

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT  
SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES  
(held in place of June 12, 2013, Regular Business meeting)  
June 11, 2013

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Vice-chair Mrs. Collins, Secretary Mrs. Osuba, Mrs. Lambert  
(arrived at 7:07), Dr. Switchenko, Mr. Adamo, Ms. Tinker, Mr. French

BOARD ABSENT: Mr. Desaulniers

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Assistant Superintendent Ms. Barker-Jones,  
Communications Officer Ms. Markey, Director Mrs. Banks

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

OTHERS PRESENT: general public, staff; administrators, news media

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Sewall called the June 11, 2013, Special Board of Education business meeting (held in place of the June 12, 2013, regular business meeting) to order at 7:05 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Switchenko led the Board and the public in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

May 8, 2013, Business meeting (Ref. 1)

May 22, 2013, Workshop meeting (Ref. 2)

Board of Education minutes, Ref. 1 and Ref. 2, were accepted as submitted.

Student Recognition (#1 of Superintendent's Report)

Ms. Ortiz recognized Windham High School student, Casey Dieter-Leeds for his many outstanding accomplishments. On behalf of Casey, who could not attend tonight's meeting, his father accepted the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education Leadership Award. Casey is also the recipient of this year's CAS Music Award. The Board extended congratulations to Casey.  
(Mrs. Lambert arrived.)

Financial Audit Report – McGladrey LLP

Scott Bassett, partner in McGladrey LLP, provided an overview of the financial audit completed for the year ending June 30, 2012. Components of the financial statements and compliance report were highlighted. Weekly phone calls were held with all parties participating, beginning in October, to review the ongoing status of the Town and Board of Education audits being conducted. A key recommendation is to have reconciliations done on a timely basis by both the Town and Board. Development of a process to conduct these monthly was recommended. Questions were answered throughout the presentation.

Storyline Arts Outreach Program

Barbara McClintock, Gail Zeiba and Lyn Frazier spoke about STORYLINE, which is an arts outreach program to bring elementary school students to the Kerri Gallery and the Willimantic Public Library and provide them with exposure to the arts, as well as an opportunity to experience these activities.

### PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Mary Gallucci, Willimantic, said that she strongly disagrees and is very disappointed about the removal of the provision in the STEM magnet school operations plan that allows staff members' children to attend the school because this would be a perk for staff members. She also said that allowing neighborhood children to attend the STEM magnet school was never part of the plan. Ms. Gallucci also said that there are not that many students who live nearby and there are no sidewalks for them to safely walk to school; therefore, a savings on transportation would not be the case as Chairman Sewall has said. She explained that the MBR requirement is a law and Steven Adamowski strategically circumvents this law. Ms. Gallucci commented that Dr. Adamowski advocated removing educational monies from the school budget and having the Town pay the separate appropriations. She said that these financial manipulations have compromised this year's budget and all future budgets and it is a shame that the Board of Education stands by and rubber stamps these actions. She also said that Dr. Adamowski complained in an e-mail to the *Chronicle* that the State Board of Education didn't deem replacing Natchaug's roof as an urgent matter because the Town took so long to vote for the money in a referendum. She also would like to know where it is written that Windham taxpayers should finance students to attend another district's school. School choice costs the district money, provides for no transportation, and is not available to all Windham students.

Christian Kolleger, Columbia, is returning to Windham to teach at the Barrows Academy and feels divided between the community he teaches in and the community he lives in as it is difficult to be split between the two. He said that he would be delighted to teach in the same school that his child attends and asked the Board to reconsider the idea. He said that in order to hold onto competent teachers, teachers need to be treated with respect and offered something to make them feel part of the community that they work in. Mr. Kolleger also said that lots of money was invested in the magnet school and lots of planning went into it, but it doesn't become a reality without the people who work in that building. He asked that the Board reconsider allowing teachers to bring their children to school with them.

Nicole Bay, Windham resident and teacher, asked the Board to reconsider the change made to its policy regarding enrollment of staff members' children in the Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy. She and other teachers spoke with Ms. Ortiz and Dr. Sewall at open office hours to present a solution and Dr. Sewall encouraged them to attend tonight's meeting to address the entire Board. She said that Mr. Wihbey supports them in their belief to allow certified staff to have their children attend the magnet school which is a benefit to the teachers and to the students. This could be achieved by overenrolling each class by one student without taking away a lottery spot from another student. The District Improvement Plan talks about recruiting and retaining quality staff and this would be a win/win situation at no cost to the district that would draw quality teachers. She has seen many qualified staff members leave and this will make them want to stay at no cost to the district. She asked Board members to reconsider the change now that the lottery has been completed.

Carolina Mendez, Windham resident and teacher, read a letter from Randall Prose, President, Windham Federation of Teachers, in support of allowing the children of teachers at Charles H. Barrows Academy to enroll automatically in the school providing an opportunity for the district to demonstrate its genuine commitment to finding incentives to keep quality teachers in the district. In the letter, he asked that the Board reconsider its previous position on this issue.

Scott Duplisea, General Manager, Fire Alarm Specialty Design in North Windham, and John Stofa, Regional Sales Manager, Honeywell Life Safety, provided a brief demonstration on how the alert

notification system works. They would like to return at another time to provide a more in-depth presentation when time on the agenda would allow it.

## REPORTS

### Superintendent's Report

#### Windham Middle School and Windham High School Discipline Data

Mr. Olkowski provided an overview regarding Windham Middle School's discipline data which included student achievement data, behavioral data and an attitude survey which was given to students. NWEA data showed growth from the fall to spring in all Middle School grades. Behavioral data was reviewed showing a decrease in referrals from the previous year. The Windham Middle School-wide Data Team designed and administered a student survey in the spring asking students about their perceptions regarding school. Doing well in school was important to 96% of the students. Mr. Olkowski answered Board members' questions.

Ms. Krach, Ms. Potter and Mr. Harris reviewed Windham High School's discipline data. They reviewed data for suspensions and showed comparisons beginning in 2009 which indicated an overall decrease in student suspensions and expulsions. A breakdown of the number of referrals compared to the number of students enrolled was reviewed. Expectations are higher with the focus on learning. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) will be fully implemented in 2013-14. This year's School-wide Information System (SWIS) data will be used as a baseline for planning on where to focus next year. Questions were answered throughout the presentation.

#### Kindergarten Entrance Inventory

Ms. Barker-Jones provided an overview of the Fall Kindergarten Entrance Inventory 2013 data. Data for students attending the Windham Early Childhood Center, community based centers which include several community programs, and unknown status (not sure if student attended a preschool program) in the areas of language skills, literacy skills, and numeracy skills were compared for all students, as well as for special education students, lunch eligible students and ELL students identified in kindergarten.

#### WHS Class of 2013 Post-Secondary Selections

Ms. Ortiz reviewed the Windham High School Graduation Report for the class of 2013. The majority of graduates plan to attend either a four-year or two-year college or training program.

### Committee Reports

#### Finance and Audit Committee

Ms. Tinker reported that the committee met prior to tonight's Board meeting. Members were brought up to date on the purchase of MUNIS software, the job description and advertisement for the combined finance director position were reviewed; and a review of the budget took place. The committee will meet on June 25.

#### School Planning and Design Committee

Mrs. Lambert reported that Wayne Donaldson and Bob Roach met with Town representatives regarding a micro-grid, and the Town is working on obtaining a grant, which will require Board of Education approval.

Mr. Donaldson was present tonight and spoke about the micro-grid process. Mr. Donaldson also spoke about the High School roof explaining that requirements include approval of the educational specifications by the Board of Education and funding approval by the Town. He also spoke about the need for a building on the grounds of the Barrows STEM Academy to house snow plows and other grounds keeping equipment which is not part of the school design.

Executive Committee

Dr. Sewall reported that a rubric for calculating the Superintendent's evaluation has been developed and is on the agenda as an action item.

Ad hoc Transportation Policy Committee

Mr. French reported that he is tweaking the agreement with M&J and is looking for ways to save money such as placing a cap on diesel fuel.

Waiver of Competitive Bid Process

Ms. Ortiz said that there has been difficulty with the copiers presently used in the district working properly. Per Policy 3323, Section IV (Waivers), she is requesting a Waiver of the competitive bid process to award a contract for the lease and service of copiers and service of printers using a state contract per the policy. By using a state contract that has already been awarded and approved by the state, the district would realize an approximate savings of \$10,000 compared to the district's current expenditures. With the Board's approval, based on this policy, the district will be able to move forward. The Board agreed to the Waiver.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Superintendent's Evaluation Calculation Rubric (Ref. 3)

**Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent's evaluation calculation rubric.**

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

Agreement with Region 11 Board of Education (Ref. 4)

**Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board of Education approve the agreement between the Windham Public Schools' Board of Education and Region 11 Board of Education.**

It is noted that the motion is made to allow for discussion. There was discussion with concern voiced by Board members regarding Region 11 being a participating district in the Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective in the 2014-2015 school year; increased number of options for students to leave Windham High School; options available only to parents who can transport their students out of district; programs offered at Parish Hill compared to those offered at Windham High School; and long-term effects to the district. There was also concern that applications have already been received. Dr. Sewall said that the agreement is contingent on Region 11 being a participating district in the magnet school; however, it cannot be a participating district because Parish Hill is comprised of grades seven through twelve and Chaplin is not a participating district. There was also discussion regarding the Special Master's authority regarding the proposed agreement. Mr. French called the question.

**The motion is unanimously opposed and fails.**

ED-049 Submittal for Windham High School Roof (Ref. 5)

**Motion of Ms. Tinker, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board of Education approve the Educational Specifications for ED-049 submittal for the Windham High School Roof project.**

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

Micro-Grid Solar Panels (Ref. 6)

**Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education support the proposed micro-grid solar panels pending final site plan and location approval.**

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

IDEA Grant (Ref. 7)

**Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the IDEA Grant Application for the school year 2013-2014.**

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

Donation to Windham High School Music Department (Ref. 8)

**Motion of Mrs. Osuba, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education accept, with deep appreciation, an anonymous donation in the amount of \$1000 to the Windham High School Music Department.** Board members thanked the anonymous donor for this generous donation.

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

Approval of Appointments

**Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Ms. Tinker, that the Board of Education approve the following appointments:**

1. Jamie Vallarelli to the position of Kindergarten Teacher at Natchaug School effective August 21, 2013.  
Replacement
2. Suzanne Slater to the position of Kindergarten Teacher at Natchaug School effective August 21, 2013.  
Replacement
3. Stephanie Everett to the position of Grade 1 Teacher at Natchaug School effective August 21, 2013  
pending receipt of appropriate teacher certification. Replacement
4. Nicole Collette to the position of Grade 4 Teacher at Natchaug School effective August 21, 2013.  
Replacement
5. Mary Lou Smith to the position of Grade 5/6 Teacher at The Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective August 21, 2013. New Position
6. Stephanie George to the position of ESOL teacher at North Windham School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
7. Misty Crowley to the position of Grade 5/6 Teacher at The Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective August 21, 2013. New Position

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

Restraint and Seclusion of Persons at Risk Policy 5144.1 – First Reading (Ref. 9)

This is the first reading of the revised Restraint and Seclusion of Persons at Risk policy 5144.1 with final action on the policy occurring at the August 21, 2013, Board of Education meeting. Any questions relative to this policy should be sent to Ms. Lee Ann Packer.

Special Master's Report

Dr. Adamowski is not present; there is no report.

Mrs. Collins asked that the Board revisit allowing staff members' children to attend the Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy. Board members agreed that a discussion was in order and would like to see a proposal showing that seats would not be taken away from lottery students.

ADJOURNMENT

**Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board meeting adjourn at 10:17 P.M.**

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Luz Osuba, Secretary