

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

November 21, 2016

Regular Board Meeting

Board's Meeting Room

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on November 21, 2016 in the Board's Meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order by James Morrissey, Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

James W. Morrissey, Chairman
Robert Guthrie, Vice Chair
Susan Walker, Secretary/Treasurer
Karen Pacelli
Mark Palmieri
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Patrick Leigh
Patricia Libero

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Anne Druzolowski, Assistant Superintendent
Matt Cavallaro, Director of Finance

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Mayor Edward M. O'Brien

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT:

Evelyn Fabian

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Chairman Morrissey welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if anyone would like to address the board during public session. There were no public speakers.

REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro stated that ACES is coming in to look at some of our in house programs to see if it might be possible to keep more kids in district. They will look at our facilities, teachers and the programs we are offering. We hope to have a report by mid January. We hope this will give us some ideas of what we can do with some kids who are

currently outplaced and see what we may be able to do to improve on the programs currently in house. Superintendent Cavallaro wants to ask them to speak with our nurses because we have some really physically challenged kids in some of our learning labs. Our nurses are hopping right now in the schools and we want to provide for them. We hope to have ACES come and give a final report to the board.

The money for the cafeteria workers is exactly the same as we discussed back in July. We have to give some retro raises. This is a union that does not receive any health benefits or anything like that. They are getting decent raises and their jobs have changed a little with Sodexo so we feel they are being compensated and we are using the money generated from the program to help pay for the raise so that is a good thing. We are anxious to get them the retroactive pay and in their new roles.

Gilbane Construction was just chosen to be the construction manager for the new high school project. The city is in the process of negotiating the final numbers and contract language with them. The project should be wrapping up shortly after the holidays. We are going to provide them with some information to get them up to speed. We are optimistic that this project will get going pretty shortly.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

The report is attached at the end of the minutes. Thank you.

Evelyn Fabian stated she has talked with a lot of students and teachers about the midterm schedule. She has heard the exam will be an hour and a half and then students will go on with the rest of the school day and this will go on for all eight days of the midterm schedule. Evelyn hasn't found anyone who is really supportive of this schedule.

Superintendent Cavallaro said as of the last time he has met with the people this is not the schedule. He knows there were concerns especially from the seniors in the advanced classes regarding the eight day span of the exams. Last week we worked out a plan that would start the day after Martin Luther King which is the 17th and would go to the 20th and there would be two periods a day of exams that are an hour and a half each and then you would go through an abbreviated day. There would be four periods and we would extend the day at the end to make sure that all kids are able to have lunch and if we need to have late busses we would have them for kids who needed to make up a test etc. Superintendent Cavallaro is not sure that everything is carved in stone but when we heard some of the concerns last week we did address most of them. One of the reasons Superintendent Cavallaro pushes to keep kids in school all day is that you have to put 900 hours of instruction in per year and with the final exam schedule, midterm schedule, and the state testing schedule the way they were last year we were cutting it pretty close to the 900 hours. We expect that study groups can take place and kids can prepare for their exam. That is a full day of school and any hour we miss for instruction is time that is not well spent. By keeping the kids in school we can help them prepare for exams. This is the tentative schedule right now and there may be some minor changes. Superintendent Cavallaro feels that putting in a full day of school is really important.

Evelyn Fabian said there would be two 90 minute exams and (Superintendent Cavallaro said per day and it is over a four day period which is a big difference than the eight days and he understands why eight days would be too long to shorten the classes and teachers felt that kids would miss a lot). Following the two exam periods you will pick up a schedule and go to three or four classes. This allows kids to have lunch and we are approximately 65 to 70% free lunch and we want to have the opportunity to do this. Evelyn said with the two exams and the half days it would give students time to go home and study for the next exam but with a full day she is not sure. Superintendent Cavallaro said you are talking about getting out around 12:00 noon compared to 1:45 PM and the classes should be structured as study groups so you can go over study skills or important points. A further discussion took place about the minimum for the hours of instruction and after school programs etc. This is a new schedule and we may make a few mistakes but whatever we make this year we will improve on next year. Evelyn asked if the schedule for finals be the same. His guess is but we have not talked about the final schedule. The other thing they heard from teachers and students was they wanted more SAT like questions so we are reviewing and changing all of the exams to make them more meaningful to you. Evelyn thanked Superintendent Cavallaro and Chairman Morrissey thanked Evelyn.

Neil said under informational F.4. for the newly hired paraprofessional, rather than the current assignment while she is stationed at Pagels School, it was posted as a district wide paraprofessional for the record.

C.1.c. Board

Mark wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Rosa attended the Savin Rock/ Washington Math Night and the Mackrille Math Night and Wednesday she will attend the Turkey Dinner at Mackrille for families at Thanksgiving and she extended warm wishes to all her constituents.

Karen attended Forest School's Literacy Night on October 18th where Stacy Giaquinto a third grade teacher was the presenter and had written a book called Sticky Green Noses Helped Save The Brook. The attendance from students and parents was great with a nice dinner before. Each student walked away with one of her books which was very nice. It was an excellent night and she wrote a wonderful book. Karen wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Rosemary thanked everyone for the beautiful arrangement that they sent her after her surgery it really cheered her up. On Friday Dan Shine and his class came to her home and built a shed for her in the back yard. It was great watching the kids measure and do everything needed to get that shed constructed. It reinforces what a great program we have and the shed is beautiful. To see the mutual admiration between a teacher and students was really remarkable. Rosemary wants to donate a van and has the form but asked if you need the title. Neil will find out what to do next. He thinks that she only will have to sign the title over to them. Rosemary wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Susan wanted to know the progress on replacing Steve Lopes over at Washington School. Superintendent Cavallaro said we are currently reviewing the posting and it should go out no later than Monday and we should be ready to fill the position by the first of the year. Susan thanked Neil and said the second thing is that she has been on the committee to choose the Connecticut Teacher of the Year for 20 years and this year she is a member of The Teacher of the Year Council and they recently chose Lauren Danner of North Branford High School who is a science teacher as the Connecticut Teacher of the Year. The four finalists were all science teachers. She student taught at Bailey Middle School with Sherry Mitchell so she was one that got away but she will be a wonderful Connecticut Teacher of the Year.

Mayor O'Brien attended Acceptance Day at the Conference Center for the high school seniors and you can't be more proud of the kids we have in West Haven and the great students that come out of our school system. It was a great day to see all their excitement as they were accepted by the various colleges. Mayor O'Brien said to keep up the good work because at this point in the school system we are doing something right and he also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Chairman Morrissey thanked Mayor O'Brien.

Bob Guthrie attended the WHHS Kids Workshop called Yo Mama Goose and the performers did a great job and he wishes David O'Brien was here but hopes this gets back to him. The performers did a great job interacting with the students who were all dressed up for Halloween and had a tough time staying off the stage enjoying the performers. The students did a great job it was like A Night At The Improv and they included the kids in costume to make them feel like they were part of the show. It was a wonderful time. Bob also attended the Pagels and Haley Veteran's Day Ceremonies and he thanks our schools and veterans for all their service and we as a school district should continue to acknowledge our veterans. He also attended a CAFE Policy Update and will sit down with Neil to go over some things. There is a new policy with an August 15, 2017 implementation. The State Department of Education has approved a suggested application for employment for all school district's use and perhaps that is something we need to consider. Listening to what my fellow board members have to say about Math Nights, Literacy Nights and school events he would like this board to reconsider the communications position. We have heard the need for this from our student rep, parents, students and I don't think the district has continued to do a good job in getting the message out and we cannot afford to buy that time in general media so I would like us to consider this after the holiday break. Bob wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Chairman Morrissey attended the Pagels Veteran's Ceremony and the kids did a great job as they do every year. The kids were very excited and it was very touching. Some Veterans were there and they talked about their family members who were veterans and were in attendance and the kids were saying they were their heroes and rightfully so. It was a nice ceremony. Jim also attended the high school Decision Day as the Mayor and Superintendent Cavallaro did. It was a nice ceremony and the kids were all dressed up and very happy. This keep on getting bigger and bigger each year and everyone does a great job. Mrs. Paolino and the guidance staff do a wonderful job and WTNH gave us coverage on the news that night. Chairman Morrissey saw Evelyn there and she had a

picture taken of Quinnipiac University that she was hanging up and he said to her that he went to Quinnipiac College and his daughter went to Quinnipiac University and Evelyn told him she is also looking at Northeastern and Fordham so we have quite a talent here. Chairman Morrissey and Superintendent Cavallaro were judges at the high school for the Antique Car Show and this showed off the talent we have at West Haven High School. It was a nice event put on by the high school.

Chairman Morrissey talked about the exams and said he urged this board and the superintendent to bring back the midterm exams because he thought it was a good thing. He didn't know about the format and how it was set up. He talked to the superintendent last week as there were concerns from the teachers and students about the possibility of not having enough time to study for the exams. Students in the AP classes have a lot of studying to do in a very short period of time and there were concerns about this also. In the past when the kids had midterm exams they were allowed to go home and study so I hope this does work out and we should know in the next month or so. He wants to make it clear that he thinks it was said that the Board of Education implemented the all day for the kids and that was not true. Superintendent spoke here tonight stating he was for it and that is his prerogative. I hope this works out but if it doesn't we will know about it shortly and I do want to have more input from the students and the teachers to find out if there are ways to improve on this. A further extensive discussion about midterms took place. All parties to the discussion hope everything works out.

Chairman Morrissey received a letter from the Pequonnock Yacht Club inviting the Marine Technology Program students and staff to have two boat slips free for the months of May, June, September and October. He knows there are a lot of kids in our schools and shoreline community who are interested in boating so this is an opportunity from the Yacht Club to give our students safe boating and this is something this board might want to look at. Superintendent Cavallaro said we can look at it but one of the things we have to address is the liability issue which was a real concern last time. We can contact the city's insurance carrier as well as our attorney to make sure we are in compliance with whatever we need to do. Bob Guthrie asked who signed the letter. Mr. Garrett Grant who is the Commodore. There was a cc to the board but no one had received a copy so a copy will be sent to each board member and Superintendent Cavallaro tomorrow.

Chairman Morrissey asked how we are trending this year financially. Matt Cavallaro said the first quarter of benefits are in and we are doing better than we were at the first quarter of last year by about \$360,000.00. Our tuition is running about the same as last year and we don't have any spikes. The salaries were budgeted appropriately and the spending is on par with what it was last year. We hope that the benefit number keeps coming in under what it was last year and we should be in a much better position. Superintendent Cavallaro said we met with the Lockton Group today and they said the second quarter now looks pretty good too. Matt said yes they said the month of October came in pretty low but I haven't seen those number yet as they haven't been entered into our budget yet but as I receive the information I will keep you informed.

Mayor O'Brien said to Matt that he knows Kevin has been asking for a plan. Is there any plan? Matt stated he talked with Kevin today and told him he will be getting the information for the October benefits and then he will make a forecast based on what we have for the four months fiscal year for benefits and get something up to Kevin right away. Mayor O'Brien said OK my concern is that Special Ed is trending the same way it did last year and I want to make sure we are proactive in case we have a problem so we are not caught off guard like we were last year. Matt said absolutely. Mayor O'Brien thanked Matt.

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 October 17th at 7:00 PM.

Chairman Morrissey 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 were in favor.

Minutes are approved.

D.2. Resignations (Certified)

16-70 John R. McKee, Business Teacher – West Haven High School

Effective: January 1, 2017

Reason: Personal

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve D.2 Resignations: (Certified)

Item 16-70

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve and wished him well

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion: Chairman Morrissey said that Mr. McKee had taught one of his children as a business teacher at WHHS and he was a very nice guy and he wishes him nothing but the best. Susan Walker said he started as one of the interns after he finished his banking career and he was a good addition to the school system. Mark Palmieri said he did a great job with the DECA Program and he wished him well.

All board members were in favor

Item 16-70 is approved

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

16-71 Martha Jacobs, 53 Martin Street, West Haven, CT 06516

Spanish Teacher – West Haven High School

Effective: September 23, 2016

Salary: \$43,354.00 Step 2 BS

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve D.3 New Hire: (Certified) Item 16-71
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion
Discussion: Superintendent Cavallaro said that Martha Jacobs was a former West Haven High School student who went to Princeton and she came back to us as a long term sub. This is her second year in the job and she has received her full certification and that is why she is at step 2 with the date that you see. We are very happy to have her on board in a permanent full time position now.

Chairman Morrissey said he also knows her and she is quite a kid and is a graduate of Princeton University and will do a great job at the high school. Neil said she fell in love with teaching.
All board members were in favor
Item 16-71 is approved

D.4. New Business

16-72 Approval of the West Haven Board of Education (Cafeteria) and United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) Agreement July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2019

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve D.4 New Business Item 16-72
Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
Item #16-72 is approved

16-73 Approval of the Immigrant Children and Youth Education Grant

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve D.4 New Business Item 16-73
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
Item #16-73 is approved

F. Informational

Chairman Morrissey wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and asked for a motion to adjourn.
Mark Palmieri made the motion
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion
All board members present were in favor
The meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary

The Student Report can be found at the end of the minutes.

BOE Student Report
November 21, 2106

On Friday, the School Counseling Department hosted the Second Annual College Decision Day at the Savin Rock Conference Center. Eight colleges participated – Quinnipiac University, University of New Haven, Eastern CT State University, Southern CT State University, Western CT State University, and Central CT State University. Sixty five students interviewed and there were 125 acceptances to college. Only four out of 65 students interviewed received decisions pending Period 2 grades. All others were accepted "On the Spot"!

Three schools offered their scholarship monies on-site:
Quinnipiac University awarded \$94,000 in scholarships. *University of New Haven* awarded \$500,900 in scholarship money. This is a large amount since UNH had 27 students receive the half tuition scholarship along with 5 Presidential Scholarships. Presidential Scholarships are approximately \$1,700 more than the half tuition scholarship of \$18,300. *Western Connecticut* had three students who earned the Presidential Scholarship which means Full Tuition at \$10,017 per year.

On Saturday, November 26th, 57 students attended the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Tour – 37 seniors, 10 juniors and 10 sophomores. 19 seniors were given on-site decisions to colleges such as Delaware State University, Talladega College, Virginia State University, Allen University, Bethune-Cookman University, and Coppin State University. One senior received the Mason Scholarship to Philander Smith College and a full ride to Talladega College.

The WHHS staff is fully immersed in the NEASC self-study for accreditation. Teachers are assigned to seven standards committees, and students have just completed a self-assessment of the Academic Expectations of Learning school-side rubric. During the second half of the school year, we will be looking for parents and students to get more involved in the self-study process. The NEASC Visiting Committee will be at WHHS in September, 2017.

Tickets are \$5 and go on sale tomorrow for the Fall Production of "One Night Only... Well, Maybe Two" on December 1 and 2 at 7:30pm in the auditorium. Tickets are also available at the door.

The National Honor Society sponsored its annual Sports-tacular and raised \$5,371 for MDA.

Senior Fatima Al Rashad was in the Top 5th of the latest Yale University Urban Debate League competition.

WHHS held the PSAT's for all 9th, 10th and 11th graders on October 19th. Seniors had a special day designed for them which included a brunch, a guest speaker, buddy pictures, fitness activities, a class meeting and the Senior Class Photo, taken on the football field.

The 2016 Fall Festival was a huge success on October 29th with the Festival, Entertainment, Trick or Trunk, Chalk Art Contest, and Car Show. Special thanks to our celebrity judges Superintendent Cavallaro and BOE Chair Morrissey. The Prospective Student Breakfast kicked off the event with over 30 families in attendance.

Congratulations to the following Fall Athletes on receiving recognition from the SCC:
ALL SCC SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR - *Salah Oumorou*
ALL SCC BOYS & GIRLS SOCCER - *Salah Oumorou, Abdoul Aremu, Gabriella Prisco, Lauren Lewis*
ALL SCC FOOTBALL - *Byron Dickens, Anthony Godfrey, Kyle Godfrey, Robert Hawkins, Tim McCarthy*

The PTSA is hosting a Barnes and Noble Fundraiser on Saturday November 26th in Milford. All proceeds benefit senior scholarships. Please plan to stop by.

The Academic Integrity Committee is reading to 3rd graders throughout the district, emphasizing the importance of character and integrity.

Class of 2017 Yearbooks are on sale for \$60 before December 31st and Senior Pictures should be taken and selected before December 9th.

Seventeen students are currently enrolled in the classes at the University of New Haven, Charging Ahead program. Seven students have applied for the Outstanding High School Senior Program. Interviews will be held in December and accepted students will spend the spring semester as full-time college students.

The Junior Class hosted a pep rally for the entire school on October 28th featuring the Powder Puff Football Game. They are also selling Holiday Ornaments.

The ELL Global Studies class took a bus tour of West Haven while working on maps, directions and distance. One stop was Bruneau's Service on Front Ave. Students were able to tour the facility and learn about the daily demands of running a garage.

November 21st kicks off our Annual Toys for Joy Drive with the West Haven Professional Firefighters. Last year, we were able to service over 531 children in West Haven. This community toy drive to benefits West Haven residents (11 and under). Over 160 families took advantage of this opportunity for toys last year. Toy distribution will be on December 21st by calling 203-933-9347.

