

WINDHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILLIMANTIC, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
June 10, 2015

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. French, Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Quamme

BOARD ABSENT: Vice-chair Mr. Desaulniers, Mrs. Osuba

ADMINISTRATION

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

STUDENT

REPRESENTATIVES: Kathy Oyola, Nathan Cusson

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mrs. Lambert called the June 10, 2015, Board of Education Workshop meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. in the Windham High School Library Media Center.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

May 13, 2015 Minutes

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education approve the May 13 2015, business meeting minutes (Ref. 1).

Motion is unanimously approved.

May 27, 2015 Minutes

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that the Board of Education approve the May 27 2015 workshop meeting minutes (Ref. 1A).

Aye: Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Quamme, Dr. Sewall, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. French, Dr. Gomez

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mrs. Lambert

The motion passes: 6-0-1

Mrs. Lambert thanked the Windham High School band for playing this evening and she thanked all of the Windham High School students in attendance at tonight's Board meeting.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Reports

Student Recognition

Dr. Garcia recognized Thalia Rivera, Bailey Tracy, Emma Vining, Heather Smith and Alex Martinez for their work on the publication of the third edition of *Mirrors and Windows*, a student-run publication

showcasing Windham High School students' art work and writing. She also recognized and thanked their advisor, Ms. Bowling

Staff Recognition

Dr. Garcia announced that the Puentes al Futuro/Bridges to the Future afterschool program received the 2015 Campus-Community Partnership award presented by the Connecticut Campus Compact. Ms. Rosie Hernandez, Windham Middle School Family Liaison and director of the program, was not present at tonight's meeting but was congratulated for her work with the Puentes al Futuro/Bridges to the Future afterschool program.

School and Community Recognition

On behalf of Natchaug School and the Superintendent, Dr. Garcia thanked the Little Angels program for donating forty new bicycles that were raffled off at the fifth annual Natchaug Carnival.

Dr. Garcia spoke about the successful Family and Community Expo that was held on June 6 and thanked the family liaisons, Mr. Stover, Ms. Markey and the many staff members who attended, along with Board members Dr. Gomez, Dr. Sewall and Mrs. Osuba.

Windham High School Presentation

Principal Mrs. Potter recognized the following: the students in the jazz band who played this evening, directed by Mr. Sinclair; the students in the culinary arts program who made the treats for tonight's program; the students' art work displayed in the library by Ms. Gosline and Ms. Rohr; the many capstone projects that are also on display; and the *Mirrors and Windows* publication. Mrs. Potter spoke about the college credit and AP courses that are offered and student Joshua Dupont spoke about the courses he has taken at Eastern Connecticut State University. Gabrielle Lambert and Nathan Cusson said that their trip to Madrid as participants in the Madrid Exchange Program was a very positive and enjoyable experience. Mr. McLean spoke about the success of the first year of the Capstone Program that he and Mr. Usher oversee. Rebecca Bowling spoke about her project which was to raise awareness about homelessness in the community. Ms. Pierson spoke about the New Arrivals program, and students Jessica Martinez and Gabriella Bruno spoke about their experiences in the program. Ms. Godbout represented the athletic coaches at tonight's presentation and student Joseph Santiago talked about participating in athletics and what it has meant to him. Nathan Cusson and Rebecca Bowling spoke about the Write Idea Peer tutoring writing center, and India Nicholson and Nathan Cusson spoke about the Windham Players. Mrs. Potter ended the presentation by highlighting the Unified Sports Program overseen by Ms. Cavanaugh. Mrs. Potter, Mr. Maclure and Ms. Krach were thanked for organizing the High School's presentation.

PUBLIC DIALOGUE

A petition with 273 signatures was presented to the Board of Education stating that "We, the undersigned, call on Windham Board of Education to eliminate school uniforms and allow self-expression in our schools."

Taina Quiles, WHS student, Junior Class President, spoke about eliminating uniforms at Windham High School.

Allen Sfakios, WHS student, spoke about eliminating uniforms at Windham High School.

Kayla Alvarez, WHS student, spoke about eliminating uniforms at Windham High School.

Caleb Huhn, WHS student, spoke about eliminating uniforms at Windham High School.

Leah Thompsom, WHS student, spoke about eliminating uniforms at Windham High School.

Kyarra Ray Smith, WHS student, spoke about eliminating uniforms at Windham High School.

George Sfakios, WHS student, spoke about eliminating uniforms at Windham High School.

Mrs. Lambert thanked the students and said that the Board will take their comments under advisement.

Mary Gallucci, Willimantic, said that she has noticed how beautiful the grounds are at Windham Middle School and is grateful to the Master Gardner. She said that she enjoyed the jazz music as she entered the meeting tonight and is excited about the Madrid Exchange program and thinks there is room for more opportunities for students to be involved in exchange programs. She said that she is particularly interested in the interviews for the Middle School principal search and there have been a lot of turnover of principals in the district. Mrs. Gallucci said that she is troubled to see that special education will be addressed by an outside service and would rather see Windham build its own program instead of continuing to contract more and more services outside of the district. She said that she is proud to be from a state that has very stringent standards and requirements for administrators and teachers and she hopes that no one lowers these standards as teaching is one of the most difficult jobs.

Al Korczynski, Willimantic, commended the students for being very articulate when speaking about eliminating uniforms at the High School. He said that their arguments were clever and well put together and it is important that these students be heard. He spoke about La Familia and said that he wished more people could see the community and family atmosphere at some of the school events that take place. He said that the word has to get out about the dynamics and the atmosphere at these events where it can be seen that the kids care about each other. He said he hopes that the young people, the faculty and the staff continue to be listened to in order to make Windham Public Schools a place that people are clamoring to attend. He asked everyone to work as a team and collaborate.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS (continued)

German Exchange Program (moved up on the agenda)

Ms. Christel Donahue and State Representative Susan Johnson presented information on a German Exchange Program with a school in Germany. The Town of Windham is in the process of affiliating with Bad Soden in Germany as a Sister City and having a student exchange program would be part of this program.

Motion of Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education add to the agenda the authorization of Dr. Garcia and her staff to investigate cost factors for an exchange program with Germany.

Aye: Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Quamme, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. French

Nay: No one

Abstained: Dr. Sewall

The motion passes: 6-0-1

School District Mission and Vision (return to order of the agenda)

Dr. Garcia thanked everyone who contributed to the development of the district's mission and vision statements which can be found on the district's website.

Summer School

Dr. Garcia thanked Dr. Gasper for his work to coordinate summer school. She reported that the district is on target with staffing for the programs offered, as well as the enrollment of students.

Windham Middle School Schedule for 2015-2016

Dr. Garcia thanked Mrs. Rollins, Dr. Gasper, Dr. Conner and the Middle School administration for their work to develop a schedule for next year which is beneficial to students and follows recommendations from the Enrichment Committee.

School Start and End Times for 2015-2016

Dr. Garcia said that there are changes to the times for Windham Middle School and Windham Center for next year and no additional buses are needed.

Math Pilots

Ms. Hafiz and Ms. Niland-Poirier explained the process for the recent math pilots that took place at the elementary schools and at Windham High School. Dr. Conner thanked the teachers and principals who participated in the pilot programs. It was explained that there are shifts in math due to the Common Core and the new materials will support the Common Core.

Principal Searches

Dr. Garcia provided an update on the principal searches for the Middle School and Barrows Academy. Ray and Associates was selected to assist with the recruitment of candidates for both positions.

Summer Food Service Program

Information about the Summer Food Service program run by the district was provided.

Alternative Education Services (moved up on the agenda)

Ms. Brooke Violante from Specialized Education Services, Inc. (SESI) spoke about the program that is offered by SESI. Mrs. Packer said that it was an opportunity to bring outplaced students back to their school community. Ms. Packer and Ms. Violante answered questions from the Board of Education.

Motion of Mr. Quamme, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education add to the agenda the elimination of the uniform policy. Dr. Sewall said that this is a policy issue and he would like to receive information from the administration.

Mr. Quamme amended his motion, and Mr. French agreed to second the amended motion, which follows: the Policy Committee be directed to review the uniform policy at Windham High School.

Amended motion is unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Audit Committee

Mr. French reported that the committee met this evening and discussed workers' compensation. He reported that the Town of Windham is interested in hiring PMA Management to take care of liability.

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that the Board of Education add to the agenda the approval to join the Town to hire a third party administrator for Workers' Compensation.

Motion is unanimously approved.

School Planning and Design Committee

Mr. Kalajian reported that the committee has met and there will be some changes in the timing for taking the High School project to referendum. He said that in order to be thorough and provide details to the community, the number of meetings will increase to ensure time for the committee to develop complete and thorough data and design criteria. Mr. Kalajian also reported that the constructive phases for the wells will begin soon; however, there have been a couple of administrative bumps in the process.

Policy Committee

There was no report.

Executive Committee

There was no report.

ACTION ITEMS

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that the action items be moved up on the agenda to take place at this time.

Motion was unanimously approved.

Exchange Program with Germany (added to the agenda)

Motion of Mr. Kalajian, seconded by Dr. Gomez that the Board give Dr. Garcia and her staff the authorization to investigate cost factors for an exchange program with Germany. There was some discussion. This is for the purpose only of exploring this opportunity.

Motion was unanimously approved.

Uniform Policy Review (added to the agenda)

Motion of Mr. Quamme, seconded by Mr. French, that the Policy Committee be directed to review the uniform policy at Windham High School and its dissolution.

Amended motion is unanimously approved.

Specialized Education Systems Incorporated (SESI) (Ref. 2)

Motion of Dr. Sewall, seconded by Mr. French, that the Board of Education approve Specialized Education Systems Incorporated (SESI) as the vendor to provide alternative education services at Windham Middle School and Windham High School.

Aye: Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Quamme, Dr. Sewall, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. French

Nay: No one

Abstained: Dr. Gomez

The motion passes: 6-0-1

Go Math Textbooks (Ref. 3)

Motion of Mr. Kalajian, seconded by Mr. Montalvo, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of Go Math textbooks for the elementary schools' math program, grades K through Grade 5.

Aye: Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Quamme, Dr. Sewall, Mr. Kalajian, Dr. Gomez

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mr. French

The motion passes: 6-0-1

Windham High School Math Textbooks (Ref. 4)

Motion of Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Dr. Sewall, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of Pearson – AGA (Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2) textbooks for the High School Program.

Aye: Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Quamme, Dr. Sewall, Mr. Kalajian, Dr. Gomez

Nay: No one

Abstained: Mr. French

The motion passes: 6-0-1

School Start and End Times for 2015-2016 (Ref. 5)

Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education approve the proposed school start and end times for the 2015-2016 school year as presented.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Donation from 2015 Lowe's Toolbox (Ref. 6)

Motion of Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Dr. Gomez, that the Board of Education accept, with deep gratitude, the amount of \$2,000 from the 2015 Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant from the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation (LCEF).

Motion is unanimously approved.

Personnel (Ref. 7)

Motion of Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Mr. Quamme, that the Board of Education approve the following appointments and terminations and accept the following resignations:

Appointments

- Lee-Ellen Achten, to the position of Tutor at North Windham School effective May 4, 2015, hourly rate \$15.00. Replacement.
- Lauren Liedke, to the position of Head Start Cooperating Teacher at Commerce Drive effective May 18, 2015 hourly rate \$16.50. Replacement
- Sabiha Madraswalla, to the position of Tutor at Windham High School effective May 21, 2015, hourly rate is \$15.00. Replacement.
- Katherine Barry, to the position of Teacher at Windham Middle School (rehire to rescind resignation previously submitted).

Resignations

- Ryan Corthouts, Teacher at Windham Middle School effective June 30, 2015.
- Tamara Hall, LPN at Sweeney School effective June 30, 2015 for the purpose of retirement.
- Jacquelyn Darbyshire, Teacher at Windham Middle School effective June 30, 2015 for the purpose of retirement.
- Brendan Martin, Teacher at Windham Middle School effective June 30, 2015.
- Catherina Gress Wright, Teacher at Windham Middle School effective June 30, 2015.
- Michele Lund, Tutor at Windham Middle School effective June 30, 2015 for the purpose of retirement

Terminations

- Tomas Morales, Crossing Guard at Windham Middle School effective June 13, 2014.
- Yaritzaid Moran-Ruiz, Family Liaison at CHBarrows effective May 29, 2015.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Workers' Compensation (added to the agenda)

. Motion of Mr. French, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education accept the approval to join the Town to hire a third party administrator for Workers' Compensation.

Motion is unanimously approved.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Quamme said that he would be in Washington, D.C. and would not be able to attend the High School graduation. He congratulated all of the students who are graduating and moving up and graduating this year. He said that he is proud of tonight's High School presentation and proud to be an alumnus of Windham High School.

Mrs. Lambert thanked the elementary principals for their promotion ceremonies this week and the Barrows seventh grade that presented Mr. Maclure and the Mayor a theme park plan. She thanked Nathan Cusson

and Kathy Oyola, who are graduating, for serving as student liaisons on the Board. She thanked Mrs. Potter and her staff for tonight's presentation. Mrs. Lambert reminded Board members that the Middle School's promotion ceremony and the High School's graduation both begin at 6 PM.

Mr. Kalajian said that in the short time that he has been on the Board of Education, he has witnessed a change in the tone of the town with things becoming more cohesive and everyone getting a sense that the district can be recreated.

Mr. Montalvo said that he was very proud of the High School. The staff and students showed preparation and commitment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion of Mr. Quamme, seconded by Mr. Kalajian, that the Board of Education enter into executive session at 9:21 PM for the discussion of exempt documents pertaining to personnel matters.

The motion is unanimously approved.

BOARD PRESENT: Chair Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Montalvo, Mr. Kalajian, Mr. French, Dr. Sewall, Dr. Gomez, Mr. Quamme

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Garcia, Director Ms. Beghetto

REGULAR SESSION RECONVENES

Chair Mrs. Lambert reconvened regular session at 10:25 P.M. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Montalvo, seconded by Mr. Quamme, that the Board adjourn its meeting at 10:25 P.M.

Motion is unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Juan Montalvo, Secretary