

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
June 26, 2013

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Mrs. Collins, Mr. Desaulniers, Mr. French, Ms. Tinker, Mrs. Lambert, Dr. Switchenko

BOARD ABSENT: Mrs. Osuba, Mr. Adamo

ADMINISTRATION

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

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

OTHERS PRESENT: Special Master Dr. Adamowski, CT SDE Priority Project Manager Ms. Gabrielle Ramos, general public, staff; administrators, news media

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Sewall called the June 26, 2013, Board of Education workshop meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. French led the Board and the public in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Legislation Affecting Education in Windham

State Representative Susan Johnson reviewed a summary of major public education legislative acts for 2013 and highlighted funding areas for Windham.

Munis and Shared Services

Jeff Ziplow from BlumShapiro provided an overview of the creation of shared financial services between the Town and school district, which includes a new financial management system. A steering committee has been established to accomplish this effort and conference calls take place once a week for discussion and updates. Mr. Ziplow shared some of the accomplishments to date, as well as some of the tasks still to be completed. Two grants have been obtained towards the purchase of Munis software, a municipal financial management system. CCAT will be responsible for the technical responsibility of maintaining the Munis software. Questions were answered throughout the presentation. Work is in progress to identify and hire a joint financial director, and, as part of that effort, a job description has been developed. The position has been advertised and applications are due by June 28. Resumes and applications will then be reviewed and interviews will be conducted by a panel.

WORKSHOP SESSION

Commissioner's Network Proposal Update

Ms. Ortiz, Ms. Ramos and Mr. Drewry provided an update on the work of the Turnaround Committee regarding the Commissioner's Network application. Following the preliminary submittal, recommendations have been received and the committee is working on revisions to the application, incorporating changes into

the proposal. Mr. Drewry reported that the committee's input has been thoughtful and rigorous. Committee members met with the Commissioner in Hartford on June 15 and feedback was received. The plan, as submitted, did not meet the Commissioner's expectations, and the committee requested, and was granted, an opportunity to revise the plan. Every issue presented was reviewed and revisions were made and will be submitted by this Friday's deadline. Following the submission, the plan will be presented to the State Board of Education on July 10.

Ms. Ortiz spoke about the Time Collaborative for extended learning time and the Small Learning Communities as outlined in the plan, among other details of the redesign plan. Ms. Ortiz also reviewed the revisions made to the goals as a result of feedback from the State Department of Education.

Dr. Adamowski said an effort is being made to enable the school to qualify for the Commissioner's Network for the next school year. He reported that the Commissioner's feedback has been very specific allowing for the document to be revised. If acceptable, the plan will be approved by the State Board of Education in July, opening the door for state funding for next year. The plan would be implemented in increments over three years. State resources are substantial, and the expectation is that there will be significant change and an increase in student achievement.

Ms. Ramos said that committee members are committed to the students and have worked very hard on the application. The transition of the document has been tremendous and real improvements have been made to develop the best possible plan. Ms. Ramos said that working with committee members has been a great experience.

Questions were answered and there was a lengthy discussion regarding the Middle School and many aspects of the plan.

PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Misty Crowley, Brooklyn, said that at the last Board meeting, it was said that allowing staff members' children to attend Barrows Academy would be discussed at tonight's meeting.

Dr. Sewall said the topic could be discussed even though this meeting is a workshop meeting and the topic is not on the agenda.

Ms. Crowley asked that the Board reconsider the decision about allowing teachers' children to attend the Barrows Academy since there is no better way to build common ground and relationships. Allowing for this would build a culture of families at the Academy. She said that this costs nothing and the rewards are plentiful benefitting both students and staff.

Nicole Bay, Windham, said that she hopes that the Board would reconsider changing the operations plan to include allowing staff members' children to attend the school. This would be important to the entire building community. She said that a great selling point was the fact that certified staff could bring their children to the school. This helps to acquire and retain quality staff. The possibility of over enrollment would not be an issue and it would not affect the lottery. Since there are three classes per grade, one student per class could be accommodated or three students per grade. She hopes that the Board will reconsider this issue.

Heather Harkins, Tolland, said that having children in the school that you teach in will have far reaching positive impact. By not allowing this, it puts the achievement of all students at a disadvantage. She urged the Board of Education to remedy this situation because some teachers signed their contracts with that understanding in place and this was a significant factor in deciding to work in this district. Having teachers teach at the school their children attend reincorporates the plan for the highest level of parental involvement.

There was some discussion among Board members regarding the topic. Dr. Sewall said that it was indicated by Dr. Adamowski that this wouldn't be implemented in the first year. Dr. Sewall said that because this would change the Operations Plan, the change would have to be approved at the State level. It was decided to discuss the topic at the Audit and Finance Committee.

ACTION ITEM

Discussion and Possible Action on an all funds budget for 2013-2014 (Ref. 1)

Motion by Ms. Tinker, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board approve the adjustment of the 2013-14 budget revenue forecast to \$54,658,179. After legislation was passed and it included the transportation reimbursement, Ms. Tinker reported that she looked at what was in the budget book and asked administrators to update the figures for state and federal grants, as well as other grants and contributions. The bottom line changed from \$53,295,147 to \$54, 658,179. There is some discussion regarding the Board of Finance's vote not to pass through the \$311,807 in transportation reimbursement to the Board of Education. Dr. Adamowski has told the Audit and Finance Committee that this is a pass through and the Town has to pass it through to the Board of Education. Ms. Tinker said that we should assume that we can work this out with the Board of Finance. She explained that the Board of Education has to now pass a budget that is more accurate than what was in the budget books so that money can be spent after July 1. Dr. Sewall said that he spoke with Board attorney about the Board of Finance's decision regarding the transportation reimbursement and was informed that the Town has to give it to the Board of Education. They can reduce the Town's contribution as long as it's not reduced below the MBR. There was some discussion.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Approval of appointments with addendum

Motion by Ms. Tinker, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board approve the following appointments including an addendum presented at tonight's meeting.

1. Lauren Ciccarello to the position of ESOL Teacher at The Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective August 21, 2013. New Position
2. Carrie Birdsong to the position of Grade 7 Science Teacher at Windham Middle School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
3. Michelle Murphy to the position of Technology Education Teacher at Windham High School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
4. Marielle Slappe to the position of Kindergarten Teacher at The Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective August 21, 2013. New Position
5. Micaela Folan to the position of ESOL Teacher at Windham Middle School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
6. Robert Greene to the position of Interim Director of Finance/Project Manager at Central Office effective June 10, 2013. Temporary Position
7. Michael Kent to the position of Business & Operations Associate at Central Office effective June 10, 2013. New Position
8. Joanne McDermott-Foerschner to the position of .50 Speech/Language Pathologist at Sweeney School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement

Addendum

9. Dr. Anthony Gasper, Deputy Superintendent/Director of Schools, effective July 8, 2013. Replacement.
10. Martha Dwyer to the position of ESOL Teacher at North Windham Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
11. Jennifer Olsen to the position of Grades 5/6 Teacher at The Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective August 21, 2013. New Position
12. Elisa De Faria to the position of Grade 1 Dual Language Teacher at North Windham Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement

13. Heather Sotomayor to the position of Grade 6 Math Teacher at Windham Middle School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
14. Ava Hacker to the position of Grade 5 Teacher at North Windham Elementary school effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
15. Chantel Peltier to the position of Grades 9-12 Social Science Teacher at Windham High School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
16. Jessica Hall to the position of ESOL Teacher at Windham Center Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
17. Natalie Allen to the position of Grade 4 Teacher at Natchaug Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement.
18. Alexandra Garcia to the position of Kindergarten Teacher at Windham Center Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
19. Kathryn Harry to the position of Grade 5 Teacher at North Windham Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
20. Andreas Bisbikos to the position of Grade 8 Social Studies Teacher at Windham Middle School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
21. Chelsea Ferland to the position of Grade 7 Social Studies Teacher at Windham Middle School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
22. Megan Reed to the position of Grade 3 Teacher at Natchaug Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
23. Priscilla Alicea to the position of Grade 7 Math Teacher at Windham Middle School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
24. Josue Lopez to the position of Grade 2 Teacher at Windham Center Elementary School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement
25. Madison Calder to the position of Grade 8 Science Teacher at Windham Middle School effective August 21, 2013. Replacement.

Dr. Gasper was introduced and thanked the Board for his appointment. He said that he looks forward to joining the team in Windham.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education enter into executive session at 9:41 PM for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to bargaining unit negotiations.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Vice-chair Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Lambert, Dr. Switchenko, Ms. Tinker, Mr. Desaulniers, Mr. French

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Director Mrs. Banks

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENED

Chair Dr. Sewall reconvened regular session 10:06 PM.

Motion by Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Ms. Tinker, that the Board add the ratification of the tentative agreement between the Windham Board of Education and the Cafeteria Union to the agenda.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Motion by Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Ms. Tinker, that the Board move the ratification of the tentative agreement between the Windham Board of Education and CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Windham Cafeteria Chapter.

On the motion: Aye: Mrs. Collins, Dr. Switchenko, Ms. Tinker, Mrs. Lambert

No: Mr. French, Mr. Desaulniers

The motion passes.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. French, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board meeting adjourn at 10:07 P.M.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Murphy Sewall, Chair