

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2010
6:30 P.M. TO 8:30 P.M.
Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center
400 Aylsworth Avenue

Attendees:

Cindy Stepanian (PAC Co-Chair/Globe Delegate), Denise Auclair (PAC Co-Chair/Harris Delegate), Claire Dumas (WED K-12 Instr. Leader Unified Arts, Ron Celio (Fifth Avenue/Coleman Schools Principal), Rob Desrosiers (Globe Park Principal/Elementary Principal Delegate) – until 7:15 pm, Donna Houle (School Success Coalition Team Leader/ RIPIN Representative), Jenny Kithes (Parent of a student at WHS), Maggie Koosa, (WHS Teacher Representative) until 7:15 pm, Kara Bourke (Bernon Heights Delegate), Linda Filomeno (WED Director of Programming for ELLs and RTI Coordination), Kathy DiModica (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Science), Matthew King (WMS Teacher Representative), Robin Crane (Elementary Teacher Representative), Brenda Galvin (Leo Savoie Delegate), Robert Gerardi (Superintendent of Schools), William Webb (WACTC Teacher Representative), Patrick McGee (WMS Principal), Tony Gabriele (WHS PTO President), Lynne Bedard (WHS Principal), Elaine Zagrodny (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Reading), Lisa Jacques (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Math), Stephanie Roberts (Elementary Teacher Alter. Delegate), Mark Lebrun (Teacher Harris School), Tina Silva (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Social Studies), Sue Rochefort (Parent of a student at WHS), Carmen Boucher (Resident of Woonsocket), Lynne Kapiskas (Chair SELAC), Estelle Bubble (Fifth Avenue), Mark Garceau (WED Director of Instruction and Administration), Linda Majewski (School Committee member)

Guest Speakers: K-12 Instructional Leaders - Lisa Jacques, Tina Silva, Elaine Zagrodny, Kathie DiModica, Claire Dumas

Called to Order – 6:33 pm by Cindy Stepanian

For the Record:

Delegates not in attendance: Susan Niles (WMS Delegate), Sue Votto (WACTC Ass't Principal), Carnell Hendeson (WHS VP Principal, WHS Admin. Delegate), Steve Boss (WMS Admin. Delegate), Andrea Natera (ESL Parent delegate)

1. Delegate/Guest Introductions - Suggestions/Concerns:

Cindy Stepanian (PAC Co-Chair, Globe Park delegate, parent of a WMS student)

- Concern: Full-day kindergarten return, budget
- Announcement – Globe Park is bringing back Movie Nights; have a license to show movies at school, students are excited, time to spend with friends after school; first movie will be “How to Train Your Dragon”

Linda Filomeno (WED Director of Programming for ELLs and Response to Intervention Coordination)

- Taking minutes in absence of Kim Blais (Recording Secretary).

Kara Bourke (Bernon Heights delegate) Concerns about ½ day Kindergarten.

Kathy DiModica (WED K-12 Science Curriculum Coordinator), No comment.

Matthew King (Special Education, WMS 6-8), No comment.

Robin Crane (2/3 ESL Inclusion teacher at Citizens, parent of 7th grade student at WMS), No comment.

Brenda Galvin (parent of a student at Leo Savoie and WHS)

- Announcement - Savoie will hold Santa's Breakfast on December 11 at WHS; needed to change location due to high attendance – last year had to turn some children away due to high attendance and fire codes.

Robert Gerardi (Superintendent of Schools)

- Addressed issues of Full-day Kindergarten and budget; Both City Council and School Committee want to bring back All-day Kindergarten.
 - WED received \$2 million in an Edu-Fund grant from the federal government.
 - City Council sued the School Committee/WED to reduce the budget by \$700,000.
 - Woonsocket Education Department made those adjustments.
 - City Council sued WED to cut another \$1.6 million.
 - Stacey Busby (Director of Administration and Finance) found other monies through continued review of budget items, bringing the final total cut to \$1.2 million.
 - Auditor's report called for WED to cut substitutes and health care based on current expenditures.
 - School Committee will need to decide if those cuts are realistic
 - At this time there will be a reduction of \$3 million in revenue for next year due to cuts at federal and state levels.
 - WED has reduced staff by 40 teachers over last two years.
 - Will double check number.
 - WED has been very frugal; many are doing a great job with what they have.
 - As a result, there will not be enough money to bring back All day Kindergarten.
 - School Committee will look at other legal options (may consider bringing case to the Supreme Court).

- These are not good times for educational funding in WED right now; this judge did not want to hear arguments, will be hard to bring back items which have been cut already.
 - School Committee is doing their best under difficult circumstances.
- C. Stepanian – What did City Council suggest we could cut?
 - Response – This was an interim report from the auditor.
 - The final report will be forthcoming and available soon.
 - The auditor identified adjustments knowing that the City Council was suing WED (final report forthcoming), came up with adjustments knowing that city was suing WED;
 - WED made some adjustments to get down to \$31 million; The auditors state that WED can make further adjustments, such as in health care by projecting based on four months; next 4 months are winter with more expensive health costs; health costs are usually projected on a 3 year plan but the auditors are projecting on low-cost months and suggesting WED can cut based on that projection
 - Judge said we need to cut \$1.6 million; Ms. Busby found enough to get down to \$1.2 million.
- R. Desrosiers – What has Commissioner Gist said?
 - Response: The Commissioner sent a letter on our behalf, but judge chose not to listen to her argument.
- C. Stepanian - \$2 million?
 - Response (from R. Gerardi and L. Majewski)
 - The Edu-Fund grant (\$2 million) saved those items and programs that would have been cut otherwise - sports, etc.
 - Hope is not to impact students.
 - ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) funds through both Title I and IDEA will be going away at the end of this school year, Edu-funds will be gone for next year; \$3mil structural deficit; many positions were funded.
 - Ultimately decided in courts, not an equitable education; when injustices occur – way to get justice is through the legal system.
- C. Stepanian – What is the situation with the copiers?
 - Response: issues coming up, but schools are working together (school 's doesn't work – using the copier at another or at McFee).
 - Due to the budget situation, we didn't start paying 2011 bills until late October.
 - Out-of-district placements – some will not take additional students because we have not pd the bills.
 - L. Majewski – contract signed at WHS for fire alarms – 3 years; came up again – dropped from contract because city didn't pay; the Woonsocket Fire Department granted us a waiver.
 - 18 pages of unpaid bills to date that were not covered.
 - L. Majewski – School Committee is approving what needs to be done, city holding up what needs to be done.
- WED hasn't paid legal fees for Fair Funding Formula fight.
- If we make paper cuts that don't affect programs, we can get control of budget;
 - Some of the cuts suggested are unrealistic; we can cut, but realistically we will probably run out of money.
 - Unfortunately outside auditors are telling us how to adjust our budget; we feel like we have to cut, cut, cut;
- Budget was at \$64 million, now at \$60 million.
- C. Stepanian - thank you for going over that for us;
 - Response: difficult situation.
 - L. Majewski - city is in deficit; didn't get concessions from employees like School Committee did from teachers; easier to point to someone else's deficit.

Linda Majewski – (School Committee member), No comment.

Patrick McGee – (Principal at Woonsocket Middle School), No comment.

Robert Desrosiers – (principal at Globe Park School), No comment.

Mark Garceau – (Director of Instruction and Administration), No comment.

William Webb – (teacher at Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center), No comment.

Tony Gabriele – (President of Woonsocket High School Parent/Teacher Organization)

- Thursday Woonsocket High School PTO will meet 11/18/2010 from 6:30-7:30
- Remarked on 18 pages of unpaid bills
- Seeing needs of students/teachers as PTO president
- City in dire straits

Lynne Bedard – (principal at Woonsocket High School/Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center), no comment.

E. Zagrodny – (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Reading), No comment.

Lisa Jacques – (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Math)

- Son in Grade 7 at Woonsocket Middle School

Jenny Kithes- (Parent of a 10th grader), No comment.

Ron Celio – principal at Fifth Avenue and Coleman Elementary Schools (Team Fairmont)

- November 18, 2010 from 6-7pm Thursday, Parents' Voice meeting – how to read Standards based report card
- December 16, 2010 – gift basket raffle at Coleman / music, refreshments, 6-8 pm

Claire Dumas – (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Unified Arts), No comment.

Donna Houle – (Rhode Island Parent Information Network/School Success Coalition)

- School Success Coalition meeting this Thursday 4:30-6 pm
 - Brenda Galvin – email said 5:30
 - Response: Noted
- Concern from a parent – Workshop on bullying, as a parent has been dealing with
 - D. Auclair asked age/grade. Elementary level.
 - Response: Will look into it
 - M. Garceau - Bullying issue is an issue WED takes seriously; ongoing concern; trying to shore up policies;

Maggie Koosa – (teacher at Woonsocket High School)

- In charge of Homework Club – Tuesday –Thursday from 2:15-4:45pm, bus home, snack, 3 certified math teachers, 1 ELA teacher, soon to add Science, ESL person, moving location.
- Not all parents have portal information – knows Mr. Ferry is trying to be everywhere; more parents need portal.
 - D. Auclair/L. Bedard – this Thursday from 5-7pm there will be a portal information session, a little over 800 parents have the information and are able to access the on, M. Ferry will be doing a phone blast, on report cards
 - B. Galvin - will we learn how to access.
 - L. Bedard – we can give you a login/password, answer any questions.
 - L. Jacques - last time we did not have a computer with a direct tutorial, but maybe could do that this time.

Stephanie Roberts – (teacher at Harris Elementary School, PTO VP), no comment.

Mark Lebrun –(teacher at Harris Elementary School), No comment.

Tina Silva – (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Social Studies)

- 2 children in the Woonsocket public schools.

Sue Rochefort

- Child is a senior at Woonsocket High School.

Carmen Boucher

- Resident of Woonsocket, parent of a child who might return to Woonsocket public school system.

Lynne Kapiskas – (Chair of Special Education Local Advisory Council)

- Child coming to Woonsocket High School, child at Action Based E, described SELAC (every other month) tries to do a presentation at every meeting any volunteers, ideas for topics? Brochures in all the schools. Next meeting Dec 2, 6:30-8:30 Pothier, welcome to all, looking for topics outside Special Ed, working with KD to put something together.
- C. Boucher - how are we doing for translation of letters for parents going to IEP, evaluations done through doctor?
 - Response from R. Gerardi/L. Filomeno – Which letters?
- C. Boucher - Child Outreach; Special Education
 - Response from L. Filomeno – WED has a School/Community Liaison and an ESL Program Parent Outreach Worker who can translate. Will remind all principals and departments.

Estelle Bubble – helping out at 5th Ave. School.

Denise Auclair - Harris delegate, children at Harris, Woonsocket Middle School, Woonsocket High School.

- Concern – consistency in curriculum, programs to be affected by budget cuts

2. Approval of minutes (had been passed around)

- R. Crane - motion to approve
- M. Koosa – second
- Vote – unanimous
- D. Auclair – public thank you to Kim Blais and Adam Stanley for getting the minutes of the PAC meetings on the Woonsocket Education Department website, will see updated minutes there, thank you to McFee for letting this happen.

3. PAC Survey

- Majority of members would like to see PAC keep the same meeting format since everyone has a chance to give their input and receive feedback.
- Parents would like to hear more teacher input on various topics on what works and what does not.
- Presentation from outside sources on different themes is appreciated. Not more than two per meeting to get full benefit.
- General consensus is that PAC has become a strong advocate for parents and hopes are that it continues in this direction with a goal of going statewide.

- D. Auclair/C. Stepanian – thank you to all
 - Contact either of the co-chairs at any time.

4. PAC elections

- D. Auclair – PAC has had national recognition, long time in coming.
- Terms of current co-chairs end this year.
 - D. Auclair – term ended last year
 - PAC is like their child, want to make sure it is passed on – grow and survive, pains of getting established and recognized, it is one place where we can bring everyone together and talk, PAC has done a great service, hope it continues.
- C. Stepanian/D. Auclair
 - Prefer to have parents as Co-Chair, needs to stay parent focused, don't want to force anyone, it is a love.
 - Would be here to help, guide and still come to meetings.
- We should have an election tonight.
- PAC could remain a sleeper committee – when something needs to be done, PAC could be reactivated;
- T. Gabriel – what happens if nobody stands up?
 - D. Auclair – PAC could remain a sleeper committee, McFee could contact D. Auclair as a contact and we could see what's needed and get back together.
 - C. Stepanian – current Co-Chairs would not be gone, but their 4 years in office are up and they have to step down;
 - Still helping out; reality is we need someone in the seat with fresh ideas to keep PAC alive.
 - Explained alternating cycle.
 - Technically supposed to have 2 secretaries, Dr., Gerardi arranged to have Kim Blais serve as part of her job.
- B. Galvin – willing to talk to them about possibly taking on;
- T. Gabriel – one year or two years?
 - Response: No more than 2 consecutive terms.
- C. Boucher – thank you to Denise Auclair and Cindy Stepanian.
 - Concerned about issues, huge issues in the district;
 - PAC always needs fresh blood, knows when PAC first started it was a new way, then the current co-chairs came along and kept PAC going.
 - PAC is run by volunteers.
 - It would be a loss for the children of the Woonsocket Education Department if PAC is just let go.
 - Very different to react than to be proactive.
 - Many administrators here, leaders and teachers
 - You know your parents, personal invitations to bring other parents in.
 - Co-Chair's acknowledge no new co-chairs voted in tonight.
- D. Auclair – did anyone have a chance to get PTO pres name/contact information?
 - C. Stepanian – we are asking for the information so we can get information out there more quickly.

5. New business

- Curriculum Presentation
 - During WHS WMS conferences, parents had questions on curriculum.
 - D. Auclair – Start presentation/discussion with L. Majewski – chair of Curriculum Committee: then K-12 Instructional Leaders – transition from elementary, to middle school, to high school; then we can have a question and answer session.
 - L. Majewski – 2007 elected to School Committee, started Literacy Committee with Linda Filomeno – then Director of Literacy; became clear – numeracy is an issue as well; created Curriculum Committee with the goal of bringing together administration, parents and eventually community. liaisons from community-based organizations and after school programs;
 - Identified key areas – 3 areas of Focus; 1. NECAP performance 2. Attendance (truancy court lawsuit against district), 3. Homework (directly out of PAC discussions, School Committee conducted focus groups on homework, parents have concerns and want to help their children, teaching methods have changed and parents may not know how to help children).
 - Established goal statement - all students pass NECAP and be successful; shoot high and gear everything to that end.
 - NECAP – the Curriculum Committee began to look at data; not yet completed; first started – asked previous principal Lourenço Garcia and current principal Lynne Bedard to look at the number of students at WHS failing English and math.
 - Elementary schools and Woonsocket Middle School – met Adequate Yearly Progress this past year.
 - The Curriculum Committee met in the early part of summer; budget concerns and changes in administration have impacted pace.
 - The Curriculum Committee will be meeting next Friday;
 - Have been involved with Dana Center specifically on math and literacy and instructional practices.
 - The Curriculum Committee will continue to look at data to identify gaps.
 - Along with review of NECAP performance, the Curriculum Committee is looking at performance- based graduation requirements (PBGR), the PBGR system needed work; need to look at the system more closely.
 - How are they weighting NECAP; some students passing all categories, but overall score is less than 3 – so there are questions.
 - Clarify the amount of credits students need to earn, so we know every year; would like to ensure that

- parents are informed of how many portfolio entries are needed in each grade so that they have the appropriate number by the time they are seniors – parents should not be notified near the end of the senior year that a child does not have a proficient portfolio.
- The work will involve identifying the building blocks between grades; not a 3 month project – will take a couple of years to look at fully;
 - RIDE received Race To The Top money; some additional mandates from RIDE.
 - Hope to see a good plan because it is being created in response to parents' concerns.
- Lisa Jacques (WED K-12 Instructional Leader Math) homework.
- Adam Stanley added a link to the district website – click on schools, ASKRI.org link is at the bottom under Parent Resources providing a free live homework tutor; if parent/student has a library card – they can log in for free from 2-10 pm; any grade, any topic, all subjects; students or parents can log in.
 - L. Majewski - teaching methods have changed (calculator example).
 - L. Jacques – the site provides a live tutor who will work through the assignment.
- Elaine Zagrodny – along with NECAP scores Instructional Leaders and Curriculum Committee are looking at current practice, working with teachers to look at Common Core standards which will impact our curriculum – what we are doing/not doing, looking at interventions.
- We have solid interventions in place; need to ramp up Tier I instruction to prevent need for interventions, looking at transition to ensure that students have had enough exposure to nonfiction texts, skills to decode, read fluently, comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts so that when middle school teachers assign reading students are prepared, and read with greater independence from middle school to high school.
 - Guided reading is working well at elementary school level; need to continue to look at exposure as the complexity increases; Woonsocket Middle School still has reading specialists; have 4 reading specialists at Woonsocket High School/Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center.
- Mark Garceau – K-12 Instructional Leaders ensuring consistency in delivery from Kindergarten through Grade 12.
- Throughout the Basic Education Program – there is a focus on educational reform.
 - In the Race To The Top Grant that RIDE submitted, references to guaranteed and viable curriculum ensuring all students have access to the same high quality instruction and curriculum; all students have time and supports to access curriculum; interventions that contribute to the student we want to graduate from Grade 12, in June with peers.
 - We want to ensure that students at Woonsocket High School have same opportunities as students in other communities so that if the student wants to join the service, attend MIT, or flip burgers – it is his choice, students should be able to leave as capable and able to make what ever choice he wants.
 - Issues of attendance, closing achievement gaps – test scores for the average student is not where we want them to be; there are significant gaps for students with Individualized Educational Plans, Hispanic students, English Language Learners – trying to address the issues through the Instructional Leaders, web of instructional leaders – Instructional Coaches, TIME teachers, directors.
 - If we keep our eyes on the prize, we can't help but be successful.
 - Drew Marzano triangle on easel - standards in middle, bottom segment is curriculum; left-hand segment is instruction, right-hand segment is assessment;
 - Collaboration: Grade Level Expectations/Grade Span Expectations – spell out what students need; shifting to Common Core standards over the next couple of years – 38 states; NECAP was a 3-state consortium; was a model for Common Core collaboration; then Maine joined to make a 4-state collaboration; same high expectations, same guaranteed and viable curriculum across 4 states.
 - Curriculum is whatever it takes to get to standards, look at what we are doing in terms of curriculum, instructional practice, visits to classrooms to see if supporting learning.
 - In terms of consistency – that's what the Instructional Leaders are about; used to be department chairs – departments are too discreet, too separate from each other; Instructional Leaders bridge levels.
 - Web of leadership – all contributing to the student we want to graduate; ensuring access to guarantee and viable curriculum.
 - Dana Center work – the Dana Center did not write a curriculum and drop it on us; it is not new math –
 - Math is spelled out in Grade Level Expectations/Grade Span Expectations; what students should know and be able to do
 - Dana Center facilitated the development of a math curriculum written by our teachers in conjunction with Cumberland and Lincoln; assembled writing teams – here's what standards say, how can we pull apart and set a scope and sequence so that all students have had access to high quality curriculum, the teachers built the scope and sequence – facilitated by Dana Center.
 - Need horizontal expectation – 3rd grade is 3rd grade is 3rd grade; too important to be luck; need to ensure horizontally consistent – standards say at a minimum must do this; that might take a lot of supports, might take a lot of enrichment; across district, the guaranteed and viable curriculum ensures that a student at grade 3 whether at Savoie or Coleman will have what he needs to be successful at grade 4; all rigorous, standards-based, attention paid to instruction and assess.
 - Then vertical consistency – cumulative, sequential, well thought-out, when a student leaves grade 1 he will be ready to be successful to compete grade 2, then grade 3; if he starts to stumble- put in interventions so the student is getting the support he needs; then when back on track – support goes away for awhile.
 - Trying to get alignment; sometimes things get put in silos, fragmented; 7 elementary schools, then silos of elementary, middle school, high school.

- Instructional Leaders meet weekly – how do we make this happen? Eventually all parts of conversation – data, align curriculum, around standards.
- R. Crane – frustration around Dana Center work; no examples, no common assessment.
 - Responses: M. Garceau – there will be; R. Gerardi – better if we develop these ourselves; focus on new Common Core; M. Garceau - not new math, same Grade Level Expectations/Grade Span Expectations formed into a scope and sequence; data screams – need to up the rigor; this year is implementation; recognize hard work, people digging in and doing terrific work; L. Jacques – we are moving away from textbook, guaranteed and viable curriculum is not in order of textbook; every teacher using different resources.
- D. Auclair – is it new to teachers? Teachers think of it as new math in their heads; addressing L. Jacques – do you go down to elementary level to go over the curriculum?
 - Responses M. Garceau – on PD day, the Dana Center representatives from the University of Texas at Austin were present; told teachers many times; Instructional Leaders and Director of Instruction and Administration meet with Instructional Coaches weekly to try to figure out ways for communicating back and forth (e.g. webpages, listservs) it is a yeoman’s job.
 - Responses M. Garceau – implementation is supported by Instructional Leaders K-12, Instructional Coaches at the elementary level; Building Principals; Instructional Coaches are the right hands for principals. instructionally; they meet frequently with Instructional Leaders – take direction from Principals, Instructional Leaders, selves; Instructional Coaches are members of the Woonsocket Teachers’ Guild – 6 crackerjacks – they are in classrooms, lead study groups; L. Jacques - to help teachers implement math, other disciplines.
- L. Majewski – speaking from the School Committee perspective;
 - Please don’t leave table thinking that we hired these people and lost all day Kindergarten; we changed from department heads and saved money, this structure was part of the District Negotiated Agreement with RIDE – rather than invest money again in House Leaders since Woonsocket Middle School met Adequate Yearly Progress – RIDE wanted to put money into Instructional Leaders to help achieve K-12 alignment; Title II and monies through the District Negotiated Agreement paid for the Instructional Leaders; curriculum development is a big piece of what they do.
 - School Committee reviews job descriptions.
 - Asked specifically that K-12 Instructional Leaders go to School Improvement Team meetings at each level so they can hear first-hand from parents, teacher, parents what concerns are; always wants things brought back to parent/teacher level.
 - K-12 continuity.
 - Wants a Curriculum Committee; reason for School Committee member to be there – so that all policies support what we are doing to support instruction; if the attendance policy is weak, then needs to be changed, if PBGR system is weak, then needs to be changed; School Committee role is to be parent voice, community voice, to support Instructional Leaders to do what they do best – which is to teach.
- D. Auclair – on behalf of PAC, we appreciate the presentation; once in a while maybe we could have a parent attend the Instructional Leader meetings.
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- D. Auclair – concerns
 - at elementary level – children are learning to read; many teachers let children read what they want; at middle school level – students get to read what they want – even comic books; vocabulary is not getting stronger or the grammar - not writing “juicy” sentences; it depends on the teacher; teachers are telling parents child needs to improve vocabulary and grammar but don’t provide any solutions or suggestions; Why can’t teachers have book lists for children to choose from – grade by grade?
 - T. Silva – administrators are now going into classrooms on a regular basis, focusing on seeing what teachers are doing in classrooms; looking at content specific reading, even outside of content classes (Social Studies/Science), then we can turn around and bring it back to cluster – like what are children reading in content; in reading, we are seeing what students are doing at each grade level; parents should see less of these things happening.
 - D. Auclair – can’t punish a child when being allowed to read what they want;
 - M. Garceau – students aren’t allowed to read what they want except for independent reading.
 - R. Gerardi/E. Zagrodny – at Woonsocket Middle School students should be reading in all contents – English Language Arts, content area reading, students are encouraged to engage in reading for enjoyment - might do a book report on a graphic novel, it is important to create lifelong readers not just reading as assignments.
 - B. Galvin – as a parent – it would be helpful to have a list of authors; Still getting individuality and choice.
 - E. Zagrodny – there are choices in different content areas; boys typically do not see reading for pleasure - let students read magazines/newspapers as well as books.
 - R. Crane/M. Garceau – maybe we could create lists of books on the district website;
 - E. Zagrodny – need to allow both academic/pleasure reading.
 - D. Auclair – the high school summer reading list has specific book titles listed.
 - B. Galvin/C. Stepanian – if child can go to library and they have suggested lists of authors, subjects, titles, piggybacked with WED – helps out with summer reading; this could help students choose books.

- How do you challenge students – when “I’m done?”, How do you get student to excel beyond? Son will only read what has to – answers in simple sentences, doesn’t explain, won’t use adjectives, details.
 - Response: M. Garceau – Woonsocket Education Department is upping rigor; trying to ensure that teachers are asking the more probing questions, not letting students off hook too easily; look at level of engagement – type of questioning going on, wait time? All of that builds mental muscle, quality of questions we ask, at what point do we hold students accountable for what they say,
 - Cindy Stepanian - maybe teachers could develop a protocol for parents with questions.
 - M. Garceau –teachers might give some suggestions/help for parents to support child’s learning;
- M. Garceau – if parents are concerned about rigor of assignments, they should speak with the teacher first, next the principal, then to Director of Instruction and Administration, then to the Superintendent; always go back to source.
- R. Gerardi – we have come a long way in a short time;
 - Over 20 years ago the curriculum was the text book; Now – standards, state standards, even multi-state standards.
 - How to get kids more engaged – Rhode Island Writing Project (involved since he was in North Providence) used writing to get students interested in reading.
 - A guaranteed and viable curriculum – in every classroom, now we have Instructional Leaders working cross-discipline, linkages on how to be better instructors.
 - Race To The Top – will provide financial support for curriculum.
- D. Auclair – important for teachers to have support; if parents understand where the curriculum comes from – we can help support, maybe at PTO meetings we can mention what we heard here; let parents know who they can contact, let teachers know who they can contact.
- R. Gerardi – it is exciting that this conversation is happening at a PAC meeting.
- C. Stepanian – will Race To The Top grant help instructionally?
 - Response: M. Garceau – all about standards and building systems – assessment, curriculum, reforms Commissioner of Education talks about - all supports for guaranteed and viable curriculum, safe secure schools, attendance, materials,, supports for struggling students, Race To The Top is a grant – will help with some pieces.
 - Will it cover the salaries of Instructional Leaders?
 - Response: Not Race To The Top. It is supplemental money – unless the federal government cuts Title II money.
- M. Garceau – Race To The Top will pay for 85% of the teachers in urban districts to go through intensive study of standards; bombard teachers with study – now many teachers go on and do the best they can without a real understanding of or clarity of standards; All students in all classes need to know and be able to do; with the scope and sequence and supports - teachers will feel more supported and have sense of clarity based on the scope and sequence– what students need to know by November, by March.
- R. Crane – Will the report card be changed to reflect the new scope and sequence in math? Grading reports, grading policies.
 - Response: M. Garceau – first priority will be the secondary report cards and grading policies and homework; the Basic Education Program says districts need consistent and clear policies; anticipate those will be the priorities; District will offer workshops on how to implement; need to understand that curriculum and instruction is not what we grew up with; secondary needs to learn from elementary; alignment has to go both ways
- L. Majewski – Is it possible to present scope and sequence in math to PAC – one meeting for elementary, one for secondary so parents will know what children should be learning.
 - Response: L. Jacques – Parents, anyone can access the Math Scope and Sequence on the district website; under documents – K-12 Scope and Sequence and Frequently Asked Questions.
 - L. Majewski – need to explain to parents.
 - M. Garceau - perhaps we could set up a series on math K-12, reading K-12, etc.
 - D. Auclair - Would it be better at a Math Night? Something to consider at a school event.

Next meeting

- C. Stepanian – there are no further meetings scheduled. Current co-chairs will contact delegates regarding next meeting dates and topics.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by C. Stepanian. Seconded by D. Auclair. Unanimous vote

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Filomeno