

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES  
December 9, 2015

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mrs. Osuba, Vice-chair Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. French, Mr. Quamme, Mr. Flores-Alvarez, Mr. Montalvo (left the meeting at 9 PM)

BOARD ABSENT: No one

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Garcia; Assistant Superintendent Dr. Williams; Directors Ms. Beghetto, Ms. Markey and Mr. Johnson

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: No one

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mrs. Osuba called the December 9, 2015, Board of Education meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Lambert led the Board and the public in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

November 18, 2015, business meeting minutes (Ref. 1)

October 22, 2015 special meeting minutes (Ref. 1A)

Mrs. Lambert said that she did not review or submit the minutes for the October 22, 2015, special meeting for approval and requested that her name be removed as the submitter. Per Mrs. Lambert, under advisement from the attorney, the meeting was a non-meeting and did not require posting; however, the meeting was posted as a special meeting which requires minutes. A quorum was not present at the October 22, 2015, special meeting.

**Motion of Mr. Kalajian, seconded by Dr. Sewall, that the Board of Education approve the November 18, 2015, business meeting minutes (Ref. 1) as submitted and the October 22, 2015 (Ref. 1A) revised special meeting minutes with Mrs. Lambert's name deleted as the submitter.**

**On the motion: Aye: Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. French, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. Flores-Alvarez, Mr. Quamme**

**Nay: Mrs. Lambert**

**Abstained: No one**

**The motion passes: 8-1-0**

PUBLIC COMMENT

James Flores, Willimantic, spoke about a comment made on Facebook regarding a Board member and said that an apology was due to the Board member. He said that everyone should stick together for the future of all of the children; and he asked the Board to stop playing politics and do what is best for all of the children.

## REPORTS

### Superintendent's Reports

Dr. Garcia welcomed Ms. Luz Manson, to tonight's Board meeting. As a participant in the 092 certification program, Ms. Manson is Dr. Garcia's intern.

### Windham Early College Opportunity Mentoring Program Update

Dr. Garcia reported that on November 19, 2015, Windham students participated with New London students in an ECO kick-off event at Three Rivers Community College at which time students met their mentors and learned about the manufacturing industry.

### CT LEAD Superintendents' Visit to Barrows

Dr. Garcia reported that on December 2, 2015, twelve superintendents from around the state visited Barrows as part of the CT LEAD Superintendents' program. The visit was successful and Dr. Garcia thanked the team at Barrows for hosting the visit.

### District Data Team Process

Dr. Garcia reported that the first district-wide data team meeting will take place on December 18, 2015. The purpose of the district data team will be to focus on the district's goals and to implement the district's priorities. Mr. Weathers and Dr. Garcia will co-chair the team.

### Science and Social Studies Plan

Dr. Garcia provided an update on the plan to implement district curriculum aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). She said that more in-depth information will be shared during the Board's retreat in January.

### Panorama Survey

Ms. Markey gave a brief overview of the Panorama Education School Climate survey which was implemented by the district as part of the 2012-2015 Strategic Operating Plan. The survey was made available to students, families and staff members. Ms. Markey's report included the survey history, feedback and next steps.

### Technical Procedures for Development of the Budget

Dr. Garcia reported that work is taking place on the development of the 2016-2017 budget; and beginning next week, budget meetings will take place with administrators.

### District-wide Attendance and Discipline Policy Committee

Dr. Garcia reported that the district is working on an initiative to increase student attendance and a district-wide attendance and discipline committee, chaired by Mrs. Krach, is being formed. The purpose of this committee is to increase public awareness about the benefits of school attendance.

### Division, Department and School Improvement Plans

Dr. Garcia reported that each division or department has developed an action plan aligned to the strategic plan. These plans are yearly plans and will be reviewed and adjusted at least three times during the school year.

### First reading of revised Board Bylaw Officers #9120

This is the first reading of the proposed revised Bylaw of the Board - Officers #9120. The revision will make the Bylaw compatible with the recommended revision to Board Bylaw #9122 - Office of the Vice-Chairperson which is on tonight's agenda for approval.

Dr. Garcia commended the elementary schools for the recent parent conferences which were well attended. She congratulated Windham High School staff members and thanked them for all of their work in preparation for the recent NEASC visit. She thanked the Board members who participated in Sunday's meeting with the NEASC visiting committee, as well.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Finance and Audit Committee

Dr. Sewall reported that the committee met prior to tonight's Board meeting and reviewed the first quarter financials and budget transfer requests. He indicated that special education costs are affecting the budget. He also reported that an initial analysis of the 2016-2017 budget is being reviewed.

**Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mrs. Lambert, 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 met last week and is looking at every option regarding renovating the High School in order to be cost effective.

#### Policy Committee

Mrs. Osuba said that she is working on naming a chair for the Policy Committee.

#### Executive Committee

Mrs. Osuba said that the committee will meet on January 14, 2016.

### ACTION ITEMS

#### Substitute Pay Rates (Ref. 2)

**Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Flores-Alvarez, that the Board of Education approve the pay rate of \$105 per day to a Kelly Services' substitute teacher who is substituting for absences of thirty days or less effective January 1, 2016, and that the Board of Education approve the pay rate of \$115 per day to a Windham Public Schools' substitute teacher who is substituting for absences more than thirty days in length effective January 1, 2016.** There was some discussion. Dr. Garcia, Ms. Beghetto and Mr. Johnson answered Board members' questions.

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

#### Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement Grant Application (Ref. 3)

**Motion of Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Mr. Quamme, that the Board of Education approve submission of the Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement grant application.** There was no discussion.

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

#### Revised Magnet Schools/Enrollment Outside of Attendance Districts' Policy #5117.11 (Ref. 4)

**Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that the Board of Education approve the revised Magnet Schools/Enrollment Outside of Attendance Districts' Policy #5117.11.** On the next to last page of the policy, #3 following *The lottery process may give preference in the following order, etc.*, language has been added for clarification since the first reading. There was no discussion.

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

**Bylaws of the Board - Office of the Vice-Chairperson #9122 and Board Committees #9130 (Ref. 5 and Ref. 5A)**

**Motion of Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Dr. Gomez, that the Board of Education approve the revised Bylaws of the Board - Office of the Vice-Chairperson #9122 and Board Committees #9130.** This is the second reading of both Bylaws and no changes have been made since the first reading.

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

**Board of Education Meeting Dates (Ref. 6 and Ref. 6A)**

**Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Flores-Alvarez, that the Board of Education approve the proposed Board of Education business and workshop meeting dates for January – December 2016 as submitted (Reference 6) and the proposed Board of Education committee meeting dates for January – December 2016 as submitted (Reference 6A).** This is the second reading. There was some discussion and the following changes to the meeting schedules were made: move the meetings in June to June 15, 2016, and June 29, 2016; add a meeting on August 17, 2016; move the Board retreat to September 16 and 17, 2016; eliminate the September 14, 2016, meeting; and change the Finance and Audit Committee meetings in June to coincide with the Board meetings on June 15 and 29, 2016.

**Dr. Sewall amended his motion to include the proposed changes listed and Mr. Flores-Alvarez, seconded the amended motion.**

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

**Personnel (Ref. 7)**

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

**Appointments**

- Rebecca Bissonnette to the position of Math Teacher at Windham High School effective November 24, 2015, salary \$48,804. Replacement.
- Cynthia Albert to the position of Secretary II at Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy effective November 12, 2015, salary \$15.76 per hour. Replacement

**Resignations**

- Robinson Camacho, Family Liaison at Windham High School effective December 16, 2015.
- Christine Clarke, Budget/Accounting Manager at Central Office effective December 4, 2015.
- Linda Joyal, English Teacher Windham High School effective June 30, 2016, for the purpose of retirement.
- Kim Lombardy, Paraprofessional at Windham Middle School effective November 10, 2015.

Mrs. Lambert acknowledged the losses to the district as a result of the resignations of Mr. Camacho and Ms. Clarke and the retirement of Ms. Joyal.

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

**Budget Transfers (added to the agenda)**

**Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education approve the budget transfers as submitted.**

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Quamme said that he had the privilege of attending Sweeney's turkey feast this year, and it was great to see the Sweeney community and greater Windham community come together.

Mrs. Lambert thanked Lindsey Hepple, Neal Sherman, Dr. Kathy Koljian, Tim Maclure, Dr. Yvette Santiesteban and Suzanne Krach for all of their hard work preparing for NEASC. She said that she didn't receive the schedule until Friday and was disappointed that she couldn't make it to meet with the panel on Sunday but she was able to attend the reception. Mrs. Lambert said that the Barrows concert was well attended and the students did a great job. She also said that the Barrows' National Junior Honor Society members made cookies and mailed them to various troops overseas. Mrs. Lambert said that she had been informed, after the Middle School concert, that none of the Board members or Dr. Garcia had attended. She said that she would like the Board to receive timely updates about upcoming school events. She would have liked Town Council and Board of Finance members invited to see the new instruments that were purchased and asked that in the future they be invited, as well. Mrs. Lambert asked about the EASTCONN regional school calendar for 2016-2017.

Dr. Garcia said that the school calendar for next year will be brought to the Board in January or February. She explained that she was not informed of the Middle School concert and found out about it very late. The concert was held on the same evening as elementary parent conferences. Dr. Garcia said that a process will be put in place to avoid scheduling conflicts within the district.

Mr. Kalajian said that the new Board of Finance Chair, Tom White, reached out to him regarding the assignment of two Board of Finance members to serve as liaisons to Board committees.

Dr. Sewall agreed that it was a privilege to attend the Sweeney feast. He also agreed with Mrs. Lambert about notification of district events and said that they could possibly be posted electronically on a calendar. Dr. Sewall said that the revised Bylaw of the Board #9130 - Board Committees approved at tonight's meeting states that all Board members have the right to attend all committee meetings. This concept has been in place but has not been specifically stated in a policy. He encouraged as many members as possible to attend committee meetings, especially the School Planning and Design Committee meetings and budget meetings. Dr. Sewall said that, in his opinion, the Board has too many policies and some contradict each other. He asked Board members to bring any policies forward to the Policy Committee that they think should be reviewed.

Mr. Montalvo said that he would like to see Board recognition for members of the community when they do something for the schools. For example, he saw the beautiful mural that was done by Rene Montalvo and Milimar Cambrelen at North Windham School.

Mrs. Osuba commented that the High School band and chorus did a fantastic job at the community Christmas parade on November 27, which was well attended. She reminded Board members to send any requests to the Board Chair and she'll direct them to the superintendent.

Mr. Kalajian said that he was pleased to have the chair of the High School's School Governance Council reach out to him to let him know that the group is interested in having a dialogue about the high school project. He will follow up with this in January.

Mrs. Osuba said that she contacted Representative Susan Johnson about the cuts in education to suggest that she meet with Mr. Johnson to discuss how these cuts will impact the district before they take place. She said that Tyler Griffin and Paula Haney from Town's Board of Finance will each serve as a liaison to either the School Planning and Design Committee or the Finance and Audit Committee. Mrs. Osuba said that she attended a Middle School PTO meeting to introduce herself and was pleased to see the involvement at the school level.

Dr. Gomez commented that the Senate has done away with NCLB and the control now passes onto the State. He said that it is time for the District and the Board to start looking at what the future holds in order to be prepared.

Dr. Garcia said that Connecticut has a new system of accountability which will be rolled out to Windham administrators in January, as well as to the Board.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education enter into executive session at 8:38 PM for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to personnel matters and bargaining unit negotiations.**

**The motion is unanimously approved.**

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mrs. Osuba, Vice-chair Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Kalajian, Mrs. Lambert, Mr. French, Mr. Quamme, Mr. Flores-Alvarez

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Garcia, Director Ms. Beghetto

**(Mr. Montalvo left the meeting.)**

**REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES**

Chair Mrs. Osuba reconvened regular session at 9:32 P.M.

**Motion by Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board add the teachers' contract to the agenda.**

**On the motion: Aye: Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mrs. Lambert, Mr. French, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. Flores-Alvarez**

**Nay: No one**

**Abstained: Mr. Quamme**

**The motion passes: 7-0-1**

**Motion by Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board approve the teachers' contract.**

**On the motion: Aye: Mrs. Osuba, Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. French, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. Flores-Alvarez**

**Nay: No one**

**Abstained: Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Quamme**

**The motion passes: 6-0-2**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 9:35 P.M.**

**Motion is unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jaime Gomez, Secretary