

**WALLINGFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
INSTRUCTIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday – September 5, 2017
Board of Education Conference Room**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Cei called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

J. Cei, S. Glidden, K. Hlavac, R. McKay, M. Votto

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

D. Bologna, C. LaTorre, C. Lavalette, B. McCully, C. Melita, J. Piacentini, T. Snyder

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Instructional Committee Meeting minutes of June 5, 2017 were accepted with corrections.

III. PRESENTATION

A. Middle School Enrichment Block Presentation

Joseph Piacentini, Moran Middle School Principal, stated this presentation is an update from the initial Board presentation back in June 2017. The middle school schedule used in the past consisted of a seven day rotation with seven class periods per day. Every core subject class met every day for 43 minutes. This schedule provided no common meeting time for teachers/students of different grade levels. School assemblies, advisory and other programs had to be fit into the normal schedule. Enrichment block (which started this year) is conducted every 3 days and is in the middle of the day on C days. Every core subject class meets two times in a three day rotation and class periods run for 68 to 69 minutes. The enrichment block every third day provides time for extra help, retakes and review sessions. Assemblies, advisory and other programs can be held during the enrichment block with no other schedule changes needed.

Todd Snyder, principal at Dag Hammarskjold Middle School, stated the teaching staff at both middle schools have wanted a schedule which has longer instructional time. During this past year administrators and teachers took many steps preparing for the new schedule. These included reaching out to high school and elementary teachers regarding strategies that are effective in a longer teaching block, providing a library of resources for teachers to access and discuss on their teams regarding block scheduling and conducting numerous conversations as a faculty about apprehensions as well as ideas for the new schedule. Mr. Piacentini noted online resources were provided for all staff as well as professional development with an outside consultant. This professional development was conducted for staff from both middle schools. There were also four additional professional development sessions held at each of the middle schools for staff to attend.

Daniel Bologna, Assistant Principal at Moran Middle School, stated both middle schools have been through one rotation already and are looking to improve the way the schedule works. Teachers have been provided with resources to help them with the new schedule; including meeting times, which have changed a great deal from last year.

In addition, the guidance department has worked tirelessly during this past summer to make adjustments to the master schedule in an effort to get every student's schedule correct. The Board watched student testimonials about the enrichment block from two grade six students, two grade seven students and two grade eight students. Student feedback included statements such as "I like having a longer time in the classes that I really like." "I like that the longer blocks get us ready for high school." "The longer class periods give the teachers more time to work with students one-on-one."

Christine Melita, assistant principal at Dag Hammarskjold Middle School, spoke about the enrichment block. The staff at both middle schools have had several meetings with the administration regarding enrichment policies and how exactly this should run. Teachers would like to see the enrichment block used for monthly movies, working on the yearbook, teacher office hours prior to activities, instrumental sections getting additional time to meet, a school store, peer tutoring (which was done previously only during lunch time), review/extra help sessions, library assistants, unified sports (including Inspire students), taking students outside for reading groups, fundraiser/community service projects, Fox 61 student news, collaboration with neighbor schools, mindfulness activities and team building activity time.

Mr. Bologna discussed how to maintain accountability and manage the enrichment time block. He stated all students report to their advisory teacher at the beginning of each enrichment block. Each teacher has a sign out sheet, where students have to fill in where they are going (up to 2 locations) and every student must check with a teacher prior to enrichment to see if they can report to their room/location. If teachers are running activities, each teacher will have a calendar event for enrichment that contains a link to a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet lists all the activities being offered, the location, if these activities are open or filled, and if they gave students passes. Teachers can also include a link to a class roster for those students who signed up for a particular activity. Mr. Votto requested he would like to see an actual schedule of one or two middle school teachers – one who teaches Social Studies and one who teaches music or art.

B. Watson Update

Carrie LaTorre, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, stated at the last Board of Education Instructional Committee meeting that Mr. Cei requested an update on the Watson project. Since that time, the middle school staff, ELA and math teachers, along with administrators from the district, got together with Office Depot to have their first experience logging into Watson and receiving professional development as it relates to their subject areas. There will be another training for ELA and math teachers with Office Depot in early November. This pilot group will work with Office Depot throughout this school year to derive what the data is telling us about our students. The district will be guided by the feedback from this group as how and where to move forward. Watson is intended to be a powerful tool for mastery based learning and personalized learning that identifies different learning styles of each student.

IV. POLICY AND POSSIBLE CONSENSUS

A. Proposed Adoption of Revised Regulation: 6153a – Field Trips

Mrs. LaTorre stated the only change to this regulation is the removal of language under Item M. of *Educational Field Trips* and Item K. of *Recreational Field Trips*. These sections address the administration of medications to a student whose parent does not accompany their child on the field trip. The language to be removed is the following: *By notifying the administration in writing that an adult designated by the parent will serve in place of the parent.* This language is in violation of Connecticut state statute. There is no place in state statute that allows a parent to designate someone else to give medication to their child.

B. Proposed Adoption of New Policy: 1316 –Civility and Respectful Communications and Actions

Mrs. LaTorre stated this is a new policy which was vetted through a parent group, a teacher group and the Board's policy committee. The policy addresses purpose, standards for communications, disciplinary consequences and public reports. Mr. Cei stated this policy is truly a code of ethics. She requested any Board reflections to this policy be forwarded to her prior to the September Board of Education meeting.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Matthew Morrison, a Wallingford student, requested a copy of the proposed new policy: 1316 – Civility and Respectful Communications and Actions. He asked if this policy is also intended for students and was told the intent of the policy is to maintain a civil, respectful environment for teachers, students, administrators, staff, parents and other members of the school community. It describes expected standards for staff, students, parents and members of the public while at school, on school property or at a school function. Matthew stated he hopes this does not waste valuable time for the building administrators dealing with students who may violate the policy.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Cei adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy McCully
Assistant Superintendent's Secretary