

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
May 27, 2009

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mr. Folan, Mr. Adamo, Dr. Switchenko, Mr. Doyle, Mrs. Haney, Mrs. Collins (arrived at 6:39 PM), Mr. Clements, Mr. Diaz (arrived at 6:42 PM)

BOARD ABSENT: Vice-chair Mrs. Rayhall

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Mrs. Fuller, Assistant Superintendent Ms. Ortiz, Director Mrs. Banks

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 May 27, 2009, Board of Education meeting to order at 6:35 P.M., in conference room one (room 223), 2nd floor, Kramer School.

Mr. Folan asked for a motion to add a report on the Positive Behavior Supports program to the agenda as item 6A.

(198) Motion of Mrs. Haney, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education add a report on the Positive Behavior Supports program to the agenda as item 6A.

On the motion: Aye, 6-0; unanimous.

MINUTES

May 13, 2009, Regular Board of Education Meeting (Ref. 1)

(199) Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Clements, that the Board of Education approve the May 13, 2009, Regular Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1.

On the motion: Aye, 6-0; unanimous.

May 19, 2009, Special Board of Education Meeting (Ref. 1A)

(200) Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. Folan, that the Board of Education approve the May 19, 2009, Special Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1A.

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

Nay: No one

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

The motion passes: 2-0-4

PRESENTATIONS

Connecticut Coalition for the Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF)

Dr. Dianne Kaplan deVries, Project Director for the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding, spoke about the lawsuit filed on behalf of school children in Connecticut alleging the state's failure to adequately and equitably fund its public schools thus failing to provide suitable and substantial educational opportunities to all children in the state. The coalition is comprised of parents, school children, municipalities, local boards of education, statewide education associations and advocacy organizations.

(Mrs. Collins arrived.)

Since 2004 Yale law students, as part of the Yale Law School Education Adequacy Clinic, have taken on the lawsuit pro bono and have been working diligently on this case. At this time, there is a pre-trial challenge in progress and the decision from the Supreme Court is expected shortly. Following that decision, it will be decided what steps to take next.

(Mr. Diaz arrived.)

The goal is to provide adequate and equitable education to all students in every community shifting the financial burden to the state in accordance with its constitutional obligation lessening the burden of taxpayers. Dr. deVries answered questions from Board members and the audience. Mr. Folan thanked her for attending tonight's meeting.

WILI Radio Host – Windham Middle School Student Zachary Quamme

Mr. Hutson introduced Windham Middle School student, Zachary Quamme, who is hosting his own radio show on WILI on Saturday mornings at 9:30 AM, sponsored by the Windham Federation of Teachers (WFT) and highlighting the Windham School district. Mr. Hutson publicly acknowledged Zachary's success as an exemplary student and his excellent work in the radio studio and as the morning news announcer at the Windham Middle School. Zachary asked that if anyone has something they would like highlighted on his show, he may be e-mailed at wpsradio@yahoo.com. He publicly thanked the WFT for sponsoring the radio show.

TSA Students

Mr. Hutson announced that Windham TSA students placed in every event that they competed in this year at the Connecticut State Conference. He also commended the Windham Middle School Robotics Team which built a complicated robot and competed against high school teams and placed 19th out of 30. Mr. Hutson was also proud to announce that at today's Connecticut Technology Association Conference, Windham took first place in the judging of student work. Mr. Hutson introduced the following students who were present at tonight's meeting: Cody Diselets, Stephen Lambert, Austin Montagna, Bailey Rontey, Braden Lynn, and Noelle King.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Folan commended the students for their hard work and their efforts and the parents, as well, for their support and involvement. He also thanked Mr. Hutson for his outstanding leadership.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Celia Poirier reported that the May 19th Leadership Conference planned by the Student Council was very successful. The students ran many workshops centered around the theme, *cultures around the world*, and University of Connecticut History Professor Sherri Olson was the keynote speaker. On June 2, class elections will be facilitated by Student Council members and later in the month, Student Council elections will be held.

CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

Tony Fantoli, Tuckie Road, spoke about his concerns with locating the Magnet School off of Tuckie Road which is near his property. He indicated that, due to the economy, money used for the Magnet School should be invested in schools that are already in Windham. He asked if there would be money in the town budget to maintain the Magnet School and what would happen if the state was unable to follow through with its promise of funding. Mr. Folan and Mrs. Collins suggested that he attend a Magnet School Building

Committee meeting so that his concerns could be addressed. The next meeting is Monday, June 1, 2009, at 6:30 PM, at Kramer.

SUMMARY ACTION

Personnel Action (Ref. 2)

(201)Motion of Mr. Clements, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education approve Reference 2: Resignations

- Tracy Perez, Paraprofessional/Windham Preschool Program effective May 29, 2009.
- Susan Slater, Data Entry Clerk/AIS Department effective May 28, 2009.

Leaves of absence

- Rebecca Martin, Special Education Teacher/Sweeney School, medical leave of absence effective May 11, 2009 through June 23, 2009.
- Angel Vazquez, Head Start Cook/Boston Post Road, medical leave of absence effective May 22 through approximately June 5, 2009.

There was no discussion.

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

ACTION ITEMS

Land for Windham Interdistrict Magnet School (Ref. 3)

(202)Motion of Mrs. Haney, seconded by Mrs. Collins, that the Board of Education approve the land for the Windham Interdistrict Magnet School and its submission to the State Department of Education. Mrs. Haney explained that after much research for available land, the Committee presented its choice for the school site, which is off Tuckie Road near Carriage Lane and George Street, to the Board of Selectmen and are now presenting the proposed site to the Board of Education. Following approval from the Board of Education, the proper forms will be submitted to the state.

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

(Mrs. Collins left the meeting at 7:26 PM)

Healthy Food Certification (Ref. 4)

(203)Motion of Mrs. Haney, seconded by Mr. Diaz, that the Board of Education certify that the Windham School district will participate in the Healthy Food Certification pursuant to section 10-215F of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs. This approval must be obtained annually and is for the 2009-2010 school year. The Windham Board of Education became a participant in the Healthy Food Certification Program in 2008.

On the motion: Aye, 7-0; unanimous

Technology Plan (Ref. 5)

(204)Motion of Mr. Diaz, seconded by Mrs. Haney, that the Board of Education approve the Windham Public Schools' Educational Technology Plan for July 1, 2009, to June 30, 2012. The Technology Planning Committee developed this plan, which has been reviewed by members of the Program Development and Evaluation Committee. Ms. Ortiz responded to a Board member's question. Ms. Cook from EASTCONN and Mr. Jensen were thanked for their technical assistance in developing this plan.

(Mrs. Collins returned to the meeting at 7:29 PM)

On the motion: Aye, 8-0; unanimous

REPORTS

Intervention Positions (Ref. 6)

This is included as informational material.

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) (Ref. 6A)

At the Board's request for information about PBS, Ms. Negrón, Mr. Janisaitis and Mr. Blain, along with Mr. Forman, were present to update Board members on how the program is working in Windham schools. Mr. Forman provided some history about instituting the program which began at the Middle School several years ago and is based on behavioral intervention and support. There were PBS data discipline boards displayed for viewing showing data for Natchaug School, the Middle School and the High School. Mr. Janisaitis explained that Natchaug has made dramatic improvement in the number of office referrals each month and feels that good progress is being made at Natchaug. Ms. Negrón has also seen dramatic improvement with the total number of referrals reduced but still wants to see the number of referrals substantially decrease. Mr. Blain said that the high school, which implemented the program a year after the middle school, has also seen referral numbers decline. Faculty members are teaching students appropriate behavior in different environments and are personalizing the education process. Questions from Board members were answered and there was discussion about rewarding good behavior. The three principals explained the reward system used at each of their schools. Mrs. Fuller said that progress is being made.

Financial statements (April 2009) (Ref. 7)

There were no comments. Mr. Doyle will give a report under the Budget & Finance subcommittee report.

Announcements/Information (Ref. 8)

There were no comments.

Board of Education

Job Descriptions (Ref. 9)

This is the first reading of the following two job descriptions: the Director of Athletics, Health and Physical Education and Intervention Specialist. Both job descriptions will be brought back to the Board for final action at its June 10, 2009, meeting.

Subcommittee Reports:

Personnel: Dr. Switchenko reported that staffing information from Jeff Forman was reviewed, the organizational chart was reviewed, job descriptions were reviewed, and two issues were discussed in executive session.

Program Development/Evaluation: Mr. Adamo reported that *News and Views for Literacy, Numeracy, Science and Social Studies* were reviewed; the District Technology Plan for 2009-2012 was presented; the benefits of physical activity and its effect on academic performance were reviewed; delivery of art instruction in the elementary schools was discussed; and future agenda items were determined.

EASTCONN: Mr. Adamo reported that the final meeting of the year was held at the Arts Magnet School and was very well attended. Entertainment was provided by the students. The keynote address was given by Commissioner of Education McQuillan and employees were recognized for their years of service. The business meeting included the executive director's report; the financial director's report on the 2009-2010 budget and budget projections; approval of the cost allocation policy; Head Start update; and following executive session, the Board approved a three-year extension of the director's contract.

Budget/Finance: Mr. Doyle reported that there is still no definite information from the state regarding ECS, IDEA and title monies. At this time, it appears that there will be no significant 2008-2009 budget surplus.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Doyle asked to see plans on how art will be delivered to elementary students, as well as how other gaps will be filled due to the lay off of elementary school teachers.

CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

There were none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

(205) Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Haney, that the Board enter into executive session at 8:21 P.M., for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to bargaining unit negotiations.

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, and Director Mrs. Banks

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Mr. Folan reconvened regular session at 8:40 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

(206) Motion by Mrs. Collins, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 8:40 P.M.

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

Respectfully submitted,

John Adamo, Secretary