

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
April 27, 2011

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mr. Folan, Vice-chair Mrs. Rayhall, Mr. Adamo, Mr. Doyle, Dr. Switchenko, Mrs. Lambert, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Haney (arrived at 7:02 PM), Dr. Sewall

BOARD ABSENT: No one

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Directors Mrs. Banks and Mr. Nelson

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: Abbey Baldarelli, Alison Risley

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mr. Folan called the April 27, 2011, Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

Mr. Folan took a moment of silence in memory of Mr. Nicholas Merlino, father of Windham High School Principal Mr. Steve Merlino, who recently passed away unexpectedly.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

April 11, 2011, Special Board of Education meeting minutes held in place of the April 13, 2011, Regular Board of Education meeting (Ref. 1)

(215)Motion of Mrs. Collins, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the April 11, 2011, Regular Board of Education minutes, Reference 1.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous
(Mrs. Haney arrived.)

April 6, 2011, Special Board of Education meeting minutes (Ref. 1A)

(216)Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education approve the April 6, 2011, Special Board of Education minutes, Reference 1A.

On the motion: Aye: Mrs. Rayhall, Mr. Adamo, Mrs. Haney, Mr. Doyle, Dr. Switchenko, Mrs. Lambert, Dr. Sewall, Mrs. Collins

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mr. Folan

The motion passes: 8-0-1

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Windham Middle School 2011 Connecticut Student Writers Magazine winner

Windham Middle School seventh grader, Jalen Hunter, was recognized as a *2011 Connecticut Student Writers Magazine* winner for his poem entitled *Drowning in You*. He was congratulated for his award which recognized excellence in student writing. Mr. Folan thanked teachers, Mrs. Flaherty and Ms. Gilbey,

for supporting Jalen in his writing and encouraging him to share his writing pieces. Ms. Gilbey presented a short video with Avatar reciting Jalen's poem.

Windham High School Pep Band and Cheerleader Squad

Cheerleader coach Kathy Burdick was recognized for her leadership and for volunteering her time with the cheerleading squad. The following cheerleaders were presented with certificates of appreciation for their involvement in school activities: Yomaliz Adams (team leader), Thalia Datton, Yafreisy Datton, Maria Flores, Janellis Galarza, Keila Galarza (team leader), Maggie Gavin, Sheynali Gomez, LaShondra Harris (team leader), Imani Hawthorn (team leader), Shayla Melendez, Coral Orona Baez, Julianna Perez, Annasette Rivera, Yarelis Rivera (team leader), Tomas Rodriguez (team leader), Sarah Sikorski, Stephanie Sikorsi, Samantha Spann (team leader) and Karely Vega.

Instrumental music director Peter Lillpopp was commended for his leadership of the music program at the High School. The following students in the pep band were presented with certificates of appreciation for their involvement in school activities and their representation of the school at many community activities: Troy Anderson, Kyle Austin, Branden Bassett, Matt Burdick, Gerald Chadwell, Griffin Coleman, Adam Coley, Edgar Collazo, Robert Craven, Jeremy Cruz, Casey Dieter-Leeds, Laura Dobrolet, Brett Donovan, Alyssa Dubicki, Abigail Gibson, Ruben Gonzales, Ryan Grant, Tim Grylls, Mary Guzman, Rebecca Hinckley, Nicholas Khan, Gabrielle Kissman, Stephan Lambert, Kyle Motivans, Shaun Nadeau, Chris Prochorchik, Zach Quamme, Cesar Soto, Noah Sterna, and Jose Velasquez. Casey Dieter-Leeds was recognized for his selection to participate in the 2011 Connecticut All-State Band.

PRESENTATIONS

2011 Student Philosopher

Editor-in-Chief Kevin Dobrolet presented Board members with copies of the *2011 Student Philosopher* and read this year's dedication to Physics teacher, Mr. William McCooley. He read the Prologue, *Look at the World*, by Brittany Boynton, and the Epilogue, *Words*, by Christopher Udall. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Folan thanked those involved in this year's *Student Philosopher*, along with advisor Mr. Skoog.

Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (SEE)

Ms. Andrea Rosario explained that Parents SEE is a free course for parents to learn about the policies of the school system. There are fourteen parents attending a thirteen-week course to learn how the school system works and to learn how to partner with the district. She invited Board members to next week's World Café on Tuesday in Kramer from 5:00 to 8:00 PM. This will provide participants with an opportunity to ask questions and learn about their roles within the district. Ms. Rosario thanked the Superintendent for her support of the program.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Folan informed Board members that there will be a staff and student talent show fundraiser for the Class of 2012 and the High School band on Friday, April 29 at the High School. Ms. Ortiz reported that the VFW provided the district with two flags as a result of Mr. Quercia's request.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Abbey Baldarelli reported that thanks to the efforts of staff and students at the High School, the WHIPS raised \$1,000 to send a shelterbox to Japan.

CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

Peter Quercia, Willimantic, spoke about the comprehensive report and said that a lot of things need to be fixed. He said that the Board of Education needs new faces that represent the population.

Mark Phelps, Windham, thanked Board members for their service and their dedication of time to the district. He said that students don't take testing seriously and ways need to be looked at to make parents and students accountable.

Henry Crane, Willimantic, said that people are held accountable at their jobs or they are fired. He said that it is time that schools teach students to be accountable.

SUMMARY ACTION

Personnel Action (Ref. 2)

(217)Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve Reference 2.

Resignations

- Shayne Stedman, Math Teacher/Windham High School effective June 30, 2011.
- Martha Hayes, Music Teacher/Windham Middle School effective June 30, 2011 for the purpose of retirement.

Appointments

- Mary Kathryn Williams, Family Resource Center Coordinator/Natchaug School effective April 11, 2011. Hourly rate is \$28.00, replaces Barbara Hood.

Leaves of absence

- Joann Dupont, Head Start Teacher Aide/Boston Post Road, medical leave of absence beginning April 15, 2011 through approximately May 4, 2011.
- Sandra Patulak, Special Education Teacher/Windham Middle School, medical leave of absence beginning May 2, 2011 for approximately 4 to 6 weeks.
- Ana Maria Olezza, Director of Grants/Developmental Programs, medical leave of absence beginning April 18, 2011 through May 1, 2011.

Mr. Doyle wished Ms. Hayes a happy and healthy retirement.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

ACTION ITEMS

Summer Food Service Program 2011 (Ref. 3) and Food Service Program Update (Ref. 5)

(218)Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Dr. Sewall, that the Board of Education authorizes Superintendent Ana V. Ortiz to sign the Summer Food Service Program Agreement and related claims for reimbursement, and in her absence, Jeffrey I. Nelson, Director of Finance and Management, is authorized to sign claims for reimbursement. Mr. Koschmeider provided a brief background on the sites used and the funding provided and answered Board members' questions. He also spoke about the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program funded through a grant and said that as of the end of March 30,000 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables have been given to students for snacks. Mrs. Collins thanked him for the great job he is doing and he, in turn, commended his staff for their support.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Superintendent's Reports

Reading at the elementary schools – Instructional Consultants (Ref. 4)

Ms. Packer introduced elementary school Instructional Consultants Amanda Doyle, Kay Weeks and Tracy Duenzl, who attended this meeting. Ms. Bartlett did not attend as she was at Sweeney School's trip to Nature's Classroom. The Instructional Consultants previously reported on reading at the elementary schools to the Program Development and Evaluation Committee and were asked to report to the full Board. Ms. Doyle reviewed the 90-minute reading block for students; Ms. Duenzl reviewed the assessment tools and

measurements; and Ms. Weeks reviewed Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention procedures. The Instructional Consultants answered Board members' questions and were thanked for their report.

Food Service Program Update (Ref. 5)

Update given by Mr. Koschmieder with Reference 3 earlier in the meeting.

Project Opening Doors Leadership Conference (Ref. 6)

Ms. Packer reported that Mrs. Lambert, Ms. Lazzari and she recently attended a leadership conference for Project Opening Doors. The highlights of the conference were a panel discussion with Windham High School student Tommy Martin and Windham High School science teacher Mr. McCooey, as well as a showing of the commercials with the three Windham High School students that were aired during the Master's Golf Tournament on television.

Discipline Report (Ref. 7)

Mr. Forman reviewed suspension numbers for the past three years for all six schools and district-wide totals. He also compared the number of suspensions per student. Included were in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, bus suspensions and expulsions. Mr. Forman answered questions from the Board and Mr. Folan thanked him for his report.

Feasibility Study (Ref. 8)

Ms. Ortiz reported that in response to Mrs. Collins' and Mrs. Haney's request regarding grade configuration of our schools and meeting the needs of our students, she and cabinet members met with representatives from two companies to obtain information about conducting a feasibility study in Windham. She spoke about what the two individual companies offered, including the cost and depth of each study and length of time to complete. Mrs. Collins asked about possibly having graduate students perform a study since it is an expensive project. Ms. Ortiz will check on that possibility. Ms. Ortiz was thanked for the information.

Announcements/Information (Ref. 9)

Included are the Windham School District calendar for May 2011; Parent Engagement Opportunities; and the Windham Federation of Teachers' newsletter, *The Spectrum* (April 11, 2011). There was no discussion.

Board of Education

First reading of proposed policies (Ref. 10)

The following policies have been reviewed by the Policy and Planning Committee and were presented to the Board for a first reading: Policy 5117 Students – School Attendance Areas; Policy 3542 Business/Non-Instructional Operations – Food Service; Policy 3542.31 Business/Non-Instructional Operations – Free or Reduced Price Lunches; Policy 9125 – Bylaws of the Board – Attorney; and Policy 9321 – Bylaws of the Board – Time, Place and Notification of Meetings. These policies will be brought back to the Board for final approval at the May 11, 2011, meeting.

Subcommittee Reports:

Personnel: Dr. Switchenko reported that Mrs. Banks gave an update on staff for next year and reported on the job fairs attended. An executive session was held.

Districtwide PTO: Mrs. Haney reported that the committee met at Sweeney School. Ms. Packer attended in Ms. Ortiz's place. Each school will be participating in the Spring Family Day; budget information was provided; and updates on the many activities going on were given during round table.

EASTCONN: Mr. Adamo reported that EASTCONN was awarded by CAFE for the booklets published by EASTCONN; the annual meeting is scheduled for May 24 and all Board members are invited; the financial report still showed that EASTCONN is in the black in spite of increasing fuel costs; a Head Start update was given; a construction update was given and offices should be ready by mid-August; tuition and fee increases were discussed for next year; the new medication policy from the State was reported on and discussed; grants for adult education were approved; raising the high school drop-out age was discussed; and an executive session was held.

Mr. Folan announced that the Natchaug After School Program is hosting a Seuss Celebration Family Night on April 28.

Mr. Folan also spoke about the Get Out the Vote (GOTV) effort and thanked the WFT LPAC for the very generous donation. He thanked all of the supporters for the huge effort which will begin on May 3 which includes radio and newspaper ads, door tags and signs.

Mr. Stover announced that Advocacy Day will be held at Natchaug School on Friday.

Ms. Ortiz thanked Mr. Stover for organizing the recent community conversation evening. He will provide the Board with a report in May. Mrs. Rayhall and Dr. Sewall both attended the event and spoke positively of its success.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mrs. Rayhall asked for an update on the governance committee at Natchaug School. Mrs. Collins was pleased to have more reports given at Board meetings. She asked about the possibility of having Board members and administrators meet with students to hear what they have to say about behavior in schools. Ms. Ortiz said that she meets with students during school walk throughs and it would be great to include Board of Education members in these conversations with students. Dr. Sewall said it was time to talk about the comprehensive study and the role of the Board.

CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

Henry Crane, said that students need to be taught to read to give them more confidence in life and keeping students in school until they are 18 years old might be a good idea. .

Charles Sebok, thanked the Board for trying to make Windham schools better. He said he appreciates everyone's efforts and with everyone working together, it can happen.

Andrea Rosario, Willimantic, agreed that listening to what students have to say is a great idea and she is willing to help.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

(219)Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education enter into executive session at 9:05 PM for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to bargaining unit negotiations and personnel matters.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mr. Folan, Vice-chair Mrs. Rayhall, Mr. Adamo, Mr. Doyle, Dr. Switchenko, Mrs. Lambert, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Haney, Dr. Sewall

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Directors Mrs. Banks and Mr. Nelson

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Chair Mr. Folan reconvened regular session at 9:18 P.M.

(220)Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board add to the agenda at this time the recommended approval to resolve the retirement benefit of a staff member and the recommended approval to accept the teacher resignations for the purpose of the retirement incentive.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

(221)Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, that the Board of Education accept the recommended approval to resolve the retirement benefit of a staff member and the recommended approval to accept the following teacher resignations for the purpose of the retirement incentive: Sandra Anglin, Gail Montalvo, Juan Montalvo, Lynda Nappi, Elaine Canedy, Pat Desjarlais, Paula McNally and Paula Shea.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

(222)Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 9:20 P.M.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

John Adamo, Secretary