



Wakefield School Board Public Minutes

January 2, 2024

Held in Paul School Library

Approved

BOARD MEMBERS		ADMINISTRATORS	
Mary Collins, Chair	✓	Anne Kebler, Superintendent	✓
Bob Ouellette, Vice Chair	✓	Frank Markiewicz, Business Administrator Via Zoom	
Brennan Peaslee	✓	Sarah Howard, Special Ed Director	
Sandrea Taliaferro	✓	Norma DiRocco, Principal	
Robert DeColfmacker	✓	Ivy Levitt-Carlson, Assistant Principal	✓

Those Present: Rachael Lapierre, Relf Fogg, Mary Soares from Clearview TV

Mrs. Collins led those present in the salute to the flag at 6:09.

Reports

Transportation

Mrs. Taliaferro reported that they now have a van and a driver. The van will be lettered. One of the buses had \$13,000 in repairs. They will be adding more high school cluster stops.

Superintendents Report

Mrs. Kebler said it was so exciting to hear how well attended our annual holiday concert was. It is great to see our community come in and celebrate our students, The concert was so well done, thank you to Mrs. Sullivan, our music teacher, for coordinating this and showing off the talent of our students and thank you to all the staff who came after hours to help make it such a successful night. We look forward to continuing with the spirit of community throughout the school year.

We have recently been designated by the Department of Education as a school in need of "Additional Targeted support and Improvement" (ATSI). This is one of three designations a school might be given in New Hampshire, and it is as a result of three subgroups in our school which did not meet state cut scores in a variety of indicators. Our school leadership is meeting with the DOE department of accountability on Thursday, December 28th and further details will be brought to the board as we learn what expectations we must meet. The three subgroups that did not perform well are our students with disabilities population, economically disadvantaged students and students of a different race. The work we do the remainder of the year will include a focus on utilizing our interventions and special education staff to address the gaps these subgroups are showing.

I am excited to start the new year with a focus on finalizing our literacy standards with vertical planning to assure our teachers are consistently meeting the grade level standards and all staff are aware of all grade level expectations. To do this work, we will be using all non-instructional time

working with our staff to come to a consensus on our literacy standards. Non instructional time will include our staff meetings our leadership team meetings, teacher professional learning communities and professional development days. In November our staff worked on producing a "curriculum resource dump" which was an activity which allowed them to get a quick inventory of the curriculum resources that are being used in classrooms. This work will align nicely with the finalization of literacy standards with the standards work moving towards consistently matching our resources to our standards. There have been some dates established by our behavioral health team for monitoring our data regarding our SEL programming and we will work with the staff at our first staff meeting in January to determine at least 2 data days where we spend time monitoring the data teachers are gathering through the work, they are doing with our literacy standards. In addition, our district leadership team will be monitoring the work done monthly.

We believe that strong literacy skills are necessary for every content area we teach in our school and we will be looking at the many ways we use literacy when teaching/learning science, social studies, math and the arts. It is clear from the research that our best work is done when we do it collaboratively as a staff rather than in smaller silos. I am excited to embark on this endeavor and will report back to the board monthly on how our work is going. It is crucial that the time needed to do this work be carved out and structurally planned so that our teachers have the time they need to teach and do the work necessary for focused improved student achievement.

I am pleased with our budget process and want to commend all our department heads for getting the job in a timely manner. As a reminder, the Public Hearing on January 9th at 6:30 at the town hall is a great opportunity for the community to ask questions about the budget. I look forward to the continued support of the community which we saw during the budget process. Thank you to all who worked so hard to help get our budget approved.

Mrs. Kebler said the meeting with the DOE has been rescheduled. She said they had a very low participation rate for special ed in state testing. Mrs. Levitt-Carlson said there were fewer who opted out this year. Last year we sent the opt out forms home this year parents had to request the forms from the office. She said it's hard to have an accurate assessment when people opt out. Participation rate is a part of the score.

Homeschoolers are counted in the test scores for Wakefield. They did not have an opportunity to test so that counted against us. Those scores are marked at a zero. Mrs. Kebler said that Ms. Howard is developing a plan to determine why students are opting out. Participation, achievement, growth and equity are the four areas that are used for scoring. Mrs. Kebler said there are several designations that are used. The whole school did poorly, targeted and then there is one where subgroups did poorly. Some of our sub group did poorly.

Mr. Ouellette said if there are good reasons why we are doing poorly on the state test the community needs to know this. Mrs. Levitt-Carlson suggested looking at the raw data of the kids that did take the test. The state factors in the population that never took the test as part of our score. How did the kids who did take the test score? Mrs. Levitt-Carlson will pull that all together to share with the Board.

Discipline

Mrs. Levitt-Carlson told the Board that was happy with the results of the discipline report. Based on language being used by staff and students reflects the work they have done around MTSSB. Classroom teachers are using the language of PAWS. There has been a significant reduction in some of the behaviors as with compared with last year. She shared several graphs with the Board

which focused on specific areas like referrals per grade, referrals by days/months, physical aggression, a broad category, which includes horsing around on the playground. Also, action taken. Last year there were 100 ISS this year there have been 18. All categories have shown a significant decrease in referrals. A lot of write ups come from the bus ride home. She and Mrs. DiRocco have been riding the buses. She will be doing a reminder of bus behavior expectations within the next week. Bus safety will be part of that reminder.

Consent Agenda

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the consent agenda. (Vote 3-2)

Meeting Minutes

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve the public minutes of 12-19-23 with a correction. (Vote 5-0)

Old Business

Rochester AREA Agreement Committee

Mrs. Peaslee would like to start a committee to look at other models and see if there's a possibility of other schools interested in taking our students then see what it's going to take to get out of our AREA agreement.

Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mr. DeColfmacker, to have Mrs. Peaslee head the AREA agreement committee. (Vote 5-0)

Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Peaslee, to have Mr. DeColfmacker serve on the AREA agreement committee. (Vote 5-0)

Mr. Ouellette asked how many will serve on this committee. Mr. Ouellette suggested five to seven members. Mrs. Kebler would like to be on it. Mrs. Peaslee asked about having a teacher and a Special Ed educator. Mr. DeColfmacker liked that idea. Mrs. Colbath said she would like to be on the committee and so did Mrs. Soares, both having experience with AREA agreements. They will both send in letters of intent. Mrs. Kebler said she would put this out to the community. After some discussion it was decided by the Board that the committee will meet once a month on a Monday at 5:30. The letters of intent will be due on January 26th. Mrs. Peaslee and Mr. DeColfmacker will review the letters of intent on January 29th and make their choices.

Mrs. Peaslee made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the AREA Agreement minutes of 10-16-23. (Vote 5-0)

Ratification of Teachers Salary Schedule.

Mrs. Taliaferro made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, that we approve additional raises for \$2,200 for fiscal year 2025 subject to voter approval and authorize the School Board Chair to sign the tentative agreement with the Teachers' Union.

Mrs. Taliaferro said with the increase in insurance costs some teachers were receiving less pay than they were the year before. She said the Board wanted to make an adjustment after they finished the para negotiations. They needed to adjust both teachers and paras to be competitive. She said we were losing staff that couldn't afford travel costs and increases in prices for

everything. This is a one time adjustment. Negotiations for the teachers CBA will take place next year. She said in the current CBA teachers would receive a 2% increase. She said the cost of living adjustment for last year was a 4.1% increase for social security. And this year it's an 8.7% increase. This adjustment is an average increase of 4.48% increase. We will need to adjust this next year to be competitive with surrounding schools. She said this is a good start. **(Vote 5-0)**

New Business

Policies (2nd Reading)

BEDG – Minutes

There was a discussion about the wording in this policy. Mrs. Taliaferro said the Board voted to keep the word 'will' instead of the NHSBA suggestion of 'should'. Mr. Fogg objected to changing the word from 'will' to 'should'.

Mrs. Peaslee made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to have the word 'will' be put back into and approve policy BEDG and have it available for review at the next meeting. (Vote 4-1)

Mrs. Taliaferro asked about the policy where the Board voted to put the second comment back in but said it's not on the agenda. Mr. Fogg explained to the Board how the thirty minutes of public comment should work and that it's censorship to not let anyone relinquish their time to another person. Mrs. Kebler explained that wording is in policy BEDH and it was adopted by the present Board on February 7, 2023. She explained this was a separate policy from the one that was brought to the Board at the last meeting. Mrs. Collins said the Board approved that wording on one policy but refused to approve that wording in another policy. Mr. Fogg said that would be unconstitutional.

BEDB – Agenda Preparation and Dissemination

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Taliaferro, to approve Policy BEDB.

Mr. DeColfmacker, speaking to Mr. Fogg, said maybe we should stick to the policy for public comment that says, 'items on the agenda' to eliminate the time spent having conversations that have nothing to do with our night's work.

Mrs. Taliaferro rescinded her second and Mr. Ouellette rescinded his motion.

Mrs. Peaslee made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to eliminate the entire last paragraph from policy BEDB. (Vote 5-0)

Mrs. Peaslee made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve policy BEDB. (Vote 4-1)

DAF – Administration of Federal Grant Funds

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve policy DAF. (Vote 5-0)

JLDDDB – Suicide Prevention and Response

Mrs. Peaslee made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve policy JLDDDB with the word building removed throughout the policy. (Vote 4-1)

Policies (1st Reading)

EEAB – Establishment of School Bus Routes

No changes in this policy.

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Taliaferro, that anytime a policy comes before the Board we receive the original and the proposed and any policies that coincide with the policy. (Vote 4-1)

AC – Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity Employment and Anti-Discrimination Plan

This is a combination of several policies.

AC-E – Annual Notice of Contact Information

Take out names and add: this information can be found _____.

ADC – Prohibitions Regarding Use and Possession of Tobacco Products

The Board talked about making combining this with the student policy and making one for students and staff.

Nominations/Hires/Resignations

FYI - Linda Lee Hooper non CDL Driver. They're waiting for the background checks to come back.

Non Public

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mr. DeColfmacker, to enter non public session under 91-A:3, 11 (c) at 8:15. Roll call vote: Collins aye, DeColfmacker aye, Ouellette aye, Taliaferro aye, Peaslee aye. (Vote 5-0)

The Board returned to Public Session at 8:30.

Adjournment

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 (Vote 5-0)

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting,

Priscilla Colbath
School Board Secretary