



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

School Council - Wood End Elementary

Date: 2021-01-25

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: School - Wood End

Location:

Address: 85 Sunset Rock Lane

Session: Open Session

Purpose: Regular Meeting for 2020-21

Version: Draft

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Lori Abelson, Lindsay Baker, Nicole Cella, Mia Gaska, Jessica Hester, Joanne King, Christine St. Hilaire.

Members - Not Present:

Kevin Sexton

Others Present:

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Joanne King

Topics of Discussion:

The second quarterly meeting of the Wood End Elementary School Council was held via Zoom on January 25, 2021.

Call to order:

A quorum of members being present, and the meeting having been duly convened for Wood End Elementary School by the Principal, Joanne King called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and proceeded with business.

Public Comment:

No public comments were shared.

Review and Acceptance of Minutes:

Members reviewed draft minutes from the October 26, 2020 meeting. There were no corrections or additions.

Vote: Minutes Accepted 7-0-0

Old Business:

Chronic absenteeism: Attendance is still an area of concern at Wood End with the overall attendance rate for the 2019-20 school year at 96.62%. With the hybrid learning model in place for this year, it has been very challenging to get an accurate representation of attendance for all students. The current data for September through December 2020 shows 0 students with 10+ absences, which would be considered chronic. There were two students absent for a total of 7 days, 1 student absent for 6 days, and 5 students absent for a total of 4 days. The policy for Reading Public Schools, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 76, § 1B, is the

school must notify the parent or guardian of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year, or who has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a school year. At this time, no families have met these criteria.

There was conversation around what the future might hold for our attendance numbers once students are back in person, full time. Concerns were voiced around April vacation time and quarantine time around the vacation weeks and the effects on our MCAS scores.

Hybrid Teaching & Learning: Teachers continue to use Google Classroom, SeeSaw, Pear Deck, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams to provide instruction when students are remote, and to support the hybrid model in place this year. Fortunately, Wood End has not been significantly impacted by COVID causing cohorts to quarantine thus far this year. The school nurse, Kristen Agami, is constantly monitoring the health of students and staff. There is a concern over fatigue around following the suggested COVID guidelines, however Wood End continues to be vigilant in making sure to continue to follow the suggested guidelines.

Equity: A small team of teachers (Lori Abelson, Emma Conry and Lisa Norcross) and the principal are taking part in a "Commitment to Equity Teaching and Leadership Series" this year with the School Reform Initiative. This is a year-long course of study focused on educational equity. Participants will take part in an action research project to build the capacity of teachers and the community to build a more equitable culture within the school and district. In addition, more diverse literature (picture books) is being shared with students, teachers and families through read-alouds and social media to begin the dialogue. The goal is to provide easy access for families of these diverse resources to raise awareness. Lori and Joanne shared some of the language ("Calling In or Calling Out") and activities they have experienced in this teaching series.

Suggestions for sharing information and resources were brought up at the last School Council meeting and included book talks, TED-Talks, parent book group, all-school meeting time for topics, speaker sessions, and professional development.

New Business:

The FY22 School Budget has been presented to the community and School Committee. School Committee is meeting this evening to vote on the Superintendent's proposed budget.

Dr. King has asked for members to preview some of the literature she shares with families. Also, Dr. King has asked members to think of scenarios they might have encountered in life or work, that has been rooted in diversity or inequality, that the members could role play during the next meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the School Council adjourned at 8:02 p.m. with plans to reconvene on March 29, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,
Mia Gaska,
Recording Secretary