

WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY
MAY 4, 2023

School Board Members Present: K. Jerome, J. Blake, J. Hadler, L. Picard

Administration Present: L. Carey

The School Board meeting was called to order by Chair, L. Picard at 6:37pm.

KEENE HIGH REPORT:

Brett Gottheimer, Assistant Principal at Keene High School came to give the report on Winchester students at Keene. He wanted the Board to know right up front that they are missing key information from the Fall of this year. He will make sure he gets additional information to the Board. Believes it is just the Fall numbers that are missing. They will send a request for feedback to Winchester so Keene knows what they want to see in the future. He asked the Board to be mindful of that while looking through the report. Brett Gottheimer reviewed the report and answered questions of the Board. Explained he would like to prepare trends for future reports so the Board can see if the numbers are going up or down.

J. Blake asked if there is an exit interview for students when they leave school.

Brett Gottheimer explained a lot of it deals with truancy issues, so that is hard to do. He does think it would be a great idea to know why kids are leaving Keene High School.

K. Jerome asked what steps are taken if students aren't doing well. What types of interventions are there?

Brett Gottheimer explained the teachers contacting home is an important first step to make sure you are partnering with parents. The school has a daily 45-minute intervention block for students that they can use to reassess or make up something during that time. Also, I-time can be used for catching up in areas where students are falling behind. Work completion is way lower now than they have ever seen before. Handing in the work is the biggest issue. Advised he doesn't have a great answer for how to solve the problem. There is only so much that can be done if the student is unwilling to do the work.

J. Hadler asked if they track with the teachers on communications with parents? Advised she has a 9th grader. She gets information on Power School and stuff like that, but she is not hearing from teachers. She is proactive, but if she wasn't, she would have no idea if her student was struggling.

Brett Gottheimer agrees. It is so critical to reach out. He often tells parents as they get older, you want your students to reach out directly to the teacher. He also tells them, behind the scenes be proactive and be sure you are reaching out; both teachers and parents need to connect. Especially with Freshman and Sophmores; he thinks it is a valid concern. He would like to see more communication when the student is not getting the work done. Teachers are

overwhelmed, they can't reach out to everyone every week, but the teachers who do that tend to have better grades in their class.

L. Picard agreed with Brett Gottheimer; it would be really helpful if the report was more about showing a trend. Not compared to the greater Keene population, but what are our students doing and tracking those numbers a little more specifically.

L. Picard – There are 150 students in a school of 1300 and Winchester is continuously told KHS doesn't identify towns, but she encourages Brett Gottheimer to rethink that a little. Students are hitting a population of 1300 and they end up being one kid in an entire class and you have immediately identified them.

L. Picard are willing to pick kids up for after school activities, because they had to for school. The issue is kids feel lost and unable to find a friendly face and someone to connect with. There are a lot of parents that carpool and do what they can to get their kids back and forth. Feels transportation is actually really low on the list. She feels engaging our students with the general population is actually higher on the list.

Brett Gottheimer feels that is an interesting way to look at it - he likes it. They need to look at ways to get students who haven't been to the Keene Elementary Schools, to be part of the culture together. They are always mindful of not excluding, but it is the difference between recognizing it and valuing it in the same way you value diversity, opinions, races, etc. A student may have a different experience than someone else and they may want to get to know them.

J. Hadler - When kids go into classrooms alone they get crap from being from Winchester and they have no one to back them up and they normally aren't going to stand up for themselves if they are the only one.

L. Picard - Could there be a co-ed team opportunity that maybe is run out of one of the community centers? Something that brings students a little more familiarity.

Brett Gottheimer liked this way of thinking; feels this issue affects other schools.

L. Picard there are other small schools, Nelson, Chesterfield and others. She thinks it could impact other schools.

L. Picard advised Winchester continues to make strides, as students get to the 12th grade year, in significantly bridging the gap of the average GPA. Thinks it may not all be academic, could be some of these other things that come into play. As those students are even more comfortable in the high school, they are gaining ground on their GPA.

J. Hadler feels it would be nice to see the reasons why grades are below where they should be.

L. Picard advised Brett Gottheimer brought something up at the beginning of the meeting that the GPA is just a hard comparison because not every school's 4.0 is the

same 4.0. She thinks that is the message you get behind when talking about competency.

Brett Gottheimer feels the Board raised some good points. He is already thinking about how to enculturate students. They want to give the kids the opportunity to connect with other kids they didn't go to school with.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Sheena Bushee has a 9th grader at KHS and wanted to speak about making connections. Her daughter, who doesn't usually have an interest in sports, signed up with another student from Winchester with an interest in volleyball when Keene came to talk with the eighth graders. They also went to open gym and connected with students who were on the volleyball team. She had a great first week of school. Sheena Bushee thinks it is huge to be able to do something to connect the kids. They need a segway in. She thinks that would have a huge impact on the ninth grade experience.

J. Hadler feels if the year starts out that way, you are more apt to do more things and not get in trouble, too.

Sheena Bushee works in the school office - feels when our students transfer to Keene, there is a disconnect between the transfer of information between Winchester and Keene's system. Thinks it would be wonderful if they could find a way to collaborate so Keene has the information. She thinks there are other systems out there. She feels they are doing it a very complicated way. It would help if Keene had information to allow them to reach out to families and share information with Winchester.

Brett Gottheimer explained it frustrates him. He doesn't see Winchester attendance logs, behavior patterns, etc; doesn't have access. He can't reach out proactively because he needs to wait until there is a problem. Maybe they could talk as a Board and connect with the IT department at Keene High or the SAU's. He agrees it would be huge to be more proactive.

He asked the Board to give feedback. They will send it out to everyone. He can't promise it will happen in one swoop, will take a while to construct; but these things are important. Administrators are pretty responsive, so if Winchester has feedback they should give it and Keene will do their best to take it.

J. Hadler MOVED to approve the public and non-public Minutes of 5/4/23; SECONDED by: J. Blake, VOTED: 3-1 (L. Picard - abstained), MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Payroll Manifest dated 4/28/23 in the amount of \$221,025.17; SECONDED by: J. Blake, VOTED 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest dated 5/5/23 in the amount of \$1,399.00; SECONDED by: K. Jerome, VOTED 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest dated 5/5/23 in the amount of \$197,735.07; SECONDED by: J. Blake, VOTED 3-0, MOTION PASSED.

POLICIES:

J. Blake MOVED to approve as recommended by the Policy Committee, Policy BBB-TA – Oath of Office; DIH – Fraud Prevention and Fiscal Management; DJC – Petty Cash Accounts; EG – District Communication Plan; FF – Naming of District Buildings & Facilities & Dedication of Areas; SECONDED by: J. Hadler, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard reminded the Board that the second meeting in May will be held on the 25th not the 19th.

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR REPORT/QUESTIONS – L. Picard:

L. Picard wants to be sure they don't lose momentum. The public will be checking on projects. Will get bids on the field work, wondered if there were any others.

L. Picard reminded the Board that the Winchester Food Festival will be held this Saturday, May 6th.

Sheena Bushee shared that this week was staff appreciation. She reviewed the activities from the week that included breakfast by the Board, gifts for the staff, etc. Tomorrow will be ice cream sundaes. The staff are appreciated; they deserve it.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Professional Development:

K. Jerome attended the Committee meeting; found it interesting. Surveys are being sent out to see what professional development opportunities teachers are looking for. Will meet again in June.

L. Carey advised the Board that the WSSA would like to meet on May 30th at 5:00pm. to lay the groundwork for Negotiations. After discussion, it was agreed to meet at 5:30pm to allow J. Blake time to get there.

J. Hadler MOVED to go into non-public session at 7:57pm under RSA-91:A3(b) SECONDED by: J. Blake; K. Jerome – yes, J. Blake – yes, L. Picard – yes, J. Hadler - yes, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to leave non-public session at 8:00pm; SECONDED by: J. Hadler, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

While in non-public session L. Carey reported that they are fully staffed with classroom teachers, except for the Music teacher.

J. Blake MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:14pm; SECONDED by: J. Hadler, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins, School Board Secretary

