

D.l.a.

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

December 19, 2016

Regular Board Meeting

Board's Meeting Room

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on December 19, 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
Patrick Leigh
Karen Pacelli
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Palmieri
Patricia Libero

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

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT: Evelyn Fabian
Andrew Gordon

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 speakers.

REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro said prior to this meeting there was an initial Carrigan School Building Committee project which involves the roof and an update on some of the other things that are going on. Superintendent Cavallaro had given board members pictures of the lockers which are about 65% installed as are the Carrigan auditorium seats which should be ready for opening night Wednesday. Project Manager Roger LeFluer

and his son Jason the site manager is here to answer any questions you have. Superintendent Cavallaro had spoken to Chairman Morrissey about the bad shape the pool is in so we are putting a project together so Roger can fill you in and answer any questions about the pool.

Roger LeFleur, PAM Resources reallocated some money from some of the other projects and allocated it towards the high school pool and boilers are in rough shape. It is costing quite a bit of money just to keep it maintained and we are down to one functioning heat exchanger. We have two or three different sources of money to use. Part is from the Alliance Grant, part is from the Utility Grant and we also hope for some rebates. We think the cost will be about \$800,000.00. There has been corrosion through the air and through the water and this has taken its toll on the boilers and some of the other equipment within the building. Everything will get ripped out and two new stainless steel boilers will be installed as well as a new humidification system. Because of this there is going to be an upgrade to the overall electrical switch gear to the building. It will go from a 400 AMP system to a 1200 AMP system along with a new line from the pool house going up near to part of the high school which is about a 200 foot run underground. It is out to bid now for a design built where the designer will work with the contractors because issues will have to be resolved together between the design people and the contractors. What we are trying to avoid are change orders. We know what our budget is and we are looking for the best team that comes in with the best ideas that will do the best job for the pool house. We hope to have an indication of this on Wednesday.

Questions from the board. Karen Pacelli asked about the reallocated money. Superintendent Cavallaro said this is money the board actually reallocated and have already approved this because we had some additional funds left over from Carrigan and saw that the high school pool needed work. We had the state approve the project. Karen thanked Neil. Bob Guthrie said will the boilers become a stand-alone building? No we will rip out the old boilers and this will create space for the new boilers in the same location. Rosa said and you won't have that corrosion issue anymore because of the new humidifier system. No because you are going from a steam heat exchanger to stainless steel condensing boilers and this is a completely different technology. There will be a significant savings in energy by doing that switch alone. Neil said we are using Alliance Grant money and we are working with rebates from the U.I. and also the energy conservation fund and some financing from the U.I. Company so we are getting a very good value and should start reaping the savings pretty quickly. Neil said we will even save on pool chemicals because now they are burning up too quickly. Mr. LeFleur said all new LED lighting will be installed which will bring a significant savings. Bob Guthrie asked if the lights will be included in the locker room. Yes and the locker rooms are included in the heat part of this as well. Bob Guthrie asked if the lockers will be included as replacements in this or is that separate. Superintendent Cavallaro said we are not doing the lockers at this time but it is certainly something to consider down the road. Mr. LeFleur said we are doing energy conservation at this time. Bob was thinking while the building was down and out of commission the painting or lockers could be done. Neil said they are not in good shape Bob I can tell you that. Rosa asked if we could use some of the good lockers from Carrigan. You may have 100 or so but you never know. Mr.

LeFleur said it is whatever you decide. Karen said so you are looking for a company to do the project. Yes the RFP went out and the respondents will come back with a proposal on how to solve the problem. A small committee will evaluate who we think has the best idea on how to do this and meet the budget. When we have that we will make a recommendation to go forward. Karen asked when the start date would be. Superintendent Cavallaro said there will be a shutdown period so probably late in the spring. Mr. LeFleur said with the cold weather even if we could dig the trench we might have lost that window. Neil said the overall concern is the urgency of the project because West Haven pays a premium because we aren't very good a preventative maintenance around here. There is a sense of urgency to get this project done so we won't be out of commission for a lot longer and it won't cost us a lot more. Bob Guthrie asked if we have to relocate the swim team this season or have a conversation with the Wizards. No they usually finish around mid-March and we will be a little later than that. Mr. LeFleur said once the team is hired they will come up with a design which must be approved and get building permits and pass all those types of inspections and then construction schedule will be developed through the board and Chris Everone. Neil said at that time of year the high school is out of there as the swimming season is over. We can use Carrigan as a backup for swim lessons and we should be ready for the summer program which is a busy time and in the spring time just swim lessons and parties. This is a small price to pay for what we are going to end up with. Chairman Morrissey said with change orders the cost can really go up but you are pretty confident that you can get all the parties on board. Yes and that is why we decided to go with a designer format. When you go with a design bid build anything that is not in those plan specifications that pops up becomes a changeover. We are basically saying to this team that once you accept the contract to do this job there will be no change orders so the budget we have is the number we are going in with. Chairman Morrissey said that is good to hear because he knows when a project starts the next thing you know you have one change order after the other and it skyrockets. Mr. LeFleur said he won't say this is impossible but it is highly unlikely. The board thanked Mr. LeFleur.

Superintendent Cavallaro said a couple of weeks ago Jim, Rosa and I met at the high school and there is another meeting scheduled for Wednesday at 8:20 AM which has been changed to 9:27 AM. We had a very good productive meeting and Neil thanked Crystal and Tracy who were on the committee as were two of our student representatives. We had some good discussion and we all gave a little and there are some plans in the works which gives everyone a little bit of what they want including one half day. We will formalize a schedule on Wednesday and all board members are welcome to attend. Neil said this seems to be moving along. Jim said he is glad to hear that and thanked Neil.

Dr. Druzolowski said the results of the SBAC Testing and in our DERG we are #1 in Mathematics, tied at #3 in English Language Arts (grades 3 through 8). This means our kid's growth exceeded the state average so we are flying right now. Looking at all of the Alliance Districts we were #2 in Math which is impressive. Putnam was ahead of us with their N is 395 and our N 204T. This data is based on matched cohorts and is two years of data. Each child has a separate growth factor based on standard scores. We will be going into this in more detail and we are pretty happy about it. We see some areas we want to

do some different things with. You will have more information on this along with the SAT data in January.

Matt Cavallaro said Patrick Leigh asked him to put together a presentation on the audit and Special Ed tuition. Matt gave the board the written information. The audit of our ED01 Report which is the big state financial report which needs to be audited and certified by December 30th has been interesting because two Friday's ago the entire audit team just left their company for other opportunities. There is a team coming from Massachusetts or Hartford and Matt doesn't see any issue with us being able to certify our data on time because the previous auditors did most of it and the new team just has to review a couple of numbers and should be able to certify it by the 30th.

The budgeted amount for the 2016 – 2017 fiscal year the budgeted amount of Special Ed tuition was increased by \$388,887.00. As of today the forecast for the total spend is \$151,000.00 less than it was at this time last year. There obviously is still a big difference between the spend and the budget amount but there are some possible areas in the budget to lessen the over spend. The two big areas where we might see some significant savings are health insurance and workman's comp. Health Insurance expenses are \$200,000 less than last year for July – October and Workman's Comp for the same time period only 18% of the budget has been expended and that budget is 1.25M and now expenses are only \$233,000.00 and there are no huge settlements forthcoming. We will monitor expenses to find additional savings elsewhere.

If there is an over expenditure in the budget the Excess Cost Grant must be used to make that account whole. We can't take any more than what the over expenditure is so we will be doing everything in our power to make sure we don't need as much as we did last year. This is something that is beyond our control but we will give it our best effort.

Questions from the board. Patrick Leigh asked what accounted for the \$151,000 less than last year in the Special Ed expenditures to date. What is the savings from; is it less students or from the cost of tuition. Joe Lucibello said we do have less students at this point than last year. We also had students that graduated who were at some of our higher cost schools that we talked about in previous meetings. It is a combination of these things and we also have been able to bring some students back into our district programs. This is only up to October and we just go by month when all the bills come in. Patrick asked when the November bill will be available. By the next board meeting we should have an update with the November numbers. Neil said he will get it to the board as soon as they receive it. Rosemary Russo asked why there were no expenditures within the New Haven Magnet Special Ed from August to November. Joe Lucibello explained that they don't give us bills monthly. Matt Cavallaro said they do it more towards the end of the fiscal year and send one large bill. Rosemary Russo asked how much the bill is usually for. Matt said the total spend is about half a million dollars. Rosemary said so then we are really not a little bit ahead. No, Joe said this is factored in to the trend report but we don't know if this will be the same or less we are really not sure. Matt said there shouldn't be that much of a variable. Chairman Morrissey said the same amount as last year is factored in? That is what we use but obviously there could be a little variable up

or down but there is not going to be a huge swing that will cause \$150,000 to disappear. Patrick Leigh asked if the increase in tuition is put into the trend report. Joe said we base the trend off of our bills and all of our bills have the increase and unfortunately for us all of our out of district schools all went up on their tuition. When we get the bills we do it off of that and that is why we tend to wait so we know exactly how much money we spent monthly so all of the increases are in the trend. Chairman Morrissey asked Neil if there was a meeting with the ACES officials during the last couple of weeks. Yes, Neil mentioned this to him and said they came in two or three weeks ago and met with him and Anne. We are looking at the Special Ed programs to see where we are and if we can offer any more programs in house, and the status of our in house programs. We expect a full report by mid-January we expect a full report to give to the board. They are looking at WHHS, Bailey, Carrigan, Savin Rock, which has a lot of paras and inclusion programs, and Pagels and Seth Haley which are two schools with the neediest learning labs. Rosemary Russo asked if they charge us to do this. They do charge us about \$4,000 although we haven't yet received a bill. Rosemary asked if the Special Ed Coordinators are part of that. Joe said we facilitated the calendar schedule with them. We let them go anywhere to talk with the teachers, paras and whoever they want to talk with and they have one more school to do before they write up the report. Karen Pacelli asked if they are looking to create new programs or just add to the current programs. Joe said Neil and Anne gave them an idea of what we wanted. Neil said he is afraid they will say we need a few more paras and is also concerned they will say if you are going to bring the type of child that we are currently housing in some of our Seth Haley Learning Labs or Pagels we may need to upgrade some of our facilities a little bit. Neil asked them about adequate nursing coverage in those buildings because we have some medically challenged kids there who take up a lot of the nurse's time there. We had a frank conversation with them and now they tell us what we need to do and where we are prior to moving on. Rosa said so this study is to hopefully bring some of our children back or to bring our level to where it needs to be. No, Neil thinks they will look at our in-house programs and assess where they are. Neil said they will not have the knowledge of who actually is placed out in the facilities that is not part of the study. One of our goals is we would like to say we have adequate space if a program for an emotionally disturbed child calls for it we have the room and we would be able to bring them back. This would also require some space and teachers. Rosa said the study basically is just to make sure that we are up to standard in their need assessments. We have been bringing back some kids and the consensus from all of our principals would be that some of the children in our learning labs now are children that we would have been placing out of district years ago. If they say we need a few more paraprofessionals and we would be able to bring some kids back; those are the things we would be looking at. Dr. Druzolowski said they may also say there is no other better facility that you can find for these kids given their needs than what you have provided and she is anticipating that more than anything else. Rosemary Russo has toured the Pagels and Seth Haley learning labs and those kids are really involved in those programs. The teachers and the paras are really phenomenal. Rosemary asked if the kids who are more medically challenged and have private nurses have their family insurance pay for the nurse. Joe said the insurance pays for the equipment but if it is educational we have to pay for the nurse while they are in school. Some children do require a private nurse for any number of reasons and that would be part of what is covered under IDEA.

We don't have many students like that but we do have a few that require their own nurse. We look at those students very carefully and talk with the principal, teacher and with Donna Kosiorowski our nurse supervisor to make sure that we are appropriately educating that student. Sometimes we can keep them in district and sometimes we cannot. If a student requires a nurse regardless of whether we keep them in or send them out we will still be paying for that nurse. Rosa said and that includes physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. Yes that would be part of their IEP. Rosa asked when we talk about how numbers vary could it be because they no longer are getting physical therapy. Neil said it is possible but the kids that we are looking at in those learning labs are always going to require physical therapy if they are currently getting it. Bob Guthrie asked if we ever have reached out to the staff about suggestions on cost savings. Bob was approached twice last week by two staff members who feel they have valuable suggestions. Bob suggested the Superintendent and Board Chairman send out a joint letter to the various bargaining units expressing our interest in hearing where they feel we could have cost savings and the responses could be anonymous. Two staff members feel they have suggestions but are uncomfortable putting it in writing. Neil said he doesn't want anyone to feel uncomfortable and we will get something out. Jim wants more input from teachers and principals and that is exactly what this board wants also. We don't want them to be afraid to come up and offer suggestions. He doesn't think any suggestion is a bad suggestion. Neil and Anne agree. Jim wants to have better communication with our teachers and principals and better communication with our superintendent and assistant superintendent so please if you have an idea bring it forward. Neil said we are open. Matt said we will gladly take any idea we will never say no. Jim said we have current teachers on this board and retired teachers so they have some great ideas. Neil said after the break or maybe before he will draft a letter that he and Jim can get out. Jim said that sounds good. Jim said just to reiterate ACES came in to give us a synopsis of what our programs are and the possibility of maybe doing things differently or maybe better. Neil said yes they are checking if we are adequately staffed, checking on our facilities, what kind of kids we have, and what kind of kids we may be able to bring back. Neil said they may say we are doing a pretty good job of not placing kids out; let's see what they say. Neil thinks this is a good thing and this kind of thing should happen every so many years. Jim thanked Neil.

Chairman Morrissey saw Ms. Acquarulo and Ms. Fanelli in the audience and said they were both at a meeting with him last week and the week before and it was a good meeting with the students and faculty. He asked how the levelling was going at the high school and how they feel about it. They think it has been going well so far. There are a few kinks where we notice that kids should be placed at maybe a lower level but overall it has been going well. Neil thinks things like that are always going to happen anyway. Absolutely; they think it will work itself out now that teachers who have never been teaching in a levelling system are now teaching in one this year and their recommendations next year might be a little more accurate. Because Ms. Fanelli and I both taught under the levelling system some first time teachers who are new recommended students for levels and maybe they weren't sure but now that they are teaching we will have more accurate recommendations for next year. Chairman Morrissey said he knows it is new this year so there may be little bumps in the road.

Overall they have heard positive feedback from the teachers. Both Ms. Acquarulo and Ms. Fanelli thanked the board for having their backs; they appreciate the board for listening to their concerns about this. Jim thanked them for coming to tonight's meeting.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

Andrew Gordon said we met with the Superintendent to discuss the midterm scheduling. The next meeting will be Wednesday (which has been changed to Thursday, January 5th at 8:20 AM). Over the weekend the WHHS Bel Canto Choir went caroling at local businesses in West Haven and raised \$648.00 in donations for WHEAT. Congratulations to the three WHHS senior, Adnan Sumra, Mary-Lou Heidtman and Alice Li for being accepted into the Outstanding High School Senior Program. They will be starting classes at UNH in mid-January. The Toys for Joy Toy distribution even is set for Wednesday, December 21st in the Bennett Rink during the school day. The Peer Advocated just wrapped u toy shopping at Target and they are excited to begin spreading the holiday cheer to over 100 families.

Evelyn Fabian said the WHHS Winter Band Concert is this Thursday at 7:30 pm in the auditorium. Admission is free but donations for WHEAT and/or the WH Animal Shelter are greatly appreciated. Auditions for the WHHS Theatre Workshop Production of Annie will be coming up in the first week of January. The performance is set for March 23rd - 25th, please mark your calendars. WHHS junior and seniors attended an assembly with guest speaker, Chris Sandy, who warned students to be cautious of destructive decisions during the holiday season. His presentation received a lot of positive feedback. Tomorrow the Bailey Choral Department will be visiting WHHS to sing with the WHHS Choral Department. Hopefully they will inspire the middle school students to continue their musical education at the high school level. The board gave thanks.

Chairman Morrissey asked Evelyn and Andrew how they feel the levelling has been working. They take AP Classes so they are not really familiar with the levelling. Chairman Morrissey asked if they have heard any feedback from other students. Andrew said the issue is that there is never a medium and he feels like he is always in the middle and with math classes it is either jump into AP Calculus or stay in Academic Calculus but he feels like he is suited for an Honors Calculus but there are not enough students to fill that class this year. More students would be satisfied if there was an in between but then you would have to find a teacher for that class and fix the schedule. There are two extremes and there is no balance. Superintendent Cavallaro said he thinks that is something that may come. There are courses like English that has AP and Honors and Academic and regular some have five levels. Neil said the longer we do this the more accurately we can place the kids. Andrew said generally everyone is satisfied. The board gave thanks.

C.1.c. Board

Karen Pacelli reported that Forest School was working with White's Plumbing this year and they collected toys and donations for children and were able to reach out and support 50 families this year at Forest School. Parents are able to come and pick up toys and gifts

for the students tomorrow or Wednesday or they will be delivered to the families if they are not able to pick them up. Board members all commented on how wonderful this is.

Patrick Leigh took part in the interview procedure for the Principal of Washington School and liked the process a lot. A lot of interesting things came out of it like the writing aspect, a presentation aspect, and a question and answer portion. The only feedback I would give is maybe the committee should have more input with the question part especially for myself as finance chair there were some questions I would have liked to ask financially. For example how you would run a school and things of that nature. He is sure some of the other people who are parents or perhaps the PTA President had questions they would have liked answered but overall he thinks it was a great process and he really enjoyed it. He thinks the candidates were all awesome and all were suitable for the position and Patrick said he thinks the Superintendent made the right decision. Neil thanked Patrick. Chairman Morrissey thanked Patrick.

Rosemary Russo wished everybody happy holidays and Merry Christmas.

Susan Walker said during the December meeting of the West Haven Historical Society we had Mrs. Phyllis Silver and the Bel Canto Choir sing at the meeting. This is the third year in a row they have done this and we hope they never stop. The only sad news we heard was that most of the boys are graduating so next year it may be an all girls choir unfortunately but they were fantastic as ever. Sue also went to the Ward Heitman House last week to look at the dioramas they found from Thompson School in the 1930's which were in excellent condition. The students had built their projects out of wood and it is amazing the shape they were in after all these years. Sue also participated in the process to choose the next Principal of Washington School and she enjoyed getting to know the candidates better and she thinks Mr. Cavallaro made an excellent choice and she looks forward to working with her. Superintendent Cavallaro thanked Susan and said the numbers at Carrigan and Bailey are really good so we are hoping to get some boys out of this deal to the high school for the choir.

Robert Guthrie thanked the Superintendent and the administrators at Carrigan for making sure the seats are in and that the project is completed. Carrigan has their performance Wednesday night so we are happy to see that this has been accomplished since the last meeting. He had the opportunity to attend Seth Haley's concert and Pagel's Fourth Grade Chorus Concert. He attended the "Wreaths across America" assembly at Savin Rock School. Savin Rock School was one of three stops in CT, but only two schools, on that day. Students presented wreaths remembering the members of our military, sang patriotic songs, and waved American Flags. It was a very moving experience and he thanks Savin Rock staff and students for participating. The convoy of vehicles and people was so large it closed three streets around the school. Bob attended the Bailey Choral and Band Concert. The number of students participating was impressive. The staff did a great job preparing the students and putting on a wonderful performance. From a board perspective it was nice to see the students playing on new percussion instruments purchased for the music program. The staff and students were appreciative of the added instruments. He also attended the Ward Heitman House presentation on student dioramas. Ward Heitman

remains a source of learning for our students if they choose to visit. The Director of the Public Library was there and I spoke with her. Perhaps we could invite her to one of our spring board meetings to talk about the partnership for the summer reading challenge just to see what they have to offer with their changes to the school. Bob would ask the Superintendent to make sure we secure all photos from Stiles, Thompson and Blake that might be of historical significance to the history of the school district such as photos of the building and the person it was named after before ownership changes and they are lost. Superintendent Cavallaro said we will have to get items from the Blake Building and we have donated a lot of those types of things along with journals to the historical society but Neil is sure there are things that can be rounded up and inventoried better. Susan Walker said we have a lot of the student registers that people want to come and see every year as they go way, way back. Neil said people look for names and they find them; perhaps it is somebody semi-famous, a relative or somebody they knew when they were in the school district.

Chairman Morrissey stopped by the WHHS Alumni Hockey Game last week and they had a collection for Chris Scranton who was involved in a serious accident with his motorcycle way back. His children went to WHHS. Superintendent Cavallaro said he was very active in youth hockey and donated a lot of his time. Chairman Morrissey said our thoughts, prayers, and best wishes go out to Chris and to his family.

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 December 5, 2016 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
Patrick Leigh seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor.
Minutes are approved.

D.2. Resignations (Certified)

16-76 Jocelyne Morrell, JV Girls Soccer Coach – West Haven High School
Effective: Immediately
Reason: Personal

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve item #16-76
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve item #16-76
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion
Discussion: Rosa wished Jocelyne well in her Master's Program. She is a great soccer coach but is also a great softball and hockey coach. The soccer girls will miss her.
Chairman Morrissey said in her letter she said she was going for her masters so there is

not enough time to do all three things; you can't be too many places at once. She is a great coach with a great family from West Haven.
All board members present were in favor
Item #16-76 is approved.

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

D.4. New Business

16-77 Field Trip Permission Form Request for approximately 25 students from the WHHS Hockey Team, accompanied by adult supervisors, to travel to Washington D.C. from February 17, 2017 to February 21, 2017 in order to play two games and visit educational sites.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve item #16-77

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve item #16-77

Rosemary Russo seconded the motion

Discussion: Rosa said they are only missing one day of school. Neil said it is half a day as it is actually the long February weekend. Karen asked what the cost involved is. Neil said the Penalty Box is paying for it so it is not costing the kids or families anything. That is very nice. Patrick asked if they knew what teams they were playing. Rosa said it was listed in the letter. Neil said they are two teams from Virginia. These games don't count for our record for qualifying for the tournament but there are only 16 teams in division 1 and they all qualify. These are not scrimmages they will be played like real hockey games but won't count for our record for tournament seating. They are going to a Ranger game too which is nice.

All board members present were in favor

Item #16-77 is approved.

16-78 Recommendation to hire Twana Shirden as the Principal of Washington School.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve item #16-77

Robert Guthrie made the motion to approve item #16-77

Rosa Richardson seconded the motion

Discussion: Rosa wished Twana well and said she has the support of the board and all the staff and is sure she will do well. Twana thanked her. Jim said he is sure she will do a wonderful job on behalf of the students at Washington School.

All board members present were in favor

Item #16-77 is approved. Congratulations and applause followed from the board and audience. Twana thanked everyone.

F. Informational

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to adjourn.

Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
All board members present were in favor
The meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM

Superintendent Cavallaro wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary