

WILLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

May 10, 2022

Virtual Meeting: Zoom

7:00 p.m.

Minutes

[Zoom Recorded](#)

Members Present

Michelle Doucette Cunningham - Chair
Herb Arico- Secretary
Ann Grosjean- Vice-Chair
Tracey Anderson
Donna Cook
Briana Ross
Laura Rodriguez
(members all present remotely through Zoom)

Also Present

Superintendent of Schools, Phil Stevens
Members of the public

1. Call to order

Chair Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Cunningham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Present to speak

Sarah Reis, Pinecrest Rd. read her email she wrote to the board of education regarding her concern about the public access to the curriculum.

Arthur Christensen, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, expressed his appreciation of the last meeting regarding students' scores and town involvement. He also expressed his concern regarding curriculum.

4. Guest Speaker: Great Schools Partnership, Portrait of a Graduate

Gabriela Striteler from Great Schools Partnership discussed the details of Portrait of a Graduate and the committee's process.

Some of the board members asked Ms. Striteler a few questions; such as the assessment process, the objective of this program, how it aligns with other schools including E.O. Smith and who/what is the Great School Partnership organization. The board members discussed in the length with Ms. Striteler.

5. Chairman's report

Chairperson Cunningham shared they had another meeting, Wednesday, May 11, 2022 at 6:30pm regarding Ed specs.

6. Communications

The communications that came in were from Sara Reis, Michelle Christinsen and Amy Cook.

7. **Superintendent Report**

a. 2021-2022 school year update

Superintendent Stevens gave an update on; Covid cases, state testing, staff appreciation week, the HSM baseball team thriving and CIP projects.

b. End of the year activities

Superintendent Stevens discussed a few events; Hall School has a band concert on June 2, 2022, the chorus concert June 9, 2022 in the gymnasium. The Eighth grade promotion ceremony will be June 21, 2022 or the last day of school and 4th grade ceremony at Center School is June 17, 2022 at 9am.

c. Enrollment Update

Superintendent Stevens stated there was no change since the last report.

d. Staffing

Superintendent Stevens discussed several staffing changes.

Donna Cook had some concerns with staffing and positions that continue to be available.

e. CES Insurance Claim

Superintendent Stevens discussed the work that is continuing to be done from the flood and asbestos.

8. **Financial Report**

a. May Financial report

Attachment #1

Superintendent Stevens shared the significant changes to the programs.

A few board members inquired about money available for transportation and technology.

9. **Committee Reports**

a. Negotiations Committee

Superintendent Stevens explained it was on the agenda for later.

b. Transportation Committee

Superintendent Stevens stated that they met and discussed the proposal from M&J.

10. **New Business**

a. Approve minutes of regular meeting, April 12, 2022

Attachment #2

b. Approve minutes of Policy Committee, April 11, 2022

Attachment #3

c. Approve minutes of special meeting, April 26, 2022

Attachment #4

Chairperson Cunningham made a motion to approve the regular meeting of April 12, 2022, the policy committee meeting on April 11, 2022 and the special meeting on April 26, 2022.

Ann Grosjean seconded the motion.

Donna Cook stated she thought they accepted the policy meeting minutes and not approved them.

Chairperson Cunningham accepted a friendly amendment to accept the Policy meeting minutes instead of approving.

Superintendent Stevens explained the policy committee is working on the process of recording the minutes to be shorter and more direct.

Chairperson Cunningham repeated the motion to approve the regular meeting on April 12, 2022, accept the policy committee meeting on April 11, 2022 and approve the special meeting on April 26, 2022.

7 Yes Motion passes, unanimously

d. WESS Contract

Superintendent Stevens explained who this contract includes as it's a mix of many staff. He highlighted what negotiations the committee supported.

Ann Grosjeans made a motion to approve the WESS contract for the next three school years , 2022-2025.

Herb Arico seconded the motion.

7 Yes Motion passes, unanimously

e. Funding for technology

Superintendent Stevens discussed some available funds at the end of the school year. He shared some items that he felt would benefit from these funds including laptops for staff and steps to increase cyber security. The next step is for this to be presented to the finance committee.

f. Superintendent end of the year evaluation

Chairperson Cunningham reminded the board the process of this and that she emailed the link and form to use. She asked for them to be done by the end of the month.

g. English Language Arts curriculum set #3

Tracey Anderson made a motion to approve the English Language Arts Curriculum set #3.

Ann Grosjean seconded the motion.

Donna Cook expressed some concerns regarding the ability and availability of the curriculum.

A few board members made a few suggestions for Donna Cook towards her frustrations.

Herb Arico expressed his thoughts and concerns regarding the curriculum. He felt it was all around well written but the material has him concerned.

Tracey Anderson expressed her approval of the curriculum and that she takes this responsibility very seriously.

Tracey Andersson asked the chair to call the question.

Laura Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstain
H. Arico		x	
M. Cunningham	x		
D.Cook		x	
T. Anderson	x		
A.Grosjean	x		
B. Ross	x		
L. Rodriguez	x		

5 Yes 2 No Motion passes

Chair Cunningham facilitated the vote to approve the English Language Arts Curriculum set #3.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstain
H. Arico		x	
M. Cunningham	x		
D.Cook		x	
T. Anderson	x		
A.Grosjean	x		
B. Ross	x		
L. Rodriguez	x		

5 Yes 2 No Motion passes

11. **Old Business**
a. Portrait of a Graduate

Superintendent Stevens reiterated the board's goals and why they are doing this process. Their next meeting is May 25, 2022.

b. 2021-2022 Willington Public School calendar update

Superintendent Stevens discussed the board's options for the last day of school. Friday June 17 or Tuesday, June 21 were the choices.

The board discussed details including parent feedback, summer camp schedules, the high school schedule, early dismissals due to heat, meeting the state's 180 day minimum, and staff requirements.

Ann Grosjean made a motion to have the last day of school be on Friday, June 17, 2022.

Briana Ross seconded the motion.

Chairperson Cunningham stated that it would be half day on the 17th.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstain
H. Arico			x
M. Cunningham	x		
D.Cook	x		
T. Anderson	x		
A.Grosjean	x		
B. Ross	x		
L. Rodriguez	x		

6 Yes 1 Abstain Motion passes

12. Present to Speak

Arthur Christensen, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, found it distasteful to vote to stop discussion while others on the board had more to discuss.

13. Board Comment

A. Grosjean wanted to thank all the staff and teachers for all their hard work and that they are appreciated.

H. Arico wanted to thank the staff and those leaving. He also welcomed new staff. He also expressed his concern and disappointment in the board for not allowing more questions as he thought that was part of being on the board.

L. Rodriguez wanted to thank the staff. She also wanted to wish the staff that is leaving well and welcome to the new staff. And congratulations to the baseball team. She also discussed how she understands the community and the board's concerns with the curriculum.

D. Cook expressed her hopes and concerns towards the curriculum. She also is hoping that the policy committee is working on being able to share emails that are sent to the board.

T. Anderson wanted to thank the staff that was leaving and welcomed the new staff. She also wanted to thank the guest speaker from the beginning of the meeting. She is also cheering on the baseball team.

B. Ross wanted to thank the staff, especially throughout this pandemic. She expressed how she hopes students continue to grow through literature and art that reflects themselves and their struggles. She also understands the community's wants and needs to have access to the curriculum. She hopes they can work to have more opportunities for that to happen.

Chairperson Cunningham wanted to thank her fellow board members for their time and effort. She thanked them all for the cards and texts she received after her father's passing last week. She

shared her father was once on the board of education and she feels she is living his legacy. She also apologized if her passion sometimes became overpowering. She was not trying to be rude or to talk over others.

14. **Adjournment**

Ann Grosjean made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:23p.m.

Donna Cook seconded the motion.

7 Yes Motion passes, unanimously

Nicole Fusco
Recording Secretary

Next regular meeting June 14, 2022