

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
Pupil Services Committee Meeting
Board Meeting Room**

A Pupil Services Committee Meeting of the Board of Education was held on October 21, 2019 in the Board's meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT. The meeting was called to order by Rosa Richardson, Chairwoman of the Pupil Service Committee at 5:30 PM. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rosa Richardson Chairwoman
Rosemary Russo
Karen Pacelli
Susan Walker
Robert Guthrie

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

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

Chairwoman Richardson asked Joe Lucibello to talk about the number of enrolled SPED students in the district. Joe said we are never really sure what those numbers are going to be but right now at Pagels some of the rooms have 9 students and we have one room with 12 students but those are fourth graders. For the rooms that are mostly children with autism we try not to go above 6 or 7 students. The rooms that have 9 or 10 students do not require behavioral support it is more academic maybe OTPT and we can go to 10 or 12 depending on the students in the class. We have really worked on this and any students that have a high behavioral need and we can't give them an appropriate program in district those are the students who are outplaced. This is a team decision but the younger students that we have had over the last several years have more behavioral than health issues and are better off in a more specialized program. Superintendent Cavallaro said if you have seen our classroom numbers at the elementary schools they are very good. If we combine some for some reason there are a couple of classes we could disband to make room if we had to for another SPED Class or if we had an influx of 4th graders we do have some room. Right now class size in general especially at the elementary level is very good. Joe Lucibello said and to last year's budget we were able to add a couple of Special Ed teachers that were needed at Carrigan and Bailey. This actually helped us because now we have all these students going up to Carrigan and then on to Bailey so that allowed us to continue to do these programs and not have to create another class or outplace more students for whatever reason. Right now we are at a good place but the numbers change constantly every month. A handout was given to board members showing all the programs we have currently. The only one not shown was at the high school the ACES Collaborative and there are 20 students in that class. That program tuition wise is half of what it would be if we outplaced them. Rosa said and that age is 21

correct. Some stay until 21 and for the last two years we have a program at the Community House and they transition a lot of those students to that program. They do an 18 to 21 program. The reason we started doing this is because DDS works with the Community House so most of those students will transition to DDS so it seems like a natural progression plus they will stay in West Haven and the parents will see that this is a benefit and it is a year round program. We are in our third year of doing this and we have 8 or 9 students in it and are trying to get up to 10 or 12. We let the parents know that the progression now is Carrigan, the high school until 18 or 19 depending and then to the Community House. There will be some students who stay at the high school until 21 based on their needs and medical needs but most of the students transition to the Community House. Chairwoman Richardson said and the Community Connections is pretty much a day program for them correct? Yes everyday it is like going to work. They are starting to put in more programming for some students because we talked with the state about getting more job coaches and getting them supported at a worksite/jobsite. They are starting to implement that this year. Rosa said that is great.

Rosemary Russo said you don't have any of the pre-schools for Washington, Forest and Mackrille. Joe said because the ones we show here are more self-contained more Special Ed. Our Pre-K at the other schools special Ed students are in most of the programs but not to the level of these particular labs. Rosemary said one class at Seth Haley and one at Pagels had 16 and 19 and there is another PreK class at Seth Haley with 6 and one with 7 so why do you have so many in one class. The needs in those classes aren't as high as the other ones. Rosemary said so the classes with the least amount of students are high needs students. The classes with the higher number of students are Special Ed but with more speech and maybe developmental delays, no behaviors and mostly they are not autistic. Rosemary wanted to understand how it was so those are your inclusive classes. Correct. OK.

Rosa wanted to take a moment to review the student's outside district. We just started so we don't have a lot of tuition in the line items yet as they are sending us bills now. The handout showed the number of schools that are currently being used by the district. Some of the things are companies that we use for the nurses and for subs. Right now we are using Delta Group for some sub speech help. Most of the names are schools we actually use. Right now we have 130 students placed and we have 4 students pending right now. Last year we ended at 138 students. Last year we had 10 students that graduated but we also had a number of students move into district before school started that were already outplaced so 130 is the number right now and that is fluid and can change with time. A lengthy discussion about our budget and tuition costs was discussed and what is projected for this year. We average about a 3 to 5% increase due to tuitions which we have no control over. We also put in for excess cost money which helps us but the state changes the formulas all the time. We also get Medicaid money. Neil said given what we spent last year and what we budgeted for this year and what we expect to get back we are in pretty good shape. We use a number of schools based on the student's need and we do have some schools that have more students than others. ACES has a number of schools so they will have the most students. Karen Pacelli asked where the Children Center is located. It is in Hamden. She noticed it was 1 to 1 and Joe said some children have very serious needs. We don't have a lot of those students but we will have them. When

students have difficult times we have to add more services. We are working with young kids right now who will need a higher level of care and programming that are in kindergarten or first grade. Rosa asked if this was based on the number of restraints? This is based on a lot of things and we have a lot of younger students in need of that intensive program. The hope is that when they do get older maybe 4th or 5th grade they will be able to come back instead of doing it at a later time and maybe never being able to come back. We don't just outplace a student unless we have the data that shows the need and why we need to go there. 130 is a lot of students and if we didn't have all these programs the number would be twice what it is. Rosa would like to say we appreciate what you do and she has had ample opportunity to go to Seth Haley, Pagels and in particular walk through the medically challenged facility along with the self contained classroom and it takes very special people to do what they do and without that we wouldn't have a board of ed budget and for that we are very appreciative. Joe said you guys listen to what we need and our people do a great job and there are some tough classrooms that we have but our staff does a phenomenal job and the parents appreciate that their son or daughter is still in district and is successful. All of this and the support that we have for staff is critical and it affects everything. Rosemary said she works in New Haven and share a lot of the therapists from ACES and they come in and say this would never happen in West Haven. They talk about the equipment you have and it makes her feel so good to hear that from them and it also makes her feel very jealous because she wants the same stuff. Joe said when we make decisions it is for the best interest of the kids money aside if we can do it in a way they can stay in district then that is what we will do. The board gave thanks. Rosa said youguys are right on top of keeping us informed

Chairwoman Richardson asked for a motion to adjourn.

Karen Pacelli made the motion to adjourn

Rosemary Russo seconded the motion

All board members were in favor

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola

Board Secretary

BOE Student Report 10/7

1. Students came up with a list of concerns and suggestions regarding the lunch lines. A meeting has been set for with the head of food service to go over these concerns.
2. This week is spirit week at the high school. Our homecoming football game will be played at some point this week, but last we heard, the schedule is not definite.
3. The PA system is set to be up and running in the old part of the school by October 11th.