

**MINUTES OF THE WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

232nd MEETING

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Thursday, January 19, 2006, at the Omni Austin Hotel in Austin, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Christina Melton Crain, Chairman
Pierce Miller, Vice Chairman
Patsy Day, Secretary
Oliver Bell
Pastor ~~Rev.~~ Charles Jackson
Tom Mechler
Leopoldo Vasquez, III

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Adrian Arriaga
Greg Coleman

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Judi Benestante, Interim Superintendent
David McNutt
David Chagoya
Jim Hamilton
Don Lawrence
Bambi Kiser
Bruno Mata
Susan Norris
LuAnn Pickett
Jane Spivey
Teacher of the Year Finalists

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE (TDCJ) STAFF MEMBERS**

PRESENT:

Brad Livingston, TDCJ Executive Director
Ed Owens
Melinda Bozarth

CONVENED

Christina Melton Crain, Chairman, called the meeting of the Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Thursday, January 19, 2006, at 1:51 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the ~~Public Information Act~~ Open Meetings Act

Chairman Crain stated that during the meeting, the Board would be conducting business from the agenda posted in the Texas Register. A quorum of the Board was present and the 232nd meeting of the Board was declared open.

The Chairman stated that the WSD Board of Trustees was committed to providing the opportunity for public testimony on topics posted on a meeting agenda, as well as public comment on issues within its jurisdiction as provided in Board Rule 300.1. Persons interested in providing testimony or comment at the meeting were required to complete a registration card and submit it at least ten minutes prior to the meeting's posted start time. As no cards were received for either testimony or comment, there was ~~no public input on agenda topics nor~~ no public input on agenda topics or any comments during the public comment portion of the meeting.

RECOGNITIONS

Chairman Crain congratulated Dr. Judi Benestante, Interim Superintendent, on her endorsement by the American Correctional Association, as a candidate for the association's delegate assembly in the area of adult correctional education services. If elected ~~at~~ in ~~theis~~ the upcoming spring meeting, Dr. Benestante will assume a two-year term ~~in this position~~ beginning in August 2006.

Dr. Benestante introduced the Teacher of the Year Committee (TOY); Dr. Jim Hamilton, Division Director of Human Resources; Susan Norris, Counselor, Ferguson Unit; LuAnn Picket, Principal, Eastham Unit; Bambi Kiser, WSD Communications Coordinator; and Jane Spivey, Gulf Coast Regional Administrator. She also introduced Don Lawrence, North Texas Regional Administrator; David Chagoya, South Texas Regional Administrator; and Bruno Mata, West Texas Regional Administrator.

Dr. Benestante informed the Board that Mr. Mata would be retiring at the end of the month and added that he had 41 years of dedicated service to education.

She explained the TOY process and stated there were rigorous requirements and an unbelievable selection process. Eight teachers were selected as finalists, two from each region. These eight finalists had to demonstrate their skills in leadership expertise, instructional skills, collegiality and support for the goals and mission of WSD. ~~They all represent a special gift for WSD and the District is very proud of them.~~

Dr. Benestante introduced Ms. Ponice Hartman as the 2005 WSD Teacher of the Year. She also introduced the other finalists, which included: Teresa Butler, Luther Unit; Kathryn Gant, Darrington Unit; James Masters, Estelle Unit; Rosie Shepherd, Huntsville Unit; John Robison, Torres Unit; Michael Cole, Jordan Unit; and Pat Stephens, Smith Unit.

~~She presented the Chairman with a framed poster of the TOY finalists.~~

~~Photos were taken with the Chairman.~~

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Crain called the Board's attention to the Consent Items on the Agenda (Attachment A), which consisted of the minutes of the October 27, 2005, meeting, multiple employment requests, appraisers for the 2005-2006 school year, and approval of excused absences.

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Chairman Crain asked if there were any corrections or additions to the Consent Items. Noting there were none, she stated the Consent Items were ~~approved~~^{adopted} as presented.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Revisions to WSD Board Policies

WSD BP-03.01 (rev. 1) – Windham School District Superintendent Qualifications, Selection, Evaluation, and Dismissal or Renewal/Non-Renewal of Contract

Melinda Bozarth, TDCJ General Counsel, presented WSD BP-03.01 (rev. 1) ~~– Windham School District Superintendent Qualifications, Selection, Evaluation, and Dismissal or Renewal/Nonrenewal of Contract. She explained~~^{explaining that this was} it is a consolidation of two previous WSD Board Policies (3.02 and 3.04). The most significant change₂ in Section I. A.₂ provides for the interim appointment of ~~the~~^a superintendent in the event the superintendent cannot serve based upon death, inability to serve or illness. It allows the Chairman of the Board to appoint someone on an interim basis until the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, at which time the Board may ratify that appointment, appoint someone else to serve in the interim basis, or appoint someone to serve on a permanent basis.

At the suggestion of ~~Pierce~~^{Mr. Miller}, Vice Chairman, Section III ~~was~~^{has been} incorporated to address ~~which involves~~ the evaluation of the WSD superintendent's performance. ~~It has greater detail than the previous Board Policy because it identifies the ten areas in which the superintendent would be evaluated.~~

Also, ~~at the suggestion of Mr. Miller~~, Section IV and Section V₂ concerning the non-renewal of ~~the a~~^a superintendent's contract and ~~the dismissal~~^{were} ~~have been~~^{also} added. ~~The dismissal section is modeled very closely to recommendations in the model policy put forth by the Texas Association of School Boards.~~

Chairman Crain asked if there were any questions for Ms. Bozarth concerning the policy.

Tom Mechler asked if the title of Section IV should include both "renewal" and "non-renewal" as the section addresses both. ~~about an editorial change in Section IV regarding renewal/non-renewal of contract.~~ Chairman Crain responded ~~that~~ the change was appropriate and should be noted in the motion.

~~Patsy~~^{Ms.} Day moved that the Board approve Windham BP-03.01 as amended by Mr. Mechler ~~in Section IV.~~

Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The Board unanimously passed WSD BP-03.01 as amended.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Bi-Monthly Investment Report

David McNutt, WSD Chief Financial Officer, welcomed the new Board members. He explained that the investment reports covered the period beginning September 1, 2005, t

through October 31, 2005. The balance for Texpool at the end of the reporting period was \$5,267,075 and the interest earned was \$15,525. The balance for Texpool Prime at the end of the reporting period was \$2,917,863 and the interest earned was \$5,219. The balance for Logic at the end of the reporting period was \$1,259,995 and the interest earned was \$4,256. He stated that the interest earned during the period ranged from 3.54 to 3.78 percent.

2. Interim Superintendent's Report

a. School Board Recognition Month

Dr. Benestante explained that the Governor designates each January as Texas School Board Recognition Month. She thanked the Board for their support and their work ~~everything they do~~ for WSD. Each member was presented with an apple, and a cup and ~~&~~ coaster engraved with the WSD logo.

Chairman ~~Ms.~~ Crain thanked the WSD staff for the wonderful jobs they do.

b. Budget Activity Update

Mr. McNutt gave a brief overview of the budget activity summary. This report covered budget activity through October 31, 2005. Through the month of October, WSD has expended 15 percent of its budget. The college program has only expended 3 percent of their budget, but the colleges are historically very late billing WSD for the offender tuitions. Many of the grants have expended a much higher percentage due to equipment purchases that occur at the beginning of the fiscal year. The ECHO budget is 68 percent expended, but that is not uncommon, because the majority of the budget is for the printing of the ECHO. Todd Webb Press of Austin was printing the ECHO but is in the process of bankruptcy and has suspended all printing. The Huntsville Item won the bid for printing the remaining issues for the year and will begin with the next edition.

During the month of October, the District earned 1,696,326 contact hours. This is ~~We are~~ currently only 55,000 contact hours behind ~~where we were at the same~~ is time last year, which is ~~and that is~~ good, considering the problems experienced during Hurricane Rita ~~that we had during the hurricane~~. Mr. McNutt ~~He~~ concluded by stating the District earns \$3.97 per contact hour for academic classes and \$3.24 for vocational classes.

Mr. Miller asked if WSD ~~the District~~ was able to make up the hours that were lost during the Hhurricane.

Mr. McNutt responded that the units have made arrangements to make up the days that were lost ~~during the hurricane~~.

Oliver ~~Mr.~~ Bell asked about the current teacher staffing.

Dr. Jim Hamilton, Director of Human Resources, responded that WSD ~~the District~~ has 763 teacher slots.

Mr. Bell asked if WSD historically runs with 10 percent vacancies.

Dr. Hamilton responded that historically, it is right on line with what ~~WSD the District~~ vacancies have been in the past. ~~As t~~The bulk of retirements take place in January and August, ~~the~~. ~~The total current vacancy rating includes that we currently have~~ are due to employees retiring January 31st. Dr. Hamilton ~~He~~ added that ~~, at this time,~~ he was not concerned about the number of vacancies.

c. WSD Programs by Unit

Dr. Benestante briefly reviewed the handout of the WSD Programs by Unit.

d. Staff Activities

Dr. Benestante informed the Board that, Jane Spivey, Gulf Coast Regional Administrator, would be representing WSD as a regional mentor and board member on the Texas Council of Women School Executives. This group works very closely with the Texas Association of School Administrators and ~~helps also~~ keeps WSD ~~us~~ informed on what is happening in the public education eye so we can understand what is going on in public education.

Dr. Benestante thanked the unit shared-decision-making committees for developing coming up with plans for their units to make up the days lost during Hurricane Rita.

Dr. Benestante reported that ~~She stated that~~ she and Bob Evans, Director of Continuing Education, have been working with the Texas Workforce Commission and Project RIO to develop a their strategic plan for the next biennium. ~~Also,~~ Travis Henderson, Division of Operational Support, has also been working with the Higher Education Coordinating Board to help in the data disaggregation and collection for offenders post release.

~~She closed by stating that the District had been asked to make better collaborative connections and we are working to do that statewide.~~

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

~~Topic was passed as no registration cards were received. Chairman Crain stated that the Board support staff received no cards prior to the established deadline. Therefore, there were no public comments.~~

Chairman Crain thanked Dr. Benestante, Dr. Hamilton, and the rest of the WSD staff for their work on the Teacher of the Year awards, noting it. ~~is a~~ She thought it was a wonderful initiative, that has been reinstated. ~~She~~ congratulated Ms. Hartman and the rest of the finalists.

Chairman Crain ~~She~~ also thanked Mr. Mata for his many years of service to WSD and wished

him well in all of his future endeavors.

Mr. Mata thanked the Board and the administration of WSD for their support over the years.

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ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Crain asked for questions or comments. There being none, the 232nd meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees adjourned into Executive Session at 2:25 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary