

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

May 4, 2015

**Regular Board Meeting
Board's Meeting Room**

The Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the Board's Meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut on May 4, 2015. The meeting was called to order by Patricia Libero, Chairwoman of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Patricia Libero, Chairwoman
James W. Morrissey, Vice Chair
Betsy Davis, Secretary/Treasurer
Patrick Egolum
Robert Guthrie
Mark Palmieri
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo
Cebi Waterfield

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Matt Cavallaro Director of Finance

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mayor Edward M. O'Brien

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT:

Alice Obas
Jesus Yanez
Susannah Beyl

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Chairwoman Libero asked if anyone would like to address the board. Teresa Heaney, Secretary at WHHS passed out a flyer and stated that on Thursday, May 7th at 1:00 PM in the Auditorium our senior are having the very first WHHS College Signing Day which is their commitment to where they are going. They will walk across the stage and the school they plan to attend will be announced and they will receive a certificate and a cupcake. Ms. Heaney invited everyone to attend. The board gave thanks.

Ed Francis said he was born in West Haven and played Football for WHHS in 1969 and graduated that year. He was honored to play for a Coach name Joe McHugh. From the team in 1969 kids were sent all over the country to schools like Trinity, Missouri, Southern Connecticut, Harvard and many more all from this one team. About 5 years

ago Tinker Blake called and asked him along with several other members from that team to form an organization of alumni to try and help the West Haven Football Program. The mission statement they came up with was read and their vision is to create a competitive and rewarding experience for the student athlete while promoting a sense of community and responsibility. The benefactors of this will someday provide mentorship and guidance to future generations of students. As a group over the past five years they have raised about \$250,000.00. They now run just under \$50,000.00 a year in donations that are used to support these kids. It is there hope that the process to hire a new coach must be open and a wide ranging process. There is great talent in this town and to get to the next level kids need to have more than football skills. They need to have the rest of the package and that is where we really want the next coach to be focused in order to partner with them and enable them. We need the kind of coach who focuses more on the rest of the whole man and not on the speed, strength, size and conditioning as much. A further discussion took place. The board gave thanks.

Dana Martinez, 54 Barbara Lane, West Haven thanked Cebi Waterfield for judging the Little Miss Westie Contest. She also thanked Pat Libero and Rosa Richardson who will be coming to the attendance hearings at the end of the month. The board gave thanks. Public Session closed at 7:10 PM.

Before beginning the reports Chairwoman Libero said today is School Nurse Day and it is Teacher Appreciation Week. We are truly blessed to have a great staff here of teachers and nurses and we have great secretaries and support staff here too. Pat spent 37 years in this school system and these people are dedicated and love the kids they work with. I am happy that we have a day that we actually can say thank you to them for all they do so if you get a chance please say thank you to them.

C. REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Before giving out the awards Superintendent Cavallaro said we really do have terrific kids at West Haven High School. Tonight we are honoring kids for their athletic ability, their academic ability and their leadership ability and this is The Big 3 and you also should throw in Fine Arts too. This is the type of student we have at the high school and they are recognized not only in West Haven but they make us proud throughout the state of Connecticut.

The first recipient was Rose Silver who recently won 1st place in West Haven High School's Academic Integrity Contest which is a pretty big deal. Before reading her essay Rose said integrity those types of characteristics are really important to me so it is an honor to write about something that I am really passionate about. Rose read her award winning essay about Charlie Brown and integrity and applause followed. Superintendent Cavallaro offered his congratulations. After reading her essay pictures were taken of Rose with her family members, Mayor O'Brien, Chairwoman Patricia Libero and Superintendent Cavallaro.

The next two awards are for athletic ability. Brandon Sebastian is the top long jumper in New England with a jump of 23 feet 4 inches at the New England High School Indoor Track and Field Championships in Boston. Superintendent Cavallaro offered his congratulations. Applause followed and pictures were taken of Brandon with his family members, Mayor O'Brien, Chairwoman Patricia Libero and Superintendent Cavallaro.

This is the second year that Max Padro has won a state championship and he is a junior with one big year to go. This year we are honoring Max for winning 1st place in the Class L 200 Yard Individual Medley. The event took place March 17th at Wesleyan University. Superintendent Cavallaro offered his congratulations. Applause followed and pictures were taken of Max with his family members, Mayor O'Brien, Chairwoman Patricia Libero and Superintendent Cavallaro.

The next awards were given to Alice Obas and Jesus Yanez who sit on our Board of Education as student representatives from West Haven High School. Superintendent Cavallaro read the letter he received from CAGE on April 15th. Certificates from CAGE were presented to Alice and Jesus. The award they received recognizes student leadership and potential and for the board itself to be recognized as a community leader. Superintendent Cavallaro offered his congratulations. Applause followed and pictures were taken of Alice and Jesus with their family members, Mayor O'Brien, Chairwoman Patricia Libero and Superintendent Cavallaro.

Miss Martinez helped to develop the PACE Program five years ago and has really done some remarkable things to get students on the right track. This year Miss Martinez had a few of the students talk about some of their experiences rather than have a PowerPoint with the charts and the data. We are so very proud of the progress that the kids in our program have made. Mr. Leapley, and Mr. Nixon who teach in the program were also in attendance along with Miss Tremblay one of our paraprofessionals in the program. We also have some of the students' parents here today who are so proud to hear them speak. We take kids who are struggling with education in school and bring them into our program. The teachers and paraprofessionals are very dedicated to the program and everything about the program is an outside of the box approach to education in order to reign these kids back in and show them what they can accomplish in life.

Arika Sarro said school can be a frightening place for some people. In the 9th grade she was put into the PACE Program which was exactly what she needed; a welcoming, warm and comforting environment. The teachers have all been a wonderful support system. Because of PACE she has turned her life around and turned into a young lady that is ready to face life with confidence and excel. Trevon Bowman said he had made bad choices his first year in high school. He played football but was kicked off the team because of his grades. He joined the PACE Program to get his grade better. He is doing pretty good now and has received support from his teachers. Angel Karpel will be graduating this year and we are so proud of her. She had a troubled time in high school and things were so bad that she stopped going to school. A meeting was held where she was offered one last chance and would enter the PACE Program. In just one week she felt comfortable with the teachers and her GPA was going up and she knew the program was helping her. She has taken on line courses to cover many of her lost credits. This

year she has become more responsible academically and has learned she is part of the graduating class of 2015. Tatianna Hatchet said in class she felt like she would never understand anything and it was very difficult to learn at a fast pace. She didn't want to come to school and never felt so uncomfortable. She was put in the PACE Program her second year of school and has learned so much. The teachers are great and she is doing a lot better in school and is happy to go to school. She said she has a great support system and brought her grades up and gained self-confidence to move forward. Next year she plans to use all of the skills from this year in order to be successful. Antrell Green said this is his first year of high school. He said he was doing well until the end of football season and had very bad grades and was kicked off the team. When he entered the PACE Program he learned how to do things. He now has C's and B's and actually likes high school this year. Shauna O'Brien said before joining the PACE Program she had a hard time adjusting academically and socially which led to poor choices. She cut classes and her negative behavior turned into a pattern and she lost credit in all her subjects. Shauna said she knew she needed help and the PACE Program was exactly what she needed. Shauna said the PACE Program helped me gain confidence, set goals for my life, and build positive social skills. The small classes help get students the extra help they need. The teachers in the program are fantastic and are always available to support and help me. I am very grateful. Applause followed after each student spoke. Pictures were taken of all the students with their teachers.

Dana said we just wanted to showcase a few of our kids and it is really difficult to pick just a few to bring with us as we have 42 kids in the program. Thank you for letting us come and share this with you. The board gave thanks. Cebi complimented the students for being able to get up and speak in front of everyone. Rosa hopes that the students will come every year.

Susan Misur talked about the new School District Cell Phone App. Susan found a sponsor for us so this is being made available to us for free in the App Store on your iPhone or Android. Make sure when you download it you know your password that you need to use when you buy apps otherwise you can't get it. She gave instructions on how to download it and gave us different ways it can be used. The company they chose was with School Messenger and they have worked with them for a while now for our alert system for snow days etc. We can make changes at any time with no charges incurred. We looked for a sponsor and the University of New Haven jumped on board and funded this for us and we are very grateful. There are multiple calendars available and you can add your personal phone calendar as well then your phone will remind you there is an event at your child's school. You can choose what schools you want to follow you can check them off at the top and you will get notifications for those schools. All the contact information for each school is included. The scheduling information for Bennett Rink is available with all the events along with multiple other items for PTA, Parent Portal etc. A further discussion continued.

Board Member Bob Guthrie thanked Susan and said he thinks most people are communicating this way now. Besides whatever UNH put up front to get this going is there a yearly maintenance fee. Yes and it is the same for every year and we get a

discount because we use them for our alert system. How will parents learn about this? Parents will learn about it on Twitter, Instagram, our website, The Voice, orientation programs etc. Bob suggested Founder's Day would be a great time to let parents know about it and they agreed with Bob. Applause followed and the Board gave thanks.

Superintendent Cavallaro gave an update on the budget. Neil said we are waiting for the State to adopt a budget. As of now in the appropriations committee there is some money for All Day Kindergarten for Alliance Districts who don't currently have it and that could mean more money for us. We also think there is possibly a slight increase in ECS funding this year and a little larger next year so that is some good news. The paraprofessional union asked if we would freeze their contract for a year and commence negotiations next year so that will be voted on tonight and there will be a pretty substantial saving with this. The other is with the teacher's union. We didn't foresee a lot of retirements this year however we said what if we were to offer the same incentive that we offered last year. The union identified about six teachers in addition to the few who are already leaving so this would also mean a substantial savings. Some of the jobs we wouldn't fill and some we would but we will wait and see where the retirements are. We are going to give five years single health benefits at no cost to the employee and this is a nice incentive and there is a pretty good cost savings. Neil thanked the unions for coming forward and working with the board. We applied for year four of the Alliance Grant. Last year we received around four million dollars and we wrote into the Grant full day kindergarten for Washington School and if you couple that with the appropriations committee money we may be able to put the program in place district wide so we are watching this. We feel better today than we did a month ago. A further discussion took place.

Rosa Richardson wanted to make it known that she would have great difficulty with implementing an All Day Kindergarten Program for it to be taken away next year. That is something that this board needs to consider. The confidence a parent would have when enrolling their child into an All Day Kindergarten this year or next year and then it is gone for their next child when they could have in fact enrolled them into a magnet program that is guaranteed an all-day situation. We as a board have to be aware of that and be confident that once it is implemented that it is going to be there for the duration not come and then we have to take it back. Thank you.

Jim Morrissey said with the Alliance you are saying there is more money in appropriations is that correct. Neil said it is specifically for Alliance Districts that do not offer All Day Kindergarten and we are one of the few and given the size of our district it would be a substantial amount of money. Jim asked how much money is available. Neil thinks according to CAPSS it is about \$500,000.00 and if there are three or four districts we hope it will be a couple of hundred thousand dollars that could come our way but this is subject to final passage when the budget being adopted. Jim said you are shooting for Washington School correct. Yes and the possibility that this money is above and beyond that. Jim also wants to make sure we can sustain this for future years. He is hoping that things will change in the City and we will have better financial footing down the road. We are one of the few school districts in the State of Connecticut who don't have All Day

Kindergarten and we really need to do our best to see if we can make that happen sooner than later.

Matt Cavallaro said we are in a better place that we were a month ago but we are still not at the number we need to meet a contractual obligation so although it is written in and there is a possibility of more money it would be difficult to add any programs before we get to our number for contractual obligations. We are better than we were a month ago but we still aren't there yet and contractual obligations really need to be met first.

Mayor Edward O'Brien requested to speak regarding Rosa's point. He has been meeting with Neil and Matt for months and the plan was never to do a one year All Day Kindergarten. It was always to sustain it year after year and he thinks everybody does agree with this. We did get the million dollar grant for capital improvements and that will help. This is a onetime fix but those are capital improvements we don't have to do year after year. Hopefully with Ann's grant money and with the appropriations committee funding coming through we will be able to do it. However he wanted it clear that a one year program was never on the table and he thinks everybody is in agreement with this. We keep talking about how we have to sustain it and we have been talking about it for months and we can stop talking about this because the City, Board of Ed, Neil and I agree with you on that. The board gave thanks.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

The student representatives' report is attached at the end of the minutes.

C.1.c. Board

Patrick Egolum asked Neil if we are currently searching for the replacement for the football coach. Neil said we will follow the process that we have been following as soon as the resignation is accepted by the Board of Education. We will post the job and put together a committee similar to what we have been doing. We have had a lot of coaching vacancies so we are getting pretty good at the process and we will put the best person in place for the job. Would it be appropriate to have a representative of the West Haven Football Association like the gentlemen who spoke this evening? Pat Libero and Ed were in contact and she told Rosa he would be a good representative. Patrick thanked her. Pat said we do have outside people and Rosa said we try to include usually one community based organization related to that specific sport as part of the committee. Pat said and there is a rubric that goes with it and Rosa has done a great job.

Rosemary Russo congratulated Bailey's 7th and 8th Graders that were inducted into the Junior National Honor Society on Thursday Night. It was a really nice ceremony and we have a lot of celebrating to do the end of this year. There are wonderful things happening in West Haven.

Bob Guthrie said there is a lot going on at all of the schools and he had the opportunity to attend the Science Fair at Bailey and it was a nice time. He also went to the Aladdin Jr. Play at Carrigan and the Sports Analogy for the sports in West Haven. There is a good minor league feeding system through Carrigan through Bailey up to Theatre Workshop

building there. He also attended the 7:30 PM session at Bailey for their National Honor Society. On Saturday Pagels tried something new. Bob had the opportunity to go to a Father Daughter Dance and they did get over 100 people to attend. On June 9th at 9:00 AM CABA will hold the legislative wrap up in the legislative office building.

Neil said we have gotten such good feedback and response and attendance at every event that we sponsored this year it has been overwhelming. We have had tremendous crowds at everything.

Jim was at the Science Fair at Seth Haley with Bob and the kids did a great job. He also attended the National Junior Honor Society with Rosie and saw Bob at the second grouping. The kids did a great job. They should be proud of themselves for all the hard work they have done and their accomplishments. The parents came out to show their support and it was wonderful. Yesterday he stopped by the Westie Day of Hope which was great. He made his donation but needed his hair for two graduations and a wedding so he couldn't get his head shaved. The staff and students did a great job for a great event. Things like this make us proud to live in West Haven.

Cebi said the Bailey drop off has been great for the past couple of days and she thanked Neil, the police officers and Dr. Cordone for all their help. Cinderella is at Bailey this week and she can't wait to see it. She was very impressed with The Drowsy Chaperone; it was so entertaining. She can't say enough about Sean, Margi and Mrs. Silver and the work they do at the high school. We have great theatre kids, great sports kids, great band kids, great honor student kids and we have great kids trying to find their way back on track. She is so proud of the City and the school system and can't say enough about it. She has a brand new Girl's Lacrosse player in her family and the coordination between the people running the Youth Program in the City and the high school program is great. We have great kids in our Football League and we need to see that they go to good colleges and do good things with their life.

Rosa said she thinks she has taken a week's vacation in interviews for coaching positions. The procedures in place for the interview process will give us the best candidate in any coaching position. It is very important to Rosa as Chairman of the Athletic Committee to follow the same steps in the hiring of coaches that we do teachers. There is no difference between the two. She attended the Biondi Recognition tonight with the Mayor and was part of the committee.

Pat said she was at Aladdin and it is phenomenal to see these 5th and 6th graders up on stage learning their lines, dancing and working together. She also saw the Drowsy Chaperone and everyone did a fabulous job and she is looking forward to Bailey's show Cinderella Saturday night at 7:00 PM.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on April 5, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.a.
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes
Bob Guthrie seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

15-33 Katherine A. DeStefano, Kindergarten/Literacy Teacher – Seth Haley
Effective: June 30, 2015
Reason: Retirement

15-34 Ed McCarthy, Head Football Coach – West Haven High School
Effective: April 16, 2015
Reason: Retirement

15-35 Carol A. Roche RN, School Nurse – West Haven High School
Effective: End of the 2014 – 2015 school year
Reason: Retirement

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve items 15-33 through 15-35 inclusive
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve
Patrick Egolum seconded the motion
Discussion: Cebi Waterfield said it makes her feel old to see Coach McCarthy retiring because it was his first year as a coach and her first year as a cheerleader at WHHS so she is feeling a little ancient right now. Pat Libero thanked the teachers and the nurses that are retiring for their service.
All board members present were in favor.
Motion passes. Items 15-33 through 15-35 inclusive are approved

D.4. New Hire: (Certified)

15-36 Gina Genovese RN, 21 Ludlow Drive, Milford, CT 06460
School Nurse – West Haven High School
Effective: August 24, 2015
Salary: \$41,113.04 - Step 1

15-37 Erin Blake, 275 Kelsey Avenue, West Haven, CT 06516
Girls Hockey Coach - West Haven High School
Effective: 2015-2016 Season
Salary: \$3,500

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve items 15-36 and 15-37
Cebi Waterfield made the motion to approve

Rosa Richardson seconded the motion

Discussion: Neil Cavallaro said the rationale for hiring the nurse is that we are still one short from what we were last year and that is why we are moving forward with this now. We may leave one job off depending on how we can make sure we have coverage at all of the schools. We felt it was important to fill this job now. On 15-37 we are co-opting at this point with Sacred Heart Academy because we didn't have enough girls to have a full team and Sacred Heart has been trying to start a hockey team. The goal will be for both programs to have their own hockey team someday but for now this is a great opportunity for both schools. We are appreciative that Sacred Heart is joining us.

All board members present were in favor.

Motion passes. Items 15-36 and 15-37 are approved

D.5. New Business

15-38 Paraprofessional Agreement

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-38

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor.

Motion passes. Item 15-38 is approved

15-39 2015 Voluntary Teacher Retirement Incentive Plan

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-39

Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve

Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion

Discussion: Jim Morrissey asked Neil if this is the same contract we offered the teachers last year. Yes it is the same retirement but the current contract in retirement is different.

If you retire this year without this incentive you would get 5 years single medical coverage but you would pay the same rate and get the same plan as current members.

Whereas we are giving them the same plan that we offered up until last year which is 5 years free single medical coverage. Jim said and they get \$1,000.00; yes they get \$1,000.00 for the HSA correct. Jim asked what the estimated saving would be. Neil said 4 or 5 teachers are planning on retiring and we hope for another 6 or so that were not planning on retiring. At \$20,000.00 per teacher it could be a couple of hundred thousand dollars minimum and not all jobs may have to be replaced. You have to have 25 years continuous service to the BOE in order to qualify for this.

Cebi thanked all the unions for their help. Every time we ask them to make concessions they do and we couldn't be more pleased with the efforts of all the unions. It is great to have that relationship because not every school board has that relationship with their unions and their workers.

All board members present were in favor.

Motion passes. Item 15-39 is approved

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to adjourn.
Rosa Richardson made the motion
Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion
The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou C. Amendola
Board Secretary

BOE Student Report – May 4, 2015

The FBLA, Future Business Leaders of America will be having their sixth annual talent show on May 15th

The Senior Directed play will be held on June 5th. We hope you will come out to see it.

The Senior Art Show will be held on Wednesday, May 27th from 5:30pm-7:30pm at the Savin Rock Conference Center

The Choral Department's Spring Concert will be held on Wednesday, May 20th.

SADD presented Grim Reaper Day on April 23rd.

Final Exams have been set for 2015 – Senior Exams will begin on June 10th with underclass exams starting on June 11th.

Graduation will be held on Thursday, June 18th. *Blue & White: Up All Night* will be held following graduation at the Jewish Community Center. We are always looking for volunteers, so come join in on the fun!

This week is RESPECT WEEK at WHHS, “respect yourself to respect others.” Each grade will hear from a special speaker during the week, and families are invited to Friday evening's “Big Night” featuring ESPN Commentator Alex Pombo, WHHS Grad and Syracuse Football Player Ervin Philips, WHHS grad and UNH Admissions Rep Monique Bolt, Gateway Dean Dr. Mark Kosinski, WHHS grad and Yale senior Stacey Matakaetis, and WHHS senior and actor Tommy Nelson. The event begins at 5, is free, and includes a catered dinner.

WHHS is holding College Signing Day on Thursday, period 8 in the auditorium. Partnering with the Reach Higher Initiative, we will be recognizing all seniors who have committed to a 2 or 4 year college or a branch of the Armed Forces Students must sign up through Naviance. We invite all BOE members to join us.

Chris Brubeck, a jazz and classical musician and composer, visited West Haven High School band students last week to play a few songs with them and talk about his work as a musician.

Tonight, the West Haven High School softball team and alumni are hosting a night of recognition for coaches Frank and Bonnie Biondi and Cliff Casner at Biondi Field at WHHS, in recognition of their contributions to the West Haven Softball program.

The Charging Ahead initiative allows WHHS juniors and seniors to take one class for free in the spring or fall semester at UNH. Applications for the fall semester are due May 13.

The Great Skate Event was held April 21st and 24th, opening the doors of Bennett Rink to all West Haven youth. The two evenings were a huge success. Coupled with the second grade field trip to the rink, over 800 youngsters visited Bennett Rink for educational or enjoyment purposes. Thank you to Joe Morrell and his team for organizing this great event.

Congratulations to the Unified Sports Team on winning the 2015 Michael's Cup Award.