

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
January 13, 2016

BOARD PRESENT: Vice-chair Dr. Sewall, Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. French, Mr. Quamme, Mr. Montalvo

BOARD ABSENT: Chair Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Flores-Alvarez

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Garcia; Interim Assistant Superintendent Mr. William Chaffin; Interim Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Penny Hebert; Directors Ms. Beghetto, Ms. Markey and Mr. Johnson

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

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

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-chair Dr. Sewall called the January 13, 2016, Board of Education meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

December 9, 2015 business meeting minutes (Ref. 1)

December 16, 2015 workshop meeting minutes (Ref. 1A)

With regard to the December 9 minutes, Mr. Quamme indicated that he abstained from both the vote to add the teachers' contract to the agenda and the vote to approve the teachers' contract.

Mrs. Lambert indicated that she also abstained from voting on the approval of the teachers' contract.

The revised December 9, 2015 business meeting minutes (Ref. 1) noting that Mr. Quamme abstained from the vote to add the teachers' contract to the agenda and that Mr. Quamme and Mrs. Lambert abstained from the vote to approve the teachers' contract and the December 16, 2015 (Ref. 1A) workshop meeting minutes were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Sewall announced that Mr. Flores-Alvarez will be chairing the Policy Committee which will be meeting later in the month.

Dr. Sewall spoke about the Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy's new TSA program. They have won the state competition for a new app that the students developed and have moved to the national competition. The public can vote by texting.

Alicia Lynn, a parent of a student at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy, spoke about the Academy's TSA program that has launched a successful first initiative. The students have developed an app for cyclists

that was entered into the TSA state competition. The board and public are asked to vote for the app as a fan favorite which is the process that will allow the app to be developed. Every state has chosen one middle school and one high school to compete for the national award.

Bryce Lynn, a student at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy, spoke about being one of the developers of the app and explained that its objective is to encourage healthier living by bike riding. The Board congratulated the group and looks forward to a report of the outcome of the national TSA event in April.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Reports

Barrows Technology Student Association (TSA) App Challenge

The students in Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy TSA program created an app for the Verizon App Challenge and won "Best in State". Eleven students (Henry Rose, Jordan Plefka, Mark Middleton, Bryce Lynn, Kyle Higley, Skylar Hofmann, Aliza Ducot, Austin Ducot, Mark Despard, Trey Lindsey, Damarqus Battle) participated in the creation and design of the app's features and submitted a video. Their app, entitled "Bike Hike", allows users to view and search bike trails in their locations. The students were awarded \$5,000 and each student won an IPAD. The community can vote to send the students to the national competition by texting the word BIKEHIKE1 to 22333. The prize for the national award is \$15,000 and an opportunity to develop, code and present their app at the national conference.

The superintendent would like to give special thanks to teacher, Mrs. Nicole Bay, Mrs. Laura Rodriguez Mrs. Alicia Lynn and Ms. Carolyn Wheeler for facilitating the TSA program.

Education Matters

Dr. Garcia reported that Windham Public Schools will host the local education show "Education Matters". The show is aired throughout Northeast Connecticut and covers educational initiatives and news in the region. Each month will cover three topics related to education, one of which will be related to Windham Public Schools. Mrs. Markey will be the host of the show.

District Reading Initiative Update

Dr. Garcia reported that the district is making a tremendous effort to improve reading at all grade levels. The K-12 reading initiatives have been aligned. The district has invested a lot of financial and human resources in the implementation of this initiative with much professional development being provided to the ELA coaches and teachers.

Social Studies and Science MAPS Development Update

Dr. Garcia reported a social studies design team and a science design team met two weeks ago to discuss the preliminary social studies and science MAPS. The next meeting is scheduled for the week of January 18, 2016. Mr. Albie Harris will assist in the development of the social studies MAPS and Ms. Rana Hafiz will lead the science team. The team plans to work through January 2017 on the designs and implementations.

District Calendar for 2016-2017

The Board was presented with the recommended school calendar for 2016-2017. The calendar was developed to be in compliance with the EASTCONN regional calendar. The calendar will be on a future agenda for approval.

German Exchange Program

Dr. Garcia reported that Windham High School students were surveyed and approximately 50 students are interested in being involved with a German Exchange Program. Contact has been established with the Albert

Einstein School in Schwalbach, Germany. In the Spring of 2016, WHS will host a meeting for interested students to discuss the exchange. Ms. Vanessa Sousa has offered to be the lead from WHS working with Ms. Karen Lapuk from Central Office.

Programs of Choice and District Lotteries Update

Dr. Garcia reported that the district recognizes the necessity of providing flexibility and choices within the school system to meet the needs of individual families. Therefore, multiple programs of choice are offered and the district makes efforts to keep families informed of their options. Several programs of choice are currently being promoted.

The lottery application period at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy opened on December 16, 2015 and will remain open until January 29, 2016. The school hosted an open house for prospective students and their families on Tuesday, January 12, 2016.

Applications are now being accepted for the Windham-ECO program. Fifty students will be admitted to the program in Fall 2016. A lottery will be held should more than 50 students apply. As part of the program, students will graduate with a no cost associate degree from Quinebaug Valley Community College in either *Manufacturing Principles* or *Technology Studies: Lean Manufacturing and Supply Chain Management*.

Compañeros will open the lottery application period for the Fall 2016 kindergarten class on January 19, 2016. There will be a mandatory informational session to learn about the program with information sessions scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 2016 and Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at North Windham Elementary School. Preschool information nights will be held on Tuesday, March 15 and Wednesday, March 16.

Windham Early Childhood Center will host an information night on Wednesday, January 13, 2016 in the WECC Multi-purpose Room regarding options for families with students entering kindergarten.

Electric Vehicle and Charging Station

Dr. Garcia reported the district has been awarded a grant for the purpose of purchasing an electric vehicle and charging station. The vehicle will be a Nissan Leaf which will replace the current van used for the district mail service. The cost will be approximately \$20,500 and the state and the district will each cover 50% of the cost. The grant will include an EV charging station which will be located at Windham High School.

Dr. Garcia welcomed Mr. William Chaffin and Dr. Penny Hebert to the administrative staff as Interim Assistant Superintendents. The hiring process for the permanent positions will be held during the traditional hiring season and will be an item for discussion during the upcoming retreat.

Dr. Garcia announced that the Budget Forum will take place on January 19, 2016 and she encouraged Board members to attend.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Audit Committee

Dr. Sewall reported that the committee met prior to tonight's Board meeting and that there are a small number of fund transfers that the committee would like the Board to approve.

He advised the budget priorities for 2016-2017 were discussed and several categories have been identified for cost savings.

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education add the recommended approval of budget transfer requests to tonight's agenda.

Motion is unanimously approved.

School Planning and Design Committee

Mr. Kalajian reported that the committee is moving forward with the master plan. The changes would have the most impact on the grade school population but the committee notes that the high school and middle school students will see some cosmetic changes. The committee will only meet one time a month as members move into the community to coordinate the effort.

Mr. Kalajian better defined what the Ed Spec program encompasses. It was explained that the initiative will align the school facilities with the needs of programming. Dr. Sewall added that the programming will assist in the plan to have students graduate with college credits. Dr. Garcia indicated that the college credit program is already under discussion with UCONN.

Policy Committee

Dr. Sewall reported that the committee has not met and that Mr. Flores-Alvarez has been appointed as chair.

Executive Committee

Dr. Sewall said that the committee met and discussed setting the agenda for the upcoming workshop. The topic will be standardized testing and the amount of time spent testing. Some preliminary information had been given regarding test results but performance results will be discussed in detail. The committee set the agenda for the retreat to be held on Friday, January 29, 2016 at EASTCONN from 8:30am to 4pm.

ACTION ITEMS

Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy Operation Plan (Ref. 2)

Motion of Mr. Kalajian, seconded by Mr. Quamme, that the Board of Education approve the revised Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy Operations Plan for the 2016-2017 school year. There was some discussion. Dr. Garcia and Dr. Sewall answered Board members' questions.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Revised Bylaw of the Board (Ref.3)

Motion of Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education approve the revised Bylaw of the Board – Officers #9120. This is the second reading of the Bylaw and no changes have been made since the first reading. There was no discussion.

Motion is unanimously approved.

James F. Curtis, Jr. (Windham High School Class of '75) Scholarship (Ref. 4)

Motion of Mr. Kalajian, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education approve the acceptance, with deep appreciation, of the James F. Curtis, Jr. (Windham High School Class of '75) Scholarship. The Board acknowledged that scholarships are an important assistance to students moving on to higher education.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Personnel (Ref. 5)

Motion of Mr. Kalajian, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education approve the following appointments and accept the following resignations as recommended:

Appointments

- Rebekah Avery to the position of ISS Tutor at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective December 21, 2015, salary \$15.38 per hour. New Position.

- Jay Hall to the position of Crossing Guard at Windham Middle School effective December 17, 2015, salary \$14.00 per hour. Replacement.
- Robbin Masna to the position of Tutor at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective January 4, 2016, salary \$15.38 per hour. Replacement.
- Palmira Mindek to the position of Nurse at Natchaug School effective January 4, 2016, salary \$47,674. Replacement.
- Jane Morrone to the position of Pre K Teacher at WECC Prospect Street effective January 4, 2016, salary \$44,412. Replacement.
- Crystal Rivera to the position of Paraprofessional at Windham Center School effective December 4, 2015, salary \$12.29 per hour. New Position.
- Kayla Virga to the position of 1:1 Paraprofessional at Windham Middle School effective January 4, 2016, salary \$13.93 per hour. Replacement.
- Janet Testa to the position of Executive Administrative Assistant in the Superintendent's Office effective January 4, 2016 Salary \$28.00 per hour. Replacement.
- Penny Hebert to the position of Per Diem Interim Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning and Leadership effective January 11, 2016 – June 30, 2016, salary \$500.00 per day. Replacement.
- William Chaffin to the position of Per Diem Interim Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Administration at Central Office effective December 16, 2015 - June 30, 2016, salary \$525.00 per day. Replacement.
- Maria Cruz to the position of Secretary II at Windham Middle School effective December 21, 2015, salary \$15.50 per hour. Replacement.

Resignations

- Kaitlyn Burdick, Paraprofessional at Windham High School effective December 25, 2015.
- Elisa De Faria, Teacher at Windham Center School effective January 8, 2016.
- Aida Diaz, Paraprofessional at Windham Center School effective June 7, 2016 for the purpose of retirement.
- Olga Ezis, Paraprofessional at Windham Middle School effective January 6, 2016 for the purpose of retirement.
- Tammi Doss, Assistant Cafeteria Manager at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective January 3, 2016.
- Kathy Pekarovic, Day Care Provider at Windham High School effective June 7, 2016 for the purpose of retirement.
- Paul Seretny, Security at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective January 8, 2016 for the purpose of retirement.
- Michael Spottiswoode, Teacher at North Windham School effective January 28, 2016.
- Vincent Iovine, Teacher at Windham High School effective January 1, 2016 for the purpose of retirement.

Terminations

- Paula Burkett, Crossing Guard at Windham Middle School effective December 9, 2015.

- Kay Williams, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning and Leadership termination effective January 11, 2016 due to lack of Connecticut certification.

Mrs. Lambert acknowledged the great loss to the district as a result of the retirement of so many employees who have been with the District for many years and possess a huge amount of history. She and the district are sorry to lose them. She also welcomed Mrs. Testa to her new role with the District.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Budget Transfers (added to the agenda)

Motion of Mr. Kalajian, seconded by Mr. Quamme, that the Board of Education approve the budget transfers as submitted.

On the motion: Aye: Dr. Sewall, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. Flores-Alvarez, Mr. Quamme, Mr. French

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mrs. Lambert

The motion passes: 5-0-1

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Lambert indicated that there was a newspaper article regarding the NESAC results. Dr. Garcia said this was an error, there was only a preliminary oral report given.

Ms. Lambert requested that an accounting of the special masters funding be added to the February agenda. Dr. Sewall responded that a decision to give such a report would be up to the Superintendent as she is serving as the special master but, at any rate, the account would be discussed during regular budgeting discussions dealing with grants.

Mr. Quamme inquired as to when the Special Master grant funding would expire. Dr. Sewall advised that there is one more year and, if the district is still considered under state supervision at that time, the Board should petition the state to continue the funding. Dr. Garcia advised that this year's funding has not arrived yet and comes very late in the academic year.

Mr. Montalvo asked whether the Board would consider having public comment at the beginning and end of the Board meetings. Dr. Sewall said this should be referred to the policy committee.

Mrs. Lambert acknowledged that this will be Mrs. Karen Lewis' last Board meeting as Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent. The Board thanked Mrs. Lewis for her many years of faithful service and presented her with a token of their appreciation.

Dr. Garcia also thanked Mrs. Lewis for her services and commended her on her many abilities, particularly her assistance during times of transition. Dr. Garcia also welcomed Mrs. Janet Testa who will assume the position of Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent upon Mrs. Lewis' retirement.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that the Board of Education enter into executive session at 8:05 PM for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to personnel matters and bargaining unit negotiations.

The motion is unanimously approved.

BOARD PRESENT: Vice-chair Dr. Sewall, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Kalajian, Mrs. Lambert, Mr. French, Mr. Quamme

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Garcia, Director Ms. Beghetto

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Vice-chair Dr. Sewall reconvened regular session at 8:57 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 8:57 P.M.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Sewall, Vice-Chair