

**Windsor Locks Board of Education
58 South Elm Street
Windsor Locks, CT 06096**

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
May 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.**

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Members Present:	K. Christianson, D. Gragnolati, L. Cutler, A. Osorio, and G. Guyette
Members Absent:	None
Administrators:	S. Parkhurst, R. Stacy, R. Bissonnette, M. Briggs, G. Testani, K. Krupa, C. Domler, G. Wiegert, M. Warner, J. Robinson, M. Parrette, and A. Goodwin
Student Representatives:	E. Norris
Students:	J. Wright, K. Ledoux, V. Bukowinski, L. Kimani, C. Haberern, K. Hinckley P. Regmi, S. Pagidi, G. Fierro, C. Wright, K. Ledoux, J. Lucas, and J. Scholefield
Staff:	D. Bole, P. Sibila, M. Sigall, J. Bernabe, M. Ellis, M. Friend, J. Long, and T. Jones
Others:	Many parents and grandparents of students and some participating on Microsoft Teams
Press:	None

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Ms. Kylee Christianson called the Special Meeting to Order at 6:00 p.m. held at the Windsor Locks High School Media Center and via Microsoft Teams.

A. Roll Call for Quorum

All Board Members were present.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood up and pledged allegiance to the flag.

II. Student Board of Representatives Report

Miss Emma Norris, Student Representative, addressed the Board. She mentioned the Prom last week held at Riverview. She noted the softball team had senior night, but unfortunately loss the game. AP testing finished up last week and she heard many students were confident after taking those exams. She also commented about a recent field trip to the Connecticut Science Museum and the National Honor Society donations of hygiene products to a homeless shelter.

III. Board of Education and Superintendent Communications

Board Member Mr. Greg Guyette thanked everyone who came out and voted on the budget.

Board Member Ms. Alba Osorio commented that she visited South Elementary School and had a great experience with the students during the student lead conferences. Great work by the teachers and paras making sure the students receive everything they need.

Chairperson Ms. Kylee Christianson addressed the Board. She mirrored Mr. Guyette's comments and wanted to thank everyone for turning out for the Town vote on the budget. She only asks that everyone remains engaged, as with more community involvement, the Board can do more and go further.

Mr. Shawn Parkhurst, Superintendent of Schools, addressed the Board. He noted that is a true testament of all the hard work of the Director of Facilities and his team, the district will be hosting the first round of the NCCC Tournaments for softball and baseball at Veteran's Park on Thursday. He spoke about the budget; he was humbled and thanked everyone involved

including, Board Members, administrators, staff, and community members as it was a very long journey to arrive at an approved budget last night. He has had meetings planning for the district to maintain and restore programs and to move closer to innovating new programs. He thanked everyone who attended the Town Meeting and showed their support for education and he said it was a testament to, as he calls “Locks Strong”. Later in the meeting, he will present and discuss the FY25 Budget for further review and possible approval. His goal is to continue to work together to make sure voices are heard.

IV. Student Recognition

- **WLHS Class of 2024 Valedictorian and Salutatorian**

Mr. Parkhurst announced the valedictorian and salutatorian for the Class of 2024. He gave a brief bio of each student’s accomplishments and future education plans and wished them well in their future endeavors.

Jason Wright, Valedictorian
Kayla Ledoux, Salutatorian

- **CABE Student Leadership Awards**

Mr. Parkhurst announced the CABE Student Leadership Awards. He gave a brief bio of each student’s accomplishments and future education plans. This award is based on being exemplary leaders, innovative thinkers and positive citizens.

Windsor Locks Middle School

- Victoria Bukowinski
- Lia Kimani

Windsor Locks High School

- Casey Haberern
- Kyle Hinckley

- **WLMS CAS Scholar Leader Awards**

- Prakriti Regmi
- Siddharth Pagidi

- **BOE Student Representatives**

Mr. Parkhurst thanked Miss Emma Norris, Student Representative, for her attendance at Board of Education meetings and her participation in discussions. Mr. Nicardo Gooden was not in attendance, but he was recognized as well.

- **CAS-CIAC Outstanding Arts Awards**

- Gianna Fierro
- Cooper Wright

- **CAS/CIAC Scholar Athletes**

- Kayla Ledoux
- Jordan Lucas

- **All State Band**
 - Jack Scholefield
- **All State Basketball**
 - Sincere Monroe

Board Recessed at 6:25 p.m.
Board Reconvened at 6:29 p.m.

V. Personnel Report: Resignation

Mr. Robert Stacy, Director of Human Resources, addressed the Board. He commented he has received one resignation, Ms. Alison Pierce, Director of Finance and Operations, will resign effective July 14, 2024. Ms. Pierce has served the District of Windsor Locks for 2 years.

It was **MOVED** (Cutler) and **SECONDED** (Osorio) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Education accepts the resignation on the date noted and offer our appreciation for her service to the Windsor Locks Public Schools.

VI. Facilities Update

Mr. Greg Weigert, Director of Facilities provided an end of the year facilities update. He began discussing projects at North Street School which included installing new playground equipment and landing zones in the Pre-K Courtyard, and starting up HVAC upgrades to Zone 4 through 6. South Elementary School projects included expanding Avigilon security camera systems, fire sprinkler upgrades/signage on backflow prevents and control valves, and installed mirrored tinting on glass entryway. Windsor Locks Middle School project of replacing hot water heater. Windsor Locks High School installing new baseball, softball and soccer field scoreboard and installing a new ice machine. He explained each project in detail and commented on the dates of completion which were in April and May of 2024.

A discussion was held.

VII. PDEC Presentation

Mr. Parkhurst introduced Mr. Jeff Bernabe to the Board. Mr. Parkhurst noted that throughout the 23-24 school year, every district in Connecticut has been charged with rewriting their Educator Evaluation plan. Meeting almost weekly for the entire year, members of our Professional Development and Evaluation Committee has been working under the facilitation of Windsor Locks High School teachers Mr. Jeff Bernabe and Ms. Deb Luzetti to develop the Windsor Locks Educator Evaluation Plan.

Mr. Bernabe presented the plan in detail and answered the questions posed to him by the Board.

It was **MOVED** (Osorio) and **SECONDED** (Cutler) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Education adopts the 24-25 Educator Evaluation Plan as presented pending approval from the CSDE.

VIII. FY25 Budget

Mr. Parkhurst addressed the Board to follow up from the discussion from last week's meeting regarding the FY25 Budget, he presented to the Board for discussion and possible approve a revised recommended reduction list. The changes from last week's list are the following:

- Health Insurance Savings from position reductions
- Reduction in Teaching Supplies
- Shifting reduction from 2.0 WLMS ELA Interventionists to 1.0 WLMS ELA Interventionist
- Shifting reduction from 2.0 Flex General Education Teachers to 1.0 Flex General

- Education Teacher (NSS) based on student need and prevents a layoff
- Shift from Art being shared between North and South to two (2) .75 Art positions based on sections and schedules at North and South
- Increase in Technology reduction line

Mr. Parkhurst discussed the changes in great detail and gave a document entitled, “FY 25 Budget Highlights” which outlined what is new in the budget and what was reduced in the budget. He also discussed the chart of all of the reductions that was given to the Board to review as well.

A lengthy discussion was held.

It was **MOVED** (Osorio) and **SECONDED** (Cutler) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Education adopts the FY25 budget with the reductions as presented.

IX. Board and Superintendent Comment

None.

X. Public Audience (only on Agenda Items)

Ms. Megan Ellis, a teacher at South Elementary School, addressed the Board. She feels her comments will fall on deaf ears, as the Board has already voted to adopt the budget reductions as presented. The district will have to move forward and she cannot disagree it looks manageable on paper, but in her opinion it is going to be very difficult. She has heard over the years, “make it work”, but it is very difficult to make it work when the district is working on a bare minimum and it is not good enough. The district received a million dollars but it needs three million dollars. The district has dedicated teachers, who work more than 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and does not receive compensation for the work they do on their off hours. Splitting the art teacher and library positions between two schools seems manageable on paper, but it will be very difficult to be able to service all students. Sharing SRO between two schools will be difficult as well. The SRO is not just needed during drop-off and pick-up times during the day. Having the SRO in the building is very helpful when handling challenging students. Discussions about the numbers of resignations over the summer, the reason is teachers are burnt out as they are trying to do their best, but it is very difficult when the staffing is not there. The district is losing the best educators, the Board of Finance is okay with losing those educators, and the effects of losing those teachers will have on the students of Windsor Locks. She hopes the teachers can make it work.

Ms. Melissa Friend, a teacher at South Elementary School, addressed the Board. She too feels that her comments fall on deaf ears. She was hoping she would be able to speak before the Board voted on the proposed reductions. She is concerned with the opportunities that will be lost for families and students. She thanked the parents that are advocates for the Board of Education and she hopes the Board is listening to those parents. However, it is not a priority for some parents to participate in meetings as they have very busy lives. Losing teachers, from PE teacher to interventionists is very detrimental in the needs of the whole student. Splitting an art teacher and library positions will create hardships as those positions are responsible for putting on an art show and book fairs in the elementary schools and if those positions are cut, it those events may not continue next year. She discussed the banner that is on the Windsor Locks Public School website boasting the goals of the district to keep all children engaged in learning and support all children in a safe and healthy climate. She is afraid they will not be able to meet those goals with a thinner staff. She asked the Board not to do this to the students.

Ms. Jennifer Long, an art teacher at South Elementary School, addressed the Board. She congratulated all of the students who were recognized in the beginning of the meeting. She too read the goals of the district which is listed on the website. She is glad that the Town voted in favor of the budget increase; however, given the reductions which were approved fall short of Windsor Locks goals. Special classes, such as; art, library and PE meet multiple times per week and engage students. Splitting those teachers between two schools will make it difficult to have those classes multiple times a week and a well-rounded education will be difficult to provide to students when those classes will be cut short due to the splitting of those positions between two schools. She understands budgets can be difficult but she believes we have to stand by our gals to ensure the best education.

Mr. Matt Sigall, President of Windsor Locks Teachers' Association, addressed the Board. He thanked the Board of Education, Mr. Parkhurst and the entire team for all of the months of work to have the approved budget at the Town level. While he is happy that the budget passed, he is concerned about the impact it will have on the staff. It has been a very stressful few months and has taken a toll on the staff. Those staff members are very valuable assets to the district and may look elsewhere for security they need to focus on students and delivering instruction. Those teachers who are being cut may not come back and they would be a big loss of resources that students deserve and need. It is a burden on the staff when positions are cut and when those positions are cut, programs are cut as well. The district cannot provide education and programs without the appropriate staff. Please continue to support educational system that supports growth and an educational system that the Town deserves and wants.

Chairperson Ms. Christianson thanked everyone who spoke.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was **MOVED** (Cutler) and **SECONDED** (Guyette) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Education adjourn the meeting to Executive Session as permitted by Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-225(a) for the following purposes as allowed by Section 1-200(6), that is:

A. Discussion of Compensation for the Following:

1. Director of Human Resources
2. Director of Facilities
3. Director of IT
4. Staff Accountant and Grant Manager
5. Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

That attendance in the Executive Session shall be limited to:

- Members of the Board of Education
- Superintendent
- Director of Human Resources

B. Superintendent Evaluation & Contract Discussion

That attendance in the Executive Session shall be limited to:

- Members of the Board of Education
- Superintendent of Schools
- Human Resource Director

C. Board of Education Self-Evaluation

That attendance in the Executive Session shall be limited to:

- Members of the Board of Education
- Others as Requested to Attend

Board moved into executive session at 7:39 p.m.

Board returned to public session at 10:13 p.m.

It was **MOVED** (Osorio) and **SECONDED** (Guyette) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Education approves the salary increase provided to the Superintendent for the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Human Resource Director and Grants Manager/Staff Accountant.

XIV. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Guyette) and **SECONDED** (Cutler) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Education adjourn the Special Meeting of May 22, 2024 at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz
Recording Secretary