

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by chairman Mark Makuch at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Mark Makuch, Laurie Semprebon, Leo Mercado, Erika Wiecenski, Barry Wallett, Mark Jones, Superintendent David Harding

ABSENT: Herb Arico

COMMUNICATIONS:

Superintendent Harding received notice of Day on the Hill for annual legislation meeting open to board members and a letter from the First Selectman regarding Freedom of Information workshop.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

Eric Britschock, CES parent, questioned the agenda's executive session asking if the public is allowed to attend with the Board's reply that no, executive sessions are private.

Deb Ostien and Dianne Walter from Willington Education Association Union read a letter to the board expressing concerns of negative impact on the Willington Schools due to the changes in staffing and programming.

PRESENTATION:

CES principal, Colin McNamara presented a reading update showing an overview of the blue ribbon testing results with questions and discussion from the Board.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Harding reported on the process of coordinating the bus contract with Mansfield and Region #19 for possible cooperative negotiations on pricing and routing.

Superintendent received two calls from parents concerned about eighth graders not being prepared when transitioning to E.O. Smith and not performing well in variety of classes. He expressed how he has been trying to combat this myth and has collected data for last four years of CMT and CAPT scores of Willington students attending E.O. Smith along with amount of students on honor roll, and sports teams. He will hold a presentation of his findings for the parents concerned and then another at a future board meeting.

He reported that scheduled meeting with Region #19 Superintendent and the Special Education directors about shared services has been rescheduled to Thursday due to the snow storm.

Discussed meeting with legislators last week mentioning the seat belt law going on the docket.

Superintendent Harding clarified the statement made at a prior meeting that he had worked on the Hall Memorial Schedule with Union Leaders i.e. President, Vice President and Secretary, but membership was not involved in writing the schedule. There was no vote or discussion with Union members other than the leadership about writing the schedule. He also stated that scheduling is an administrative function and does not require teacher input.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum Committee met and are impressed with accomplishments made by staff on curriculum, have exceeded expectations for this point and continue to work hard.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Laurie Semprebson, seconded by Erika Wiecenski, to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2010 Board Meeting with minor correction as noted.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

MOTION: by Leo Mercado, seconded by Laurie Semprebson to approve the January 19, 2010 Special Board Meeting Minutes with added wording of "pending further calculations".

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Leo Mercado to approve the February 2, 2010 Special Board Meeting Minutes with correction of location.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Board discussed communication with Legislators deciding it is best to be involved and heard.

MOTION: by Laurie Semprebson, seconded by Leo Mercado to add agenda action item on Position on Legislative Advocacy after 7D.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

MOTION: by Laurie Semprebson, seconded by Erika Wiecenski to allow Mark Makuch to represent the Board to advocate Board's position against mandatory seat belts.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Board discussed appointment to Region #19 Agriculture, Science and Technology Consulting Committee. Action tabled in order to gather more information.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Leo Mercado to approve the 2010-2011 school calendar.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

OLD BUSINESS:

Board discussed amendments to Willington Public Schools 2010-2011 Budget.

MOTION: by Laurie Semprebson, seconded by Leo Mercado to approve the amended 2010-2011 budget number of \$7,634,296 which represents a .53% increase over last years' budget.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

Eric Britschock, CES parent, stated schools should be more proactive about reading in kindergarten and first grade.

Deanna Vokoun, a teacher at HMS, responded to David Harding's statement about meeting with Union members clarifying that she and the other members are also team leaders, curriculum

chairs and Union leaders blurring the lines as to what capacity they are speaking and meeting in. She stated the Superintendent did provide an open invitation numerous times to all of faculty on the scheduling process and she and two others took him up on that however under no circumstance did they speak on behalf of the Union nor were in agreement with or support of the cuts made.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

Board thanked Colin McNamara and Kristen Stevens for the presentation.

Board members attended one of the HMS basketball games at MMS stating it was a good game.

**MOTION:** by Laurie Semprebon, seconded by Mark Makuch to enter executive session at 8:54pm to discuss Superintendent's midyear evaluation and invite Superintendent Harding to join.

**VOTE:** Unanimous in Favor

Board exited executive session at 9:40pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:41p.m.

Nichole Page  
Recording Secretary