

**MINUTES**  
**WOONSOCKET PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2009**  
**7:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.**

**Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center**  
**400 Aylsworth Avenue**  
**Multimedia Room 303**

**Delegate/Guest Introductions**

**Attendees:**

Cindy Stepanian(PAC Co-Chair, Citizen's Delegate), Denise Auclair(PAC Co-Chair, Harris Elementary Delegate), Diane Engles(District Nurse), Dr. Peter Yasigian(District Dr.), Tara Dubois(WHS Alternate Delegate), Brenda Galvin(SELAC Delegate, WMS PTA Pres.), Renee Andrews(WMS Treasurer), Rob Desrosiers(Principal Delegate), Mark Garceau(Dir. of Instr.& Admin.), Donna Houle(School Success Team Leader, RIPIN rep.), Leidyana Tilano(WED Change Leader), Shannon Gamache(Leo Savoie Delegate), Vimala Phongsavahn(Neighbor Works), Evelyn McLoggins (Fairmont Delegate), Linda Filomeno(Dir. of Literacy & Professional Dev.), Kimberly Blais(Secretary to Dir. of Instr. & Admin.), Amy Thibeault(Bernon Heights, Delegate), Tony Gabriele(Community member), Sue Rochefort(WHS Delegate, PTO President)

**Special Guests** – Diane Engles, District Nurse and Dr. Peter Yasigian, District Doctor

**Delegates not in Attendance:**

- Donna Marcotte who is Globe Delegate is not present.
- Paula Dube who is the designee for Citizen/Pothier is not present.

**Suggestions/Concerns**

**Denise Auclair:** ( PAC Co-Chair)

- Commissioner's Visit November 17th
- Harris Elementary Swine Flu Clinic tonight
  - Very organized, signs posted everywhere vaccinated students in alphabetical order.
- Concern is the Swine Flu Vaccine

**Tara Dubois:** (WHS Alternate) No comment.

**Brenda Galvin:** (SELAC Delegate & WMS PTA President) No comment.

**Renee Andrews:** (WMS Treasurer) No comment.

**Rob Desrosiers:** (Principal of Globe Park Elementary School) No comment.

**Mark Garceau:** (Dir. of Instr. & Admin.)

- Working very closely with a number of people regarding the Swine Flu and have information on this.

**Donna Houle:** (School Success Coalition, Team Leader, RIPEN rep)

- November 13<sup>th</sup> - the School Success Coalition will be meeting with Dr. Gerardi regarding attendance policy.
- November 18<sup>th</sup> – presenting same at the School Committee meeting.
- December 10<sup>th</sup> – 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. is our next meeting at Family Resources. Child care will be provided. If you need child care please call 270-0101.
- WMS Open House – anything that the School Success Coalition can do to help, let us know.
- November 17<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Commissioner Gist is inviting the community for a discussion on the RI education agenda at Northern Rhode Island Collaborative, George Washington Highway. Interested please email Melissa Cabral at [Melissa.cabral@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Melissa.cabral@ride.ri.gov). A question was raised on who is invited to this. It might only be PTA/PTO Presidents/Chairs/Co-Chairs. A suggestion was made to contact your PTA or PTO to see if anyone is going.
- Went to Bernon Heights PTO on Monday who had a guest speaker, Maryanne Stepanian from Community Health Services and she did a free presentation on CPR. She is also offering this to other PTA/PTO. Any one who is interested should call 431-5410 extension 229. Her email address is [mstepanian@lifespan.org](mailto:mstepanian@lifespan.org).

**Leidyana Tilano:** (Change Leader for WED) No comment.

**Shannon Gamache:** (New Delegate, Leo Savoie School)

- Biggest concern is we just lost a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader at Leo Savoie who passed away from cancer just last night. We are relieved that we have support and counseling on-site for the children and we have set up a tomorrow fund in memory of Jack.

**Vimala Phongsavahn:** (Neighbor Works Blackstone River Valley/Kevin K. Coleman and Fifth Avenue School) New School Committee Member.

- All community organizations working on Martin Luther King (MLK) Day celebrations 2010 scheduled for 1-18-09. This is a community wide event. Certainly want parents and schools to get very involved. Need volunteers. Events will be held Beacon Charter School/Stadium Theatre.
- Committee congratulated Vimala on becoming a new School Committee member.

**Evelyn McLoggins:** (Fairmont Delegate) No comment.

**Linda Filomeno:** (Dir. of Literacy & Professional Dev. for WED) No comment.

**Kimberly Blais:** (Secretary to the Dir. of Instr. & Admin.) has a child in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at Globe Park. No comment.

**Amy Thibeault:** (Bernon Heights, Delegate) I have a 1<sup>st</sup> grader at Bernon.

- Had a really well attended family dance.
- Food drive for the month of October was a huge success, had over 1200 items, and it is still going on. Alan Shawn Feinstein has agreed to match dollar for dollar for what was brought in our folder for the month of October.
- Started walk to school days. Every Thursday, Mr. Nasuti, Bernon Principal meets the students, along with parents, at Bernon Park at 8:15 a.m. and walk to school together. This has been really well attended and really successful.
- First coffee hour this Friday morning with the TIME teacher Ms. Steers at 9:15 a.m.

- Holiday bazaar on 11-28-09 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We are looking for vendors. Table rentals are \$25.00 a piece.

**Tony Gabriele:** (Community member, VP WHS PTO) Parent of a WHS Freshman No comment.

**Sue Rochefort:** (WHS PTO President)

- Last meeting was October 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - A speaker from the Woonsocket Coalition Task Force, Laura, talked and passed out pamphlets about tobacco and substance abuse.
  - Also had a speaker regarding Christmas trees and wreaths. It is a great idea that we could do as a fundraiser, however it was just not feasible right now because it was too late in the year. We had to have 100 sold before the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> of November. Contacted music boosters, football teams, etc., and they already had their fundraiser for the year. In addition, the boy scouts do this and we also would take away from them. We might meet again in August on this idea.
  - Had beach towel fundraiser and did sell some at the last football game.
  - School pictures were scheduled for October 29<sup>th</sup> however it was cancelled. Do not have a rescheduled date.
  - Our next meeting is November 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Cindy Stepanian:** (PAC Co-Chair)

I am not at Citizens' and Pothier anymore. I am at Globe.

- November 10<sup>th</sup> - McDonald Fundraiser – Proceeds will go towards Globe PTA.
- November 12<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 p.m. – Next Globe PTA meeting.
- November 24<sup>th</sup> – H1N1 Vaccine Clinic at Globe.
- Bus stop rumors – one rumor was that kids that went to the Halloween dance got sick. They have concerns about bringing their kids to other future events. Mark Garceau pointed out that the kids are together all day for school; therefore, what makes the difference of the gathering during the day or during the evening. None.
- A lot of controversy about should we let our kids get the shot or not, side effects, etc. because parents are not getting enough information or correct information. After we get all the information, correct information, from the nurse this evening, we need to start spreading the correct information to all parents. Dr. Yasigian recommendation is to get every child vaccinated.

**General Discussions:**

- Mark Garceau - Purell issues – It is very effective in killing bacteria. When the bird flu was an issue about 7 to 8 years ago, the Governor ordered purell dispensers in every classroom. We did do this; however, because of the high alcohol contents in purell, they are considered to be a fire hazard per the Fire Chief and all purell dispensers need to be removed. We now revert back to warm water and soap. We will share whatever information we receive with you. We anticipate cases of SWINE Flu in all buildings. It has never been recommended shutting schools down. This is just not practical. We told principals that YES it is critical to have kids in school, we have a firm attendance policy, however, this year we will lighten up a little bit because we are telling parents that if your child is sick, keep them home.
- Mark Garceau – met with Chief Lataille, Fire Chief for the district and also the head of EMA. He has been in charge of helping us with the vaccine, etc. for the next month or so. He has been told that the virus cannot survive on a surface for more than a couple of

hours. However, our custodians are still doing extra cleaning. Will check to make sure this includes water fountains/bubblers.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- *Old Minutes* – We sent January, March, and June out a while back. They were not approved so we made the changes and sent them back out again. We would like to try to approve them again tonight. Evelyn McLoggins made motion to approve minutes of those dates and Brenda Galvin second the motion. At our next meeting we will be doing September minutes, Commissioner's minutes, and tonight's minutes. Hopefully we will get those out to you very shortly.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- *Parent Leadership Workshop* – We will look at doing this at Coleman. Asked Donna Houle to help so we can get more parents involved at Coleman. What we need to find out first is what would you as PAC Delegates like to see in a parent leadership workshop. One idea is to have a parent leadership workshop that can train us as parents on how to go and respond to teachers without taking sides between child and teacher (communication and proper questions to ask). Another suggestion for a different kind of workshop is to have a financial fitness class to teach parents how to budget especially with the upcoming uniforms. The whole idea for workshops is to get more of the community involved, try to get parents more active, etc. Child care is a big issue, therefore, we need to explore options of child care. Some options/ideas for child care could be:
  - TIME Teachers – need to get permission from School Committee and/or Dr. Gerardi.
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century or other out sources.
  - WMS, WHS or WACTC students in child care studies.
  - Brenda Galvin offered to do Certificates for Community Service for students.

We want this workshop done before the end of this school year (maybe sometime in March).

- *WMS Transition/Opening Ceremony Update 11/21/09* – Only touring one school which is the one on Hamlet Avenue. Tours will begin at 10:30 a.m., grand opening ceremony at 12:00 p.m., and back to touring until 2:30 p.m. November 10<sup>th</sup> will be our final meeting for the grand opening.
- WMS Students will be moving to the new schools during the week of January 4<sup>th</sup>. Students have been told which school they will attend, however, if they are not sure they can contact Dr. McGee.
- Brenda Galvin - November 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30 p.m. at the WMS there will be an informational night for parents and students. This meeting will address any questions and/or concerns regarding traffic, lockers, bell schedule, lunch, etc. Any delegates that can help it would be appreciated. PAC will send notice to parent list. WMS will send flyers homes (after approval by Dr. Gerardi). She will also contact police department to monitor traffic for that evening.
- *H1N1 (Swine Flu) Presentation by WED Health Educators* – Diane Engles, Chairperson of nurses in Woonsocket and School Nurse at WHS. Dr. Peter Yasigian, Pediatrician and Medical Director for the School District in Woonsocket.
  - First H1N1 Clinic at Harris Elementary School. Vaccinated close to 300 students out of 404 students.
  - PowerPoint presentation – see Cindy or Denise for paper copies.

- Every school nurse in Woonsocket has volunteered to vaccinate children not only in Woonsocket but throughout the State.
  - Consent forms available on the home page of the Woonsocket Education Department website, home page of the Department of Health website and also available in every school.
  - Vaccination Team consists of administrator, nurse, EMT from Wellness Company, Emergency Medical Reserve Corps., and Department of Health.
  - Students have to be on the roster or they will not be vaccinated. A signed consent form is mandatory or they will not be vaccinated. Parents have to be in attendance with their child.
  - Students are vaccinated at their home school only. Home schooled children are to register and report to the school that they would otherwise attend. Home schooled children will receive a letter and registration form via mail.
  - Approximately ten days to produce antibodies to the H1N1 virus. Side effects may be soreness and/or redness at the injection side, NO neurological issues.
  - Students will receive the injectable vaccine not the nasal spray.
  - The second vaccine is due in 30 days of first vaccine. We will hold another clinic at every school when the vaccine becomes available.
- *Next Two PAC Meetings* – Wednesday, January 20, 2010 and Monday, March 8.
  - *PAC Co-Chair* – Election for a new PAC Co-Chair is coming up. If you are interesting in becoming a PAC Co-Chair, please advise the Committee at the January meeting. It is a two-year run. We will send out an email in a couple of weeks in regards to this. We will do nomination via email and at the January meeting, we will make the vote.

Motion to adjourn made by Cindy Stepanian. Second motion by Linda Filomeno. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kimberly Blais