

**Winton Woods Board of Education
Minutes
Regular Meeting – December 16, 2024**

The Winton Woods Board of Education met in Regular Session on Monday, December 16, 2024 at Winton Woods South Campus, Lake Room 1106, 147 Farragut Road, Cincinnati, Ohio. President Bryant called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

On the roll call the following members were present: Mrs. Angela Knighten, Mr. Brandon Smith, Mr. Bill Speelman, Dr. Viola Johnson, Ms. Debra Bryant. Also present were Mr. Steve Denny, Superintendent and Mr. Randy Seymour, Treasurer.

PREFORMANCE BY THE WINTON WOODS HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY ENSEMBLE

The Board of Education and Administration extended their appreciation to the Winton Woods High School Varsity Ensemble and Directors, Ms. Beth Miller and Mr. Alex Kress, for providing the beautiful holiday music for the Board meeting.

DISTRICT HONORS AND RECOGNITION

Horace Mann Fine Arts Student of the Month Award

Winton Woods Middle School - Laxson Dahal, Jr.

Kiwanis Character is Key Award - Caring

Winton Woods Intermediate School - Ava Mays

Kiwanis Student of the Month Award

Winton Woods High School - Catherine Mendoza-Cisneros

Skyline Student Athlete of the Month Award

Winton Woods High School - Emariyae Blackwell-Crawford

Skyline Teacher of the Month Award

Winton Woods Intermediate School - Ms. Maggie Thaxton

Retirement Recognition

Officer Vada Harris, Student Resource Officer

Community Appreciation

Dr. Monica Swope, DDS, Kingdom Family Dentistry

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DISTRICT HONORS AND RECOGNITION – (Cont.)

Community Spirit Award

Colonel William Arns, Forest Park Chief of Police (This award is presented to an organization or individual to recognize their significant contribution(s) to the Winton Woods City School District over a period of many years.)

INTRODUCTIONS

Winton Woods Middle School - Ms. Lavinia Biernacki, Assistant Principal

COMMENTS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FROM THE ASSOCIATIONS

WWTA REPRESENTATIVE – Absent

OAPSE REPRESENTATIVE – Absent

WAIVE READING OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Dr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Smith to waive the reading of the minutes for the following meetings:

Regular Meeting – November 18, 2024

Regular Meeting – December 2, 2024

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye;
Ms. Bryant, Aye

President Bryant declared the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Speelman, seconded by Dr. Johnson to approve the minutes for the following meetings:

Regular Meeting – November 18, 2024

Regular Meeting – December 2, 2024

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye;
Ms. Bryant, Aye

President Bryant declared the motion carried.

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TREASURER’S REPORT

The Financial Statements for the month of November, 2024 were approved and filed for audit.

(As an item for information, the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Hearing will be on January 3, 2025, 12:00 p.m. at the Board of Education Office.)

TREASURER’S RECOMMENDATIONS

Investments – November, 2024

12-144-24 On a motion by Mrs. Knighten, seconded by Mr. Smith to approve the Investment Report for November, 2024.

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye; Ms. Bryant, Aye

President Bryant declared the motion carried.

REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Upcoming School Events – Attached
- Student Achievement Report – Each Child on Track – Dr. Tamra Ragland, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, Grades 7-12 (Attached)
- Facilities Update – Jeremy Day, Executive Director of Business Affairs

SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS

Personnel Schedules

12-145-24 On a motion by Mr. Speelman, seconded by Mrs. Knighten to approve the personnel schedules as presented.

Schedule A – Resignations

Resignations:

Donna Newberry, Special Ed. Assistant, Transportation, effective 12/02/24

Cyara Thompson, Special Ed. Assistant, SCPS, effective 12/04/24

Wendellen Rigby, Teacher, NCMS, effective 01/06/25

Retirements:

Jennifer Hardy, Tutor, SCIS, effective 06/01/25

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SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS – (Cont.)

Personnel Schedules – (Cont.)

Schedule C – Personnel Employment – Support Staff

New Hires:

Emily Hester, Clerical C, WWSC, \$22.89/hr, effective 12/09/24

Change of Employment:

Daniel Peter, from Sub. Food Service to Part-Time Transportation, \$26.89/hr, effective 12/02/24

Schedule D – Personnel Employment – Certificated and Uncertificated (Including Extra Duties)

Food Service Attendance Stipend - \$100:

Karen Andwan	Katie Lauter	Kenya Scott
Ann Beiting	Linhong Louis	Susan Songer
Alyse Canaday	Denise Maddox	Stephanie Stacey
Paul Damon	Sandy McCormick	Geeta Subedi
Veronica Flowers	Lisa McDonald	Tanya Whitson
Sheila Hogans	Kathi Olmstead	
Cynthia Lathan	Mila Rahe	

NCMS Supplemental – Cultural Celebration Committee - \$200:

Mica Thompson	Lisa Giblin
Anna Owens	Laj'Jae Johnson

Nyasha James

Student Teacher Mentor Stipend - \$550:

Lynne Blalock

Mentor for Resident Educator - Year 2 - \$1,500:

Jennifer Mounce

Schedule E – Leaves

Tracy Dean, Field Production Specialist, Child Nutrition, Intermittent, 11/27/24 – 05/31/25, F.M.L.A.

Nathaniel McCalley, Special Ed. Assistant, SCPS, 11/27/24 – 01/27/25, F.M.L.A.

Samantha Donohue, Teacher, SCIS, 01/20/25 – 04/18/25, F.M.L.A.

Nicole Gierzak, Teacher, ECCC, 09/01/24 – 09/01/25, F.M.L.A.

Ashley McKee, Teacher, SCES, 01/07/25 – 04/08/25, F.M.L.A.

Jessica Anthony, Teacher, SCES, Intermittent, 11/15/24 – 11/15/25, F.M.L.A.

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye;
Ms. Bryant, Aye

President Bryant declared the motion carried.

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SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS – (Cont.)

Second Read: New Policy

12-146-24 On a motion by Dr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Speelman to approve the second read: New Board Policy 2265 – “Protections of Individual Beliefs, Affiliations, Ideals, or Principles of Political Movements and Ideology” as presented. (Copy is available from the Office of the Superintendent.)

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye;
Ms. Bryant, Aye

President Bryant declared the motion carried.

Second Read: New Policy

12-147-24 On a motion by Dr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Speelman to approve the second read: New Board Policy “Growing Our Own” as presented. (Attached)

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye;
Ms. Bryant, Aye

President Bryant declared the motion carried.

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORTS

- Legislative Report
- Great Oaks Report

BOARD MOTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizational Meeting 2025

12-148-24 On a motion by Dr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Smith to set the Organizational Meeting for 2025 on Friday, January 3, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. at the Early Childhood Central Campus Stage, Room 184, 825 Waycross Road, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye;
Ms. Bryant, Aye

President Bryant declared the motion carried.

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BOARD MOTION/RECOMMENDATIONS – (Cont.)

Appointment of a President Pro – Tempore

12-149-24 On a motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Dr. Johnson to appoint Mrs. Angela Knighten as the President Pro – Tempore until a new president is elected at the Organizational Meeting for 2025.

Vote: Mrs. Knighten, Aye; Mr. Smith, Aye; Mr. Speelman, Aye; Dr. Johnson, Aye;
Ms. Bryant, Aye

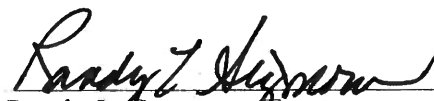
President Bryant declared the motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SUPERINTENDENT

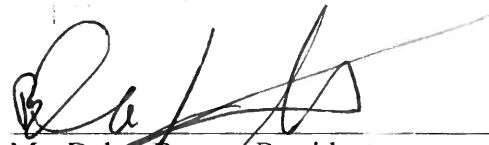
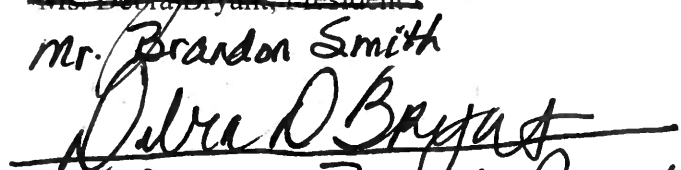
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Bryant declared the meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

ATTEST:


Randy L. Seymour, Treasurer

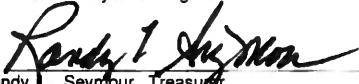
APPROVED:


~~Ms. Debra Bryant, President~~
Mr. Brandon Smith

Ms. Debra Bryant, President

WINTON WOODS CITY SCHOOLS
Bank Reconciliation Statement
November 2024 (Year to Date)

	Fund Balance	Book Balance	Bank Balance			
001	General Fund	\$22,310,805.06	Beginning Balance	\$32,098,716.67	Fifth Third Bank	\$2,160,512.48
002	Bond Retirement	3,367,809.78			Petty Cash	500.00
003	Permanent Improvement	938,543.22	Plus: Receipts	33,341,655.52	Food Service-Drawer	250.00
004	Building	153,485.68	Less: Expenditures	(32,155,227.82)	Athletic-Gate	2,000.00
006	Lunchroom	1,158,436.73				
007	Special Trust	160,818.07				
010	Classroom Facilities	3,302,959.52				
018	Public School Support	112,207.70	Ending Balance	33,285,144.37	Total	2,163,262.48
019	Local Grants	93,687.17				
022	District Agency	0.00				
034	Classroom Facilities Maintenance	1,592,173.36	Outstanding Warrants:			
200	Activity Fund	23,849.62				
300	Athletic Fund	152,995.37	Fifth Third Bank	51,671.15	Investments:	
401-9024	Auxiliary Services - JPPI	164,985.43			Star Ohio	18,412,877.33
439-9025	Early Childhood Education	(14,911.00)			Star Ohio - Building Local	2,054,466.01
451-9025	Connectivity	6,000.00			Star Ohio - Building State	1,402,041.71
516-9025	IDEA-B	(72,401.00)			Meeder Investments	9,303,562.99
536-9025	Title I Non-Competitive School Improv	0.00			Meeder Invest (Building)	0.00
551-9025	Title III LEP	(16,585.61)				31,172,948.04
572-9025	Title I	(131,649.05)				
584-9025	Title IV-A	0.00			Bank Adjustments	
584-9224	Stronger Connections	(7,916.01)			Pay School Accounts	
587-9025	IDEA ESCE FY25	(1,450.46)	Total	51,671.15	Food Service	0.00
590-9025	Title II-A FY25	(8,699.21)			General Acct	605.00
					Pay School In-Transit	605.00
			Book Adjustments			
				0.00	Total	605.00
Total Fund Balance	33,285,144.37	Book Balance	33,285,144.37	Bank Balance		2,163,262.48
Plus: outstanding warrants	51,671.15	Plus: outstanding warrants	51,671.15	Plus: investments		31,172,948.04
	0.00	Plus: book adjustments	0.00	Plus: bank adjustments		605.00
Adjusted Fund Balance	<u>\$33,336,815.52</u>	Adjusted Book Balance	<u>\$33,336,815.52</u>	Adjusted Bank Balance		<u>\$33,336,815.52</u>

I hereby certify the foregoing to be correct to the best of my knowledge and belief


 Randy L. Seymour, Treasurer

WINTON WOODS CITY SCHOOLS
General Fund Receipts
November 30, 2024

	<u>Estimated Revenue</u>	<u>% of Revenue</u>	<u>Revenue MTD</u>	<u>Revenue FYTD</u>	<u>Percentage Received</u>
Local:					
Real Estate Taxes	\$23,600,000	39.23%	\$794	11,073,322	46.92%
Public Utility Personal Property	2,500,000	4.16%	0	1,160,677	46.43%
Tuition (1)	1,208,000	2.01%	1,115	367,646	30.43%
Interest	1,350,000	2.24%	105,679	672,894	49.84%
Student Fees	15,000	0.02%	176	2,086	13.91%
Rental Fees	35,000	0.06%	2,745	41,866	119.62%
Other (2)	300,000	0.50%	471,576	644,386	214.80%
Total Local Revenue	<u>29,008,000</u>	<u>48.22%</u>	<u>582,085</u>	<u>13,962,877</u>	<u>48.13%</u>
State:					
Foundation Fund	23,840,000	39.63%	2,088,527	10,183,766	42.72%
Homestead & Rollback	2,700,000	4.49%	0	1,352,372	50.09%
Other (3)	4,148,000	6.90%	394,109	2,133,887	51.44%
Total State Revenue	<u>30,688,000</u>	<u>51.01%</u>	<u>2,482,636</u>	<u>13,670,025</u>	<u>44.55%</u>
Federal:					
Other (4)	462,000	0.77%	12,519	223,079	48.29%
Total Federal Revenue	<u>462,000</u>	<u>0.77%</u>	<u>12,519</u>	<u>223,079</u>	<u>48.29%</u>
GRAND TOTAL	<u>\$60,158,000</u>	<u>100.00%</u>	<u>\$3,077,240</u>	<u>27,855,981</u>	<u>46.30%</u>

(1) Includes summer school, special education, regular classes, and open enrollment

(2) Includes all other receipts not otherwise classified

(3) Includes catastrophic and tangible reimbursement

(4) Includes Medicaid and e-rate reimbursement

WINTON WOODS CITY SCHOOLS
General Fund Expenditures by Object
November 30, 2024

	<u>Appropriation + Carry Over</u>	<u>% Total Appr.</u>	<u>Expended MTD</u>	<u>Expended FYTD</u>	<u>Encumbered FYTD</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>% Spent</u>
Personal Services (100)	\$35,048,000	54.35%	\$2,903,454	\$14,008,926	\$0	\$21,039,074	39.97%
Fringe Benefits (200)	12,708,032	19.71%	941,935	4,913,561	194,471	\$7,600,000	40.20%
Purchased Services (400)	12,528,935	19.43%	671,116	3,855,897	6,895,527	\$1,777,511	85.81%
Materials & Supplies (500)	2,769,627	4.29%	166,335	1,157,907	652,039	\$959,681	65.35%
Capital Outlay (600)	362,000	0.56%	2,866	50,014	257,130	\$54,856	84.85%
Other (800)	819,300	1.27%	12,899	408,907	45,673	\$364,720	55.48%
Transfers/Advances (900)	253,000	0.39%	0	0	0	\$253,000	0.00%
Total	\$64,488,895	100.00%	\$4,698,605	\$24,395,211	\$8,044,840	\$32,048,843	50.30%

Object Numbers:

- 100 - Employees' salaries and wages - includes payment for sick leave, personal business leave, holiday pay, etc.
- 200 - Retirement, Insurance coverage, workers' comp., fringe benefits
- 400 - Purchased services - utilities, postage, repairs, insurance, lease/purchase, mileage reimbursement, etc.
- 500 - Instructional supplies and materials, office supplies, textbooks, library books and materials
- 600 - Capital outlay - purchase of new equipment and vehicles
- 800 - Other - election expense, auditor and treasurer fees, audit cost, membership dues, liability insurance
- 900 Temporary advances to other funds and transfer of funds

Appropriation Summary:

FY25 Appropriations	\$64,401,050	
FY24 Carryover Encumbrances	87,845	
Total Appropriations	<u>\$64,488,895</u>	6.013

WINTON WOODS CITY SCHOOLS
General Fund Expenditures by Function
November 30, 2024

	<u>Appropriation + Carry Over</u>	<u>% Total Appr.</u>	<u>Expended MTD</u>	<u>Expended FYTD</u>	<u>Encumbered FYTD</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>% Spent</u>
Regular (1100)	\$22,816,700	35.38%	\$1,743,093	\$8,821,264	\$482,451	\$13,512,986	40.78%
Special (1200)	14,361,798	22.27%	1,082,385	5,104,437	2,415,738	6,841,623	52.36%
Pupils (2100)	4,555,864	7.06%	248,916	1,623,220	1,106,867	1,825,777	59.92%
Instructional Staff (2200)	4,207,988	6.53%	221,131	1,351,526	941,443	1,915,019	54.49%
Board of Education (2300)	327,405	0.51%	3,333	223,275	56,857	47,274	85.56%
School Adm. (2400)	5,062,302	7.85%	396,198	2,255,115	103,126	2,704,061	46.58%
Fiscal Services (2500)	1,696,027	2.63%	93,028	689,538	98,060	908,429	46.44%
Business Services (2600)	365,200	0.57%	27,207	152,096	15,359	197,745	45.85%
Oper. of Plant (2700)	4,638,513	7.19%	342,334	1,855,408	1,852,467	930,638	79.94%
Pupil Trans. (2800)	4,047,890	6.28%	328,085	1,395,360	767,503	1,885,027	53.43%
Central Support Services (2900)	944,357	1.46%	66,957	358,826	98,233	487,298	48.40%
Community Services (3000)	36,200	0.06%	0	34,137	357	1,707	95.29%
Extracurricular (4000)	1,070,650	1.66%	139,962	494,591	49,989	526,071	50.86%
Capital Outlay (5000)	105,000	0.16%	5,976	36,420	56,392	12,188	88.39%
Contingencies and Transfers (7000)	253,000	0.39%	0	0	0	253,000	0.00%
Total	\$64,488,895	100.00%	\$4,698,605	\$24,395,211	\$8,044,840	\$32,048,843	50.30%

Functions:

Instruction (1100 – 1200): Instruction includes the activities directly dealing with the teaching of pupils or the interaction between teacher and pupil. Teaching may be provided for pupils in a school, in a classroom, in another location, such as in a home or hospital, and through other approved media such as television, radio, telephone and correspondence.

Pupils (2100): Activities which are designed to assess and improve the well-being of pupils and to supplement the teaching process. e.g., Pupil personnel, guidance, health, psychological, speech and audiology, attendance, graduation and student assembly services.

Instructional Staff (2200): Activities associated with assisting the instructional staff with the content and process of providing learning experiences for pupils. e.g., Curriculum development, staff training, ed. aides and media services.

Board of Education (2300): Activities concerned with establishing policy in connection with operating the District.

School Administration (2400): Activities concerned with administrative responsibility e.g., Supt. & Principal offices.

Fiscal (2500): Activities associated with the financial operations of the District. e.g., Treasurer's office.

Business (2600): Activities concerned with directing & managing service areas. e.g., Business Manager's office

Operation of Plant (2700): Activities concerned with keeping the physical plant open, comfortable and safe for use and keeping buildings and equipment in an efficient working condition. e.g., Maintenance & custodial areas.

Transportation (2800): Activities concerned with the conveyance of students to and from school and to activities

Statistical Services (2900): Activities, other than general administration, which support each of the other instructional and supporting services programs. e.g., Personnel and technology

Community Services (3200): Payments made by the District to support activities that do not directly relate to providing education for pupils in the District.

Extracurricular Activities (4000): Subject matter and/or activities not provided in regular classes. Generally, participation is not required and credit is not given.

Capital Outlay (5000): Improvements to the District buildings & land.

Contingencies (7000): To be used for unanticipated emergencies

Appropriation Summary:

FY25 Appropriations	\$64,401,050
FY24 Carryover Encumbrances	87,845
Total Appropriations	\$64,488,895

WINTON WOODS CITY SCHOOLS
Year To Date Summary as of
November 30, 2024

FUND	Beginning Balance	FYTD Revenues	FYTD Expenditures	Current Fund Balance	Current Encumbrances	Unencumbered Fund Balance
001 General	\$18,850,036	\$27,855,981	\$24,395,211	\$22,310,805	\$8,044,840	\$14,265,965
Special Revenue Funds:						
018 Public School Support	106,219	26,268	20,280	112,208	14,630	97,578
019 Other Grants	91,944	29,037	27,294	93,687	2,852	90,835
034 Classroom Facilities Maint.	1,631,698	106,673	146,198	1,592,173	28,693	1,563,480
300 District Managed Activity	174,465	114,378	135,847	152,995	92,950	60,045
401 Auxiliary Services	97,930	191,286	124,231	164,985	243,818	(78,832)
439 Preschool Education	0	29,462	44,373	(14,911)	0	(14,911)
451 Data Communication	0	6,000	0	6,000	0	6,000
499 Miscellaneous State Grants	31,947	0	31,947	0	0	0
507 ESSER	23,259	1,048,657	1,071,916	0	0	0
516 IDEA	12,066	309,566	394,032	(72,401)	58,232	(130,633)
536 Title I School Improvement	1,407	71,443	72,850	0	135,413	(135,413)
551 Limited English Proficiency	4,932	78,911	100,429	(16,586)	0	(16,586)
572 Title I, SQI and EOE	24,648	516,017	672,314	(131,649)	115,721	(247,370)
584 Title IV-A	398	58,326	66,640	(7,916)	89,187	(97,103)
587 IDEA Early	183	5,514	7,148	(1,450)	0	(1,450)
590 Title II-A	3,149	81,963	93,812	(8,699)	39,479	(48,178)
599 Miscellaneous Federal Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0
Debt Service Funds:						
002 Bond Retirement	3,882,655	1,653,889	2,168,735	3,367,810	1,058,778	2,309,032
Capital Projects Funds:						
003 Permanent Improvement	1,955,632	320,020	1,337,109	938,543	279,674	658,869
004 Building	177,832	905	25,251	153,486	0	153,486
010 Classroom Facilities	3,255,947	134,824	87,811	3,302,960	582,017	2,720,943
007 Special Trust	124,534	67,784	31,500	160,818	28,504	132,314
Agency Funds:						
200 Student Activity	23,100	6,972	6,223	23,850	818	23,032
022 District Agency	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enterprise Funds:						
006 Food Services	1,624,735	627,777	1,094,075	1,158,437	434,883	723,554
Total	<u>\$32,098,717</u>	<u>\$33,341,656</u>	<u>\$32,155,228</u>	<u>\$33,285,144</u>	<u>\$11,250,487</u>	<u>\$22,034,657</u>



TO: WWCSB Board of Education
 FROM: Randy Seymour, Treasurer
 DATE: November 30, 2024
 SUBJECT: November Investments

The Treasurer requests official approval of the following investments of interim funds made November 30, 2024

	<u>Investments</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	
General Fund:				
Money Markets:				
Star Ohio	\$18,412,877	\$73,028	4.89%	
Meeder Investments	9,303,563	32,403	various	
5th/3rd	2,160,512	1,440	0.50%	Includes earnings credit
	<u>29,876,952</u>	<u>106,871</u>		
Building Fund:				
Local Share:				
Money Markets:				
Star Ohio	2,054,466	8,162	4.89%	
	<u>2,054,466</u>	<u>8,162</u>		
Building Fund:				
State Share:				
Money Markets:				
Star Ohio	1,402,042	5,570	4.89%	
	<u>1,402,042</u>	<u>5,570</u>		
Total	<u>\$33,333,460</u>	<u>\$120,603</u>		

Winton Woods City Schools Growing Our Own Program Policy

Purpose

The Board's Growing Our Own Program is designed to encourage and support current Winton Woods City Schools staff in pursuing further education and training that aligns with district needs and strategic goals. This program provides a pathway for employees to advance their careers without incurring upfront tuition costs, thus enhancing professional development, supporting staff retention, and addressing critical staffing needs.

Eligibility

1. **Eligible Participants:** The program is open to full-time Winton Woods City Schools staff members with at least one year of service who seek to obtain advanced certifications, licensure, or degrees related to critical district staffing needs.
2. **Eligible Programs:** Only accredited and district-approved educational programs qualify for the Growing Our Own Program, including teaching certifications, administrative licensure, specialized endorsements, and other relevant certifications that support district priorities.

Program Benefits

1. Direct Tuition Assistance

- The Board will pay tuition and approved educational expenses directly to the educational institution on behalf of the Employee, ensuring the Employee does not incur upfront costs.
- Tuition payments provided under this program are structured to comply with IRS guidelines under IRC §127 (Educational Assistance Programs), which allows for tax-free educational assistance up to the IRS annual limit (\$5,250.00 at present), provided it meets federal requirements.
- Employees must apply for any federal aid or supplemental scholarships for which they are eligible. The Board's tuition payment may be adjusted accordingly, coordinating directly with the university.

2. Professional Development Leave

- Participants may be granted paid leave for program-related activities, such as examinations, student teaching, or other practicum requirements, with prior approval by the district.
- Leave is subject to supervisor approval and must not disrupt regular district operations.

3. Mentorship and Support

- Participants in the program will have access to mentorship opportunities, pairing them with experienced staff in similar fields or roles within the district to provide guidance and support throughout their educational journey.

- Mentorship meetings and program evaluations are expected to occur quarterly.

Program Requirements

- **Service Commitment:**
 - In exchange for direct tuition payment, participants agree to remain employed by Winton Woods City Schools for a minimum of five years following completion of their program. If the Employee leaves the district voluntarily or is terminated for cause before completing this commitment, they may be required to repay a prorated portion of the tuition expenses based on the time remaining in the commitment period.
- **Application Process:**
 - Interested employees must submit a program application, including a personal statement outlining their career goals, the alignment of their educational pursuits with district needs, and supervisor recommendations.
 - Applications are reviewed by the Superintendent or designee, with selection criteria based on district needs, employee performance, and potential for career growth within Winton Woods City Schools.
- **Program Oversight and Evaluation:**
 - The district will conduct an annual review of the Growing Our Own Program, assessing the success of participants and program outcomes in meeting district staffing needs.
 - Program policies, benefits, and eligibility criteria may be adjusted as necessary to maintain compliance with Board policies and IRS guidelines regarding fringe benefits.

Compliance with IRS Code and Board Policy

All benefits offered through the Growing Our Own Program will comply with applicable IRS regulations regarding fringe benefits and educational assistance programs to ensure that any assistance provided aligns with tax-exempt criteria under IRC §127. Tuition assistance will be capped at the IRS annual maximum for tax-free educational assistance. Participants are encouraged to consult with a tax advisor regarding any potential personal tax implications.

Policy Effective Date: Retroactive to 7/1/2024

Board Approval: _____

Related Board Policies: 4422, 3422