

**Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee**

**Meeting of Jan. 19, 2012**

**Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE** A. McCloughan called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. at the Buker

**OF ALLEGIANCE:** Multipurpose Room. The Committee and audience rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRESENT:** Sean Condon, Bill Dery, Kym Donnellan, Roger Kuebel, Alexa McCloughan, Ann Minois, Jack O'Keefe, Dacia Rubel, and Larry Swartz

**ALSO PRESENT:** Peter Gray, Superintendent; Dr. Celeste Bowler, Assistant Superintendent for Learning; Alan Taupier, Director of Information Technology; Bryan Menegoni, High School Associate Principal; John Hughes, High School Principal; Kathy Harris, Director of Student Services; John Driscoll, Miles River Middle School Principal; Christy Reynolds, Miles River Associate Principal; Catherine Donovan, Director of Food Services; Rick Shruhan, Director of Facilities; Don Doucette, Athletic Director; Carrie Vaich, Winthrop Elementary School Principal; Carol Bratt, Cutler Elementary School Acting Principal; Brian O'Donoghue, Buker Elementary School Principal

**ABSENT:** No one.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:** **ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO ACCOMMODATE TOPICS THAT THE CHAIR DID NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATE 48 HOURS BEFORE THE MEETING, SPECIFICALLY A BRIEF UPDATE FROM CELESTE BOWLER FROM A MEETING ON TUESDAY REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE PROCESS FOR ROLLING OUT THE NEW EVALUATION PROCESS. JACK O'KEEFE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (9-0-0).**

**STATEMENTS OF GUESTS:** Michelle Bailey of Remington Rd., Wenham noted that Winthrop School is to be used as a polling place for primary elections, and asked whether school would be cancelled on that date. A. McCloughan said the school would remain open; safety measures are being considered. From late 2012 forward, Hamilton polling is to take place at the old Hamilton Library, but renovations will not be completed in time for 2012's primary voting to take place there.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** **ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE JANUARY 5, 2012 MEETING. JACK O'KEEFE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (9-0-0).**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

DESE Evaluation Tool	C. Bowler reported on the new state-mandated teacher evaluation procedures the district must implement by Sept. 2012. The district has the option of revising its existing policies and procedures, adopting the state's evaluation tool and rubric, or adopting the state's and adapting it to fit the district's needs; the leadership team plans to "adopt and adapt" and will confer with faculty, administrators, and the teachers' union. The more rigorous process will involve extensive classroom evaluation of teachers, which may occupy principals' time on as many as 150 of the 180 yearly school days. The state's goal is for evaluation to generate information about what each teacher can do to improve practice.
Finance Working Group	D. Rubel said research and discussion of the district's ability to bond should conclude within a week of this meeting, at which point this working group plans to formulate a recommendation for the full Committee. The final report on the FY2011 financial audit is expected in the same time frame.
Policy Working Group	D. Rubel asked members to review the proposed policy on remote access, for discussion at the next Committee meeting.
Facilities Working Group	J. O'Keefe reported this working group would present soon a prioritized list of potential projects; he suggested the Committee discuss with Town officials whether to bundle some as a separate warrant article for Town Meetings. The working group is uncertain the long time frame for state funding of repairs is workable for urgent Winthrop roof repairs. A new ADA compliant ramp is needed at Winthrop School.
Communications Working Group	K. Donnellan reported that a survey of faculty, staff, students and parents is underway online. The community has been invited to public interviews involved in the superintendent search process. In answer to a question from the audience, she said parents with several children attending district schools can either complete the survey out once answering regarding their oldest child, or complete it multiple times to answer regarding each of their children.
Budget Process Committee	L. Swartz said an updated budget process calendar should be developed. He said this committee is discussing how the Towns and district will lay out budgets, and how and when to present financial information to the community.
Legislative Working Group	This group was to meet the day following this Committee meeting. State Rep. Brad Hill is scheduled to the Committee's March 22 meeting to update members about approved legislation.
Town Facilities Committee	A. Minois said this group reviewed its mission statement and may put out a request for proposals for a consultant to review work already done to identify facilities needs.
<b>BUDGET WORKSHOP:</b> Superintendent Update	Administrators joined the Committee at the meeting table. P. Gray noted that Committee members received the Buker Elementary School Improvement Plan prior to this meeting, and had earlier received the SIPs for the other elementary schools and the middle school; also in the packet for this meeting was a summary of requests for consideration in the FY13 budget. He said the high school SIP was nearly complete

and would reach them soon. He said that budget process reports would continue at the next Committee meeting with presentations on revenue questions and the district's Excess and Deficiency (E&D) account. The information technology proposal for FY13 is under review by administrators.

#### Students Services

K. Harris presented information about the district's Special Education program and the FY13 Student Services budget proposal. Committee members had printouts of PowerPoint slides containing information and data she cited. She requested no increase over the FY12 budget. She gave details and financial information about topics including out of district placement; transportation; the components of the Student Service budget; Medicaid reimbursement; proposed SPED personnel reductions; her request for updated information management software; revenues the district's SPED programs generate, and how they might be increased; the integrated preschool program; and state "circuit breaker" funding. The PowerPoint slides are appended to these minutes.

Discussion followed. P. Gray explained the state-required process of depositing revenue in a revolving account during the year it is received, and then shifting it to the general fund. He responded to members' questions about state reimbursement rates and the time line for access to funds in revolving accounts and the E&D account. K. Harris responded to questions about projected software costs; contingency funds; prepayments for contracted services and out of district tuition; the projected impact of proposed personnel reductions; the high cost of the current district-run in-district transportation compared to out-of-district transportation; and ways to build and market the district's SPED programs to attract other districts to place students in HWRSD programs in years when local enrollment is low, and space exists for additional students. She advised the district not integrate high school skills level classes into A1 sections at this time. She recommended institution of a contingency fund line item, and said past practice appears to have been to budget extra money in various accounts. She previewed the upcoming state Department of Education review of the district's SPED program.

#### Staffing Review

The principal of each school reported on staffing, enrollment (total, and per classroom or program), and staffing variations as grade level enrollment shifts year to year. Written reports providing some of this data contained some inaccurate data which administrators corrected verbally as they presented the information; corrected reports are appended to these minutes. Principals and K. Harris clarified the differing responsibilities of TAs (regular and SPED) and teachers; the teaching loads of middle and high school department chairs; the nature of the integrated preschool, ASPIRE program, and intensive reading-writing-literature based program; enrollment trends in some SPED programs; and integration of students with special education plans into regular education classrooms to provide education in the least restrictive environment possible. Principals and Committee members discussed teacher planning time.

School Improvement Plan Assessment C. Bowler said she reviewed the individual school improvement plans (SIP) to confirm their goals and objectives align with the principals' FY13 budgetary requests. She outlined these requests and said

she considers nearly all of them essential. A list of the requests is appended to these minutes.

**Saturday/Sunday Possible Meeting** The Committee scheduled an extra meeting for 8:30 to 12 noon on Sat. Feb. 4 in the superintendent's office for continued budget planning. Members decided to move the start time of the regularly scheduled meeting on Thurs. Feb. 2 to 6:30 p.m. because of the extensive agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT:** **ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADJOURN. KYM DONNELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (9-0-0).**

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

**DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS**

**USED AT THIS MEETING:** PowerPoint slides, Student Services FY13 Budget (23 pages)  
Buker Elementary School Improvement Plan 2011-2012  
Buker School: 2011-12 Instructional Staff (1 page)  
Cutler School: 2011-12 Instructional Staff (1 page)  
Winthrop School: 2011-12 Instructional Staff (1 page)  
Untitled document listing staff, specific and average class sizes, and total students per teacher at Miles River Middle School (5 pages)  
Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School Class Size 1st Semester 2011-2012 (corrected) (4 pages)  
Draft proposal, Policy Working Group's draft proposal for adoption with modification of the Remote Access Law (7 pages)  
Requests that the Principals or Department Heads asked the SC to consider (1 page)

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Sierks Smith, School Committee recording secretary