

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2014
(Unofficial Until Board Approval)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Erika Wiecenski at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Erika Wiecenski, Leo Mercado, Michelle Cunningham, Ann Grosjean,
Barry Wallett, Herb Arico, Superintendent David Harding

ABSENT: Mark Jones

COMMUNICATIONS:
None

PRESENT TO SPEAK:
None

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS:

Superintendent mentioned the November board meeting is on Veteran's Day. The Board decided to cancel that meeting date and reschedule a special meeting on November 12 instead. Members were reminded to put forth agenda items ahead of time because special meeting agendas cannot be altered.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Finance Committee met and reviewed the bills.

Herb Arico, Liaison for EastConn stated they will meet on August 26, 2014.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Erika Wiecenski, to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2014 Board meeting.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding reviewed that the grade 7 science position was filled but then the applicant declined a week later. Peg Curtis, the current grade 6 science teacher volunteered to fill that position. This now creates an opening for a grade 6 elementary teacher. There are many more applicants available for this position and Principal Sullivan has interviews set up tomorrow.

He informed the Board that Judith Meyers, the art teacher, has given notification that she will retire in March. Judith was present at the meeting and the Board asked her questions regarding how long she had been with Willington Public Schools and why she chose March instead of June for the retirement. Ms. Meyers replied she has been with Willington for almost 20 years and has been teaching for about 26 years. She stated she had certain financial goals to be met and they will be met in March and she is eager to start her new career and anxious to start the new phase. She stated she was most concerned that the art program would continue and that the Board would

hire someone good to fill that position so that the students do not miss out and that is why she is giving ample notice.

The Board thanked her for her many years of service, the annual art show that has done wonderful things for the students in Willington and wished her good luck in her future endeavors.

Superintendent Harding presented two transfer sheets. The first one is to cover the out-placements for Special Education which is the opposite transfers from last year which covered the prepayments. The second transfer sheet is for \$5,200.00 which is for the balance of the evaluation on future liability as previously discussed. The company will start the evaluation process this week and do a presentation prior to the budget season.

Board discussed the numbers, the MBR, outplacement funding, transfers previously made, and returning of funds to the town.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Michelle Cunningham, to approve the two transfers as presented with the correction of \$5,200.00 for the total on the second transfer.

VOTE: Yes: E. Wiecenski, M. Cunningham, B. Wallett, L. Mercado,
A. Grosjean
Abstain: H. Arico

Motion Passed

Board reviewed the proposed lunch price increase and breakfast prices. Superintendent Harding stated he spoke with the Lunch Director, Wendy Knight, and she feels the prices are reasonable and fair and in line with the other towns. He reviewed the main reason for the increase as being part of the State's reimbursement program for free and reduced lunches. The State requires the prices charged be a certain percentage of the reimbursement rate otherwise they will discontinue the reimbursement program to you. The minimum amount you can increase to show you are making progress toward their goal price is \$.10 per lunch and \$.05 per milk.

Board discussed the reimbursement program and if the schools did not take the reimbursement they would not be able to run the lunch program without increasing the meal prices. The Board disagrees with the State's mandates but understands the obligation to abide.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Michelle Cunningham, to approve the proposed price increases for lunch and milk at CES and HMS by \$.10 for lunch and \$.05 for milk .

VOTE: Yes: E. Wiecenski, M. Cunningham, H. Arico, L. Mercado
A. Grosjean
No: B. Wallett

Motion Passed

Board discussed the proposed breakfast price of \$1.55 which was the price during the pilot program.

MOTION: by Michelle Cunningham, seconded by Leo Mercado, to set the price for breakfast

at \$1.55 for both CES and HMS.

VOTE: Yes: M. Cunningham, H. Arico, L. Mercado, A. Grosjean
No: B. Wallett, E. Wiecenski

Motion Passed

Board discussed the ratification of the Willington Public Schools Administrator Association Contract. Superintendent Harding stated the negotiations were held in July and the committee is requesting the Board to ratify the new contract. The changes were presented to the Board. There were six main issues agreed upon which were insurance article 8 has an increase in the group life insurance from \$100,000 to \$125,000, professional activities article 12 has increased from \$1,700 per administrator to \$1,800 for a conference stipend, wireless communication article 15 increased the cell phone service reimbursement to \$400 from \$300 per administrator, salary article 16 gave a 3% increase for 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years with a cap of \$140,000 for any future contracts on salary, workdays schedule A had two days added to the elementary principal on a prorated pay scale with prior approval of the Superintendent on an as needed basis, and the final item was the administration will take the same HSA insurance plan as the teachers currently get as the sole option in the contract for health insurance.

Board congratulated the negotiations committee.

MOTION: by Michelle Cunningham, seconded by Erika Wiecenski to ratify the Willington Public Schools Administrator Association Contract as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Board reviewed the changes to the Willington Public Schools Professional Learning & Evaluation Plan and Administrator Evaluation Plan. Language revision to include reliability, validity and usefulness of the surveys were added into both plans as requested by the State. Superintendent Harding explained that between the time the plans were submitted and the state reviewed them, changes have been implemented and the plan needs to reflect those new requirements.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Herb Arico, to approve the proposed Willington Public Schools Professional Learning & Evaluation Plan and Administrator Evaluation Plan as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Board reviewed the Policy 0200-Mission Goals Objectives and a draft of the 2014-2015 Willington Board of Education Goal. The Board discussed the goal and how to fit it into the current policy.

MOTION: by Michelle Cunningham, seconded by Herb Arico, to accept the 2014-2015 Willington Board of Education Goal as presented with the amendments as discussed to combine the new goal with the existing policy.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Board discussed holding quarterly workshops as a full board to meet their goals, putting slides together with outside people to share ideas, and will add meeting dates to the agenda for September.

Board reviewed the proposed changes to the BOE Policy 5131.82 iPad Acceptable Use Policy. Superintendent informed the Board that due to the volume of repeat damage sustained to some student iPads they are adding into the policy an additional \$25.00 fee if an iPad breaks a second time. This will help to keep students more responsible and offset the school's cost of the deductible for the insurance on repairs and replacements.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Michelle Cunningham, to approve the changes to Policy 5131.82 iPad Acceptable Use Policy as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding reviewed a handout created by Principal Sullivan regarding behavior and discipline related to iPad use that she would like approved to hand out to parents when students receive their iPads. The handout addresses the issue of social media, it is not a comprehensive listing but is based on issues and problems with social media at this time and was put together as a resource for parents to educate them as well as enable some controls around it.

Members discussed the issue of lunch detentions being overused, students missing the social time in their day to serve a lunch detention, inconvenience of after school detentions to parents, having a slip go home to parents to notify of lunch detentions being issued, addressing the discipline policy for changes.

Board agreed to put the discipline issue on the agenda for September to review the policy with members requesting samples of reports.

MOTION: by Michelle Cunningham, seconded by Erika Wiecenski to reference the Behaviors and Discipline Related to iPad Use sheet in the iPad policy as discussed.

VOTE: Yes: H. Arico, A. Grosjean, M. Cunningham, E. Wiecenski,
L. Mercado
No: B. Wallett
Motion Passed

Members asked that the revised policy with a hyperlink to the Behaviors and Discipline Sheet be added to the website.

Board reviewed language edits made to the regulation pertaining to BOE Policy 4121 Employment of Long Term Substitutes. Superintendent Harding explained over the years the contracts have changed but the language in the policy has not been edited to reflect those changes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Superintendent Harding updated the Board on the current enrollment of the schools. Board discussed the numbers and whether having more students at CES than HMS affect things that may or may not be needed at one school versus the other now.

Superintendent Harding discussed the UConn expansion project and how it could affect the number of families moving into Willington and attending the schools. He would like to contact the Mansfield committee and ask them to do a presentation as to the potential future impact.

Board questioned the students listed as homeschool and what they were allowed to attend for school classes and events. Discussed the homeschool rules and decided they want to look at the homeschool policy and will add to the agenda for September.

Board discussed that next year HMS enrollment will go down about 12 students . Members asked what the maximum number of preschool students can be or the total capacity for the program. Superintendent Harding responded it depends on the students with needs, the ages, lottery and personnel needed. He will have the Special Education Director, Holly McCarthy address this question for the Board.

Superintendent Harding reviewed the IT support stating it has begun and seems to be working very well. In the next few months after collecting data he will give a presentation to the Board on how the IT support is progressing. In July the company went through the town and schools and set up a helpdesk, run books, passwords, server, diagrams, remediation list of problems and remedies needed. The feedback from the helpdesk has been very good. He named examples of issues that were handled remotely by the company to fix the problem right away. He also stated one staff member had an issue and she called but did not get service for a while and when completed a survey gave a poor rating. The company called immediately to ask what happened so that they could correct or improve any issue. The company will come in and talk about the helpdesk and the new system.

Superintendent stated once the data is in he will be able to see the issues, trends and will present the information. He anticipates that the problems will decrease and the reliability will increase and hopes the data will be able to show that. The iPad information is being entered into the helpdesk and directed to our in house IT person and the data will be able to be tracked. This will allow us to see the value, costs, times, issues etc. There is now not a single point of failure and only one person responsible.

Members asked how this has changed things for our IT person. Superintendent replied that now there is accountability and the projects given have time lines, punch list, and our IT person is more productive, can also call the company for help if needed, the company communicates with him but everything is tracked. The tracking will enable the Superintendent to see how much of the IT person's time and effort is spent on the school issues versus the town issues to determine what percentage is spent on each department.

Members asked about the new iPads purchased, if the cost for the 4 was more than the price for the 3. Superintendent replied it was the same price to purchase either model so they chose to go with the newer model.

Superintendent informed that the boiler at CES is installed and looks great and the roof project has started. He stated the project is mapped out, staged with materials delivered, the dumpster is there. The work will begin after the rain and will take 4 to 5 days to complete. The bid came in at about \$82,500 with another \$6,000 for the architect but there was \$110,000 in CIP so we should come in under that amount.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

BOARD COMMENTS:

Board stated the roof project looks good to go, sounds like it has been a productive summer and

will be ready for school in a couple weeks.

Board thanked the negotiation committee for doing a great job. Thanked Judith Meyers for her many years of service to Willington Schools and are impressed she wants to see it go off into good hands and thanked Peg Curtis for taking on the grade 7/8 science position.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Michelle Cunningham, to enter executive session at 8:44 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter and to invite Superintendent Harding to join.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Board Exited Executive Session at 9:15 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Nichole Page
Recording Secretary