

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES  
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT  
March 25, 2009

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

BOARD ABSENT: Vice-chair Mrs. Rayhall

ADMINISTRATION

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

REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT: Student Council – Celia Poirier  
Columbia – No one

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mr. Folan called the March 25, 2009, Board of Education meeting to order at 7:01 P.M., in conference room one (room 223), 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Kramer School.

MINUTES

March 11, 2009, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes (Ref. 1)

(152)Motion of Dr. Switchenko, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education approve the March 11, 2009, Regular Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

March 17, 2009, Special Board of Education Meeting Minutes (Ref. 1A)

(153)Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board of Education approve the March 17, 2009, Special Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1A.

On the motion: Aye: Mr. Folan, Mr. Adamo

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mrs. Collins, Mr. Clements, Mr. Doyle, Mr. Diaz, Dr. Switchenko, Mrs. Haney

The motion passes: 2-0-6

WINDHAM HIGH SCHOOL YOUNG POETS

Mr. Folan welcomed Ms. Lynn Frazier and the Windham High School Young Poets to the meeting. Ms. Frazier was pleased to inform Board members that Windham students have earned finalist status in the State competition and will now compete for placement on the State team. Students are performing a series of poetry slams at the Windham Arts Collaborative and are also working with the Weed and Seed program to bring Maria Reyes, the original Freedom Writer, to the middle school. At the Board meeting, Samaria Gutierrez and Noel Diaz each read one of their poems, and Trey Vaz and Ben Fitzsimmons, who are finalists in the State competition, presented the poem on which they collaborated. Ms. Frazier said that she is very proud of the students' accomplishments. Mr. Folan, who read a poem that had been written with the assistance of some of the Young Poets, commended them for their excellent representation of Windham High School.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Folan received a thank you note from Project Graduation parents for the Board's donation. He also received correspondence from Dollars for Scholars about the upcoming phon-a-thon. Volunteers are needed to assist during the phonathon and donations are being sought.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

Celia Poirier reported that Student Council members are organizing workshops for the Leadership Conference on May 19<sup>th</sup>. This year's theme is *culture*. A professor at Eastern Connecticut State University may be the keynote speaker; however, plans have not been finalized. Members will serve as guides at tomorrow's parent conferences and will help with set up and clean up at the April 4 Craft Show at the high school. Members also will assist at the Dollars for Scholars phon-a-thon next week. Over \$1,000 was raised at a teacher vs. student basketball game organized by Student Council members. Mr. Folan thanked her for the report and for the work done by Council members.

## CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

Mr. Blain informed the Board that the Engineering Club took first and second places at the University of Connecticut's Hydrogen Fuel Cell Car Challenge competition. The Board congratulated the students.

## SUMMARY ACTION

### Personnel Action (Ref. 2)

(154) Motion of Mrs. Haney, seconded by Mr. Diaz, that the Board of Education approve Reference 2:

#### Appointment:

- Donald Zahlman, Crossing Guard/Natchaug School effective March 3, 2009. Hourly rate is \$11.90, replaces Richard Murphy who retired.

#### Leaves of Absence:

- Sandra Granchelli, Reading Teacher/Sweeney School, extend current unpaid leave of absence through the 2009-2010 school year.
- Meredith Shea, Nurse/North Windham School, medical leave of absence beginning March 16, 2009 through approximately April 9, 2009.

There was no discussion.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

### Windham High School Field Trips (Ref. 3 and 3A)

(155) Motion of Mrs. Haney, seconded by Mr. Diaz, that the Board of Education approve the following two field trip requests for Windham High School students: (Ref. 3) a trip to the Connecticut Music Educators Conference (CMEA) in Hartford, Connecticut, from Thursday, April 2, 2009, through Saturday, April 4, 2009; and (Ref. 3A) a trip to the New England Educational Research Conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, from Thursday, May 7, 2009, through Friday, May 8, 2009. Both are in accordance with Board policy 6153. Mr. Blain answered questions from Board members in reference to both trip requests.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

### Windham High School Scholarship (Ref. 4)

(156) Motion of Mrs. Haney, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education accept, with deep gratitude, the Dr. Stephen Emmett Owens Memorial Scholarship. Funding for this scholarship is through an anonymous donation accepted at the December 17, 2008, Board meeting.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

### Donations (Ref. 5 and Ref. 5A)

(157)Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education accept, with deep appreciation, the following two donations: (Ref. 5) a donation from the Center for Medicare Advocacy in the amount of \$1000 to be used to pay for dental services provided by the Across the Smiles program that students and their families cannot afford; and (Ref. 5A) a donation from Sports Image of a scoring table to be used by the Windham High School athletic department valued at over \$1000. Mrs. Collins further explained how the donation from the Center for Medicare Advocacy will be used. Mrs. Fuller elaborated on the donation of a replacement scoring table.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

#### ACTION ITEMS

##### Teaching American History Grant (Ref. 6)

(158)Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the Teaching American History grant application. There was no discussion.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

##### Improving Literacy through School Libraries Grant (Ref. 7)

(159)Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Diaz, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the Improving Literacy through School Libraries (LSL) grant application. There was no discussion.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

##### Reading First Grant (Ref. 8)

(160)Motion of Dr. Switchenko, seconded by Mr. Diaz, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the Reading First grant application. Dr. Olezza answered a Board member's question about this grant which is a continuation of the original Reading First Grant and the ongoing support provided at Sweeney School to improve students' reading skills.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

##### George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation Grant (Ref. 9)

(161)Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation grant application. Dr. Olezza explained the purpose of the grant and answered questions from the Board.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

Dr. Olezza informed the Board that Windham will receive the Enhancing Education through Technology grant. This grant application was previously approved by the Board.

##### Cyberbullying Policy (Ref. 10)

(162)Motion of Mrs. Haney, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education approve the Cyberbullying policy. Mrs. Collins explained that the changes suggested by Mr. Clements since the first reading are in bold lettering and underlined, and the committee has agreed with these changes. Mr. Folan thanked Mrs. Collins and Mr. Clements for their work. Mr. Clements asked if students received any training with respect to what happens when they put their information out on the web. Mrs. Fuller explained that, as part of the e-rate funding requirement, Windham is required to provide education on the safe use of the internet to students.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

##### Chaperone for Overnight Trip (Ref. 11)

(163)Motion of Mr. Diaz, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education approve that one chaperone for fifteen students attend the International Career Development Conference of DECA from

Tuesday, April 28, 2009, to Sunday, May 3, 2009. The trip application was approved by the Board at its November 12, 2008, Board meeting. Fifteen students have qualified to participate in the conference instead of the planned twelve. DECA advisor, Ms. King, is the one chaperone who will attend the conference with the qualifying students. Mr. Doyle asked that parents and students be notified of this exception to the policy.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

## REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Announcements/Information (Ref. 12)

There were no comments.

### Board of Education

#### Proposed 2009-2010 School Calendar (Ref. 13)

Mr. Folan asked Board members to review the staff comments that were received at tonight's meeting before the calendar comes back to the Board for approval.

#### Subcommittee Reports:

*Program Development/Evaluation:* Mr. Adamo reported that curriculum updates were given by Ms. Ortiz; CMT scores were reviewed, and an update on the Compañeros program was provided including recruitment and registration procedures.

*Magnet School Building:* Mrs. Haney reported that interviews of educational consultant applicants took place and now bids will be sought from the four groups that the committee interviewed.

*EASTCONN:* Mr. Adamo said that the following reports were given: executive director's report; regional summary report; quarterly budget report; report on updated mission statement; and Head Start update. Non-tenured teacher renewals were reviewed and there was an executive session for personnel matters and negotiations.

*Student Services:* Mrs. Collins reported that the 2009-2010 school calendar was reviewed; and Ms. Negrón spoke about the reconfiguration of teams at the Middle School, as well as implementing school uniforms at the middle school. School uniforms will be discussed at the next Board meeting. There was some discussion at tonight's meeting about the proposed school calendar. It was decided that Board members would e-mail any concerns to Mrs. Fuller once they reviewed staff members' comments.

## FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Folan asked that the Policy and Planning Committee schedule a meeting to discuss having a student representative sit on the Board with limited voting privileges. Other states have Board of Education student representatives and the Connecticut legislature has been discussing this matter.

## CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

There were none.

## SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS:

Mr. Doyle said that the Budget and Finance Committee will meet on March 31 and the Town's Board of Finance will hold a public hearing on April 1.

Dr. Switchenko said that the Personnel Committee will meet on April 7.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

(164)Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board enter into executive session at 7:55 P.M., for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to nonrenewal of non-tenured teachers' contracts.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0, unanimous.

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mr. Folan, 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 8:16 P.M.

(165)Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board add to the agenda at this time the recommended approval of the nonrenewal of an employment contract.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

(166)Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education approve the nonrenewal of the employment contract for the following non-tenured teacher upon contract expiration at the end of the current school year: Jaclyn Alpert, Windham High School.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

(167)Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 8:16 P.M.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

John Adamo, Secretary