

**WALLINGFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
INSTRUCTIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday – December 3, 2012
Drama/Lecture Room
Mark T. Sheehan High School**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Cei called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

K. Castelli, J. Cei, C. Mansfield (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), J. Marrone, R. McKay, C. Miller (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), M. Votto

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

R. Backus, A. Cerreta, E. Cohn, S. Gomes, R. Hsu, J. Iaiennaro, R. Mancusi, S. Menzo, B. McCully, C. Mikulski, R. Morrison, J. Murphy, K. O'Donnell, P. Pursell

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Instructional Committee Meeting minutes of October 9, 2012 and November 5, 2012 were accepted as presented with Kathy Castelli abstaining.

III. PRESENTATION

A. Innovation Team Findings

Dr. Menzo, Superintendent of Schools, introduced the Innovation Project team members – Jan Murphy, Kate O'Donnell and Patty Pursell – and thanked the review board - Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Quest Diagnostics, Component Engineers, White Way Cleaners, Gale and MidState Medical Center for their funding to make this project possible. The team members did a powerpoint presentation of the "Wallingford 100". The team has spent the last few months interviewing and surveying parents, students, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators and central office staff, BOE members, local business owners, school leaders from model programs and college admissions officers, researching educational topics, collecting and analyzing national, state, and local educational data, taking classes at Quinnipiac, attending conferences, reading books and peer-reviewed journal articles, and visiting schools of excellence.

The "Wallingford 100" includes plans for all levels including pre-school through high school as well as community involvement. With combined efforts from 100% of the community we will achieve a 100% graduation rate of students who are 100% engaged and empowered. The ultimate goal is for every student to be college and/or career ready. Research shows that when students drop out of high school, they are more likely to be unemployed, receive public assistance, commit crimes and become incarcerated. They are less likely to receive health insurance, pension benefits, and to vote. By focusing our community on college and career readiness, we will save the town money because it expands tax revenues, boosts employment, reduces crime and improves citizenship.

The teams plan is to focus on the high schools first. The traditional structure of our high schools has remained unchanged while the elementary and middle schools have undergone organizational changes over the last few years.

In addition, NEASC reports (New England Association of Schools and Colleges), Common Core Standards, and SRBI (Scientific Research-Based Interventions) were some of the external factors influencing school transformation. The new state DPI (District Performance Index) and corresponding SPI (School Performance Index) now includes graduation rates as a measure of district performance, and our subgroup research shows a need for intervention. The teams' research about dropouts indicates a level of healthy urgency at the high school level. AP enrollment (Advanced Placement) as compared to state averages and the remediation needs of students also support this decision. Qualitative data includes interviews, surveys and observations that also reinforce these indicators.

The first step in this project is to establish a growth mindset throughout the Wallingford community. This is an important component to moving our educational system into the 21st century. The team has been strongly influenced by the work of Carol Dweck in her book Mindset. In this book she defines two types of mindsets; fixed and growth. In a fixed mindset, effort is not valued because there is belief that intelligence and abilities cannot change. People who have a fixed mindset believe themselves to be smart or not smart and this belief impedes their growth. Conversely, in a growth mindset, effort is highly valued and is the path to learning. People in a growth mindset see how the belief that cherished qualities can be developed creates a passion for learning. Those with a growth mindset find setbacks motivating, demonstrate an ability to cope with failure and have perseverance that those with a fixed mindset do not have. According to Dweck, mindset is a choice and can be changed.

The team is collaborating to design a community reading project of the book Mindset. The community has been invited to participate in March Mindset Madness on March 4th. Carol Dweck will Skype in for the event. The team's goal is to have as many members of the community as possible read Mindset, including all staff of the Wallingford Public Schools, community organizations, local government employees, local businesses, and families. There will be several community events to celebrate our changing Mindset. Carol Dweck will visit Wallingford for our convocation in late August to speak to a variety of invited community groups.

The team will continue to meet with administrators, teachers and management teams over the next few months to implement some of the remaining ideas they have recommended from their research. The "Wallingford 100" plan will be shared with all stakeholders beginning with a group reading of the book and a systematic approach to change will be developed. Several members of the community will be invited to become "Mindset Masters" and help create a plan for the entire community.

IV. CURRICULUM

A. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Course: Web Tools

Ellen Cohn, Assistant Superintendent, introduced Juliann Iaiennaro, the district Career and Technical Education Resource teacher who joined the resource teachers this fall. Ms. Iaiennaro spoke about the addition of this new course. In the information rich business community, students need the skills to organize and publish information about themselves and their work in a variety of media formats. This course builds knowledge and skills in the use of current web tools used in academic and business settings. Students will focus on effective writing, design, and communication principals using current web tools found in academic and business settings. Students will learn the principles of message design which include unity, balance, and proportion as well as collaboratively develop projects incorporating these concepts. This is a half credit course offered to students in grades 9 to 12.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of new high school course Web Tools to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

B. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Course: Web Design for Business

It is necessary to formally educate the next generation of web professionals. The curriculum in this course teaches standards-compliant web design and is grounded in national industry skills standards and national education standards. This course offers web design from a business perspective within the Expression Studio Suite. Students learn how to critically evaluate website quality as well as learn about web design standards. Students will design their own web page and will be required to have a culminating project demonstrating the knowledge and skills required for proper web design and coding. This is a half credit course offered to students in grades 9 to 12.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of new high school course Web Design for Business to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

C. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Course: International Business and Finance

High school graduates will enter a workforce that is both inter-connected to and impacted by world-wide political and economic events. This course provides students with a working knowledge of international business models that will better prepare students for the workplace. Students will be provided with an understanding of international business where national borders as bridges and not barriers. Students will develop beginning knowledge of international and cultural business contexts and be better prepared to work in organizations with global connections. This is a half credit course offered to students in grades 9 to 12.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of new high school course International Business and Finance to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

D. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Course: Robotics

Developing a robotics curriculum for the Wallingford High School technology education departments will allow students to explore different avenues of technology, design, competition, and engineering. This course will align our course offerings with technology education programs in the state and nation, increase the number of students taking multiple courses and participating in the State of Connecticut Career and Technology Education Assessment (NOCTI), provide students with additional experiences in a STEM course and will build on the middle school robotics program. Students will be exposed to the emerging technologies, principles, and problem solving found in the field of robotics. They will use software to program custom-built robots to perform specific tasks. Using science, technology, engineering, and mathematics students will build complex electro-mechanical systems that move independently and perform pre-programmed tasks.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of new high school course Robotics to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Strategic Plan Updates

Dr. Menzo distributed 2011-2016 Strategic Plan Updates to all Board members for the following Strategic Plan Areas: Community Outreach: Communication, Curriculum and Instruction, District Climate, Facilities and Technology.

VI. A. Proposed Adoption of New Policy – Social Media for Students – 6141.326

Dr. Menzo stated this proposed policy was reviewed by our attorney in conjunction with the ACLU. The ACLU believes this policy is in the spirit of the law and respects the rights of students. There is no accompanying regulation to this policy because the content of the regulation can be found in other Board policies.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed adoption of new policy Social Media for Students – 6141.326 to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Cei adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy McCully
Assistant Superintendent's Secretary