

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
November 14, 2012

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Dr. Sewall, Vice-chair Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Osuba, Mr. Adamo, Mrs. Lambert (arrived at 7:02 PM), Dr. Switchenko, Ms. Tinker, Mr. Desaulniers

BOARD ABSENT: Mr. French

ADMINISTRATION

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

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dr. Sewall called the November 14, 2012, Board of Education business meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Osuba led the Board and the public in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Mrs. Lambert arrived.)

CONSENT AGENDA

The following minutes were accepted as presented:

Board of Education October 10, 2012, business meeting minutes (Ref. 1)

Board of Education October 24, 2012, workshop meeting minutes (Ref. 2)

PRESENTATION – TECHNOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION (TSA) CHAPTER

Connecticut State TSA Advisor, Mr. Jim Hutson, presented the Career and Technical Student Organization Outstanding Service Project Award to the Windham Middle School TSA Chapter. TSA Advisor Mr. Christopher Pilling and TSA students Nathan Perez-Espitia, Dylan Werth and Brenna Lynn were present to receive the award. Last year, the students raised approximately \$1200 which was earmarked to provide services to a classmate who was undergoing cancer treatments. This service project was recognized as outstanding by the Board of Regents and the State Board of Education. Mr. Hutson also informed the Board that TSA students attended the National Conference last summer in Tennessee and brought home many awards. The Chapter participants were congratulated and commended for their outstanding accomplishments.

PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Tom Drewry, Willimantic, representative of the Windham teachers, spoke about the recent decision to change this year's exam schedule. He said that teacher representatives met with district administration to discuss the change, which they feel negatively impacts students and teachers, and provided administration

with reasons to keep the two-hour exam schedule across abbreviated school days instead of the change to the five-day full-class schedule. Mr. Drewry asked what led to the final decision by the administration. Ms. Ortiz answered that the concerns were brought to Dr. Adamowski's attention and he felt that time should not be taken away from the instructional day. Also, Ms. Ortiz said that the calendar change would have had to go before the Board of Education to change the exam days to early dismissal days.

Mary Gallucci, Willimantic, asked if some parents are now charged for their children to attend preschool and also asked for clarification regarding transportation not being provided to preschool students. She also asked if the funds for training the TFA first grade teacher who resigned have been recovered. Ms. Gallucci said that when the budget passed during the initial vote last spring, it was said that the district would have ample time to hire staff to be in place for the following school year but this did not happen. She said that she still has not received information about how Steven Adamowski made the decision to send students to NFA which costs more than any of the other schools Windham students attend. She asked if only people on Town Boards knew about the NFA option.

Ms. Barker-Jones responded that preschool is currently self-funded. Under School Readiness and Head Start rules, parents are charged fees as part of the State's sliding scale. Preschool transportation is provided for students attending sites at Windham Center and Sweeney schools and for Natchaug students who travel with Natchaug Kindergarten children. Preschool special education students are also transported which is required.

Ms. Ortiz said that the money has been recovered for the TFA position and there is someone in the position who is waiting to take the PRAXIS exam. She explained that a Middle School parent requested the NFA meeting. The contract with NFA is for ten incoming ninth grade students prior to October 1st. Presently tuition is being paid for three students who are attending NFA.

Mary Lou DeVivo, Willimantic, asked that the next School Planning and Design Committee meeting be televised because of its importance to the community. She said that she would lend her camera so that it could be recorded if the meeting couldn't be broadcast live. She suggested that a questionnaire be given to parents at the same time that they receive report cards.

Dr. Sewall said that there will be discussions with the community. Ms. Ortiz said that Ms. England and she will attend a meeting on Friday with Natchaug families and staff regarding some of the changes taking place. Mrs. Lambert said that she will work on having the meeting televised.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Awards' Ceremony

Ms. Ortiz reported that the American Education Week Awards' ceremony was well attended. Many students, parents and staff were recognized, as well as the district's teachers of the year.

SATs

Ms. Ortiz reported that she received information from Windham High School's Guidance Department regarding the SATs. Tenth and eleventh graders were tested for the PSAT on October 17; twenty-eight waivers were provided to students in September and eleven waivers were provided in October, as well as eleven college application waiver forms; thirty-nine seniors took some form of the SAT exam in October and twenty used fee waivers; and thus far, thirty-eight seniors have taken some form of the SAT in November and fourteen have used waivers.

Music

Ms. Ortiz reported that students at the Middle School who have requested band are enrolled in the class and students at the High School who requested band are also enrolled in the class unless there is a conflict with a core course. There has been a change in music classes this year due to the fact that fifth graders are now at the elementary schools. There was some discussion regarding starting students in music in earlier

grades. Ms. Ortiz said that Ms. Barker-Jones and the Unified Arts staff will present information at the February Board of Education workshop.

NWEA

Ms. Barker-Jones reported that the NWEA math assessment is just being completed and staff members are using gathered data already which will be shared with parents. After Thanksgiving, district data will be available.

Ms. Ortiz reported that the capital project to purchase bike racks has been approved, and she and Mr. Nelson have been working with Town Manager Neal Beets regarding their placement. She thanked Mr. Beets for his support of the project. Work continues on providing more parking spaces for the Kramer building.

Mr. Ortiz was pleased to inform the Board that Mark Andrew Despard III is a National Fossil Day 2012 Art contest winner and received second place in the 5-8 year old category for his drawing, which was shared this evening with Board members. He was congratulated for receiving this recognition.

Committee Reports

Finance and Audit Committee

Ms. Tinker reported that there is approximately a \$400,000 savings from the health insurance line item and the Finance and Audit Committee would like to repurpose \$100,000 for WHS security cameras; \$25,000 for the financial analysis in conjunction with the Town; \$7,000 for an enrollment projection; and up to \$8,000 for signage for the Windham High School academies.

Motion of Ms. Tinker, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education add the repurposing of \$140,000 from the Health Insurance fund as an Action Item on tonight's agenda.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Ms. Tinker provided a brief update on the status of the audit being conducted with the Town. Each Friday there is a conference call with the auditors and those involved to keep everyone up to date with the progress and provide an opportunity for questions. The audit should be completed in January.

School Planning and Design Committee

Mrs. Lambert reported that the committee will meet on Monday, November 19, 2012, at 7:30 PM, to discuss the Natchaug roof. She asked that questions be e-mailed to her. Members of the Board of Finance, the Magnet School Building Committee, Town Manager Neal Beets and Board of Education members have been invited.

Executive Committee

Dr. Sewall reported that the committee met and is bringing a resolution forward to the full Board regarding establishing a performance-based evaluation process for the Superintendent. Dr. Sewall also spoke about Board policy 9005, Bylaws of the Board, Role of the Board and its Members, Statement of Integrity. This policy will be reviewed by the Executive Committee for any necessary revisions. There was discussion regarding the endorsement of political candidates by Board of Education members.

Ad hoc Transportation Policy Committee

Dr. Switchenko reported that the committee met and has asked the Superintendent to look at aspects of the transportation policy and make recommendations to the committee. At the next Business meeting of the Board of Education, there will be a first reading of the revised policy.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution Establishing a Performance-based Evaluation of the Superintendent (Ref. 3)

Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the following resolution establishing a performance-based evaluation of the Superintendent:

WHEREAS: The Board and Superintendent have mutually agreed upon an annual evaluation of the Superintendent based on gains in student achievement and successful implementation of school improvement strategies.

WHEREAS: The Board of Education has adopted a Strategic Operating Plan (SOP) that sets annual performance targets for student achievement and attainment designed to close the achievement gap of Windham students and that requires specific plans to be completed each year to enable such improvement.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: *The Board of Education establishes the following annual evaluation procedure to assess the Superintendent's progress and define success:*

At the beginning of each school year the Board shall renew and confirm the student performance targets, implementation steps of the SOP and other evaluative criteria determined by the Board of Education for the next school year.

The Superintendent shall work with her/his direct reports and school personnel to achieve the student performance targets for a given year, accomplish the scheduled implementation steps for that year as contained in the SOP, and/or meet other criteria established by the Board. The Board shall support the Superintendent in the accomplishment of these goals and focus its time and attention on building civic capacity and community support to achieve such goals.

The Superintendent shall provide the Board with a mid-year progress report on accomplishing the goals of the SOP and/or meeting other criteria set by the Board. This will include information on the status of the implementation steps and results of the Cycle 2 WEA, MAPPS Assessments.

The Superintendent shall document at the end of each school year the degree to which the student performance targets and implementation steps of the SOP have been accomplished.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: *The Board establishes the following criteria for the Superintendent's performance evaluation:*

The achievement of the performance targets of the SOP shall constitute 70% of the Superintendent's evaluation. The accomplishment of the annual implementation steps of the SOP or other criteria established by the Board shall constitute 30%. The number of performance targets for any given year shall be given an equal numerical weight to total 70. Each implementation step of the SOP or other criteria established by the Board should be given an equal numerical weight to total 30. The number met in each category shall be totaled and placed on a performance scale of 0-100.

A performance score of 70 or more for two consecutive years may serve as criteria for employment contract extension. A performance score of less than 70 for two consecutive years may constitute grounds for non-renewal of the Superintendent's employment contract. A performance score above 75 in any given year may result in variable pay for performance as determined by the Board. Up to 10% of the Superintendent's base salary may be available annually for performance-based, variable pay.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: *The Board of Education establishes the following timeline for the Superintendent's evaluation:*

September – The Board of Education confirms performance targets and implementation steps of the SOP or other criteria established by the Board for the new school year.

January – The Superintendent provides the Board with a mid-year progress report.

July – At the Annual Board Retreat, the Superintendent provides documentation and calculation of the SOP performance targets and implementation steps accomplished, as well as other criteria established by the Board that have been met. The Executive Committee confirms the Superintendent's performance scale

score, files the Superintendent's annual evaluation and takes any related actions regarding the Superintendent's compensation for the next school year.

August - Between the years of a Superintendent's 3 year contract, or if the Board anticipates any extension of the Superintendent's contract, the Board and the Superintendent will hold a session during which feedback is mutually exchanged regarding how the Board and Superintendent have carried out their respective roles during the prior school year and expectations for the future. Discussion of potential extension of the Superintendent's employment contract and the terms thereof may also be discussed at this time as appropriate. A decision to extend the Superintendent's contract, if appropriate, is made in public session by a vote of the Board following the feedback session.

There was some discussion.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

ECS-Alliance District Funding Grant Application (Ref. 4)

Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Ms. Tinker, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the ECS-Alliance District Funding grant application. Dr. Sewall thanked Ms. Ortiz and Ms. England for the work done to complete this important grant application. This is a new grant.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

District Federal Consolidated Grant Application (Ref. 5)

Motion of Ms. Tinker, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the District Federal Consolidated grant application. Ms. Ortiz explained that this is a compilation of Title I and Title II. She said that many of the grants are automatic because Windham is a priority school district.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement Grant Application (Ref. 6)

Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Ms. Tinker, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement grant application. There was no discussion.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

(Action Item added to the Agenda)

Repurposing \$140,000 from the Health Insurance Fund (Ref. 6A)

Motion of Ms. Tinker, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education repurpose funds from the health insurance line item as follows: \$100,000 for Windham High School security cameras; \$25,000 for the financial analysis in conjunction with the Town; \$7,000 for an enrollment projection; and up to \$8,000 for signage for the Windham High School academies.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Approval of appointments

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

1. Ivelise Velazquez, Director of Reading at Central Office effective November 19, 2012. New Position.
2. Mimi Fluharty to the position of .50 Culinary Arts Teacher at Windham High School effective October 31, 2012. Replacement.
3. Ryan Corthouts to the position of English Teacher at Windham High School effective November 5, 2012. New Position.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

2013 Board of Education Meeting Dates (Ref. 7)

Dr. Sewall explained that this is a first reading of the proposed meeting dates for the Board of Education from January through December 2013. These dates will be brought back to Board for final approval at the December 12, 2012, Board meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion of Mrs. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education enter into executive session at 8:17 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. Osuba, Mr. Adamo, Mrs. Lambert, Dr. Switchenko, Ms. Tinker, Mr. Desaulniers

ADMINISTRATION

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

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Chair Dr. Sewall reconvened regular session at 9:07 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board meeting adjourn at 9:07 P.M.

On the motion: Motion is unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Luz Osuba, Secretary