

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**July 20, 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 July 20, 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 Chairwoman Pat Libero asked for a moment of silence for the four Marines who were killed. Her nephew is a Marine and this makes it near and dear to her heart.

**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

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Cebi Waterfield

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

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES  
PRESENT:**

**B. Public Portion of Meeting**

Chairwoman Libero welcomed everyone to the July 20th board meeting and stated that public session is now open and asked if anyone would like to speak. There were no speakers and public session was closed at 7:04.

**C. REPORTS**

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

Superintendent Cavallaro stated there will be two mandatory policies which we will bring before the board at a future meeting. The recording of domestic violence, which is partly

in place already, is one and the other policy which has been in the news will be immunizations for people with religious beliefs. Donna Kosiorowski is currently working with Michelle Laubin one of the Attorneys at Berchem Moses and Devlin who handles special policies. We want to be sure that everything we do is in compliance with what the policies need to state and then will bring these policies before the board.

Superintendent Cavallaro said the fiscal year ends June 30<sup>th</sup> and we wanted to apprise you of where we stand right now. We have been meeting with the city finance director and we are in the audit process right now. Matt Cavallaro passed out information on the budget and gave a quick overview. All the expenses for the 2014/2015 year have not hit yet. We are still waiting for the June medical insurance which is a journal entry by the city. We have a little over \$742,000.00 left in our operating budget and we have a couple of other revenue streams that don't affect the budget. We had a \$129,000.00 reimbursement from the state for a security grant that happened two or three years ago and we finally received payment but that can't be directly reimbursed in our budget it is in a separate line item that we will see in the audit for school grants and this will also benefit us. We feel like we are in a very good position to hit our number once the medical benefits hit. Rosa Richardson asked if we are overextended on our medical benefits currently. No. The only line item we are over extended on is Special Ed Tuition; it is 1.7 million dollars over what we budgeted. We have been lucky and had some great success in our medical benefits and saved a lot of money there. Eventually we will have to go to the city and ask for some of the excess costs to cover this overage. There is really no way around it without a significant contribution to get our budget number up to actually put some money in the Special Ed Tuition Account. The increases we have received for the past few years go directly just to salary. We haven't had the luxury to receive our full request for at least six or seven years. This year alone we had thirty new students come in throughout the year. Those students were all outplaced and that is a very significant number. Tuition from these outside schools is not going to go down it will continue to go up. Chairwoman Libero said she knows Joe Lucibello does what he can do to try and make that number go down but what can we do about the unexpected students that move in; is there anything we can do? Joe said this year alone we haven't started the new school year yet and we already have six new students move into the district that are already outplaced in out of district schools. We were able to bring back ten to twelve students and now half of those slots are already taken. When students come in we typically will have an initial meeting but if they are already at ACES we have a conversation with the district that is sending the child to us and we will see if this is a student they were thinking of bringing back or does this student need to be where they were. A lot of our PreK students are coming in with high needs so it is tough to balance this but we are trying. Pat said it is the unexpected that we have no control over. Matt said that is what excess cost is designed to do to help lessen the unexpected costs throughout the year. Through our cost savings measures throughout the year we have been able to handle the overage but eventually those savings are going to run out and we will have to go to the city for some of that money.

#### Questions

Jim Morrissey asked if they had a ballpark figure for what the June medical might be. Matt said it varies month to month depending on how many people go to the doctor

because we are self-insured. On the average it runs anywhere from \$500,000.00 to a little over \$700,000.00. When you have a couple of really serious illnesses it can really jump up but we haven't really seen that. Bob Guthrie stated when looking at the 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 tuition we have had a problem with the last two years do we need to think about adjusting the 2015/2016 budget number now or start having those preliminary discussions about the excess money. Neil said when Matt gives his budget reports we make it a point to point out the tuition. We have been able to do internal transfers to cover that amount but there is less flexibility in our budget and it is getting a little more worrisome as time goes on. We should be having the discussion but our obligation is to put the city on notice. A further discussion took place. The Alliance money needs to be used for school improvement and we feel that the All Day Kindergarten is the best place to put the money at this point. Bob asked once this is approved will the state start releasing this money or is there a lead time for this too? Matt said the Alliance Grant is a monthly draw down that he does with other grants like Title 1 etc. Rosemary Russo said you stated there are six new students who are already in private placements is there any thought of initiating new programs where maybe you could group four or five of those students and that would be a savings. Joe said we do have a collaborative program with ACES at the high school and we increased the size of that program so we were able to bring back and/or keep students in. Rosemary asked about starting different programs because so many kids are being outplaced. If there are similarities and their chronological ages don't have a big span is there any way to combine these kids to make a small Special Ed class in addition to what we already have. Joe said this is something they look at all the time but every year it is different. We are trying to focus on behavioral and mental health issues that we have and right now we don't have the resources for that. Rosemary said but if you didn't have to pay the tuition out you would save the resources that way to start a new program. Joe said potentially but you have to have the right people and the right program and that is not easy to do in district. Rosemary absolutely agrees. A further discussion took place.

Superintendent Cavallaro discussed All Day Kindergarten and said the money is coming in the form of the Alliance School Districts and the money is coming directly to the BOE. Anne has written the program into the grant and the money has to be spent on instruction and in school; more specifically school improvement. Many districts used funding from the Alliance Grant to fund their All Day Kindergarten Programs. Neil doesn't believe this money is going anywhere soon but we did talk about maybe after the fifth year it could get rolled into ECS funding. If we don't spend it on this we would have to spend it on something else which we could lose any way down the road. We believe it is a really good place to put this additional money. We know that All Day Kindergarten is going to be a requirement in 2018. This is a good way and the right way to spend this money. We have heard loud and clear that you want All Day Kindergarten and we are getting it in. We are concerned about class size but we feel it is more important to get the program in with the number of paras in the building and the number we have written into the grant we will be OK this year. We have a little bit of flexibility and have requested five classroom teachers and two itinerant teachers and believe with the new schedule at Bailey we can take an art teacher and move them to the elementary level and create an overflow classroom at Mackrille so we can send some kids there. This is the best place for this

overflow classroom. Neil gave kudos to the principals, Stefania Izzo-Larry and Matt Cavallaro and especially Anne Druzolowski who wrote the grant and revised the grant. As far as hiring teachers we would like to move on this quickly if the board approves the program with a special meeting and not wait until the August meeting. We are ready to go!

#### Questions

Bob Guthrie asked where we stand staffing wise. Neil said we have hired most of the shortage areas and have a couple on tonight's agenda. If the program is approved tonight we will need to look at the pool of candidates and see where we feel they would best fit the need and then assign them to that spot. Once the program is approved we are ready to start making phone calls tomorrow. We have to make some internal transfers first then we will make our calls and no later than next Monday we would like to have a Special Meeting to approve the teachers.

Betsy Davis thought when we were originally talking about this money it was coming from the ECS grant that the city had to approve to give to us. Neil said some of the handouts we gave the board showed an increase in ECS money however when the budget was finalized at the state level the additional money the \$499,000.00 came in the form of Alliance Grant money so it comes directly to the BOE. Betsy said wasn't there talk about the city having to approve it. There was but when we received the preliminary numbers from the state we saw an increase in ECS funding and our assumption was it would go to the city and then would have to be transferred but this is better for us the way the money came down. The additional money came from the Alliance Grant.

Jim Morrissey said so basically the ECS money is totally separate from the Alliance Grant money. Yes. Rosa said there is no additional ECS money right. Correct. Matt said our budget combines the Alliance Grant and ECS money to make up the state portion of our operating budget. The Alliance money is a draw down and the ECS money goes to the city in two checks in December and May. This money is built into this 87 million dollar number. Jim Morrissey said so we won't have to have city council approval on this. Neil said no we won't but it does need final state approval and we don't expect this to be an issue since several districts especially Alliance districts have used this money to fund their programs. Rosa said I know that we can be held accountable for budget shortfalls as a board. Can anybody tell her what the consequences would be? We are being asked to vote on something where we guess the money will be there for the next two years but we don't know what the city will be able to provide for us after those two years are up. When we do wind up with a shortfall what is the consequence to us as a board when we can't meet our budget. Neil said if this money was to go away or the ECS formula was to change we would have to make some radical decisions. In answer to Rosa's question one thing you cannot do is knowingly adopt an invalid or underfunded budget and we would never allow you to do this. As long as you don't knowingly operate a budget that is underfunded you have met your obligation as a Board of Education. Rosa just wanted clarification and thanked Neil. Jim Morrissey said the money is here and here for next year also. People up in Hartford worked very hard to get us this money and additional money from the Alliance grant. He is hoping that down the road they will continue to work just as hard to get funding for education in West Haven. No one on this board would knowingly want to short change education. Rosa said this data sheet is a perfect example of why All Day Kindergarten is so important. Mark Palmieri said his

feeling is that we absolutely need All Day Kindergarten. With this Common Core process there is a lot more information that needs to be addressed to our children. His biggest concern is down the road. He really wants to be able to sustain this program and would like to have a sit down with the Mayor, City Council and others because we need to stop being short changed when it comes to education in our town. Next year even though we are getting this extra money for kindergarten we can't go to 1% we need to be at 3% for our raises and Mark said he has been on the board ten years now and he is tired of seeing that this board has to constantly make cuts. He doesn't want to see us go backwards. Thanks to this administration we have great programs right now we can't lose and we need a commitment from the city end so that they can help give us more funding; we can't live on 1% and rely on the state. Mark said he will vote for All Day Kindergarten but he also has a duty to the tax payers so something needs to be done. People need to sit down and talk about this and do what is right not only for our kids but for the taxpayers. We need to find other ways to do business; whether there is some type of freeze or whether there are some cuts but it has to stop being the cuts on the BOE. Pat Libero said Neil, Anne and Matt have done things with the electric and have put low lighting in to try and save money. Pat thinks we have done a lot on our end to save money and we do need more money in order to make it and this has been going on for a while. Mark said during these next two years there needs to be a lot of talk. Rosa said not talk action. Discussion and action is what we need to have said Pat. Mark said we can't keep getting 1% because that state money will dry up sooner or later so we need to stop this 10 year run of 1% every year. Jim Morrissey said Mark's points are well taken but only seven towns in the State of Connecticut don't have All Day Kindergarten and we were one of the seven out of 169 towns. Jim doesn't know of any teachers that were laid off in the last few years. On the city side Jim believes they are trying to maintain their costs too and everybody is in the same boat here. It is not an easy fix. Hopefully down the road with more development in the city we will bring more tax revenue in so there will be an ease on the taxpayers. As everybody knows we are a high tax city so everybody has to watch their nickels and dimes. What Jim sees right now is a golden opportunity for this All Day Kindergarten and there is no doubt in his mind that he is going to vote for this tonight. This has been a long time coming. Our Mayor has worked hard along with our state delegation and State Senator Gayle to get this money and he applauds them. This is a great day in education for the City of West Haven tonight if we approve All Day Kindergarten.

Stefania Izzo-Larry gave an overview of the 2014 – 2015 Full Day Kindergarten Cohort Data sheet which is included at the end of the minutes. Questions were asked and responded to. Many students from both Savin Rock and Forest schools also qualified for free and reduced lunch and students from Forest and Savin Rock in kindergarten have surpassed many of their peers in Seth Haley, Pagels and Mackrille and this is extraordinary considering where they came in at. You will see that given more time we will start bridging that gap and we will see less and less students requiring supplemental services or remediation because they will have a solid foundation. Pat asked if Stefania would agree that if we had started Forest in September their numbers would have been higher. Absolutely, had Forest started in September they would have been right on the mark with Savin Rock. A further discussion took place.

## Questions

Bob Guthrie asked if there was a target class size for All Day Kindergarten. Neil said the average size is 24. We will increase the paras at Forest so that will help. We are seeing a reduction in population so that will help. Stefania said these numbers also include students who sign up for a magnet school so parents came to the registration even though their child may attend a magnet school. Rosemary asked the total number of incoming kindergarten students. There are 484 and this year we had 434. Rosemary said these are really impressive figures; all of you should be very proud.

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

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

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

**D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Special Board Meeting** held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on June 17, 2015 at 6:00 PM.

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Mark Palmieri seconded the motion

Discussion: Rosemary Russo said at the June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting we talked a lot about the shops and opening in the fall. She knows the minutes are not verbatim but she would like to see something in there about the shops and also requested that these minutes reflect the discussion we had that the shops are in the plans and the demolition phase of the G Wing as many parents have asked her about this as they are the parents of students who actually lobbied to Save Our Shops. She would also like to know what will happen to the tools that are there. Neil said they did an inventory and went through the entire G wing and that G Wing is not scheduled to be used for the first semester however everything has been inventoried and saved. We are going to purchase some computer equipment because we are going to have to move some of the shops temporarily but the intention is, from what he has been told, because it is the first area that is being disrupted it is going to be the first area we will be able to get back in. We are working with Central Connecticut State University as far as ordering equipment for the new building and what kind of technology we need and the auto shop is included in the plans. There is a metal shop which we might call manufacturing down the road or advanced manufacturing and there is space available for that as well as carpentry/woodwork. There are three big classes for that and that all comes with new equipment as well as the other departments. This is all included in the actual money that is reimbursable by the State of Connecticut. Rosemary asked if Neil knew where the swing space for the shops would be in the fall. Neil doesn't know the exact rooms but does know they will be using a lot of the computer rooms that are across from the cafeteria because those are some of the larger areas. Rosemary thanked Neil. The information requested will be added to the amended minutes of June 17<sup>th</sup> as an addendum to the minutes.

Rosa Richardson withdrew her motion to approve the June 17<sup>th</sup> minutes and made the motion to table the June 17<sup>th</sup> minutes.

Mark Palmieri withdrew his motion to second the June 17<sup>th</sup> minutes and seconded the motion to table the June 17<sup>th</sup> minutes.

All board members present were in favor

Minutes from June 17<sup>th</sup> have been tabled.

Rosa stated that Freedom of Information doesn't require anything except discussion on in minutes. Rosa just wanted to make that point of order. Chairwoman Libero said since the shops have been such an issue we should put this in.

**D.1.b. 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 June 1, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

Mark Palmieri made the motion to approve the minutes

Rosa Richardson seconded the motion

Discussion: Rosemary Russo abstained as she was absent

All other board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

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

**15-58 Joanna Lapham, ESL Teacher – Carrigan School**

Effective: June 18, 2015

Reason: Resignation

**15-59 Abdul Choudhry, Language Arts Teacher – Bailey Middle School**

Effective: Immediately

Reason: Resignation

**15-60 Patrick Loman, Technology Education Teacher – West Haven High School**

Effective: Immediately

Reason: Resignation

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve items 15-58, 15-59 and 15-60

Mark Palmieri made the motion to approve the items

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present were in favor

Items 15-58, 15-59 and 15-60 are approved

**D.4. New Hire: (Certified)**

**15-61 Jocelyn Morrell, 34 Sorenson Road, West Haven, CT 06516**

Assistant Girls Soccer Coach – WHHS

Effective: Immediately

Salary: \$2,100

**D.4. New Hire: (Certified) Continued**

**15-62 James Lucchesi, 11 Edgecomb Street, Hamden, CT 06517**

Assistant Boys Soccer Coach – WHHS

Effective: Immediately  
Salary: \$2,100

**15-63 Qi Li Kuang**, 1145 Wolcott Road, Wolcott, CT 06716  
Math Teacher – Bailey Middle School  
Effective: August 25, 2015  
Salary: \$45,000 BS (Step 3)

**15-64 Amanda Wright**, 24 Crestwood Road, Bethany, CT 06524  
Inclusion Teacher – Carrigan  
Effective: August 25, 2015  
Salary: \$47,500 BS (Step 4)

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve items 15-61, 15-62, 15-63 and 15-64  
Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve the items  
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members present were in favor  
Items 15-61, 15-62, 15-63 and 15-64 are approved

**D.5. New Business**

**15-65** Approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs (ED-099) Healthy Food Certification Statement

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-65  
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve item 15-65  
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members were in agreement  
Item 15-65 is approved

**15-66** Approval of the District Contact and Information Sheet for 2015 - 2016 Healthy Food Certification

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-66  
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve item 15-66  
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members were in agreement  
Item 15-66 is approved

**D.5. New Business (Continued)**

**15-67** Approval of the following listing of teachers from Bailey Middle School as Team Leaders for 2015/2016: Team 1 - Greg Heudorfer, Team 2 - Deanna

Pucillo, Team 3 - Richard Hemming, Team 4 - Cindi Anastasio, Team 5 - Kevin Hardy, Team 6 - Sherry Mitchell, Team 7 - Sarah Vinci, Team 8 - James Mastriano, SPED - Jacqueline Miconi, Art/PE/Music - Kelly Flynn and Computers/Wood/STEM/Spanish - Sheila Krajcir

Pat Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-67  
Rosemary Russo made the motion to approve item 15-67  
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members were in agreement  
Item 15-67 is approved

**15-68** Approval of the Listing of Elementary Unit Leaders by school for 2015 – 2016

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-68  
Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve item 15-68  
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members present were in favor  
Item 15-68 is approved

**15-69** Approval of the 2015-16 Consolidated Alliance and Priority School District Application

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve item 15-69  
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve item 15-69  
Robert Guthrie seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members present were in favor  
Item 15-69 is approved

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to adjourn.  
Mark Palmieri made the motion  
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion  
The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Marylou C. Amendola  
Board Secretary

2014 – 2015 Full Day Kindergarten Cohort Data

**Demographics**

	Savin Rock	Forest
# of Students	102 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White – 25%</li> <li>• Black – 22%</li> <li>• Hispanic – 49%</li> <li>• Asian – 4%</li> </ul>	89 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White – 18%</li> <li>• Black – 31%</li> <li>• Hispanic – 44%</li> <li>• Asian – 6%</li> <li>• American Indian – 1%</li> </ul>
# of Classes	4 (Two 1 <sup>st</sup> Yr. Teachers)	4 (One 1 <sup>st</sup> Yr. Teacher)
# of ELL	35 Students	30 Students
# of SPED	8 Students	15 Students
Full Yr. Start Date	August 27, 2014	December 1, 2014

**Data**

	Savin Rock	Forest
Reading (DRA)	<u>Spring 13-14</u> 41% at Proficient or Above <u>Spring 14-15</u> 82% at Proficient or Above *41% Increase	<u>Spring 13-14</u> 58% at Proficient or Above <u>Spring 14-15</u> 74% at Proficient or Above 16% Increase
Math (Symphony)	<u>Spring 13-14</u> 23% at Proficient or Above <u>Spring 14-15</u> 41% at Proficient or Above 18% Increase	<u>Spring 13-14</u> 17% at Proficient or Above <u>Spring 14-15</u> 40% at Proficient or Above 23% Increase

**Strategies**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Year of Revised Curriculum Implementation
- Reintegration of Play-Based Centers
- Research-Based Phonemic Awareness Program (Sounds Sensible)
- Movement Enhanced Learning (MEL) w/ PE Staff
- Computers on Wheels (COWS) in Classrooms – Lexia/Symphony
- Daily 5 Stations – Increased Reading Stamina
- Kindergarten Stations w/Reading, ELL, and SPED Staff
- Letter/Sight Word Drills (via PowerPoint)