

D.1.a

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Regular Board Meeting Minutes  
Board's Meeting Room**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, September 16, 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 Rosemary Russo, Chairwoman of the Board of Education at 6:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS  
IN ATTENDANCE:**

- Rosemary Russo Chairwoman
- Robert Guthrie, Vice Chair
- Susan Walker, Secretary/Treasurer
- Patrick Leigh
- Patricia Libero
- Karen Pacelli
- Rosa Richardson

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

- Lauren Aceto
- James W. Morrissey

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

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

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**PRESENT:**

- Brendan Carew
- Mackenzie Gardner
- Anthony Vendrella.

**B. Public Portion of Meeting**

Chairwoman Russo welcomed everyone to the board meeting. Chairwoman Russo asked three times if anyone would like to address the board. There were no speakers. Public Portion ended at 6:04 PM.

**REPORTS**

**C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools**

Superintendent Cavallaro discussed the update on the Bailey Roof. It is in the hands right now of Frank Gladwin who is reviewing the plans, specs and materials. They still need to finish the job and when Frank gives the green light they are ready to proceed. Frank and the engineer that gave you a report have been up on the roof examining it. There were some seams in other areas that they quickly patched and they don't believe there have been any other additional leaks. Ken Carney assured Neil that they will be submitting the

049, which is the form seeking reimbursement, in order to replace the remainder of the roof prior to the beginning of the next legislative session. Roofs are non-priority projects and we will know at the end of the next legislative session in May or June whether we can move forward with that project. This would also require City Council approval and hiring an engineer to approve specs but this is all reimbursable. The roof is secure and there have been no leaks since they finished the work on top.

Bob Guthrie asked when the remainder of the roofing material will come off the property closest to the dumpster site. Neil asked Bob if he was talking about the material under the tarp and Bob said yes. Neil thinks that is material needed to finish the project; he doesn't think it is trash. Bob said it looks like quite a bit of plywood. Neil is not sure he doesn't know if they need it to finish or they use it as a platform he will find out and get back to Bob.

Neil updated the board on where we stand on the Magnet School Tuition. Hamden is in the same predicament that we are in and Mike D'Agostino a representative from Hamden is very involved and put the legislation in which requires a year's notice. We have been working with our legislative delegation and it seems like there is some momentum to make the pitch that cities like Hamden and West Haven can't afford this. Neil also spoke to Keith Norton the Director of Strategic Planning for the State Department of Education and shared his concerns and the letter he received from Dr. Birks and he took a copy of the letter and will run it by the legal department at the State Department of Education. His interpretation, the way Neil read it, was that before giving notification you must have permission from the Commissioner of Education and that had to happen prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>. By them putting us on notice prior to the Commissioner of Education granting permission doesn't seem to fall within the guidelines of the statute but they are having the legal department review that to get a definitive answer.

Superintendent Cavallaro said Sumedha Chowdhury put in for Norma Merced to receive the 2019 Yale Educator Award. She worked extremely hard to get Sumedha into Yale. When we had the celebration for the student reps Sumedha had just found out that day that she had gotten into Yale. Sumedha also send Neil a card thanking him because he had made a couple of calls to help Sumedha. It is a terrific feeling to know she is grateful and thankful for what we were able to do for her. Neil is getting her note to him framed and is happy that Norma who worked extremely hard to get Sumedha into Yale received that recognition because it is very well deserved. It really was nice of Sumedha to remember the people that helped her.

Before Anne begins to share our good news with you there are a lot of the curriculum people here tonight Colette, Nicole, Raffaella, Joe, Karen, and some of the math coaches are here Paul, Jen, Nathan and Maria. We wanted to share the information with you and will have a more detailed report later but we wanted to share some good news.

Dr. Druzolowski said she will be giving us some highlights and what we are looking at is in isolation as compared to the DRG, Alliance and the State. These are only the SBAC Scores that everyone takes unless there is an IEP which states they are exempt from it.

We have done an analysis and there is no report card yet but this is the earliest we have ever received this data. Anne gave ten of the highlights.

1. West Haven is number 1; it is first in its DRG for growth in Mathematics for all students and high needs. At one point it was closer to the bottom and then stayed at the middle for a long time. It has moved to be number 1 which is tough to do when you have mathematics which is a need area across the state.
2. West Haven is number 3 in the DRG for growth in English/Language Arts and within two percentage points of the number 1. The top 3 are very close in terms of where they fall right now.
3. West Haven is second in the DRG for high needs growth in English/Language Arts and the whole state had growth in English/Language Arts this year and we just happened to be second in the DRG.

Ann said she will now talk about the Alliance Districts which number about 30 Alliance Districts in the state and some of them are very small so their (N) is very different in comparison so it is not always the biggest districts.

West Haven is 10<sup>th</sup> in the Alliance Districts for growth in English/Language Arts. The top percentage is 65.8% and in West Haven we are 59.5% and we continue to move up and we are in the top 3<sup>rd</sup> of all the Alliance Districts. Last year we were mid-point. Just as in the DRG we have proportionately grown.

West Haven is 5<sup>th</sup> in the Alliance Districts for growth in Mathematics. Districts above us are smaller such as Winchester, Windsor, Groton which is about the size of ours, and Vernon which is a little smaller with a different population and those districts are also not in our DRG they are above us. So 5<sup>th</sup> for growth in Mathematics is pretty impressive. Remember that all of the growth figures that you are getting contribute double points to our report card and our rating across the state. The state recognizes this formula because kids are always striving to move ahead not just waiting to get the golden ring of an A. This shows the kids are learning and while it is only testing grades 3 through 8 this also represents the PreK, K, 1 and 2 because without that foundation you can't get into digging deeper into the scores.

ELA demonstrated 56.2% growth with the state average for growth of EL students in ELA was 55.7%; we are slightly ahead in that. In general across the state the L population made more growth than the average population

Mathematics demonstrated 60% growth and exceeded the state average of 56.7% growth of L students in mathematics. West Haven's L student's growth in mathematics and ELA is within 3% of the state average of growth for all students not just that population. What everyone is trying to do is to get where we are where there are no gaps at all between populations. This also shows you that last year we pushed as a team to pay attention to the middle core because we didn't think we were getting what we could out of them. We have excellent coaches,

consultants, facilitators, EL teachers and support teachers you name it and we have great Tier 1 teachers so what you are seeing now is what the Tier 1 does when it is done correctly. Tier 1 instruction has to be solid and all of our coaches and consultants do that to support the classroom teachers as well.

We are just going to be waiting for our report cards to come so we know the distinguished schools. We had some great growths in different schools. All kids are taking the test with no exceptions. The graduation rate is going to be great right Dana. Yes it is! So all in all Anne is amazed at how well this whole district has done to support kids and she can't say enough good things about it. Thank you for being patient and indulgent and we will see what else is to come.

Neil asked if anyone would like to make a comment or two and Nicole Danishevsky said all our students are growing at significant rates in literacy and numeracy. She thanked all of you because without the continued support of us and our teacher leaders and our consultants, L teachers and SPED teachers it wouldn't have been possible to have the results we are getting. We have six elementary schools and they have all increased in their growth; it is amazing. We have schools that have over 80% growth in mathematics. Mackrille has just Jen supporting the classroom teachers so Nicole is thankful for the support you give us and we use it to the best of our ability to help our students and teachers.

Chairwoman Russo said slow and steady wins the race and you guys have done an amazing job. It didn't happen overnight it took years of building upon and you stuck with it and Dr. Druzolowski kept pressing and pressing and now here are the fruits of your labors. Congratulations the results are outstanding and really nice to hear.

Colette Bennett said our teams have become so cohesive in the language that they are using and the teachers are very accepting of their peers and the teams that come in and work with them and there is a good level of communication that is happening. When we are all talking it is not isolated what is happening in one school is happening in all the other schools because we train the trainers and they go out into the buildings and we have a real good leadership team working in the schools themselves delivering the same message and that is the result you see. It is a good report card.

Rosemary asked Anne if she was sure she didn't want to speculate a little. No, not really I am just very pleased. We have really stayed the course and that is most important in anything you do; persevere so thank you.

Rosa extended her personal thanks to each and every one of you because you are what makes West Haven have it and we appreciate it very much.

Karen said coming from a classroom teacher just like you mentioned with Tier 1 it is hard because you have so many; it is like the bell curve it is huge. So knowing that you are there to support us and support them it is needed. Believe

me I am always looking for the support. I thank you very much.. Applause followed.

### **C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report**

Brendan, Mackenzie and Anthony read the report on the last page of the minutes.

Bob Guthrie said one of the student clubs is doing a fundraiser with Zuppardi's Pizza and if one of you want to get the form to Marylou this board is very supportive of students and student organizations. Bob has a feeling there might be some pizza's ordered to support you guys.

### **C.1.c. Board**

Pat Libero is happy there is a Home Football Game. Does Fall Fest have a date; not yet. She is happy to hear the scores are up. Jen you are a superwoman that is why there is only one at Mackrille. It is a lot of hard work because when everybody is down in the trenches with the kids you feel like you are going through this drudgery and nothing is happening so it is nice to have this reward come in so congratulations to all of you and thanks for all your hard work.

Sue Walker sent her congratulations to all for doing so well and she knows what hard work that takes. She thinks it is fabulous and please keep it up.

Rosa Richardson said I have already given my kudos to you guys and I am glad we are off to a fantastic start in a new year; keep up the good work we appreciate it.

Patrick echoed everyone's sentiments congratulations great job. It is an amazing uptick in scores and it is really nice to see. He said his time on the board is slowly coming to an end and he wants to take the next couple of weeks to reflect what has happened over the past four years and he has been really happy to be a part of this board and have such a great board to bounce ideas off of and collaborate with.

Karen Pacelli thanked everyone and asked them to keep up the good work.

Bob Guthrie said there are two upcoming CAFE Workshops the first is Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> for an update on legal issues and the next one is on December 10<sup>th</sup> and he will have Marylou share this information with all the board members.

Chairwoman Russo said in your packets you saw Neil's goals. Look them over and if there is anything you want to discuss get back to Neil and we will have them on the next agenda.

### **C.1.d. Committees**

#### **D.1. Approval of Minutes**

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting held on

September 3, 2019 in the Board's meeting room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT at 6:00 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Meeting minutes D.1.a.

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Regular Board Meeting Minutes are approved

**D.2. Resignations: (Certified)**

**19-96 Stacey Bannon**, Special Education Teacher – Carrigan Intermediate School

Effective: August 30, 2019

Reason: Personal

**19-97 Cristina DeMartino**, EL Teacher – Mackrille School

Effective: TBD

Reason: Resignation

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve consecutive items 19-96 and 19-97

Karen Pacelli made the motion

Bob Guthrie seconded the motion

Discussion: Joe Lucibello said #19-96 was the Special Ed teacher hired for the medically fragile lab at Carrigan and we also hired another inclusion teacher at Carrigan who had a background in working with those students so he went to the principal and said he would move into that job so we are now looking for an inclusion position teacher. Neil said we believe this will be easier to fill than the other position. Rosemary Russo said it is really good to have a male teacher. She has worked with a couple of male special ed teachers and they always have been really good with the kids and she thinks it is nice for these kids to have a male role model. Joe Lucibello would agree.

All board members present were in favor

Items 19-96 and 19-97 are approved

**D.3. New Hire: (Certified)**

**19-98 Biancesca Rivera**, 526 Third Ave., West Haven, CT 06516

EL Teacher – Mackrille School

Salary: \$45,333.00 Step 1BS + 30

Effective: TBD

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve item 19-98

Rosa Richardson made the motion

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor  
Item 19-98 is approved

**D.4. New Business**

**F. Informational**

Chairwoman Russo said the rest is informational and asked for a motion to adjourn  
Karen Pacelli made the motion  
Patrick Leigh seconded the motion  
All board members were in favor  
The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola  
Board Secretary

## **BOE Student Report 9/16**

1. Issues with passing time at the high school have been almost completely resolved.
2. Lunch lines have been getting better but still get backed up once in a while.
3. The senior class is planning fall fest.
4. The football team's first home game is this Friday against Conard.