

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES  
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT  
October 14, 2009

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

BOARD ABSENT: No one

ADMINISTRATION

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

REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT: Student Council – Jeremy Sharpe  
Columbia – No one

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mr. Folan called the October 14, 2009, Board of Education meeting to order at 7:00 P.M., in conference room one (room 223), 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Kramer School.

Addition to the agenda

Mr. Folan asked for a motion to add a special recognition to tonight's agenda.

(76) Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mrs. Haney, that the Board approve the addition to the agenda of a special recognition following the Student Council report.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Ortiz led the Board and the public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

September 23, 2009, Regular Board of Education meeting (Ref. 1)

(77) Motion of Dr. Switchenko, seconded by Mr. Doyle, that the Board of Education approve the September 23, 2009, Regular Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1.

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

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mr. Diaz

The motion passes: 8-0-1

October 6, 2009, Special Board of Education meeting (Ref. 1A)

(78) Motion of Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mrs. Rayhall, that the Board of Education approve the October 6, 2009, Special Board of Education meeting minutes, Reference 1A.

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

Nay: No one

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

The motion passes: 3-0-6

### COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

### STUDENT COUNCIL

Jeremy Sharpe reported that twenty-five students will participate in this week-end's Relay for Life and are contributing a basket to be raffled at the event. Students who participate in the lock-in planned for the night before the upcoming Cool School segment on Channel 3 are required to bring a \$20 donation in order to spend the night at the school. Money collected will go to a chosen charity for each class.

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Mr. Diaz was recognized by Mr. Folan and the Board of Education for his years of service as a member on the Board of Education. Mr. Adamo presented him with a plaque from the Board and Mr. Folan read a proclamation from First Selectwoman de Smet and the Board of Selectmen. Mrs. Rayhall presented Mr. Diaz with a gift from the Board. Mr. Diaz said it was difficult to leave the Board and thanked everyone for giving him the honor of serving. He commended the school system, teachers, administration and Board members for the good work that they do.

### CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

Information on a community based reading initiative by Mary Lou DeVivo has been tabled until the November Board meeting.

Mrs. Rayhall, Board of Education representative with Mr. Diaz on the Town's Heart Safe Committee, informed the Board that the First Taxing District approved giving two AED defibrillators to North Windham and Windham Center schools. The Heart Safe Committee will be asking the community for help in obtaining thirteen more AEDs to be used in buildings around town.

William Skoog, President, Windham Federation of Teachers, Windham High School English teacher for forty-five years, said, "We will not be intimidated."

Joanne Boulais, first grade teacher, Windham Center School, said, "I will not be intimidated."

Miriam Reynoso, first grade teacher, Windham Center School, said, "I will not be intimidated."

Victor Funderburk, Windham High School teacher for thirty-seven years, said that he will continue to ask for collaboration and said, "In that process, I will not be intimidated."

Paula Shea, resident of Windham, teacher in Windham Public Schools for thirty-seven years, asked for support of the teachers and said, "I will not be intimidated."

Herbert Arico, Windham High School, fifty-seven years teaching in Windham, said, "We will not be intimidated."

Pat Elliott, Windham Center, twenty-six years of teaching, said, "I will not be intimidated."

Cheryl Incandella, thirty-nine years teaching in Windham school system, asked for support of the teachers who are here for the students, not just for the money, said, "I will not be intimidated."

Mary Anne Germain, Windham High School, teaching science with Mr. Funderburk for thirty years, said, "We will not be intimidated."

Lynn Frazier, thirty-one years in Windham Public Schools, said, "I will not be intimidated."

Kye Paradise, born and raised in Windham, in her ninth year teaching at Windham High School, asked to please let everyone work together, and said, "We will not be intimidated."

Rosemary Scaglione, North Windham Compañeros kindergarten, teacher in Windham for fifteen years, said, "I will not be intimidated."

James Flores, Willimantic, said that he is very sad that Mr. Diaz, who is the only voice for Latinos, is leaving the Board of Education. He also said that intimidation and harassment are crimes and he is behind his “brothers”, the teachers, 100%.

Ann Chuk, preschool special education coordinator, teacher for thirty-five years, twenty-five in Windham, said that she is very fortunate because the preschool staff work together collaboratively. She said that she had asked numerous times to talk about morale in the district in 2003 when she was a member of the Superintendent’s Advisory Council; however, it didn’t happen, and this is a topic that still needs to be addressed in some manner. She said, “I will not be intimidated either.”

Derrick Gifford, 2009 graduate of Windham and resident of Windham, said he has had these teachers and they are truly dedicated, hard working teachers. He said, “We will not be intimidated.”

Evan Philips, arrived in Windham in second grade, went through the Windham school system and has over thirty years experience at Windham High School and presently at Windham Middle School, said that “We will not be intimidated.”

Jessup Wayne, Class of 2007 alumni, said that he went through Windham Public Schools and could not have asked for more dedicated teachers. He said that they deserve to be listened to, and “They won’t be intimidated.”

Mika Fleck, seven years in Windham Public Schools, said that she has never seen morale as low as it is and said, “I will not be intimidated.”

Camelia Conner, seventeen years as a teacher, in the system for twenty-four years beginning as an aide, said “I will not be intimidated.” She said that she agrees with Mika Fleck. She expects her students to give 110% in class and does not expect any less from each other, administrators and the Board.

Juan Montalvo, in education for thirty-three years, and on behalf of his wife, in education for thirty years, said, “Definitely, we will not be intimidated.”

Casten Wayne, 2009 graduate, said that these teachers are shaping America and need to be listened to and said, “We will not be intimidated.”

Spencer Coriaty, born and raised in Willimantic, went through the school system and is a 2009 graduate, said that the teachers here helped shape him into the way he is today and said, “We will not be intimidated.”

Chris Koning, community resident, substitute for seven years, teacher for twelve years, with three children who went through the district said, “I will not be intimidated.”

Carlos Flores, taught at Windham High School and said he was harassed by administration. He stands 100% behind the teachers and said, “We won’t be intimidated.”

Julianne Lucier, North Windham speech and language pathologist for four years, said, “I, as a non-tenured teacher, will not be intimidated.”

Rose Reyes, Windham Center, second grade bilingual teacher said that what she sees hurts her and said, “We will not be intimidated.”

Bill Powers, has been teaching at Windham High School for over a decade after a career change, said that he doesn’t want to be intimidated nor have his colleagues feel intimidated and does not want to intimidate but would rather have collaboration with everyone. He said that the high school administration that he works with and the central office administration have been willing to collaborate. He hopes that everyone will have collaboration together. He wished Mr. Diaz the best of luck.

Pat Desjarlais, has lived here all her life, teacher at Windham Center, first grade, thirty-four years, said, “I will not be intimidated.”

Joy Emerson, Windham Center, fourth grade, five years in Windham, said that collaboration is needed and “I will not be intimidated.”

Betsy Gonzalez, Windham Center, grade three, ten years, district teacher of the year, her children have gone through the system, lives in town said that she hears about the morale and it concerns her. She said that teachers teach here because they love the kids and are dedicated. She said that besides not being intimidated, teachers want to be respected and listened to. She realizes that the town is in a lot of stress, but without teachers, there would be no school system.

Luis Diaz Cruz, resident for thirty-five years, teacher in Windham for thirty-five years, said that the teachers' primary responsibility is to teach the students and hopes that some discussion will take place. He said, "I will not be intimidated."

Sydney Gilbey, Windham Middle School teacher, thanked the Board for listening to the people who spoke at tonight's meeting. She said that some colleagues were afraid to come before the Board. She said that "We will work for collaboration and not be intimidated."

Mr. Folan said that the Board will meet in executive session tonight and will draft a formal statement that will be announced tomorrow. He also said that the Board of Education will not be a rubber stamp for a union or for administration and he has been working for communication and hopes that everyone will move forward collectively. He said that the Board appreciates and respects the teachers and the administration and everyone needs to work together.

## SUMMARY ACTION

### Personnel Action (Ref. 2)

(79)Motion of Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board of Education approve Reference 2:

#### Resignation

- Donna Pendill-Brown, Speech Language Pathologist/Natchaug School effective October 30, 2009.

#### Appointment

- Kerri Fitzsimons, Social Science Teacher/Windham High School effective September 28, 2009. Salary is BA/2, \$36,801, prorated, replaces Neal Benson who resigned.

#### Schedule A-2 & A-4 appointments

- Melanie Godbout, .50 Junior Class Advisor/Windham High School, Stipend \$960.
- Kathleen Koljian, .50 Junior Class Advisor/Windham High School, Stipend \$960.
- Kara Cicchiello, Head Field Hockey Coach/Windham High School, Stipend \$3,456.
- Tim Maclure, Freshman Football Coach/Windham High School, Stipend \$5,376.
- Rob Gamache, .50 Assistant Freshman Football Coach/Windham High School. Stipend \$1,632, pending certification.
- Andrew Gonzalez, .50 Assistant Freshman Football Coach/Windham High School. Stipend \$1,920.
- Roger DeGray, Head Golf Coach/Windham High School, Stipend \$3,456.
- Paul Martineau, Freshman Boys Basketball Coach/Windham High School, Stipend \$2,496.
- Erin Gaucher, Freshman Girls Basketball Coach/Windham High School, Stipend \$2,688.
- Michael Lessard, Assistant Girls Swimming Coach/Windham High School, Stipend \$3,648.

There were no comments.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

## Donations

### Art supplies from WindhamARTS collaborative and Lily Pad (Ref. 3)

(80)Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Dr. Switchenko, that the Board of Education accept with deep gratitude art supplies gathered by Mr. Peter Polomski of the Lily Pad and executive director of WindhamARTS. Board members were grateful for the generosity of those who donated the gathered art supplies to the school district.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

### Sewing machines from Schiller's Sewing Circle (Ref. 3A)

(81)Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mr. Diaz, that the Board of Education accept eleven gently used sewing machines from Mr. Rick Schiller, from Schiller's Sewing Circle, with a value over \$1,000. The Board thanked Mr. Schiller for his generosity. In response to Mr. Doyle's question, students will receive these machines for their personal use.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

## ACTION ITEMS

### State Bilingual Grant Application (Ref. 4)

(82) Motion of Mr. Clements, seconded by Mrs. Haney, that the Board of Education approve the submission of the State Bilingual grant application. There was no discussion.

On the motion: Aye, 9-0; unanimous

## REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Superintendent's Reports

#### Student participation data for various programs in the district – summary report (Ref. 5)

Informational data provided. There were no comments or questions.

#### ASPIRA grant – summary report (Ref. 6)

Informational data provided. There were no comments or questions.

#### Grants update (Ref. 7)

Informational data provided. There were no comments or questions.

#### Student recognition (Ref. 8)

Ms. Fuller announced to the Board that Windham High School senior, Jeremy Sharpe, has been named a Commended Student in the National Merit Scholarship Program for 2009. He was congratulated for his outstanding accomplishment.

#### Financial statement for September 2009 (Ref. 9)

There were no comments or questions.

#### Announcements/Information (Ref. 10)

There were no comments or questions.

## Board of Education

### First Reading of proposed policies

#### Student Representatives to the Board of Education policy revision (Ref. 11)

#### Security Check/Fingerprinting (Ref. 11A)

#### Gang Activity or Association (Ref. 11B)

#### Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness (Ref. 11C)

#### First Aid/Emergency Medical Care (Ref. 11D)

This is a first reading of the above policies which will be brought back to the Board for a second reading at the October 28, 2009, meeting. Mr. Folan explained that the Student Representatives to the Board of Education policy has been revised to include the word *advisory* before the word *vote*. Mr. Clements had some suggested revisions in wording for the Gang Activity or Association policy and the Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness policy that were agreed upon by Board members. These changes will be included for the second reading.

### Subcommittee Reports:

*Magnet School:* Mrs. Haney and Mrs. Collins reported that the committee is working on setting up the educational programming and members are working with the architect. There will be a preliminary report on the traffic study and meetings will take place regarding the sewer and water for the site.

*Districtwide PTO:* Mrs. Haney reported that budget and Magnet School updates were given. Also school representatives gave updates on the many different activities taking place, including successful open houses and fundraising activities. Mrs. Haney reported that all schools are represented on the committee.

*Personnel:* Dr. Switchenko reported that Lockton gave a presentation on dental insurance that was very informative; a staff issue was addressed; and the committee went into an executive session.

*Policy/Planning:* Mrs. Collins reported that the policies were reviewed that were on tonight's agenda as a first reading.

*Facilities/Maintenance:* Mrs. Rayhall reported that the committee reviewed policies; received an update on the work being done at Kramer which should be completed soon; and received an update on pool.

#### FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mrs. Collins asked about moving forward with discussing the implementation of school uniforms at the High School. However, a report will be made in January by Middle School comparing discipline statistics from last year to this year and that information will be used to move forward with further plans. Ms. Fuller suggested that preliminary work could begin in anticipation of the results of the Middle School's report.

#### CITIZENS/DELEGATIONS

There were none.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

(83) Motion of Mrs. Rayhall, seconded by Mr. Adamo, that the Board enter into executive session at 7:50 P.M., 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, Dr. Switchenko, Mr. Doyle, Mr. Clements, Mrs. Haney, Mrs. Collins, Mr. Diaz

#### ADMINISTRATION

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

#### REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Mr. Folan reconvened regular session at 10:25 P.M.

#### ADJOURNMENT

(84) Motion by Mr. Adamo, seconded by Mr. Clements, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 10:25 P.M.

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

Respectfully submitted,

John Adamo, Secretary