

**WALLINGFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
INSTRUCTIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday – November 3, 2014
Board of Education Conference Room
Hall-Elton Building**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Cei called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

M. Brooder, K. Castelli, J. Cei, K. Hlavac , J. Marrone, R. McKay, C. Shortell, M. Votto

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

N. Brophy, D. Bryant, J. Foss, C. Lavalette, C. Madancy, R. Mancusi, B. McCully, S. Menzo, S. Parkhurst, K. Veilleux

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Instructional Committee Meeting minutes of October 6, 2014 were accepted as presented.

III. PRESENTATION

A. Connecticut School Health Survey 2013 Wallingford Results

Dr. Menzo stated this survey was actually contracted with the CT Department of Public Health through the Town of Wallingford Youth & Social Services and the results were compiled by Celeste Jorge, Epidemiologist from the Connecticut Department of Public Health. She stated the Connecticut School Health Survey is a comprehensive survey that consists of two components; the Youth Behavior Component and the Youth Tobacco Component. In the fall of 2013, the Youth Behavior Component of the Connecticut School Health Survey was administered to students in both Wallingford High Schools. This survey was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and nationally, the survey is known as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The 2013 version was modified by the CT Department of Public Health and the State Department of Education for statewide use. For Wallingford, it was further modified by representatives of municipal departments and community organizations.

Ms. Jorge informed the Board that 88% of Lyman Hall student surveys conducted were valid and 89% of Sheehan student surveys conducted were valid. 1% of the surveys were labeled invalid and were not included in these results. This survey is used as a surveillance system which looks at patterns of healthy behaviors, disease, illness, and wellness in the high school population. There are 99 questions on the survey which includes questions related to academic performance, general health, motor vehicle safety, injury & violence, cigarette use, alcohol use, substance use & abuse, sexual behaviors, obesity, overweight & weight control, dietary behaviors & physical activity, protective factors, family connectedness, school connectedness, academic factors, protective factors and other risky behaviors. Ms. Jorge provided a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed survey results from each of the above categories.

Craig Turner from Wallingford Youth and Social Services stated the Town of Wallingford is looking to develop a community health program piloted through the town's Public Health Department. This is now a state requirement. Within the community health plan there are nine domains and the data from the two high school surveys will help provide useful information for this process to happen.

The survey results will also help drive changes in our school districts health curriculum. He noted there are two ways to look at this data and historically people will look at the numbers and see what is wrong, which is truly a disservice to the majority of students who have taken the survey. A shift needs to happen where we can promote and identify what works well with students and build on that. The data from this survey allows Wallingford to be very competitive when competing for federal grants connected to community wellness dollars.

B. Attendance Protocols

Dr. Menzo stated Julie Foss, Assistant Principal at Moran Middle School, is one of the administrators involved with a review of our attendance protocols. The Board received a packet of information regarding proposals related to monitoring attendance on a monthly basis. Mrs. Foss stated the committee started a year and a half ago reviewing what was happening in each building regarding attendance. They discovered there truly is no consistency when it comes to communicating attendance protocols and stressing the importance of regular attendance. During this process, the committee established protocols for all three levels – elementary students, middle school students and high school students.

At the elementary school level after a student has three unexcused absences, a letter will automatically be generated from PowerSchool and sent home. After seven unexcused absences, the school's Early Intervention Process team will determine the best course of action based upon student need. A follow up letter will be sent home documenting any form of meeting after seven unexcused absences. After ten unexcused absences in a year or four unexcused absences in a month, a referral will be made to DCF (Department of Children and Families).

At the middle school level after a student has three unexcused absences; again a letter will automatically be generated from PowerSchool and sent home. After seven unexcused absences, the school's Early Intervention Process team will determine the course of action based upon student need.

A follow up letter will be sent home documenting any form of meeting after seven unexcused absences. After ten unexcused absences in a year or four unexcused absences in a month, a letter will be filed with FWSN (Families with Service Needs).

At the high school level after three unexcused absences, a letter will automatically be generated from PowerSchool. After seven unexcused absences, the school's Early Intervention Process team will determine the best course of action based upon student need. A follow up letter will be sent home documenting any form of meeting after seven unexcused absences. After ten unexcused absences in a year or four unexcused absences in a month, a letter will be filed with FWSN (Families with Service Needs). At the high school level, the truancy process is separate from loss of credit.

The consensus, with Mr. Votto abstaining, was to send the proposed adoption of Attendance Protocols for approval to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

C. Strategic Plan Presentation

Dr. Menzo introduced Karen Veilleux, the newly appointed Information Technology Director for the Wallingford Public Schools. He stated the Strategic Plan is truly a "draft version" throughout the entire year. Certain elements of the plan will be included in the 2015-2016 budget since they have a budgetary impact. The packet provided to the Board for this meeting includes revisions and updates in the Community Outreach Strategic plan, Curriculum & Instruction Strategic plan, District Climate Strategic plan, Facilities Strategic plan and Technology Strategic plan.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Objectives of Open Houses at Elementary

Dr. Menzo stated one of the challenges this district has with open house night is there is only one evening where all staff must be at open houses. However, some of our schools have been a bit more creative and want to provide parents with an additional “curriculum open house” evening which students can attend with parents. Stevens Elementary School did have two open house evenings this fall and Nicholas Brophy, Principal, spoke about the differences between the two evenings. Mr. Votto stated he truly believes in a traditional open house and feels there are questions parents need answered. Additionally, this is an opportunity for the classroom teacher to provide parents with information about the districts educational focus during the next school year. Dr. Menzo stated he would share this evening’s discussion regarding open houses with all elementary principals and will continue to have a conversation about this challenge.

V. CURRICULUM

A. Proposal for Granting of High School Credit for Middle School Algebra

Shawn Parkhurst stated this proposal mirrors the same procedure the district followed last year with World Language. Increasingly, students in middle school grades are completing coursework such as Algebra. Districts are encouraged to provide such opportunities for students. The appropriate units of credit should be recorded on students’ transcripts with the notation that those courses have been successfully completed prior to ninth grade and that the students began ninth grade with advanced standing.

Students in grade 8 Algebra will take quarterly assessments and performance tasks that mirror that of the high school Algebra 1 curriculum and assessments. Each quarterly assessment will count for 5% of their final grade with each marking period grade counting for 20%.

All students that earn a passing grade will qualify for the credit, while it is highly recommended that students who earn below a 70 consider repeating the course. Students who receive a 75 will be recommended to continue onto Honors Geometry and those who score less than 75 will be recommended to take Academic Geometry or repeat Algebra 1. Christine Madancy, mathematics curriculum coordinator, stated there will be no formal mid-term or final exam for these students just because of the time element. In terms of mid-terms and final exams at the middle school, we mirrored what the high schools do. High school students take four marking period assessments which are shorter in length and fit much better into the middle school schedule. This credit will appear on the student’s transcripts and is considered an honors course at the middle school.

The consensus was to send the proposed adoption of Granting High School Credit for Middle School Algebra for approval to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

VI. POLICY

A. Proposed Adoption of Revised Regulation: Advertising at High School Athletic Facilities – 1325a

Dr. Menzo stated the only revision to this policy involves vendor contracts with the district. Advertising banners created for the vendor’s outdoor advertising shall only be on display during athletic events and shall be removed for all other times. The vendor agrees the banner created for indoor advertising will remain on display at all times.

The consensus was to send the proposed adoption of revised Regulation: Advertising at High School Athletic Facilities – 1325a for approval to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Cei adjourned the meeting at 9:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy McCully
Assistant Superintendent's Secretary