

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
December 12, 2012

BOARD PRESENT: Vice-chair Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Osuba, Mrs. Lambert (arrived at 7:07 PM), Dr. Switchenko, Mr. Desaulniers, Mr. French

BOARD ABSENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Ms. Tinker, Mr. Adamo

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Deputy Superintendent Ms. England, Assistant Superintendent Ms. Barker-Jones, Directors Mrs. Banks and Mr. Nelson

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: Stephanie Quinn

OTHERS PRESENT: Special Master Dr. Adamowski, Intern to Special Master Ms. Gabrielle Ramos; general public; staff; administrators; news media

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-chair Mrs. Collins called the December 12, 2012, Board of Education business meeting to order at 7:05 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.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following minutes were accepted as presented:

Board of Education November 14, 2012, business meeting minutes (Ref. 1)

Board of Education November 28, 2012, workshop meeting minutes (Ref. 2)

(Mrs. Lambert arrived.)

PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Mark Phelps, Windham, said that he has been a teacher for thirty-five years. He grew up in Windham, purchased a home in Windham, has always supported the education budget and has served on many committees. November 28th was his son's last day at Windham Middle School. He said that his son has been bullied for three years and has left with a crumpled spirit. Mr. Phelps said that the adults ignored the problem and did not protect him. He said to please get the situation at Windham Middle School under control.

Mary Lou DeVivo, Willimantic, said that at every Board meeting she has asked to have the students moved from the Kramer building. She said that Dr. Adamowski has made the comment that the Kramer building is in the worst condition of all the district buildings. She said that the building was closed as a Middle School because it wasn't fit for children any longer, however, now the youngest, most vulnerable children are in the building. She again urged the Board to move the children out of the building. She suggested thinking outside of the box if necessary to find another location and possibly checking with other towns to see if there is room for these students.

Kevin Hoxie, Willimantic, spoke about his son being bullied at Windham Middle School. He said that when his son was out sick and he called the guidance office to get work for his son, he never received a call back. Also, his wife called the principal's office and left a message on voice mail and no one has called her back. He also said that the Parent Access Center is useless because teachers don't put anything on the site. He said that bullying is an issue and nothing is being done, and it seems that it's not about the kids but about the dollar.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Student recognition

Windham High School students, Emma Hughes and Rebecca Ray, received recognition for achieving the Advanced level on the mathematics, reading, writing and science subtests on the 2012 Connecticut Academic Performance Test. They were present at the meeting and received a letter signed by Commissioner of Education Stefan Pryor. The Superintendent and Board of Education congratulated them for their outstanding achievement.

Ms. Ortiz invited the Board to *Storyline*, an art showing of North Windham School students' work at Kerri Art Studio and Gallery at 861 Main Street in Willimantic, from 6:00 to 7:30 PM, on December 18.

Ms. Ortiz informed the Board that the family liaisons are hosting a grandparent recognition brunch for grandparents raising their grandchildren, on December 18, from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM, in the WHS cafeteria.

She also informed the Board that Ms. England and she met with parents and staff at the four elementary schools regarding the Facilities Master Plan and moving toward school choice. The meetings were very well attended.

Graduation Rate report

Mr. Harris and Mr. Smalley provided information pertaining to Windham High School's Strategic Operating Plan targets regarding graduation rates. Comparisons of graduation data for 2010 and 2011 were reviewed for five-year and four-year graduates. Throughout the presentation, Mr. Harris and Mr. Smalley answered questions. The focus needs to be on ninth and tenth grade students ensuring that they have the number of credits to move to the next year so that they graduate as scheduled. There are several initiatives in the plan of action to increase the high school graduation rate each year.

Committee Reports

Finance and Audit Committee

There was no report.

School Planning and Design Committee

Mrs. Lambert reported that the committee is working on finalizing phases of the Facilities Master Plan. She said that the committee accepted a proposal for a new playscape at Sweeney School which will be acted on later in this meeting.

Executive Committee

There was no report.

Ad hoc Transportation Policy Committee

Mr. French reported that the transportation policy was reviewed at the meeting. Dr. Adamowski informed the Board that it would not be possible to cost out the revised policy without the basic infrastructure of a street directory to indicate the number of students who walk and the number of students who are bussed.

ACTION ITEMS

Magnet School Transitional Management Services Agreement (Ref. 3)

Motion of Dr. Switchenko, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education approve the memorandum of agreement between Windham Public Schools and EASTCONN for transitional management services for the Windham STEM Magnet School.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Unexpended Education Funds (Ref. 4)

Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Desaulniers, that the Board of Education approve the request to the Town of Windham, Board of Finance of the transfer of the unexpended budget surplus of \$264,757 from fiscal year 2012 into a Town “Non-Lapsing Account” that will be used for the purposes outlined in the attached request (attached).

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

2013 Board of Education Meeting Dates (Ref. 5)

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education approve the proposed meeting dates for January – December 2013 as presented.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Sweeney School Playscape (Ref. 6)

Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the building of a new playscape at Sweeney School with donations from the Sweeney School PTO and a local business, contingent on receiving the balance of the project cost from the Town of Windham.

Mr. French will present the proposal to use funds in the Capital Improvement Plan to the Town Council at its December 19 meeting. The cost of materials is increasing by 5%, but Mr. French has been able to get a price freeze until January 20, 2013, to provide time to work out the details.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Approval of appointments

Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education approve the following appointments:

1. Raquel Luna to the position of Grade 1 Teacher at Natchaug Elementary School effective November 21, 2012. Replacement
2. Hillary Dailey to the position of Reading Teacher at Sweeney Elementary School effective November 26, 2012. Replacement
3. Stephanie Parsons to the position of ESOL Teacher at Sweeney Elementary School effective November 5, 2012. Replacement
4. Kristina Kulhawy to the position of .80 Special Education Teacher at North Windham Elementary School effective December 3, 2012. New Position
5. Maureen Bojko to the position of Interim Principal at Natchaug School effective November 13, 2012. Replacement
6. Christopher Richards to the position of Technical Education Teacher at Windham High School effective December 19, 2012. Replacement

7. Kerry Markey to the position of Communications Office at Central Office effective January 7, 2013.
New Position

Ms. Ortiz introduced Ms. Markey, the newly appointed Communications Officer. Ms. Markey said that she is very excited to begin her work in the district.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. French, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board meeting adjourn at 8:28 P.M.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Luz Osuba, Secretary