



## EDUCATION411 NEWSLETTER

January 17, 2011

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### SCHOOL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday January 20, 2011 7:30PM High School Little Theatre

#### CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
- B. Superintendent's Report  
Q2 Financial Report

#### DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Policy Manual Review- Jim Hardy, MASC
- B. FY'12 Budget Presentation

#### ACTION ITEMS

- A. Approval of Minutes: December 16, 2010

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – Agenda items and non-agenda items and other matters within the Committee's jurisdiction

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## **SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET FORUM**

The PTOs of all the Westwood schools are holding a budget forum with Superintendent John Antonucci on **Wednesday, February 2nd - 7 PM** at the High School. The budget presentation will be followed by time for questions from the audience. Please attend and stay informed about the budget process for next year.

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### **NOTES SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

December 16, 2010

#### **Superintendent's Report**

The Superintendent (JA) presented a plaque to Westwood High School student, Irina Chiulli, who won the Division 2 State Diving Championship. Ray Chiulli was also honored by the School Committee for his work as coordinator of the High School's Community Service Project for Student Athletes, which has almost 100% participation.

#### **Bullying Policy**

This was the third and final reading of the Bullying Policy. The SC had discussed and made minor edits to the policy at the previous two meetings. JA solicited public comment via email and posting the draft on the district website. During the two week comment period, ten comments were received. There were three groups of responses. First, some offered general support for the policy. Second, some asked questions such as: How do you identify bullying? Is it subjective? How do you enforce it? JA said those are valid questions and are clarified in the policy. Three, others asked about discipline given there are issues that are not bullying. He referred parents to the student handbook of each school for discipline policies. Minor edits included adding the word "significant" to the definition of bullying to specify significant emotional harm and adding the word "materially" to say materially interrupts the education process and orderly operations of the school. Finally, the word "immediately" was changed to "promptly" to state that school staff will promptly report incidents.

Discussion included the SC student representative asking if a physical act is considered bullying. JA replied it is bullying if it is repeated, but an isolated physical act would be subject to discipline and likely not considered bullying.

SC asked for public participation and there was none. The SC voted unanimously to approve the bullying policy.

#### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The district is also required by state law to submit a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, which is an extension of the policy. This document details how the district will implement and follow the Bullying Policy.

A SC member said they had been asked if bullying really happens in Westwood and the SC member asked if the administration is getting more calls now that this is on people's radar. JA said that conflict happens all the time and people now may use the bullying term inappropriately. The positive of the legislation is that people are talking about behavior. A SC member asked how many cases have occurred since September. Emily Parks, HS Principal, replied that there is one case that upon investigation was a case of bullying. Alison Borchers, MS Principal, said that the increased awareness is allowing MS staff to get involved sooner

before situations escalate. The SC student representative said that he believes Middle School is the prime bullying time. JA stated that the law allows for anonymous reporting. There will be a form available on the website shortly. Although anonymous, the administration will need details in order to investigate.

A SC member asked what is done if kids are being mean or excluding kids. Peggy Scott, Martha Jones Principal, replied that schools are concerned with all impacts of behavior and try to build a school culture to teach kids to act responsibly. The SC student representative said they have a peer mediation team at the HS and they go to freshman classes to speak about bullying.

The SC voted unanimously to approve the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

### **Library- Media Curriculum Review**

Mary Braney, the District's Director of Libraries, presented the Westwood Public Schools' Library/Media Department's Curriculum Review Report to the School Committee. The Curriculum Review Committee based their revised curriculum on the American Association of School Librarians' "Standards for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner". The revised curriculum's vision is to support students, teachers and administrators. Its mission is to teach lifelong skills and its goal is to support a strong learning environment. The review responds to the change from print media to more inter-active content, for example EBooks will be available as well as an expanded selection of databases.

More information is available on the website:

[Westwood Public Schools Library Department](#)

### **Teachers' Contract**

The SC unanimously approved the teachers' contract. JA said that this agreement is fair to both parties and the contract process was exceptional. The financial impact is a 4% increase over 3 years (1.5%, .5% and 2.0%).

