

Willard School SAC Minutes (Approved)
March 6, 2017

Present:

Liz Berk, Rebecca Comjean, Katie Kerr, Anne Kilroy, Rachael Morris, Kate Mullen, Rudd Coffey, Pat Fernandes

Absent:

Carolyn Ferraioli

Review/Approval of February SAC Minutes:

Approved

School Committee Budget Presentation:

Johanna Boynton and Dan Conti presented the proposed School Committee Budget for fiscal year 2018. This is going to be a 3.89% increase to the annual operating budget. Since this is above the Finance Committee's proposed Budget it will go to Town Meeting for a vote.

What's New at Willard? Teacher's Perspective:

Kindergarten – reported by Rachael Morris

*Just celebrated Read Across America Day with a grade wide pajama day Kindergarten teachers paired up and kids were split into two big groups and each group heard a different Seuss story. Pat Fernandes also read to the entire kindergarten. Then the Kindergarteners went into the cafeteria and they all made bookmarks.

* Learning about vowels. Studying the vowel sounds and learning that all words have vowels.

* New England Aquarium visited with a hands-on tidal pool exhibit. Children learned about starfish, clams, crabs, etc.

* Continuing to explore writing workshop in all classrooms

First Grade – reported by Rachael Morris

* Also celebrated Read Across America Day with a variety of fun rhyming activities influenced by Dr. Seuss

* February was Dental Health Month and several first grade classrooms did a bar graph showing the total number of teeth children have lost

* New Science is Solids and Liquids – students learn what makes a solid with some surprises along the way – lots of good vocabulary words (flexible, rigid, etc.) and hands on experiments

* Beginning All-About Book writing in Writing Workshop

Second Grade – reported by Rachael Morris

*Research is the big news this month – Great Apes, Whales, and Bears represent 4 weeks of hard work at school and a project at home culminating in a research breakfast

* Teachers will attend a District Wide Science day learning more about new Science curriculum roll out

* Maps in Social Studies

* Making Meaning and Close Reading happening in several rooms as a change for Writing Workshop

Grade 3 - reported by Katie Kerr

READING:

Third graders are just beginning a unit focusing on learning how to study a genre. The genre we will be using to do this is fairy tales. Just before this, classes studied tall tales with a focus on figurative language.

MATH:

Teachers are just beginning Unit 6. At this point, most students are solid on their multiplication facts.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

The Concord Museum came to do their Two Worlds Meet program. Students will continue to study this topic and move into Colonial Concord.

SCIENCE:

Teachers are piloting the new FOSS unit titled Motion & Matter. So far, the students have built their own wheel and axel system, with the focus of observing patterns of motion and what changes/affects these patterns.

WRITING:

Teachers are currently wrapping up the opinion unit. Students are writing opinion essays on school uniforms.

Grade 4 - reported by Katie Kerr

In **Social Studies**, classes are well into the Ancient China unit. Each class has had 4 visits from Mr. Ratiner. On his last visit, students practiced

Chinese brush painting. Mr. Ratiner shared his own collection of special materials for his Scholar's Table. These items included beautiful brushes, ink stones, and brush pots. After some practice, students created their own work of art on rice paper, which students will later turn into a beautiful scroll with an accompanying poem.

In **Science**, teachers have turned their attention to natural resources.

In Math, classes are working in unit 5, which focuses on computation of fractions and mixed numbers.

In **reading** groups, students continue to work on novels. Students have just finished reading a book on China. The book compared life in Ancient China to life today. The book had wonderful photographs and sparked a lot of good class discussions.

During **writing**, students are beginning to draft persuasive essays on whether zoos are good or bad for animals. Students brainstormed a long list of the pros and cons of zoos and student essays will persuade readers of their opinion on the topic.

NAEP testing occurred with approximately 60 students participating.

Grade 5 – reported by Katie Kerr

Math – Teachers are finishing up Unit 5 (multiplying & dividing fractions), starting Unit 6 (multiplying & dividing decimals)

Science - Everyone is moving along through the FOSS Earth & Sun unit

Social Studies – Exploration is being studied.

Reading - Reading groups are working with various novels (Tuck Everlasting or City of Ember). One teacher did some work with poetry picture books, working on figurative language.

Writing - answering text-based questions using RACE

DARE – Each 5th grade class had their first DARE lesson. The students were excited.

Art - Kristin Saunders

Reported by Kate Mullen

K: students are observing drawings of toy trucks, and creating class paper quilts about happiness to be displayed outside the art room.

1st grade: students have been painting with watercolors and will start using tempera paints as well.

2nd grade: painting continues with tempera paint.

3rd grade: third graders are starting papier-mâché puppet making.

4th grade: students are starting printmaking. Classes made stamps last week and will print over the next two weeks.

5th Grade: fifth graders are starting printmaking and will soon use clay to make islands.

Preparations for the 5th Grade Art Retrospective begin in April.

Physical Education - Mike Germond

Reported by Kate Mullen

All classes are starting a 3-week unit on gymnastics. Each week students will work on strength, balance, and flexibility. Students will work on these areas through work on floor exercises/tumbling, vaulting, still rings, balance beam, and the parallel bars.

Music - Charlyn Bethell

Reported by Kate Mullen

K classes are noticing spring sounds such as bird songs.

1st grades--are reviewing rhythms learned and starting to put beats into groups that will be called "measures".

2nd grades--will be doing an in-house play of Stone Soup. Ms. Bethell will present the new lower note: DO. Classes will play So, Mi, and La on xylophones.

3rd grades--are playing recorders and learning to read notes from the staff. Ms. Bethell will start a composition unit this month.

4th grades--are finishing learning the musical form, Rondo and will be starting Theme and Variation. Classes will do some composition and playing xylophones.

5th grades - will be finishing 12-bar blues and jazz artists. Students will do some composition and start to learn some half steps. Classes will review sight singing using the notes they know.

Chorus is getting ready for arts night--songs include: 12 Gates, Thula Klizeo, Crawdad song, Circle Round the Moon, (maybe Tongo), and Fun Train.

Library – Erica Josselyn
Reported by Kate Mullen

Kindergarteners will be listening to stories about food because March is nutrition month.

Grade 1 students are finishing a unit on Fairy Tales and will be moving on to a unit on Digital Citizenship. In first grade the focus will be on making sure that an adult knows what you're doing online.

Grade 2 students are continuing with a unit on Reference sources. They are using both print and online materials.

Grade 3 students are starting a unit on Media Literacy. In this unit, Ms. Josselyn will discuss the difference between media as it informs, persuades, and entertains. Students will be looking at the different ways advertisements persuade them to buy a product.

Grade 4 students are continuing their unit on literary genres.

Grade 5 students are continuing their unit on using online sources. Classes will be looking at how to evaluate websites for accuracy and usefulness.

What's New at Willard? Principal's Perspective:

Pat spoke about upcoming events:

March 10th Math Night

March 19th Talent Show

March 31st Spelling Bee

April & May MCAS testing – Next Generation MCAS

NAEP Testing –

Fourth Graders did great! NAEP testers came in and took charge of administering the test. Willard staff members were present. Not all 4th grade students took the test. Students were randomly selected. Students participated in one of three testing sessions. There were two morning sessions and one afternoon session for testing. The majority of students took the test on a laptop and some students took it with pen and paper. No individual results will be provided. The information will be part of the data profile for Massachusetts.

The March Mindfulness Theme is Creativity

Read Across America Day –

Pat read to Kindergarteners and they had a grade level pajama day.

Willard Ground's Committee –

Met with John Flaherty last week to talk about budget. If Town Budget is passed there is some money for the Willard grounds (irrigation, top soil, etc.), including money for testing soil and making a plan to go forward. When done this may also include an Operations and Maintenance plan with an outside company. This will help with ongoing maintenance. Because the allotment for Willard is \$200,000, it is likely that there will only be enough funding for the back field and not fields on the side of the building. Timing is not good because budget is so tight there is no 'slack' in this year's budget so implementing any fixes would not begin until September.

Willard Principal Search-

85 Applicants total

Nine people offered interviews and eight candidates accepted offer to interview. Committee interviewed the 8 candidates over a two-day period. Three finalists were put forward. The next step is for the candidates agree to move forward in the process and their names become public. At that point, site visits will be scheduled for committee members and Diana Rigby. Then each applicant will come to Willard to meet staff members and staff member input will be solicited. Also, parent evenings will be held and parent input will be solicited. Diana Rigby will be doing reference checks and the final decision will be Diana's.

Susan Chafe Language Arts Coordinator is retiring.

Spanish Language teacher positions posted. These positions will be filled if the proposed FY'18 budget passes at Town Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Rachael Morris

