

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**  
**June 7, 2010**  
**Regular Board Meeting**

The Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education began at the Blake Administration Building, 25 Ogden Street, West Haven on June 7, 2010. The meeting was called to order by Howard Horvath, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:05 p.m. and opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS  
IN ATTENDANCE:**

Howard Horvath Jr., Chairman  
T. Sean Maher, Vice Chairman  
Eric Murillo, Secretary/Treasurer  
Dorinda Borer  
M. Toni Paine  
Robert Saley

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Andrew DePalma  
Mark Palmieri  
Patrick Egolum

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Anne Druzolowski  
Dave Cappetta, Director of Finance

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**PRESENT:**

Eric Pang  
Brandon Patterson

Howard Horvath welcomed everyone to the West Haven Board of Education regular meeting for June 7, 2010. He requested that they have the presentations before the public portion if there were no objections. There were no objections and he turned the meeting over to Superintendent Cavallaro.

**C. REPORTS**

Neil introduced Mrs. Gardner, Principal of WHHS and Rich Weber who spoke about the Alternate Program Mr. Weber showed a brief power point which Patti Fusco will put on the website for all to read. Mr. Weber introduced Mr. Robert Jeffords and Mrs. Sandra Dickens who were also in attendance in support of the Alternate Program and the two

WHHS students who gave a presentation to the board were Stephen Flores and Brittany Gould.

Mr. Weber spoke about the success of the program this year and stated it looks to get even better next year. There were some obstacles to overcome in the beginning of the year such as the transition back to the high school and the number of teachers they were dealing with, but the strides they made and the ground they covered ended up being well worth the effort. The improvements for next year will be with the “school within a school”, the team teaching model and also to improve the program as a whole by switching the hours to a slightly earlier schedule. He stated the program was truly challenging this year but also truly successful.

Brittany Gould will be headed back to ‘regular’ school next year at WHHS. She did very well and is one of the success stories. Her first go at 9<sup>th</sup> grade was unsuccessful and she earned only .25 of a credit during the school year 2008 – 2009. In the Academy this year she will finish with 6 full credits and a 3.43 GPA. She will be a full sophomore to begin the school year 2010-2011. She hopes to play for the girl’s hockey team in the winter.

Stephen Flores will be headed to the Adult Ed program next year so he can finish high school. He will have his WHHS diploma by May of 2011. He also never fared well in ‘regular’ school and took this year to get back on track and earn 6 credits. He looks forward to finishing next year and going on to work or possibly a local community college. Rich was impressed with his maturity and growth throughout the year. He stated that he really is a great kid and he will continue to do well next year due in part to his time spent in the Academy this year.

The Board gave thanks.

Neil introduced Kurt Ogren who introduced students from the DTP Program (Developing Tomorrow’s Professionals) Gilbert Agyman, Tyrone Bromfield, Kofi Dwamena, Richard Miller and Robert Sutton. Richard Miller and Gilbert Agyman both gave speeches which will be attached to the end of the minutes along with an outline of what Mr. Ogren spoke about. Exhibit (A) Alternate Program. He wanted to state how proud he is of the young men of the DTP.

The Board gave thanks.

## **B. Public Session**

Nancy Rossi, 12 Robin Rd. stated that you are supposed to have a quorum before you meet and the Chairman is not allowed to bring the meeting to order without a quorum. She doesn’t know if she is right about this so she will ask Peter Barrett to render a decision. Neil stated he did want the presentation to take place and it was his preference

but he would not have put the board in jeopardy. A short discussion took place about this.

She has never been more upset to learn of the closing of Molloy and thinks the board was very wrong to do this. It was unfair and the children were sold out and wanted the board to please revisit this.

She passed out a copy of Policy 5117.3 Students – School Attendance Areas-New Housing. This policy has been in effect since 1985. She asked that a copy of this be made part of the minutes. She read it into the record. What she read is attached as Exhibit D.

Since 1984 we have had several housing developments and she will FOI tomorrow and wants copies of these reports from board meetings that decide what schools these children go to. The reason the school is closing is first economically. Molloy was picked because they had the smallest group of students this is due to housing developments in the shore area in the 80's. Students were not sent to Molloy School instead additions were made to accommodate students at Haley, Pagels and Bailey. These schools are up to capacity with additions and Molloy is up to capacity without additions. I have a problem with that. I have the racial % of who goes where and Molloy has one of the highest minority population. They spent no money on that side of town but the kids did well in spite of this.

I have yet to read anywhere where they closed a school that is 2<sup>nd</sup> best in the city and excelled in closing the achievement gap. Children on my side of town deserve just as much as children on the other side of town. Mrs. Rossi wants that policy researched and wants to know why it wasn't followed. When a board and superintendent do not follow policy your children are getting punished. I want this researched and the kids at Molloy deserve better than this.

We were first told that all the kids would be split between 3 shore schools and now we are hearing it is not the case. Why did we pay to put a boiler in a school that might be closed? This should have been addressed. I will wait for my FOI request and in 30 days will file an appeal.

Why did we pay \$450,000 for the turf at the football field why can't the Nicke Site be used? You still have time to take another look at Molloy there is still time; they defied the odds.

You have a phenomenal principal at Carrigan now why would you move a person from there; she has already done 6, 7, & 8<sup>th</sup> and the difference in that school is remarkable.

Regarding facilities etc., I did not read anywhere where any community moved their administrative offices from their city to another. We closed three schools in the last 12 months and laid off 50 some odd teachers. Where did the \$650,000 go - she would like

to see this in print on paper. She would like to know it is being utilized to save jobs. The board gave thanks.

Dave Orio, 375 Captain Thomas Blvd. thanked Neil, Dave Russell, Jolene Barnes and Dave Cappetta for meeting and creating ways to keep people working. We are trying to make the best out of a bad situation. We are grateful for the progress made to this point and we hope to meet again before laying off any employees.

Javaria Sandiford, 241 Highland Street has spoken at a previous board meeting and stated what a wonder job the teachers at Molloy School have done with her children. She is one of the parents whose children are being sent to SRCS and she wanted to know how the redistricting was done because there are four busses on her street taking children to four different schools - Seth Haley, Mackrille, Pagels and SRCS. This will be answered under administration later in the meeting. She asked who the teachers are that will be teaching the curriculum will they be the same as last year. Yes was the response. I have a son at Carrigan from 8:00 – 2:15 and two children that will go to SRCS with a different schedule. Now they will be completely disrupted. Her son visited SRCS today and she wondered how we are going to make it easier for them when there are schools within a couple of block of them. How are you saving money on busing with four busses on the same street. Howard Horvath said those are great questions and we will try to answer them later in the meeting. The board gave thanks.

Eric Brown, 31 Molloy Rd., stated that ECS grants that are being supplied by the state. He has two children that use Title 1 for reading and Math. His children will attend Haley which is not a Title 1 school so that eliminates the Title 1 program his children receive. His children are being affected. Some parents have to walk to get their children or take the bus. You have a 15 minute limit if the school calls to pick up your child and with the move I don't know how long it will take me now. The board gave thanks.

Cynthia Scarantino, 29 Oleander Avenue said this is her second time speaking. Closing Molloy is a tragedy; the #2 school that is rated 10<sup>th</sup> in the state doesn't make any sense. You have dedicated teachers, parents and students at that school. There is a level of trust there. The teachers will be new and the climate will be different. It is easier to close down a school in a cluster rather than Molloy. This will affect my property value and I don't agree with the closing of Molloy and will not sit back and allow this to happen. The board gave thanks.

Robert Guthrie, 11 Spruce Peak Lane spoke and his presentation is marked Exhibit E. The board gave thanks.

Hugo Pisani (don't know if last name is correct), 68 Eagle Place His children would have been attending Molloy in the future and it was a rude awakening to hear that Molloy was closing. This closing was noticed to parents of kids attending Molloy but not to the community people like me know nothing about it. Don't think it is fair to spend \$465,000 on a soccer field. I don't know who approved that. It is clear that I am on the wrong side of the map. We are talking about education for the future of this town. I am asking you

to go back to the drawing board and make plans to better affect the community and share the facts. You don't have enough facts to move forward and solve the problems. Get back to the drawing board and come up with something better. A further discussion ensued. The board gave thanks.

Rosemary Russo, 115 Pleasant Rd. feels the urgency to talk about the closing of Molloy School. The people in this school had a goal to close the achievement gap and Molloy School did this and you closed the school. We had the answers and you closed the school. 50% of our successful schools are gone. Three schools have been on the list for needing improvement and Molloy students will now be going to those schools. Molloy is a group of teachers who worked hard and progressed and you closed it. How can you live with it. The BOE took students from Molloy and you never considered bringing kids in from housing developments to fill their places. This was a big mistake. I hope the rumors are not true that it will be a hotel. The board gave thanks.

Sandy McCauley, 86 Richmond Avenue is the school nurse at Thompson and President of the Nurses Union. She wanted to let everyone know about the celebration at Thompson School. Instead of Field Day they are having Olympic Day. Opening ceremonies are tomorrow at 10:15. Olympic Day will be June 9<sup>th</sup> and closing ceremonies on June 14<sup>th</sup>. All the children have been divided into countries and have learned about country they represent. All are invited. The board gave thanks.

Sandy Miller, 315 Country Hill Drive thanked Mrs. Borer, Mr. Murillo and Mr. Saley for all their efforts for the children. She knows there are more paras than teachers that were laid off and seniority shouldn't matter. City Council funds should be used to reinstate teachers and paras and keep them from being let go.

She attended the WHHS Honors Society and was disappointed that Superintendent Cavallaro and Howard Horvath were not in attendance. Neil stated he had a previous engagement at Yale. Mrs. Miller stated the students deserved better and are owed an apology. The board gave thanks.

Public session closed at 8:15 PM

### **C.1. Administration**

Neil discussed the out of district question raised during public session. If this answer does not fully answer the question please call him tomorrow. Some students that were not living in the Molloy district to start with would not be attending the schools mentioned earlier. For example Highland Street would be in the Thompson District. If students move during the year they are also allowed to remain in their school. It could be a matter of just where her address is. He will look into seeing why they will be at Savin Rock School.

He thanked Jolene Barnes and Patti Fusco for all the work they did. Patti would have been here tonight but had a family emergency. Jolene and Patti worked very closely with

u trying to save as many jobs as they possibly could. We do not have final placements yet and we are trying to bring back teachers due to retirements. We try to bring back teachers that were laid off rather than hire someone. Neil thanked Patti and the Union for working with them to save as many jobs as possible.

Jolene reviewed the process for movement of the teachers that were affected with the closing of schools. The primary goal was to keep as many teachers as possible. They did this with four objectives: seniority, certification, consistency and fairness and we also respected the contract language.

They took all of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and moved them to Carrigan for the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade Teachers that had a basic certification for elementary we moved to grade 6 (some to grade 5

We went department by department based on seniority (Neil said this allowed us to save secondary positions).

We took certified people in certain subjects and grouped them by seniority and placed them in the positions available.

We looked at requests from teachers where they preferred to be an we tried to honor them We contacted teachers at Thompson & Molloy that were to be displaced because of the closing and they gave us their first choice of all the available openings. Many teachers received their first choice and some did not. We tried to accommodate as best we could. The final phase is the teachers have from June 4<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> to make a request if a position becomes available. We are also honoring swaps. Four people were accommodated by doing this. We had to place people in areas other than their certification to save jobs. Patti and I worked together cohesively for the past two weeks to make a perfect list. We have an additional three tenured Art teachers with no positions for them. They had no idea their positions were in jeopardy. One teacher was told they have a position for next year.

Neil said we got from 3 positions lost in Art to 1 ½ in a couple of days and I'm not going to promise anything I can't deliver but I will try. We may possibly bring back some people to replace those leaving and this is due to the money given us. More resignations and retirements will be coming in. Jolene and Cathy Cassell and Neil have met with the Co-Presidents of the Paraprofessional Union. Unfortunately 20 notices to paras went out and we will meet with them tomorrow. We have met with AFSME and we hope the length process is because we want it to be accurate and the longer it takes the better off we will be.

Dorinda said that there were 56 teachers and now with retirements etc. what are we down to. Neil said officially we are down to 45. Dorinda asked how many AFSME people were there originally. Jolene said originally we were looking at the elimination of 12 eight hour custodial positions, 12 from eight hours to five hours, elimination of eight clerical positions. We are working with Dave Orio and his group to save money and save job. These figures hopefully will be reduced by the time we are done.

Eric Murillo asked what area were the ones she mentioned as unhappy areas. Jolene said someone who might have been teaching at Bailey will now be teaching the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. By moving them to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade it opened a position for someone specifically certified in English, Math, Science or Social Studies. This will save a few jobs. Eric asked how many teachers were in that category. Jolene wasn't sure.

Toni Paine asked if any Music Teachers were lost. Neil said two notices were given out and believes they will be able to call back one.

Neil stated the transition process is taking place and they are working on creating a 5/6 school. Frank Paolino, Principal of Carrigan and Taryn Driend, Assistant Principal were available and gave a power point presentation. The presentation is attached to the end of the minutes. Exhibit (B) Carrigan.

Frank Paolino and Taryn Driend spoke about the work being done at Carrigan during this transitioning period. They have outlined all the areas where teachers, administrators, staff and parents will be involved.

Dorinda Borer stated it sounds like there is a tremendous amount of work being done. She asked if parents can be given advance notice of upcoming events and asked if it could be put on the parent portal. She was told the band has their own website which lists events etc. Dorinda asked about the band program and if there was a shortage of band instructors. Neil said we will have a full time band teacher at each of the middle schools. A switch was made with instrumental and choral. And we did lose two teachers to service the band. This cam down to seniority and certification. Neil said he doesn't want to promise anything but if we add classes back a lot can happen over the summer.

The board gave thanks.

Neil said this is the type of work that has been going on all over the district. Dr. Cordone has been doing this at Bailey and with the amount of moves we are making we know there will be bumps in the road. We are having meetings now to work on these areas.

### **C.1. a. Status of Schools**

Dorinda asked for an updated budget. Neil said after the teacher transfers are done and we can call back some of the teachers and if you give us a couple of weeks after that we will be able to provide you a more accurate one.

Dorinda asked where the bulk of the \$650,000 from City Council is going. She knows we are hoping to bring back some teachers with it but where is the bulk of it going. Neil said for paraprofessionals and teachers and he will give more accurate numbers shortly. Dorinda asked the highest class size at the elementary level. One at Washington is at 28. The average class size is 24 or 25 and the max would be 30 at the high school level. Depending on where we bring the teachers back will bring the class size down. Dorinda asked if there was a shortage of substitute teachers. Yes we do; our salary is a little bit

low. We do pay less yes. Dorinda asked do we have stimulus money for this. Yes but the problem is getting the substitutes.

Eric Murillo asked if that Title I child from Molloy School that is moving to another school is Title I going to take care of his needs or how does that happen with that child to give him the assistance he needs. Anne Druzolowski said they receive comparable services and perhaps those schools with the new enrollments will be converted into Title I Schools but they will not know this until probably November. Eric asked if school choice is still viable for parents. Neil said yes school choice is viable for parents however I don't want to give false hope as we are limited to space available. You have to offer school choice based on availability.

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

The presentation from the student representatives Eric Pang and Brandon Patterson will be found at the end of the minutes. Exhibit C

Eric Pang also commented that this will be his last board meeting since he will be leaving to join the Marines. He thanked the board for having him be a representative and has enjoyed serving as a student representative. He has learned a lot. He stated that a building doesn't teach the students; it takes teachers and a good faculty.

Howard Horvath thanked Eric and said that our thoughts and prayers would be with him.

The board gave thanks.

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

Toni Paine said there is a government program that Alan Belchak is taking advantage of where they give away beef for free and the only cost is to get it processed into whatever we choose – hamburger. Alan will come to the next meeting to explain this. Toni also attended the concert at Carrigan and they did a great job.

Dorinda said that the seatbelt law didn't pass but there will be a bill where the tax will be discounted if seatbelts are installed.

Dorinda asked if consultants were coming back. Neil said there are no plans to bring back any retired administrators.

Sean Maher worked with the Yale Glee Club in the remote villages of the Dominican Republic. It makes you realize that you should be grateful for what you have because there are a lot who don't.

He stated from all the positive reports about the band and choral concert at WHHS it was the best concert.

Howie thanked Mr. Hawley, Mr. Ogren, and the young men of the DTP for a very impressive display and likewise Mrs. Gardner and Mr. Weber from the Alternate Program and stated how well the program is doing and hopes they continue their good work.

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

Dorinda for an update on transitioning. How many transitioning teams are there. Neil said the 5/6 transitioning team has the largest number. Dr. Cordone has met with two PTA's. Dorinda asked if there are transitioning teams at the elementary level. Neil said we invited parents to go to the orientations. Dorinda asked if we can get elementary transitioning parents involved earlier. Neil said that has been one of the goals.

Rob Saley said they had a discussion on the move to Yale or an alternative site. Information was passed out to board members and they were asked to give their suggestions, make changes etc. and return the forms to him in the next few days as their input is needed.

Dorinda asked for a side by side comparison of the cost of the move to Yale vs. the cost to possibly move to Molloy and what are the alternatives? She wants the cost at Blake, cost at Yale, cost at Molloy, cost at City Hall and Sean Maher asked for the cost at Thompson. Rob agreed.

Toni Paine said it should be a bottom line number if any of these facilities need to be upgraded. Rob agreed.

Eric asked if we will research the high school in detail. Rob will try his best. Rob will try his best.

Student Representative Brandon Patterson would be remiss if he didn't thank Eric Pang on behalf of Gypsy and himself for all the help he has given them throughout the year. They will miss him and wish him luck in the Marines.

Dorinda said if the administration is not going there what can we do to put it to good use. She asked that they research what constitutes a public use and how much of the building has to be used.

Howie Horvath thanked Jolene Barnes and Patti Fusco for their efforts in getting the information done in a timely fashion. He knows there were many people who were anxious to hear what was happening.

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

**D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Special Board Meeting for the Budget**  
held May 12, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at WHHS (Enclosure)

Toni Paine made the motion to approve item D.1.a.  
Rob Saley seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members present voted in favor  
No one was opposed  
Minutes are approved

**D.1.b. West Haven Board of Education Facilities Committee Meeting** held  
at Carrigan Middle School on May 17, 2010 at 6:00 PM at WHHS.  
(Enclosure)

Rob Saley made the motion to approve item D.1.b.  
Dorinda Borer seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members present voted in favor  
No one was opposed  
Minutes are approved

**D.1.c. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting** held at  
Carrigan Middle School on May 17, 2010 at 7:00 PM (Enclosure)

Toni Paine made the motion to approve item D.1.c.  
Eric Murillo seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members present voted in favor  
No one was opposed  
Minutes are approved

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

**10-40 Paula Saunders**, Kindergarten Teacher – Forest School  
Effective: July 1, 2010  
Reason: Retirement

**10-41 Robert Mikenis**, Science Teacher – Carrigan Middle School  
Effective: June 30, 2010  
Reason: Retirement

**10-42 Mary E. Sylvia**, Special Ed Pre-School Teacher – Mackrille  
Effective: End of the 2009/2010 School Year  
Reason: Retirement

**10-43 Richard McInnis**, Physical Ed Teacher – WHHS

Effective: August 31, 2010  
Reason: Retirement

**10-44 Viya Schenk**, Second Grade Teacher - Forest  
Effective: End of the 2009/2010 School Year  
Reason: Retirement

**10-45 Henry Pozzuoli**, Technology Ed Teacher – WHHS  
Effective: June 30, 2010  
Reason: Retirement

Howie Horvath asked for a motion to approve D.2. Resignations Certified 10-40 – 10-45.  
Eric Murillo made a motion to approve D.2. Resignations Certified 10-40 – 10-45  
Sean Maher seconded the motion

Discussion: Neil Cavallaro said these people are all long time employees and they will  
be a great loss to the district.

All board members present voted in favor

No one was opposed

Motion Carries

**D.3. Resignations: (Non-Certified)**

**D.4. Leave of Absence: (Non-Certified)**

**D.5. New Hire: (Certified)**

**10-46 Kate Coldren**, 81-A Minerva Street, Derby, CT 06418  
Head Volleyball Coach – WHHS  
Effective: Immediately  
Salary: \$3,000

Eric Murillo made a motion to approve item D.5. 10-46

Rob Saley seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present voted in favor

No one was opposed

Motion Carries

Item D.5. 10-46 is approved

**10-47 Elizabeth Vaccino**, 42 Fairlawn Drive, Wallingford, CT 06492  
Assistant Coach Girl's Softball – WHHS  
Effective: Immediately  
Salary: \$3,350

Eric Murillo made a motion to approve item D.5. 10-47

Rob Saley seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present voted in favor

No one was opposed  
Motion Carries  
Item D.5. 10-47 is approved

- D.6. New Hire: (Non-Certified)**
- D.7. New Business**

#### **10-48 Approval of AFSME Retirement Incentive Plan**

Howard Horvath requested a motion to approve item D.7. 10-48  
Toni Paine Murillo made a motion to approve item D.7. 10-48  
Rob Saley seconded the motion  
Discussion: Eric Murillo abstained as he did not have enough time to read over the entire document. Dorinda will vote for it but needs to see financial backup in black and white.  
All remaining board members present voted in favor  
No one was opposed  
Eric Murillo abstained  
Motion Carries  
Item D.7. 10-48 is approved

#### **10-49 Approval of WHHS Summer School Program Personnel**

Howard Horvath requested a motion to approve item D.7. 10-49  
Dorinda Borer made a motion to approve item D.7. 10-49  
Eric Murillo seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
No one was opposed  
Motion Carries  
Item D.7. 10-49 is approved

#### **10-50 Approval of Summer School Program Personnel for Middle School - Carrigan**

Howard Horvath requested a motion to approve item D.7. 10-50  
Dorinda Borer made a motion to approve item D.7. 10-50  
Eric Murillo seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
No one was opposed  
Motion Carries  
Item D.7. 10-50 is approved

#### **10-51 Approval of Summer School Personnel for the Special Ed Program – SRCS**

Howard Horvath requested a motion to approve item D.7. 10-51  
Toni Paine made a motion to approve item D.7. 10-51

Discussion: None  
No one was opposed  
Motion Carries  
Item D.7. 10-51 is approved

**F. Informational:**

Howie asked if there were any questions on informational. There were none.  
Howard Horvath asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Eric Murillo made a motion to adjourn the meeting  
Howard Horvath seconded the motion  
All members were in favor  
The meeting ended at 9:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola,  
Board Secretary