



Winooski School Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, June 12, 2024, 6:00pm  
WSD Library Learning Commons or via Google Meet  
Google Meet Link: [meet.google.com/szx-gwkh-oee](https://meet.google.com/szx-gwkh-oee)

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: Matthew Gonzalez, Barb Pendi, Robert Millar, Michael Eppolito, Wilmer Chavarria, Sarah Haven, Nicole Mace, Isaiah Donaldson, Allyssa Ravelin, Reagan -Regional Manager with Genuine Food Service, Elom Kpesse.***

1. **Call to Order**

- a. Robert Millar calls the meeting to order @ **6:01pm**

2. **Agenda Review and Adjustments:**

- a. *None Provided.*

3. **Announcements and Recognition:**

- a. Robert Millar recognizes June is Pride Month. As a board, we recognize its importance and encourage our schools to incorporate it into instructional practices in the overall student learning experiences.

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 asks if there are any public comments not on tonight's agenda  
*i. None provided.*

5. **Consent Agenda:**

- a. Minutes of Meetings  
*i. Regular Board Meeting: May 8, 2024*  
*ii. Finance Committee Meeting: May 7, 2024*  
b. Policy Title: 1.0 Ends Statement  
*i. Approve: Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)*  
*1. JFK Elementary School*  
*2. Winooski Middle School*

- 3. Winooski High School
- c. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
  - i. Approval of Bills: June 2024
- d. Policy Title: 2.7 Compensation and Benefits
  - i. Approval of Teacher Contracts
    - 1. Veronika Ackerman: Teacher, JFK Elementary
    - 2. Magdalena Cataldo: Preschool Early Childhood Special Educator
    - 3. Amanda Donovan: Teacher, WMS
    - 4. Hayley Gonzalez: Special Education Teacher, Kindergarten
    - 5. Daviah Lawrence: Teacher, Social Justice, JFK Elementary
    - 6. Anthony Lorenzo: Preschool Teacher
    - 7. Rebecca Ludden: Teacher, WMHS
    - 8. Britney Marks: Speech Language Pathologist, JFK Elementary
    - 9. Christie Moulton: Preschool Teacher
    - 10. Abigail Odell: Preschool Special Educator
    - 11. Blaise Smith: Preschool Teacher
    - 12. Louisa Wakefield: Teacher, JFK Elementary
    - 13. Jessica Wolf: Preschool Teacher
    - 14. Matthew Yu: Preschool Teacher
- e. Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept the consent agenda.
  - i. Isaiah Donaldson “So Moved.”
  - ii. ***Passes Unanimously.***

**6. Community Engagement (Policy 4.2.1): (20 Minutes)**

- a. Discussion: Recent Community Activities by Board
  - i. Isaiahs shares that they had their final ASRC committee meeting in June.
  - ii. Robert Millar & Kamal Dahal had the honor of judging speeches from Challenging Systems of Oppression. Speeches were remarkably put together and it was an impressive Day.
- b. Discussion: Newsletter Assignment
  - i. Robert Millar shares that Kamal Dahal is aware this is his month and he is working on it. Nicole Mace is next month.
- c. Discussion: Board Community Engagement Planning Document
  - i. Nicole Mace sent a note to Kamal Dahal and Elom Kpessa to pick an organization or add an organization, if they feel one would be better. It will be a good touch base on what our plan is once the board is together, potentially at the retreat where we can decide on an organization and discuss specific topics we would like to hear from the community about, such as, monitoring the end statement for example.

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

- a. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities
  - i. Discussion/Action: Food Services Contract Memo
    - 1. Wilmer Chavarria- We went through the process of selecting a food provider. We wanted more student voice and more involvement from stakeholders in evaluating services so far and potentially selecting new services or continuing with the

services. That yielded a selection of different vendors for the upcoming year. This was a very serious and consequential decision because that means ceasing partnership with the Abbey Group who has been providing services for a long time. We also wanted to be respectful of the process.

2. Sarah Haven- The District received 3 bids and went through the grading process using the rubric provided to them. That grading process determined which company would win the bid.
3. Nicole Mace Seems like the pricing was part of the tipping point and Sarah Haven confirmed that it was the heaviest weight in the rubric. The entire process is heavily regulated by the state.
4. Nicole Mace Were their students involved?
5. Wilmer Chavarria After the student showed up at the meeting, I directed Sarah Haven and Patrice Lumumba to get together and ensure stakeholder voices and student voices were included.
6. Sarah Haven The rubric really lays it out on how you have to grade them. However, we have to keep in mind what each company is going to offer in terms of getting engagement from students and staff; That was a big weight for Patrice, and it was constantly on his mind. It was also constantly on his mind with waste. If you look at our numbers with Abbey Group, we have 81% participation, which is really good. I think it comes from being a CEP school, they are just kind of handing out these meals, and no one is really watching the waste that is happening except for Patrice and teachers and directors standing at the doors.
7. Nicole Mace did take note of the fact that Genuine does do a menu planning they offer and is inclusive to the populations they are serving. That has been a real priority for our students.
8. Wilmer Chavarria Engagement doesn't stop at the selection. It is an expectation that now Patrice doesn't fade into the background. He needs to step it up now in (setting a strong foundation- inserted comment by Nicole Mace) ensure that our partnership with our stakeholders, especially students, is realized in genuine ways- in authentic communication throughout the year. The rubric we received was primarily based on feedback from.
9. To listen to the full conversation of Food Services Contract, view here [WSD Board Meeting June 12, 2024](#)
10. Sarah Haven-makes the board aware that she needs a motion from the board that will authorize her to sign the new contract.
11. Wilmer Chavarria confirms and notes that there is an action on the agenda to make a motion to authorize Sarah to sign the contract.
- 12. Robert Millar looks for a motion to approve the memo and empower Sarah to sign.**
- 13. Nicole Mace "So Moved."**
- 14. Passes Unanimously.**

b. Policy Title: 2.8 Communication and Support to the Board

i. Discussion/Action: June Superintendent's Report to the Board

**WINOOSKI SCHOOL DISTRICT, 60 NORMAND ST., WINOOSKI, VT 05404**

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1. Wilmer Chavarria shares that there is a lot here in the report, it has been a very busy month. So many wonderful events going on every day. This is a small snippet. The walk that our graduates took was wonderful! The speech competition, lots of arts- we are very strong with the arts! It has been expressed the need for more data, attendance is what we chose this time around. It is straightforward. We were looking at the last report 2.9% of equity. Showing that we can use that in any reporting.
2. Robert Millar opens to questions and comments to the board.
3. Nicole Mace This is a good example of what is possible. I am interested in the process of approach, as we are thinking about our end statement monitoring and board retreat. I am appreciative of you saying that board members can ask whatever they want, but that takes time. Not all data will necessarily inform the board in a meaningful way. What are your thoughts about support to the board members in identifying indicators that have meaning? I think starting with the end statement is probably a good start. Is that sort of what you are thinking? We may take this data conversation as opposed to personal interest
4. Wilmer Chavarria - Robert and I will be putting together the final agenda but this will be central to that. We have all heard the very key need to activate and add some measurement to the indicators of success of the end statement. My only suggestion is that there is a lot of data. What we want is to come to the retreat, break up the end statement and major categories associated with the policies, the policy governance policies that associate best with the major categories, everything beginning at the end statement. Then for the appropriate policies, decide what is the most representative data attached to those policies. After that, if you think of this as a pyramid, you can end up with an overwhelming number of pieces of indicators, data. My only advice before we get to that point of the process is to remember there is power in less. If you have too many things, then you are shallow with everything.
5. Nicole Mace I think I would be looking for recommendations from you, Michael or the administrative team- indicators in where we feel the date is reliable- having a longitudinal way to track.
6. Nicole Mace Two areas of appreciation: The Kettle installation project in JFK- really pleased with what it was and the action that was taken. Also, the Isabelle Wilkerson event. I heard from other members of the community who attended that event how impressed they were with the fact that our students were there and they engaged in that conversation. Just wanted to thank Caitlin MacLeod-Bluver for the great work that she is doing. I also want to mention that it is nice to stand on the sidelines of a track meet and hear people saying the great work Winooski is doing.
7. To listen to the full conversation of June Superintendent's Report to the Board, view here [WSD Board Meeting June 12, 2024](#)
8. **Robert Millar looks for a motion to accept June Superintendent's Report to the Board**

**9. Nicole Mace "So Moved."**

**10. Passes Unanimously.**

ii. Discussion: 5.26 Memo to the Board

1. Wilmer Chavarria- Clarifies that his letter regarding the warning given by Interim Secretary Zoe Saunders regarding administrative control over a failing school was widely shared. He was aware because he started receiving memos from other superintendents. He notes that one of his grievances is that not enough people are talking about it. Not enough people have experiences with this. This is familiar to the Superintendent because as a teacher he was a victim of a punitive approach in schools that needed improvement . This is a society wide conversation.
2. Nicole Mace I think it is important you share your experience with the State. I agree being designated twice puts us in a position where we don't want to test it. The AOE and secretary have been reluctant to use the tools they have to support their districts. It would be quite shocking to go from a complete hands off approach to control over administration.
3. Wilmer Chavarria shares suggestions on what we do as a district.
4. To listen to the full conversation of the Memo to the Board, view here [WSD Board Meeting June 12, 2024](#).

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

a. Policy Title: 4.2 Board Job Description

i. Update: Grievance Resolutions

1. Wilmer Chavarria There were two grievances that were started last summer, before the start of the school year. The board was involved, as it came to the board. The association couldn't reach an agreement so it went to the lawyer level. The main part is the creation of the committee, which it has been.
2. Nicole Mace Does this impact management's ability to make decisions?
3. Wilmer Chavarria Yes, the original contract we have in place, assigned discretion to the superintendent. The issue with the next part of the contract, it also said at one of the discretionary decisions was grievable if the worse abuse or excessive- I am not sure what the exact wording was but it is grievable if you believe it went too far. That is the most difficult part to interpret. What constitutes overreach? What constitutes abuse of that discretion? That was one of the central questions in the grievance. A lot of that goes away, because the committee will be tasked with deciding a lot of the specifics in a lot of the predictable cases. If we come up with a unique situation that isn't a predictable case, then the committee would have to meet to convene on it.
4. Nicole Mace asks if this is an update and it is noted that the board agreed with Wilmer's original determination and after going to arbitration this is the settlement and the grievance has been withdrawn.

b. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies

i. Update: Safe Schools Resolution

1. Isaiah Donaldson- Last meeting we had an engagement with Sam Spigos in regards to firearm storage safety and proposal of a resolution. I took it upon

myself to create a new language and present it at this meeting. I have put together two versions in the form of a statement or a resolution

2. Robert Millar notes that the board will need time to review both versions presented to them tonight and ask for clarification around Isaiah noting that a statement would be more appropriate than a resolution.
  3. Isaiah Donaldson- Overall, a resolution would be way more impactful. The reason I am leaning more towards a statement versus a resolution is because I am keeping the district's workload in mind.
  4. Robert Millar requests that people follow up with Isaiah on their ideas and report back to the board with those thoughts so this can be added as an agenda item and allow for ample time to review prior to a board meeting.
- ii. Discussion/Action: Policy Second Read and Approval for Adoption
1. A21 Public Participation at Board Meetings
    - a. Robert Millar asks if there are any changes?
    - b. Wilmer Chavarria No, there were no changes other than the coding.
    - c. Robert Millar asks for comments?
    - d. *None provided.*
    - e. **Robert Millar Looks for a motion to approve for adoption, A21 Public Participation at Board Meetings.**
    - f. Elom Kpessa inquires about getting people to attend board meetings and the best way to help make this happen.
    - g. The board shares that this is common for our district unless there is a controversial topic.
    - h. The board shares that we have a lot of public people watching the recording.
    - i. Nicole Mace- At one point, we had the highest watching of municipal meetings.
    - j. *Motion passes unanimously.*
- iii. Discussion/Action: Policy First Read
1. B5 - Employee Unlawful Harassment
    - a. Robert Millar We have an existing policy that includes some updates from VSPA.
    - b. Wilmer Chavarria There are some major changes in some very important definitions, including what unlawful harassment is. There are differences even in the protected groups. There are some that are not there anymore. I think like political affiliation , things like that. Also, the standard or the bar is a lot lower for initiating an investigation.It is no longer conduct that has a purpose or effect of substantially interfering. Now it is just interfering with the employees work or creating an environment that is hostile, intimidating or offensive. We have a lot more duty to investigate on



a bar that is much lower for a conduct that falls within the criteria. We also updated a designated person, we updated the typos from the old one.

- c. Robert Millar asks if we should list the title and not the name of the person, as positions change. There are also a couple mentions to the supervisory union which we don't need.
  - d. Wilmer Chavarria That is valid, we could do that. The only one had a person's name on it, but I am happy to update it with a role.
  - e. Nicole Mace I am interested in the cross-reference. We have harassment which is legally defined specific conduct. Then there is discrimination which is different from harassment. I am just wondering what framework we have for discussing discrimination when it does not manifest as harassment.
  - f. Wilmer Chavarria Unlawful discrimination is mostly a complaint against us as a district, as a whole. We did have a complaint that I made the decision not to go into an investigation because the complaint was about a specific procedure, it did not have discriminatory effects - so we did not investigate that one. That was more district as an employer against employees. This would be an employee to employee type of thing where an environment is being created that is hostile to the protected classes.
  - g. Nicole Mace I think it is important to -maybe it happens in our equity policy, but the fact we don't have a commitment or statement to non discrimination. It can take a lot of different forms. It is important that we are clear to people what is acceptable and unacceptable and where to go to bring complaints.
  - h. Wilmer Chavarria confirms it is in the queue. It was approved for adoption back in February. It is one of the ine's that will be published in the summer. It will be in effect for the next school year.
  - i. Nicole Mace Confirms we did go through the notice of Non-Discrimination.
  - j. Wilmer Chavarria We can not list it yet, because it has not been adopted.
  - k. Nicole Mace requests the policy be in the packet for the next meeting.
  - l. Robert Millar asks for other comments and questions? It is a first read, action is needed.
- c. Policy Title: 4.4 Board Linkage with Ownership
- i. Heart of Winooski Foundation Board Member Appointment
    1. Robert Millar We are supposed to have a board member on the HOW foundation. Correct me if I am wrong, but Elom didn't you want to be appointed?
    2. Elom Kpessé- Agrees.
    3. Nicole Mace **Move to nominate Elom to be Heart of Winooski Foundation Board Member**
    4. Robert Millar **Doesn't need to go to a vote, but let's do it- all those in favor?**
    5. *Passes unanimously.*

- d. Policy Title: 4.5 Agenda Planning
  - i. Discussion: Board Meeting Summer Schedule
    - 1. Robert Millar Who would be opposed to skipping the July Meeting?
    - 2. Isaiah Donaldson- what would be the reasoning?
    - 3. Robert Millar We have two meetings in August, and Wilmer will not be present in July
    - 4. Board is in agreement and will not have a July meeting.
  - ii. Discussion: School Board Retreat Planning and Topics
    - 1. Robert Millar asks what Wilmer is looking for?
    - 2. Wilmer Chavarria A good chunk of time will be used for the end statement...If there is anything you would like Robert and I to consider, please let us know. We won't be meeting until then.
    - 3. Isaiah Donaldson What is the timing of the event?
    - 4. Wilmer Chavarria Last time, we did a full day of it starting at 8:30-4.
    - 5. Robert Millar asks if there is anything else?
    - 6. *Nothing provided.*
- e. *Robert Millar looks for a motion to enter executive session in order to set a contract and to invite Wilmer Chavarria and Sarah Haven*
  - i. *Nicole Mace "So Moved"*
  - ii. *Passes Unanimously.*
  - iii. *Entered executive Session @ 7:33am.*

9. **Executive Session:**

- a. Premature General Public Knowledge: Contracts. 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A).
- b. Robert Millar bring the board out of Executive Session @ 7:44pm
- c. **Looks for a motion to accept an early retirement proposal for Mark McQuinn.**
- d. **Nicole Mace "So Moved."**
- e. *Passes Unanimously.*

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

- a. Next Board Meeting in Person - August 13th.

11. **Upcoming Important Dates:**

- a. 6/13: Last Student Day, Early Release at 12:15pm
- b. 6/15: Graduation
- c. 6/21: VeggieVan Go
- d. 6/22: Winooski Together at 12:30 PM, O'Brien Center

12. **Adjourn:** 7:45pm

- a. **Robert Millar** Looks for a motion to adjourn the meeting
- b. **Nicole Mace** "So Moved."
- c. *Meeting Adjourned @ 745pm.*



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