

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
April 11, 2012

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Vice-chair Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Osuba, Mr. Adamo, Dr. Switchenko, Ms. Tinker (arrived at 8:07 PM), Mr. French, Mr. Desaulniers

BOARD ABSENT: Mrs. Lambert

ADMINISTRATION

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

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Sewall called the April 11, 2012, Regular Board of Education meeting, to order at 7:04 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board and the public recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

Board of Education minutes for the following meetings were approved as submitted:

March 13, 2012, Special Board of Education meeting minutes (in place of March 14, 2012, regular meeting) (Ref. 1)

March 21, 2012, Special Workshop Board of Education meeting minutes (Ref. 2)

March 28, 2012, Workshop Board of Education meeting minutes (Ref. 3)

PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Mary Gallucci, Willimantic, asked who would fundraise for the \$4000 needed for each TFA recruit. She also asked if fundraising information would be a matter of public record. Ms. Gallucci commented that there is no line item in the budget for TFA funding. Ms. Gallucci also asked about bus monitors and said that she felt that having GPS systems on buses is not the same as having bus monitors ride the buses. She suggested that central office staff, Board of Education members and the Special Master ride buses in the morning and evening to observe how students treat drivers. Ms. Gallucci also asked how is it possible that Windham has only 50% representation on the magnet school's Governance Board when 2/3 of the students are from Windham? She also asked why professional development is being handled by the Science Center and not by universities. Ms. Ortiz answered that fundraising is being done through a committee and Mrs. Collins said that she is working on fundraising with Paula Haney, Mark Doyle, Barbara McGrath, and Robin Rouse. Mrs. Collins said that there will be a public list of donors and there will be publicity on the different fundraising events once they are underway. Mrs. Osuba and Mr. Stover are coordinating community outreach efforts. Mrs. Osuba said that those involved are volunteering their time. Ms. Ortiz responded that

GPS systems will be on the buses from EASTCONN and will be monitored by someone at EASTCONN. She also responded that the magnet school's design team will select the Governance Board which will be comprised of staff and parents from our district, as well as members from each participating district. There will be six to eight districts and usually district superintendents serve on the Board. Ms. Gallucci also questioned the Reductions in Force segment of the TFA Agreement and asked why TFA teachers would get special consideration if there were reductions? Ms. Gallucci also said that it sounds like private and confidential student information will be provided to TFA recruits and the national organization can use this information in promotional literature and she finds this very disturbing. Ms. Ortiz said that until TFA teachers are hired, they will not have access to any student information. TFA teachers will be given the same consideration as other teachers if there is a reduction in force. She also answered that the Science Center has the best curriculum regarding the standards and common core and can provide Windham with the support that is needed; however, there will be other professional development as well.

Pat Risley, Columbia, said he hopes to get some clarity tonight regarding the school administrative manager position at the high school and the role of dealing with athletics. He asked if that person will be assuming the role of the athletic director position or just overseeing the position. Ms. Ortiz answered that the present contract is being developed for the position and there will be more information at a later date.

Dr. Sewall said that Ms. Tinker and Mr. Nelson are attending tonight's Town Board of Finance meeting, Mrs. Lambert is recovering from surgery, and Dr. Adamowski is unable to attend tonight's meeting. There will be no Special Master's Report tonight.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Staffing changes

Ms. Ortiz announced the following school leadership assignment changes: Mr. George Smalley, Director of Guidance for grades six through twelve, effective July 1; Mr. Gene Blain, School Administrative Manager (SAM), effective July 1; Mr. Albert Harris, Principal for grades eleven and twelve, effective July 1; Ms. Madeline Negrón, one of the Headmasters at the High School, effective July 1; and Mr. Jeff Wihbey, Principal of the STEM Magnet School, effective January 1, 2013. She said that decisions on these assignments are being made now due to the many changes taking place and in order to identify key vacancies as early as possible.

Strategic School Profiles for 2010-2011 (Ref. 4)

Ms. Ortiz gave a brief overview of the Districtwide Strategic School Profiles for 2010-2011 and said that these profiles will be available on the district's website.

Expulsion Update for 2012-2013 (Ref. 5)

In response to a Board member's request, Ms. Ortiz provided the number of student expulsions thus far this year, as well as the numbers for previous years beginning in 2003-2004.

Committee Reports

Finance and Audit Committee

Dr. Sewall provided the report due to the absence of committee chair Ms. Tinker. The Board of Education budget presentation was made to the Board of Finance last week. Mr. French said that he felt there was very positive feedback from the Board of Finance. The Town's public hearing on the budgets will be held on April 17, 2012.

School Planning and Design Committee

Dr. Switchenko provided the report due to the absence of committee chair Mrs. Lambert. Committee members are reviewing thirteen RFPs from architectural firms regarding the evaluation of school facilities. Rankings are due Monday and interviews of the three highest ranked firms will take place on April 25 from 2 to 5 PM.

Executive Committee

Committee chair Dr. Sewall reported that the committee met to discuss School Governance Councils. Dr. Sewall provided the Board with a presentation outlining the responsibilities of School Governance Councils, as well as information regarding Leadership Greater Hartford which has provided training and support for these councils in other districts. A proposal for approval from Leadership Greater Hartford is on the agenda as an action item later in the meeting.

Districtwide PTO

Ms. Ortiz reported on the following Districtwide PTO activities: a presentation was given at the last meeting on the Action for Healthy Kids project; Mr. French is working on finding a location for Districtwide PTO to hold a dance; a Kite Day in conjunction with the Recreation Department is planned for Earth Day on April 15; a Family Day in June at Jillson Square is being planned; and activities for upcoming Third Thursdays are being coordinated. This year Districtwide PTO is holding its meetings in conjunction with school PTOs at school locations.

Chair's Report

Appointment of an ad hoc Transportation Policy Committee (Ref. 6)

Dr. Sewall said that in order to find ways to save on transportation expenses, a policy needs to be developed that is more in line with what the district can spend on transportation; therefore, an ad hoc Transportation Policy committee has been created. Mr. French will chair the committee and Dr. Switchenko and Mrs. Osoba will serve on the committee. Mr. French said that the committee will hold its first meeting tomorrow evening at 6:30 PM at Kramer and the public is welcome to attend.

Ms. Ortiz distributed the 2012-2013 school calendar to Board members and indicated that some minor changes have been made based on changing to trimesters.

Action Items

Appointments

Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. Desaulniers that the Board of Education approve the following appointment:

Kelly Blais to the position of Special Education Teacher of the Deaf at Windham Middle School, effective April 9, 2012, new position. There was no discussion.

Unanimously approved.

EASTCONN Transportation Contract (Ref. 7)

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Dr. Switchenko that the Board of Education approve the transportation service contract between the Windham Board of Education and EASTCONN for in-district special education and regular early childhood transportation of school children. There was no discussion.

Unanimously approved.

Teach for America Memorandum of Understanding (Ref. 8)

Motion of Dr. Switchenko, seconded by Mrs. Osuba, that the Board of Education approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Teach for America (TFA) and Windham Public Schools. There was no discussion.

Unanimously approved.

Leadership Greater Hartford Proposal for School Governance Councils (Ref. 9)

Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Osuba, that the Board of Education approve the proposal from Leadership Greater Hartford for Windham School Governance Councils Training and Support. There was no discussion.

Unanimously approved.

Provision 2 Feeding Application (Ref. 10)

Motion of Dr. Switchenko, seconded by Mrs. Osuba, that the Board of Education approve the submittal of an application to implement Provision 2 Feeding in the Windham Public Schools.

Ms. Ortiz explained that Mr. Koschmieder and she met with state representatives regarding Provision 2 feeding. Every child will have a healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunch at no charge. This will help to streamline much of the paperwork presently processed by the Food Services Department.

Unanimously approved.

Request for Funds for District-wide K-5 Core Reading Program (Ref. 11)

Ms. Ortiz explained that the present core reading program used in the elementary schools does not comply with the national standards. Along with the purchase of the basic reading materials, the requested funds will cover the cost of extra materials to support the program. This is a separate one-time expense. There was some discussion.

Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve its Finance and Audit Committee to go before the Town Board of Finance to request \$750,000 to purchase a district-wide K-5 core reading program.

Unanimously approved.

Dr. Sewall said that the Board of Education will enter into a brief executive session and then return to open session to take action.

The Board entered into executive session at 7:50 PM.

Executive Session

Motion of Mrs. Collins, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education enter into executive session for the purpose of discussion of confidential attorney-client communication concerning the non-renewal process.

Unanimously approved.

Dr. Sewall reconvened regular session at 8:06 PM.

(Ms. Tinker arrived.)

Discussion and action on Superintendent's recommendations for non-renewal of teacher contracts

Motion of Mrs. Osuba, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education move that the contract of employment of the following teachers not be renewed for the 2012-13 school year upon its expiration at the end of the 2011-12 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to

advise such person(s) in writing of this action. The teachers included in this motion are: Kimberly Fleck, Windham High School; Terri Bohn, Windham High School; Fiona Fenteany, Windham Middle School; Jason Altieri, Windham Middle School; Anjana Tihaiya, Windham Middle School; Diana Martinez, Sweeney Elementary School; Ingrid Otero, Natchaug Elementary; Nicole Jaser, Natchaug Elementary School; Jacqueline Taylor, Natchaug Elementary School; Stephanie Parsons, North Windham Elementary School; Heather Aston, North Windham Elementary School; and Sarah Menon, Windham Center Elementary School.

Approved: 7 ayes and 1 abstention

Aye: Dr. Sewall, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Switchenko, Mr. French, Mr. Adamo, Mr. Desaulniers

Abstained: Ms. Tinker

Special Master's Report

There was no report.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 8:09 P.M.

Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Luz Osuba, Secretary