

CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01609

AGENDA #6

The School Committee will hold a regular meeting:

on: Thursday, March 3, 2011
at: 6:00 p.m. - Executive Session
7:00 p.m. – Regular Session
in: Council Chamber, City Hall

ORDER OF BUSINESS

ACTION

I. CALL TO ORDER – REGULAR MEETING

INVOCATION - Reverend Paul Frechette
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/NATIONAL ANTHEM

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF RECORDS

aor #1-6 - Clerk
(February 23, 2011)

To consider approval of the Minutes of the School Committee Meeting of Thursday, February 17, 2011.

IV. MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION - NONE

V. IMMEDIATE ACTION

ACTION

gb #1-26.1 - Administration/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Foley/
Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick/Mr. O'Connell/
Mayor O'Brien
(January 26, 2011)

To recognize Dr. Leonard Morse for his years of outstanding service as the Public Health Commissioner for the City of Worcester.

gb #1-57.1 - Administration/Mr. Monfredo/Mr. O'Connell/
Mayor O'Brien/Miss Biancheria
(February 23, 2011)

To recognize Edwin Shea, Market President of Bank of America for the bank's donation of \$50,000 to the Main South Promise Neighborhood Program.

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

ros #1-3 - Administration
(February 23, 2011)

2009-10 ANNUAL REPORTS ON GRADUATION RATES AND DROPOUTS

VII. COMMUNICATION AND PETITION

c&p #1-2 - Clerk
(February 23, 2011)

To consider a communication from a citizen regarding the Superintendent's Progress Report on District Initiatives.

VIII. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports met at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2011 in Room 410 at the Dr. John E. Durkin Administration Building.

THE ACTION SHEET MAY BE FOUND IN THE APPROPRIATE PLACE IN THE BACKUP

X. GENERAL BUSINESS

ACTION

gb #1-44.1 - Administration/Miss Biancheria/Mr. O'Connell/
Mr. Monfredo
(February 23, 2011)

Response of the Administration to the request to provide an outline of the strategies, timelines and Budget for the 2011 Summer programs to include:

- a list of the academic support and MCAS programs
- a list of the names of the community schools that will provide summer programs
- a description of academic outreach partnerships for youth employment and
- a list of proposed paid and unpaid internship sites

gb #1-65 - Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Foley/Ms. Novick/
Mr. Monfredo/Mayor O'Brien
(February 11, 2011)

To review the findings of the parent/guardian survey for children who receive special education services which are currently being compiled as part of the periodic audit of special education programs and services in the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #1-66 - Miss Biancheria/Mr. Monfredo/Mr. O'Connell
(February 22, 2011)

Request that the Administration provide a report on the initiatives in Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) taking place at all grade levels in the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #1-67 - Miss Biancheria/Mr. Monfredo/Mr. O'Connell
(February 22, 2011)

Request that the Administration forward a letter of recognition on behalf of the School Committee to a representative of Clear Channel Outdoor of Stoneham for its support in helping to raise awareness relative to the Anti-Bullying Law.

GENERAL BUSINESS (continued)

ACTION

gb #1-68 - Mr. Monfredo/Ms. Novick/Mr. O'Connell
(February 22, 2011)

Request that the Administration consider as a language arts idea to conduct Poem in Your Pocket Days on April 14th and 15th as part of National Poetry Month and supported by the Academy of American Poets. In addition, request that this idea be sent to the Worcester Public Library and to the Poetry Association in Worcester.

gb #1-69 - Administration
(February 22, 2011)

To accept a donation in the amount \$56.00 made payable to the Maxine Levy Scholarship Fund.

gb #1-70 - Administration
(February 25, 2011)

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the governmental body, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
Clerk of the School Committee

**REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
MELINDA J. BOONE, Ed.D.**

March 3, 2011

2009-10 ANNUAL REPORTS ON GRADUATION RATES AND DROPOUTS

A key indicator of a district's effectiveness and success is its graduation rate and dropout rate. Annually, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, reports on these two key indicators. The state's 2009-10 reports indicate that the 4-year graduation rate continues to rise while the statewide annual dropout rate remained steady. The four year cohort graduation rate is calculated by including the number of first time entering ninth graders in the 2006-07 school year, factoring transfers out and transfers in, and the number who actually graduate in four years or less. The dropout rate is "snapshot of those students who dropped out of school in any given year" [MDESE, 2009-10]. Similar to the state, Worcester Public Schools saw an increase in its 4-year graduation rate. However, Worcester Public Schools saw a decrease in its dropouts in 2009-10 from its 2008-09 data. This is significant change from last year's results. Worcester Public Schools was one of only seven urban districts to experience an increase in dropouts in 2008-09 while all other urban districts saw declines in that same year.

A brief review of the past five years of data is helpful to understand Worcester's progress. Worcester Public Schools has only seen an overall 1% increase in the 4-year graduation rate, moving from 73.4% in 2005-06 to 74.4% in 2009-10. Additionally, the graduation rate gap between Worcester Public Schools students has persisted during this same time period, hovering around the seven to eight percentage point range compared to all graduates at the state level. The gap is the difference between the rate of graduation of groups of students in the district compared to those in the state. The graduation rates for African-Americans, Hispanic/Latino, limited English proficient, and low income students in Worcester Public Schools during this five year period have tended to exceed the state averages for these subgroups. Conversely, the graduation rates of White students and students with disabilities have lagged the state averages for these same categories. The district does see an increase in the numbers and percentage students graduating from Worcester Public Schools in five years.

The Annual High School Dropout report has undergone a series of changes over the last few years. This report is currently reflective of the percent of students across grades nine through twelve who dropout in a particular year. Therefore, the state cautions drawing year to year comparisons due to those changes. However, significant in the 2009-10 year report is that Worcester Public Schools had 93 fewer students to drop out compared to 2008-09 school year, resulting in an overall dropout rate of 3.8 %. This is a 1.3% decrease from the previous year. This places the Worcester Public Schools dropout rate within one percentage point of the state's rate of 2.9%.

As the district strives to more closely align its practices and expectations to achieve college and career readiness for all students, these data on dropouts and graduation rates carry even more significance. While there has been steady progress, there is certainly a great deal more that needs to be done to close gaps among and between subgroups and the state performance. These results are indicative of the coherent and focused efforts being undertaken within the district through increased and effective use of data, ongoing commitment and attention to individual students by teachers and principals, and programming that is designed to address current needs to increase relevance of academic offerings and services to all students. In short, the hard work of principals, teachers, students and parents is supporting improved performance for all students.

The attached table shows the 4-year and 5-year graduation trend for Worcester Public Schools and includes state data for the same years. Additional analysis of the graduation and dropout trends over the past five years will be included in the full presentation to the School Committee during the March 3, 2011 meeting.

As always, I am available to answer any questions you may have about this report.

**Worcester Public Schools
2006-2001 Graduation Trend Data**

School Year	WPS 4 Year Graduation Rate (adjusted) % of graduates	State 4 Year Graduation Rate % of graduates	WPS 5 Year Graduation Rate (adjusted) % of graduates	State 5 Year Graduation Rate % of graduates
2009-10	74.4	82.1	NA	NA
2008-09	72.9	81.5	76.1	84.0
2007-08	72.4	81.2	78.5	84.2
2006-07	72.2	80.9	77.7	84.0
2005-06	73.4	79.9	76.6	82.7

MCAS Academic Support Summer School 2011

MODEL I - COLLEGE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS (CCC)

(596/597 and Connecting Activities)

8:30 – 2:30	Classes of 2003-2010, 2011, 2012
20 days requested	Certified math/ELA/science teachers only; 10:1 ratio
100 students	3.5 hours of academics and 2.5 hours of internship
	10 college and community locations throughout Worcester
	Students complete Work Based Learning Plan & Career Passports
	Students earn 1 credit (elective or academic) after 49 hours

Eligibility: Not Yet Passed Grade 10 Math or ELA MCAS or Grade 9 Science MCAS or never taken exam and is 16+

MODEL II – HIGH SCHOOLS

(632/625)	Classes of 2013 and 2014 for ELA, Math and Science
8:00 – 12:00	3.5 hours of academics in math, ELA or science
(450 students)	
10:1 Ratio	

Locations: Burncoat, North, South, Worcester Technical, Doherty, Claremont, Alternative, Gerald Creamer Center

Students earn 1 credit (elective or academic) after 49 hours

Eligibility Requirements

- If a student has taken the 10th grade test in ELA or Mathematics and received a failing score (under 220), they are eligible for the program, but should be offered the CCC program first.
- If a student has not yet taken the 10th grade test in ELA or Mathematics and received a Needs Improvement or Warning score (under 240) on the 7th or 8th grade test, they are eligible for the program
- If a student has not yet passed the Science exam (under 220), they are eligible for the program.

MODEL III – WORK PLUS (not connected to MCAS)

(Connecting Activities) (500 + students)	All students eligible to earn 1 elective credit if they have their own job and work a minimum of 125 hours and complete the required MA DESE Work Based Learning Plan and Competency Handbook
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MODEL V – UMASS Memorial Hospital & UMASS Medical School

Provides paid internships for 50 students at the hospital and 25 students at UMASS Medical School that have passed MCAS

Description of academic outreach partnerships for youth employment

- a. Worcester Community Action Council – pending funding, WPS will partner with WCAC to pay our students for their internships in the College Community Connection program.
- b. UMASS Memorial Hospital – through Building Brighter Futures committee, the hospital supplies 50 paid internships for students who have passed MCAS
- c. UMASS Medical School - through Building Brighter Futures committee, the medical school supplies 25 paid internships for students who have passed MCAS
- d. One Stop Career Center – through a collaboration of academic support grants 596/597 and 626/627 (for One Stops), the One Stop Career Center helps us to recruit students for our College Community Connection program. They will also present at our CCC orientation day about job readiness skills.
- e. College Community Connection sites below

Proposed paid and unpaid internship sites

Proposed College Community Connection sites:

New sites

Allcom Credit Union
Braley-Wellington Insurance Company
Worcester Academy
Hanover Insurance
Worcester Credit Union
Worcester Crafts Center

Prior Sites

UMASS Medical Hospital
Fallon Community Health
Assumption College
Quinsigamond College
Clark University
WCCA-TV
Worcester City Hall
Plumley Village

POEM IN YOUR POCKET... IDEAS

Celebrate national Poem In Your Pocket Day on Thursday, April 14 AND 15 2011!

The idea is simple: select a poem you love during National Poetry Month then carry it with you to share with co-workers, family, and friends.

Poems from pockets will be unfolded throughout the day with events in parks, libraries, schools, workplaces, and bookstores. [Create your own Poem In Your Pocket Day event](#) using ideas below or let us know how your plans, projects, and suggestions for Poem In Your Pocket Day by emailing npm@poets.org.

Put Poems In Pockets

In this age of mechanical and digital reproduction, it's easy to carry a poem, share a poem, or start your own PIYP day event. Here are some ideas of how you might get involved:

- Start a "poems for pockets" give-a-way in your school or workplace
- Urge local businesses to offer discounts for those carrying poems
- Post pocket-sized verses in public places
- Handwrite some lines on the back of your business cards
- Start a street team to pass out poems in your community
- Distribute bookmarks with your favorite immortal lines
- Add a poem to your email footer
- Post a poem on your blog or social networking page
- Project a poem on a wall, inside or out
- Text a poem to friends

Help us expand the list: send your ideas to npm@poets.org.

Need a Poem for Your Pocket?



Along with your library, bookstore, or shelf at home, you can find the perfect poem for your pocket by [browsing](#) Poets.org, or by signing up to [receive a poem](#) from new spring poetry titles each day during April.

Download pocket-sized [Poem PDFs](#) to print and share:

The NYC Department of Education has created poetry curriculums which can be used by teachers or after-school coordinators to introduce poetry to students. Visit the [Poetry Curriculum](#) page to find information on lesson plans, school-wide poetry events, bibliographies, and professional development books for teachers, ideas for encouraging parent involvement and online resources. We hope this helps you generate ideas for a school-wide poetry celebration.

We are also proud to be partnering with the Academy of American Poets and the Poetry Society of America. Be sure to check out their website, which offers many

ways to incorporate poetry into your students' lives this Poem in Your Pocket Day: poets.org/pocket and poetrysociety.org respectively.

As an educator and as a student, there are plenty of ways to celebrate Poem In Your Pocket Day. Take a look at some of our suggestions below and make poetry a part of your education this April.

Staff Members:

- Invite a business leader or your local council member to read your class a poem
- Start the day with a read aloud of a poem on the school PA system
- Each class can begin their reading/writing workshop with a poem
- Encourage all school staff to have a poem in their pockets; find opportunities to show students their poems
- Share favorite poems with your classes
- Invite classes to read poems to each other throughout the day
- Each class can create a collection of books of poetry and place it in a prominent place in the classroom
- Have students send poems like people send valentines
- Visit [Pro Teacher Archive](#) for a lesson entitled Poet-tree by Susan S. Students write their poems on teacher-prepared leaves and attach them to a teacher-made tree
- As a school-wide initiative, join the [Poetry Society of America](#)
- Have students choose a metaphor or simile to describe their feelings about poetry. Have them write a poem using these feelings
- Visit the [READ WRITE THINK](#) website for detailed lessons and activities supporting Poem In Your Pocket Day
- Visit [Poets.org](#) to find your favorite poem to share
- Organize a poetry contest and select students as judges. Include teachers and administrators as contestants

Students:

Try writing a different kind of poem - one that the students have never written before:

- *Object Poem* - become an object and write about your life as a raindrop, blade of grass, tooth, or mp3 player
- *Found Poem* - using your favorite book, identify particular words and write a poem
- *List Poem* - Using an object, experience or feeling as inspiration to brainstorm a list
- *Sensory Poem* - Using an object or experience, think of all the sensory feelings associated with it and write a poem
- Write poems with specific literary devices in mind, such as alliteration
- Write a group poem. Each person in the group writes a line and passes it on to the next person. The entire poem is not read aloud until all lines have been added

- Give instructions for something to do in poetic form
- For older students, visit [Fooling with Words](#)
- Write a poem about your favorite song
- Find a song that speaks to your favorite poem
- Text a poem to family, friends, or classmates
- Make a bookmark of your favorite poem and exchange it with your classmates

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Share a poem with everyone you meet on Poem in Your Pocket Day. As part of New York City's celebration of National Poetry Month, residents have participated in Poem in Your Pocket Day since 2002. Now the movement has gone national! Select a poem or compose an original work and carry it with you in your pocket all day tomorrow, sharing the poem and the fun of National Poetry Month wherever you go.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Use the Read Write Think [Stapleless Book](#) tool to help your students celebrate Poem in Your Pocket Day, sponsored by the [Academy of American Poets](#).

- Print, copy, and distribute copies of the [Stapleless Book Planning Sheet](#). Ask students to brainstorm what they would like to include in their books of poetry.
- Have younger students select a poem, and space the poem a line or two at a time across the pages. They can add illustrations after they have printed. Older students can select a collection of poems they enjoy to include in the book.
- Give students time to type their poem(s) into the [Stapleless Book](#) tool.
- Have students print and create their books. They will need scissors to complete this step.
- Encourage students to take their books of poetry with them throughout the day, sharing them with people they meet.
- If time permits, print and prepare multiple copies of their books and have students put them in unexpected places throughout the building!

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WEBSITES

[Poem in Your Pocket Day](#)

- Part of Poets.org (online home of the Academy of American Poets), the Poem in Your Pocket Day page features the history of the event and ideas for celebrating-including a list of poems about pockets!

[Poetry 180: A Poem a Day for American High Schools](#)

- Billy Collins, former US Poet Laureate, encourages students to take daily pleasure and inspiration from the collection of poems on this Library of Congress site. In addition to the 180 poems, Collins offers advice on reading poems aloud.

[Favorite Poem Project](#)

- The Favorite Poem Project, cosponsored by Boston College and the Library of Congress, is dedicated to celebrating, documenting, and encouraging poetry's role in Americans lives. Watch or listen to citizens read poems they love.

[Poetry Archive](#)

- The Poetry Archive uses digital recordings of a diverse range of poems to help make poetry accessible, relevant, and enjoyable to a wide audience. The site features historic and contemporary recordings and offers resources for students, teachers, and librarians.

RELATED RESOURCES

Grades 1 – 2 | Lesson Plan | Standard Lesson

[Acrostic Poems: All About Me and My Favorite Things](#)

Students create acrostic poems using their names and the names of things that are important to them.

Grades 3 – 5 | Lesson Plan | Standard Lesson

[Shape Poems: Writing Extraordinary Poems About Ordinary Objects](#)

Students select a familiar object online, build a bank of words related to the object, and write shape poems that are printed and displayed in class.

Grades 6 – 8 | Lesson Plan | Standard Lesson

[Slipping, Sliding, Tumbling: Reinforcing Cause and Effect Through Diamante Poems](#)

Writing, revising, and publishing are just a few of the tasks students will complete in order to take their cause-and-effect diamante poems from an idea to a reality.

Grades 11 – 12 | Lesson Plan | Standard Lesson

[A Poem of Possibilities: Thinking about the Future](#)

After reading John Updike's "Ex-Basketball Player," students write poems describing themselves five years in the future. The teacher takes the poems and mails them to students in five years.