

**WALLINGFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
INSTRUCTIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Monday – December 7, 2015  
Ag-Science Community Room  
Lyman Hall High School**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Cei called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**

L. Baur, S. Hudson, C. Lavalette, J. Mackey, S. Menzo, B. McCully, K. Moore, K. O'Donnell, S. Parkhurst

**II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Instructional Committee Meeting minutes of May 26, 2015, June 8, 2015 and October 13, 2015 were accepted with corrections.

**III. DISCUSSION**

**A. Discussion and Possible Action on International Trips**

Shawn Parkhurst, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, stated on the evening of November 13, 2015, a series of coordinated terrorist attacks occurred in Paris. Wallingford has students traveling abroad to France and Italy in April 2016 and to Germany in June/July of 2016. The U.S. Department of State issued a worldwide travel alert on November 24, 2015, which is set to expire on February 24, 2016. The Connecticut Council of Language Teachers (CT COLT) and Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) collected data to see what other districts are doing in regards to international travel.

The CT COLT survey data revealed that 26 districts are proceeding as normal with international travel this year, 1 district is avoiding Paris, 4 districts are canceling international travel for the year, 6 districts never had international travel plans and 4 districts (including Wallingford) are making a decision. The CAPSS survey data revealed 10 of 99 districts have canceled international travel plans for this year (only about 10%). Data from Explorica, the educational travel company Wallingford is using, currently has 207 groups departing before May 1, 2015 for tours that visit Paris. Of those 207, 80% have confirmed they're fully proceeding with their plans. Only 4 have cancelled and the remaining 30 groups have requested re-bookings to either go on a completely different tour or make changes to their current tour which includes a visit to Paris.

Explorica's cancellation policy is the following. If more than 106 days out and students cancel the following will be applied: Students who purchased the Travel Protection Plus plan will lose a \$99 deposit, the \$180 insurance fee and 25% (\$125) of \$500 cancellation fee for a total loss of \$404. Students who purchased the Basic Travel Protection plan will lose the \$99 deposit, the \$120 insurance fee and 100% of the \$500 cancellation fee for a total loss of \$719. Students who did not purchase a travel protection plan will lose the \$99 deposit and 100% of the \$500 cancellation fee for a total loss of \$599. (The \$99 deposit may be rolled over to a future trip.)

Explorica has put together multiple alternative tour options that would avoid Paris. This company's stance on worldwide travel alerts is they have no negotiating power with airlines at this point, the United States Department of State is viewing this as a singular event and there has been a worldwide travel alert issued before the holiday season for the last five years; given the increased quantity of travelers during this time.

Kim Moore, World Language Resource teacher, stated fifteen students have made payments between \$800 and \$1,500 for the trip to France and Italy in April 2016. The total cost of the trip is \$3,100 per student and all chaperones for this trip have been secured. Many Board members agreed international travel is an option and the decision for students to travel abroad should be with parents. The Board requested when planning for future trips, to explore finding travel protection plans that offer better coverage in the event a trip must be cancelled.

The consensus of the Board, with Mr. Votto dissenting, was to move forward and allow students to travel abroad to France and Italy in April 2016 and to Germany in June/July of 2016.

## **B. Discussion and Possible Action on Balanced Scorecard Data**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this report reflects Balance Scorecard Pilot data for the district. Areas addressed in this report were the following: Post-secondary acceptance rates (the percentage of students successfully accepted to an accredited post-secondary education and/or career training program), school climate (the quality and character of school life), graduation rate (students who successfully meet high school standards and earn a diploma), adult graduation rate, promotion rates (percentage of students meeting standards and promoted to the next level), student community involvement (number of hours accrued by students in community service/volunteerism), mentor support (provides individual support to all new teachers their first two years), longevity rate (length of time someone is employed as a Wallingford educator), professional development opportunities (experiences that provide staff time for new learning and individual growth), level of teacher participation on committees (the percent of teachers and administrators who participate in committees), highest academic course work (data reflecting current degrees and certifications of all certified staff), independent professional development (percentage of teachers who attend professional development outside of the district), number of students reading on grade level by grade three, community/parental support, academic programming (opportunities available in our district), technology availability (opportunities available in our district), early childhood opportunities (integrated preschool and pre-kindergarten) and English language support (English learners and bilingual education).

The Board was very concerned with current data reflecting the number of students reading on grade level by grade three. In 2013 – only 34% were reading at grade level upon entering grade four, in 2014 – only 33% were reading at grade level upon entering grade four and in 2015 - only 37% were reading at grade level upon entering grade four.

## **C. Discussion and Possible Action on Intervention Proposal**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this intervention proposal for reading and mathematics involves the PreK-2 elementary schools. At E.C. Stevens School there are 3 intervention teachers with 58 students receiving reading intervention services and 41 students receiving math intervention services; at Moses Y. Beach School there are 3 intervention teachers with 60 students receiving reading intervention services and 38 students receiving math intervention services; at Cook Hill School there are 3 intervention teachers with 59 students receiving reading intervention services and 26 students receiving math intervention services and at Highland School there are 3 intervention teachers with 46 students receiving reading intervention services and 33 students receiving math intervention services. The proposal is to lower the student to intervention ratio at the two schools with the highest need – E.C. Stevens and Moses Y. Beach. It is also recommended to hire 2.0 full time interventionists for the 2015-2016 school year – one at E.C. Stevens and one at Moses Y. Beach with subsequent years to be reviewed based on using student data to determine location.

It was noted that 99% of the students receiving intervention services at E.C. Stevens are ESL students and 98% receiving services at Moses Y. Beach are ESL students.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed hiring of two full time Interventionists to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**D. Discussion and Possible Action on Finals/Website Changes**

Kate O'Donnell, STEM resource teacher, stated the district would like to update the Wallingford Public Schools website which is powered by Finals. Finals is a company which provides web design and web software to public schools, independent schools, organizations, and colleges around the world. It currently serves over 1,500 schools as well as educational organizations located in 60 different countries and for more than 45 states in the United States. Finals has grown to be a leader when it comes to K-12 schools. Its web software, time-saving integrations, and award-winning design provide schools with an integrated platform for telling their story on the Internet. Mrs. O'Donnell showcased two public school districts in Connecticut which have a new Finals website – Avon Public Schools and Ellington Public Schools. The Board selected the design and features of the Ellington Public Schools website to replace Wallingford's current website design.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed Finals/Website changes to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**IV. POLICY**

**A. Proposed Adoption of Revised Policy: Testing Programs - IL**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the only revision to this policy is the following: Each student enrolled in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades shall take the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). Each student in the fifth and eighth grade shall take the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) in Science. Each student in the tenth grade shall take the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) in Science.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed revised policy: Testing Programs - IL to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**B. Proposed Adoption of Revised Policy: Student Health Services - 5141**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the only revision to this policy is the following: Vision screenings and hearing screenings will be required for all students in grades K, 1, 3, 4 & 5 and postural screenings will occur for female students in grades 5 & 7 and for male students in grade 9.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the proposed revised policy: Student Health Services - 5141 to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**C. Proposed Adoption of Revised Regulation: Student Health Services – 5141a**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the revision to this regulation is the addition of the following language under Vision Screening: It is recommended that a vision screening for all students in grades K,1,3,4 and 5 will be performed using a Snellen chart or equivalent screening by the school nurse. Additional vision screenings will also be conducted in response to appropriate requests from parents/guardians or professionals working with the student in question. Results will be recorded on the student's continuous health record and the Superintendent shall cause a written notice to be given to the parent or guardian of each student found to have any defect of vision, with a brief statement describing such defect.

There is an addition of the following language under Postural Screening: School nurses will screen all female students in grades 5 and 7 and male students in grade 9 for scoliosis or other postural problems. Additional postural screenings will also be conducted in response to appropriate requests from parents/guardians or professionals working with the student in question. Results will be recorded on the student's continuous health record and the Superintendent shall cause a written notice to be given to the parent or guardian of each student found to have any postural defect or problem, with a brief statement describing such defect. All postural screenings shall be done by a school nurse.

There is an addition of the following language under Hearing (Audiometric) Screening: All students will be screened for possible hearing impairments in grades K, 1, 3, 4 and 5. Additional hearing screenings will also be conducted in response to appropriate requests from parents/guardians or professionals working with the student in question. Results will be recorded on the student's continuous health record and the Superintendent shall cause a written notice to be given to the parent or guardian of each student found to have any defect of hearing, with a brief statement describing such defect.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the revised regulation: Student Health Services – 5141a to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**D. Proposed Adoption of Revised Regulation: Health Assessments and Immunizations – 5141.3a**

Mr. Parkhurst stated the only revision to this regulation is the removal of item 3 under Exemptions and the addition of the following language for item 3 under Exemptions: Effective July 1, 2015 parents or guardians may provide a statement that required immunizations violate religious beliefs. The parents or guardians must complete the state religious exemption form. The statement must be acknowledged by a judge, family support magistrate, court clerk or deputy clerk, a town clerk, notary public, justice of the peace, a CT attorney, or a school nurse. This statement must be provided both before the student is enrolled in school and before being permitted entry to seventh grade.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the revised regulation: Health Assessments and Immunizations – 5141.3a to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**V. CURRICULUM**

**A. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Grade 9: Literary Themes and Genres - Unit 3 - Power**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this unit on Literary Themes and Genres is taught over a ten week period. He provided a brief overview of the unit.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the adoption of new H.S. Grade 9: Literary Themes and Genres – Unit 3 – Power to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**B. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Grade 10: World Literature - Unit 3 – Oppression**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this unit on World Literature is taught over a ten week period. He provided a brief overview of the unit.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the adoption of new H.S. Grade 10: World Literature – Unit 3 – Oppression to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**C. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Grade 11 American Literature Unit 3 – The Rise of the Individual**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this unit on American Literature is taught over a ten week period. He provided a brief overview of the unit.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the adoption of new H.S. Grade 11: American Literature – Unit 3 – The Rise of the Individual to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**D. Proposed Deletion of H.S. Course – The Middle East**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this course is being proposed for deletion since it has not run at either high school for the past several years. The Board members had a discussion regarding this course and felt if the curriculum was updated and revised to be more current, then student enrollment would increase. He stated he would look to have the content of the course updated and revised. No action was taken by the Board.

**E. Proposed Deletion of H.S. Course – Contemporary Issues**

Mr. Parkhurst stated it was proposed this course be renamed so that it is not so closely associated with the Grade 9 Contemporary Global Issues course. As a result, an electives review committee is proposing to rename this course Controversial Issues. Thus, the current Contemporary Issues elective will need to be deleted.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the deletion of H.S. course Contemporary Issues to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**F. Proposed Deletion of H.S. Course – Civics**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this course is being proposed for deletion since all students will now take the AP Government and Politics in their freshman year for Civics graduation credit.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the deletion of H.S. course Civics to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

**G. Proposed Adoption of New H.S. Course – Controversies in Today's Society**

Mr. Parkhurst stated this course will replace the existing Contemporary Issues elective course in Grades 11 and 12. The current course title is too similar to the Grade 9 Contemporary Global Issues course and the department has suggested a title change to make this course more distinct. In addition, the curriculum for the current Contemporary Issues course needs to be updated and revised.

The unanimous consensus of the Board was to send the adoption of new H.S. course Controversies in Today's Society to the Board of Education for action at its next meeting.

There being no further business, Chairperson Cei adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betsy McCully  
Assistant Superintendent's Secretary