agrees to make this part of the January meeting.
 - e. Policy Title: 4.8 Governance Investment
 - i. Discussion: VSBA Resolutions
 - ii. Robert Millar states we went along with the VSBA resolutions.
 - iii. Nicole Mace shares that they didn't take action on a lot of the resolutions.
 - 1. Robert Millar states they came up with their own resolutions.
 - iv. Nicole Mace shares that we should follow the recommendations of the committee to the extent that we take no position, vote no.
 - 1. Robert Millar agrees. A lot of what those boards were concerned about they will put into their own resolution that was more. There were a lot of similar feelings from the boards—redistricting and things like that..
 - f. Policy Title: 4.9 Board Committee Principles
 - i. Action: 2025 Internal Monitoring Report
 - ii. Nicole Mace makes a motion to approve the Policy Title: 4.9 Board Committee Principles
 - 1. Emily Bowers "So Moved."
 - 2. **Passed Unanimously.**
7. [Executive Limitations \(Policy Section II\)](#): (60 minutes)
- a. Policy Title 2.2: Treatment of Staff
 - i. Discussion/Action: 2025 Internal Monitoring Report
 - 1. Wilmer Chavarria Change in format, a few definitions in the interpretations that were not covered in previous one- now they are. Reporting compliance. A few pieces of evidence have been added (a number of evidence, incidents that required emergency services). Much of the rest of this remains the same.
 - 2. Nicole Mace The notion of not discriminating against any staff member. Challenged by the term discriminate. It doesn't seem appropriate, good fit for conduct. I look forward to discussion later in the meeting.
 - 3. Robert Millar Curious about 2 EMS transports.
 - 4. Wilmer Chavarria doesn't want people to be alarmed. We have expertise in house and policies. Things like this happen in town, and can happen here. We had 3 last year, and two already. Wilmer Chavarria I am not worried about this.
 - ii. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the 2025 Internal Monitoring Report
 - iii. Nicole Mace- "So Moved."
 - iv. **Passes Unanimously.**
 - b. Policy Title: 2.4 Budget
 - i. Discussion: Budget Meeting Dates
 - ii. Robert Millar leads a discussion regarding Meeting Dates (i.e. day before Thanksgiving).
 - 1. Nicole Mace proposes not to meet the day before Thanksgiving, use the January 7th (as needed) meeting as replacement. Doing all budgeting in December. We will have more information regarding enrollment, etc.
 - 2. Robert Millar states he is fine with getting rid of the November 26th meeting and hosting it January 7th.
 - iii. Robert Millar opens up discussion with potential for community meeting/dinner to inform the community.
 - 1. Nicole Mace shares potentially recording a video to be sent out, follow up survey.
 - 2. Wilmer Chavarria shares that he would love to engage students, we would pay them to canvas and speak about the budget.
 - 3. Nicole Mace asks for dates of other events, concerts, etc. to set up a table and have an opportunity to share information.
 - 4. Katie Livermore shares that they can look at other community events, not parent driven.

- iv. Discussion: City Proposal for February Community Dinner
 - 1. Wilmer Chavarria shares that the city is looking to have a community dinner here. We would have tables on one side and the school on the other. Serving dinner. Have people sitting at tables to discuss budgets, etc. Strategic way to ensure they stop at the tables.
- v. Presentation/Discussion: Budget Context 1
 - 1. Introductions of the students from the ARSC (Anti-Racism Steering Committee) joining board meetings to learn and engage with our budget.
 - 2. Wilmer Chavarria gives a presentation regarding Winooski's End Statement, What a District Budget's responsibility, the Role of the Board, Indicators of Compliance, Calculating formulas, Budget Trends,
 - 3. Sarah Haven shares things to be worried about this year- Personnel (Wages, Benefits), Inflation 2025 (3.2%), 2026 (2.5%), Special Education, Preschool.
 - 4. Wilmer Chavarria shares the future dates for Budget Meetings which can be viewed here: [FY '27 Budget Timeline](#). (Reference previous discussion - Meeting 11/26 rescheduled to 01/07)
- vi. To view the full presentation: [Budget Context Presentation](#).
- vii. Robert Millar asks for a recess @ **7:35pm**
 - 1. Robert Millar called the meeting back to order @ **7:44pm**
- viii. To hear the discussion regarding FY 27 Budget: [Winooski School District Board Meeting - October 8, 2025](#)
- c. Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board
 - i. Discussion/Action: October Superintendent's Report to the Board
 - ii. Wilmer Chavarria shares that there is introduction to budget season, usual commitments, data, we are still in compliance indicator number one. Great data from the ARSC that may want to be considered with the budget coming up; worked with the students, engaged with them in their big event where the information was discussed. Administration is aware and uses it for some of their own work.
 - iii. Nicole Mace shares she is appreciative of this data. Some of the discrepancies between the white and BIPOC student responses were stark; Glad to know follow up is happening. There is a 28 point gap in having at least one adult you trust in the school, are there any insights to that? What are the students thinking about? The follow up?
 - 1. Wilmer Chavarria shares that the sentiments are the same, along with some of the frustrations since the past two years he has been at Winooski. Some have even grown.
 - 2. Nicole Mace brings up the demographic identities of our student population versus the staff.
 - a. Wilmer Chavarria shares that the students know that a lot of that is not within our power. For example, with low levels of attrition, we can't replace people. These are personal decisions to make. While students understand, it doesn't change the fact that no matter how much goes into our education and goodwill goes into our teachers and staff, it doesn't change the fact that it isn't the same. They haven't lived with their experiences. Even if the students are treated well, that doesn't translate into trust and confidence and understanding the struggles. Wilmer was not surprised by the data or the gap. Why isn't there growth? It isn't because we aren't working hard, trying to make changes and empowering students' voices. Some of the factors are not changing; They go from structural to legal to cultural. Right now, constantly being told that we hate you, we don't want you in this country, you are not an American- that alone. The school isn't doing it, but how do you know the teacher in front of you doesn't feel like that? How do you know to believe when they say we love you, I don't know if I believe that because I am being taught your people don't actually feel that. The teachers and staff that aren't saying that they won't make space for you, you have to assume that they are just tolerating us. Wilmer states that he isn't in the

shoes of our students, but that he isn't shocked by some of their sentiments. I will not say that it is bad that our part of the administration isn't doing enough; Confronting this data, really listening and taking the hit, being humble and listening to our students is the least we can do.

3. Nicole Mace shares that there has been a lot of good work done with the hiring. When there are vacancies, to eliminate the role of bias– but when you don't have a lot of turn over or applicants... We tried to pilot a program, tried to support employees in a teacher licensure apprentice program (TAP program or similar), for support staff who were interested in becoming teachers, but we didn't have a lot of money to scale that on.
4. Wilmer Chavarria shares that we still have programs in place. There have been times we have had the perfect applicant, but one qualification was missing, for example.
5. Sarah Haven we have made good progress on this. People who are doing the hiring have more resources. We are continuing to learn and grow through that.
 - a. Nicole Mace we need to play the long game with some of these students who are interested in becoming educators.
6. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept Wilmer's October Superintendent's Report.
7. Emily Bowers- "So Moved."
8. **Passes Unanimously.**
9. To hear the full discussion regarding the Superintendent Report for October 2025: [Winooski School District Board Meeting - October 8, 2025](#)

8. **Adjourn**

- a. Robert Millar looks for a motion to adjourn.
- b. Nicole Mace "So Moved."
- c. **Passed Unanimously.**
- d. Meeting adjourned @ **9:05pm.**

Upcoming Important Dates:

- e. 10/16-17: E. Release, 11am; MHS P/T Conf.
- f. 10/16-17: E. Release, 11am; JFK Inserv.
- g. 10/23: No School/No Evening Events (Diwali)