

**WALLINGFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
INSTRUCTIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Monday – June 8, 2015  
Board of Education Conference Room  
Hall-Elton Building**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Cei called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

J.P. Bolat, J. Cei, K. Hlavac, J. Marrone, R. McKay, C. Shortell, M. Votto

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**

C. Lavalette, B. McCully, S. Menzo, M. Montagnon, K. O'Donnell, S. Parkhurst

**II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Instructional Committee Meeting minutes of May 4, 2015 were accepted with noted corrections.

**III. DISCUSSION/PRESENTATION / POSSIBLE ACTION**

**A. District Leadership Team – Overview of Work Regarding Mastery-Based Learning & K-12 Graduation Standards**

Kate O'Donnell, district Science Resource teacher and a member of the District Leadership Team provided a powerpoint presentation about the initiatives during 2014-2015 of the District Leadership Team. During the past school year this team conducted monthly meetings with representative constituents to discuss and learn what mastery-based learning means. Group norms were established, a mission statement was created and the members divided into sub-teams to create planning strategies. Mrs. O'Donnell stated mastery-based learning is known by several other names, such as competency-based learning and proficiency-based learning. In a mastery-based learning environment there is a consistent set of rigorous standards for all students. These standards provide clear and consistent expectations for student learning, clear and consistent criteria for assessing student achievement, and clear, consistent criteria for communicating with students and parents.

In reality, many aspects of mastery-based learning are not different from what is already being done. Wallingford has curriculum based on standards and grading for our K-5 students is also based on standards. The main differences are teachers and administrators will not be the only ones to know standards for our students. A clear progression and alignment of standards will exist and be shared so it is known what knowledge and skills a graduate from Wallingford Public Schools has attained. These developed standards will provide a consistent reporting of progress for parents and students. (The district adopted standards are consistently rigorous for all students).

Mrs. O'Donnell noted once the district develops mastery-based learning, every student will be taught at their level, all standards will be developed towards real-life skills, projects will make learning authentic, and students will have increased choice in how to learn. They will become focused on learning; not just grades. To establish group norms all points of views must be respected, allow for all voices to be heard, be open-minded and the group should follow an agenda. The next steps are for all sub-groups to meet and design a plan to shift Wallingford to a mastery-based learning system.

This planning must include engaging the Board of Education in developing a conceptual understanding about mastery-based learning, review existing policies, draft new & revised policies, and collect feedback on these draft policies from faculty, staff, students, parents and local district officials. Policies should then be refined based on feedback and then adopted by the Board of Education.

The next steps are to establish a district-wide mastery-based committee along with a school-wide committee which will collaboratively develop the conceptual framework with faculty and staff. Professional development for faculty and staff must include mastery-based learning and assessment literacy. Cross-curricular graduation standards and content-area graduation standards will be developed. To engage the community, a communications plan for mastery-based learning will be developed which will inform students, parents and the public about mastery-based learning.

The consensus was to send the proposed Mastery-Based Learning and K-12 Graduation Standards for approval to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

## **B. Parental Consent Form for Students Participating in Yale University's Social Robotics Lab Study**

Mr. Parkhurst informed the Board that Yale University Social Robotics Lab is conducting a research study which investigates how social robots can create more effective and engaging learning interactions for students. The ultimate goal of the study is to help students (ages 9 to 11, all ability levels) learn math concepts by providing a personalized tutoring interaction. This work is part of a large grant from the National Science Foundation that funds social robotics research at Yale, USC, Stanford, and MIT.

Students will engage in 10-minute sessions with Yale's robot four times during a 2-4 week period and will work on a series of math problems and interact with the robot throughout the sessions, including asking the robot for help. (The students will not physically touch the robot). Mr. Parkhurst noted the robot is called *NAO*, is about two feet tall and is considered to be a humanoid robot. *NAO* actually sits on a desk in front of the student and will speak to the student. In addition to the four math sessions with the robot, each participating student will engage in a debriefing session with a Yale-affiliated experimenter that includes questions about the student's experience during the sessions to help determine how effective the robots were in helping the student. All responses collected during the study will be held in confidence.

The consensus was to send the proposed Parental Consent Form for Students Participating in Yale University's Social Robotics Lab Study for approval to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

## **IV. - A. Strategic Plan Narratives Updates**

This item was tabled for a future Instructional Committee Meeting.

## **V. POLICY**

### **A. Proposed Adoption of Revised Policy: Instructional Materials – IIA**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the only revision to this policy involves the removal of the second sentence in the first paragraph and the addition of the following sentence in the first paragraph: *The Curriculum Management Team has the responsibility to review and recommend all curricula for the district subject to the approval of the Board of Education. When curriculum is being reviewed and recommended to be sent to the Board of Education for approval, the Curriculum Management Team must consist of the following members for a recommendation of action to be taken: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, a Curriculum Coordinator or Curriculum Resource Teacher in the related subject area, Subject Area Coordinators in related subject area, Department Chairpersons in related subject areas, three building level administrators and a minimum of 4*

teachers; one from K-2; one from 3-5, one from 6-8 in related subject area and one from 9-12 in related subject area.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of revised policy: Instructional Materials - IIA to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**B. Proposed Adoption of Revised Policy: Textbook Selection - IIAA**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the two revisions to this policy include the removal of paragraph one and the addition of the following sentence: *The Board of Education shall adopt textbooks by a majority vote. Item #1 now reads: Potential textbooks are to be evaluated to assure that they are accurate, current, and aligned with our philosophy of education – (Policy CAA-Philosophy of Education).*

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of revised policy: Textbook Selection - IIAA to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**C. Proposed Adoption of Revised Policy: Request for Reconsideration of an Instructional Material – IIAF**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the entire policy was revised to read as follows: *The Wallingford Board of Education is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the school district. A committee of professionally trained personnel employed by the school system (the “Curriculum Management Team”) has the responsibility to recommend, develop and review all curricula for the district, subject to the approval of the Board of Education. Requests for reconsideration of instructional materials shall be carefully investigated, but it must be recognized that the ultimate responsibility for selection of educational materials rests with school authorities.*

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of revised policy: Request for Reconsideration of an Instructional Material - IIAF to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**D. Proposed Adoption of Revised Policy: Curriculum Development and Adoption - IF**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the revisions to this policy include changes in paragraph one under Curriculum Development to read as follows: *The Curriculum Management Team is a committee of professionally trained personnel employed by the school system. The Curriculum Management Team consists of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, a Curriculum Coordinator or Curriculum Resource Teacher in related subject area, Subject Area Coordinators in related subject area, Department Chairpersons in related subject area, three building level administrators and a minimum of 4 teachers; one from K-2, one from 3-5, one from 6-8 in related subject area and one from 9-12 in related subject area. This team has the responsibility to review and recommend all curricula for the district subject to the approval of the Board of Education.*

Changes in paragraph 2 under Curriculum Development are the following: *The process for development of curriculum shall begin with the Curriculum Management Team, who shall refer the potential curriculum to a curriculum writing team in that subject area. Upon completion of the work of the writing team, the draft curriculum shall be sent to the Curriculum Management Team who has the responsibility to review and recommend curricula for approval by the Board of Education. If the management team makes revisions it must go back to the curriculum writing team prior to presentation to the Board of Education. When curriculum is being reviewed and recommended to be sent to the Board of Education for approval, the Curriculum Management Team must consist of the following members for a recommendation of action to be taken: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, a Curriculum Coordinator or Curriculum Resource Teacher in related subject area, Subject Area Coordinators in related subject area, Department Chairpersons in related subject area, three building level administrators and a minimum of 4 teachers; one from K-2; one*

from 3-5, one from 6-8 in related subject area and one from 9-12 in related subject area. Mr. Parkhurst noted paragraph 3 under Curriculum Development was eliminated.

Mr. Parkhurst stated the revisions to this policy include changes in paragraph two under Curriculum Adoption to read as follows: *All new curriculum Units of Study or substantive revisions to existing curriculum Units of Study must be approved by the Board of Education. The Curriculum Management Team will present the Board of Education with Units of Study consisting of a written overview of the district curriculum in a subject area. The Board of Education will approve the Established Goals, Transfer Goals, Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions in each Unit of Study. No course of study shall be eliminated or new course of study added without the Board's approval.*

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of revised policy: Curriculum Development and Adoption - IF to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**E. Proposed Adoption of Revised Policy: Curriculum Documents - IFE**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the revision to this policy is the changing of the word *guides* where it appears throughout the policy to read as follows: *Unit of Study*. The additional revisions are the addition of items E. and F. as follows: *E. If the Unit of Study is not approved by the Curriculum Management Team, it shall then be provided to the Curriculum Writing Team for review and recommended revisions. F. If the Unit of Study is not approved by the Board of Education, it shall then be provided to the Curriculum Management Team for further review.*

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of revised policy: Curriculum Documents - IFE to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**F. Proposed Adoption of Revised Regulation: Requests for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials – IIAF-R**

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of revised regulation: Requests for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials – IIAF-R to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

There being no further business, Chairperson Cei adjourned the meeting at 10:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betsy McCully  
Assistant Superintendent's Secretary