

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
March 11, 2009

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

BOARD ABSENT: No one

ADMINISTRATION

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

REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT: Student Council – Kate McMorrow
Columbia – Mrs. Coley

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mr. Folan called the March 11, 2009, Board of Education meeting to order at 7:05 P.M., in conference room one (room 223), 2nd floor, Kramer School. He welcomed Mrs. Coley from the Columbia Board of Education. Mrs. Fuller announced that March is Board of Education Appreciation Month and she thanked Board members for their time and devotion to the school system and to the community. In appreciation, she invited everyone to enjoy some cake following the meeting.

MINUTES

February 25, 2009, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes (Ref. 1)

(136) Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the February 25, 2009, Regular Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1.

On the motion: Aye: Mr. Folan, Mr. Adamo, Mr. Clements, Dr. Switchenko, Mrs. Collins, Mr. Doyle, Mr. Diaz, Mrs. Haney

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mrs. Rayhall

The motion passes: 8-0-1

March 3, 2009, Special Board of Education Meeting Minutes (Ref. 1A)

(137) Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education approve the March 3, 2009, Special Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1A.

On the motion: Aye: Mrs. Rayhall, Mr. Adamo, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Haney

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mr. Folan, Mr. Clements, Mr. Doyle, Mr. Diaz, Dr. Switchenko

The motion passes: 4-0-5

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Folan announced that there will be a staff and student talent show this Friday at the high school. The event is a fundraising effort put on by the Windham High School Class of 2010 and the Windham High School Band.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Kate McMorrow reported that members will serve as guides at the upcoming parent-teacher conferences and will volunteer at Saturday's Special Olympics at the high school. Students from Lyman Memorial High School will be invited to participate in the spring leadership conference and planning continues for this event.

CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

Deborah Dubord, Windham Public Schools' Food Services Assistant Manager and President of Windham Board of Education Cafeteria Workers Chapter, CSEA SEIU Local 2001, urged the Board to stop the RFP to contract out the services provided by the cafeteria workers. Ms. Dubord said that private companies are for profit and asked the Board to reject the shortsightedness of contracting out and to look at long-term solutions that everyone can work on together. She said that the cafeteria workers are proud of the service that they provide, as well as their relationships with students and staff members that have developed over the years.

Mary Gallucci, Windham resident and parent, expressed her shock at the dire situation of the budget and the devastation to the town of eliminating positions. She said that people in Windham do not want livelihoods cut and students deprived of their education. She was also shocked to learn that cutting the food services staff was being considered.

Mr. Folan explained that outsourcing food services is in the exploratory stage and is being done with due diligence, looking at all of the pros and cons. He also expressed that a decision would not be made lightly and would include conversation with union membership. Secondly, he explained that it is difficult to restore positions when there is no funding.

Vanessa Gonzalez, Willimantic resident and parent, asked if involving the community to raise funds for the schools had been considered. She said that art is very important and she would not like to see cuts made in that area.

Mr. Folan explained that fundraising is a constant in the school system with ongoing support received from the community. He said that there is a meeting on Monday with the unions regarding possible concessions. Any future money that is received will be used to backfill positions. There could be potential cuts in ECS funding from the State. Mr. Folan suggested that the Student Services Committee or Districtwide PTO could coordinate community fundraising efforts and recommended that she contact the Superintendent's office.

Mary Lou DeVivo, Willimantic, thanked the Board for the terrific job that has been done with the budget and providing information to the public. She said that reading is fundamental to education and asked that a reading position be restored.

SUMMARY ACTION

Personnel Action (Ref. 2)

(138) Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education approve Reference 2 including the addendum distributed at tonight's meeting:

Resignation:

- Maria Ramos, Preschool Teacher/Prospect Street effective March 24, 2009.

Resignations (addendum):

- Brenda Adams, Special Education Teacher/ERA effective June 30, 2009.
- Leanne Duprat, Special Education Teacher/Natchaug School effective June 30, 2009.
- Jonathan Lieberman, School Psychologist/ERA effective June 30, 2009.

Appointments:

- Jara Messere, Social Worker/ERA effective March 16, 2009. Salary is MA/9, \$47,161 prorated, replaced Tim Carroll who resigned.

- Andrew Merdinyan, Math Teacher/Windham High School effective March 3, 2009. Salary is BA+15/10, \$47,283 prorated, pending certification, replaced Carlos Flores who resigned.
- Aida Algarin Gonzalez, Bilingual Secretary III/Central Office effective March 3, 2009. Hourly rate is \$15.67, replaced Gladys Underwood who retired.
- Dawn Bettinger, Cooperative Teacher/Early Head Start Boston Post Road effective February 23, 2009. Hourly rate is \$15.22, replaced Rebecca Spears who transferred.

Leave of Absence:

- Kardia Irizarry, General Cafeteria Worker/Windham High School, medical leave of absence beginning January 28, 2009 through approximately March 17, 2009.

Schedule A-4 appointment:

- Donald Collins, Boys Tennis Coach/Windham High School, stipend \$3,700.
There was no discussion.
On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous.

ACTION ITEMS

2009-2010 Budget (Ref. 3)

(139) Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the proposed 2009-2010 budget in the corrected amount of \$41,250.993. There was no discussion.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

Bullying and Cyberbullying Policies (Ref. 4)

(140) Motion of Mr. Clements, seconded by Mrs. Haney, that the Board of Education approve the bullying policy with corrections. The cyberbullying policy was distributed for a first reading and will be brought back to the Board at the next meeting for action.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Superintendent's Reports

Corrected Discipline Report (Ref. 5)

A copy of the corrected discipline report from the February 25, 2009, Board meeting was included in the packet. There was no discussion.

After-Action Report (Ref. 6)

Board members noted that the after-action report from the Willimantic Fire Department made no determination as to the cause of the fire.

Financial Statement (February 2009) (Ref. 7)

Mr. Doyle said that at this time in this year's budget, "We are holding our own."

Announcements/Information (Ref. 8)

Mrs. Fuller thanked Ms. Kim Switchenko for compiling the results for the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment (Fall 2008) for grade four for the district as a whole.

Board of Education

Subcommittee Reports:

Budget/Finance: Mr. Doyle said that it was difficult to make the necessary cuts. A forum was held last week to keep the public informed. The Town Board of Finance is yet to make its final say on the budget. Mr. Doyle encouraged parents to lobby the state for funding.

Magnet School Building: Mrs. Haney reported that proposals from educational consultants have been scored and reviewed. Presentations to the committee by selected candidates will be made prior to a final decision.

Policy/Planning: Mrs. Collins reported that the committee reviewed the cyberbullying policy and the 2009-2010 school calendar.

Districtwide PTO: Mrs. Haney reported that the districtwide movie night was well attended.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

There were none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

(141) Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board enter into executive session at 7:30 P.M., for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to nonrenewal of non-tenured teachers' contracts.

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

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

ADMINISTRATION

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

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Mr. Folan reconvened regular session at 7:43 P.M.

(142) Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mr. Diaz, that the Board add to the agenda at this time the recommended approval of the nonrenewal of employment contracts.

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

(143) Motion of Mrs. Collins, seconded by Mr. Clements, that the Board of Education approve the nonrenewal of the employment contracts for the following non-tenured teachers upon contract expiration at the end of the current school year: Chelsea Ferland, Windham High School; Deborah Becker, Windham Middle School; Stacie Shields, Windham Middle School; and Berkis Rodriguez, North Windham Elementary School.

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

ADJOURNMENT

(144) Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 7:44 P.M.

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

Respectfully submitted,

John Adamo, Secretary