

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
October 1, 2012
Regular Board Meeting
Council Chambers

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on October 1, 2012. The meeting was called to order by Mark Palmieri Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:15 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mark Palmieri, Chairman
M. Toni Paine, Vice Chair
Dorinda Borer
Betsy Davis
Patrick Egolum
Robert Guthrie

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Patricia Libero, Secretary/Treasurer
Eric Murillo
Cebi Waterfield

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Anne Druzolowski, Assistant Superintendent

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENT:

Stacie Hurley
Abdul-Rasak Zachariah

Immediately before the board meeting started Neil Cavallaro stated that there are two people to recognize. Sandy McCauley, the current school nurse at Washington Elementary School, was recently honored by the American Federation of Teachers as an Everyday Hero. She was selected by the AFT from a field of more than 300 nominees. Sandy attended the National Convention in Detroit, Michigan during the past summer and has been a school nurse in West Haven for 25 years. One AFT member is recognized from each of the union's six divisions for going above and beyond the call of duty and making a difference every day in the workplace or the community. Neil worked with Sandy for five years when he was Principal at Thompson School and she was the school nurse. No one epitomizes that phrase more than Sandy does. She goes well above and beyond the call of being a nurse. She does things for the entire school community. During the holidays she makes sure families are fed and during the winter she makes

sure kids have warm clothes and collects presents at Christmas time. She makes sure kids have access to healthcare etc. Sandy has been the President of the Nurses Group for a long time and they talk a lot about not only what they do but how dedicated they are to the profession and what it means to have nurses in all of our schools. We are very lucky as a school district to have our schools so well covered. Neil said he thinks the world of Sandy. Not only has she been involved in the school system for the past 25 years but she has been involved as a parent when I first new her with the Wizards when I was the locker room attendant and she is also very involved with the Historical Society, the Ward Heitman House, the Fireworks Committee and is just all about West Haven. Neil appreciates all Sandy does and is sure she represented us well at the conference. Applause followed.

Many of the school nurses along with Donna Kosiorowski the nursing supervisor who nominated Sandy were here to celebrate with Sandy. Alan Belchak had a cake made in Sandy's honor for this special occasion.

Donna Kosiorowski stated that there is nobody that deserves this honor more than you. Every time Sandy mentions the word retirement I won't listen to her because she can't leave until I leave. She is loved by everyone and is the reason we have nebulizers in the schools for all the kids because she had a pharmacy donate them. She is the type of nurse that if a parent can't get to her to deliver medication she will meet them wherever to get that medication. She teaches CPR and serving as a mentor for school nurses. I don't know how she does it all. She has not lost her passion for school nursing. Donna recognized our School Medical Advisor Meredith Williams who was in the audience. Meredith is the Head Pediatric Doctor at Hill Health Center and has been absolutely fabulous for us and Donna wanted to thank her for coming as she knows she is very busy with three small children. The many colleagues of Sandy who came to show their support all stood. Donna said she is very glad Sandy received the award it was well deserved. Applause followed. Neil asked Sandy if she wanted to say a few words.

Sandy said in accepting this award it gave her an opportunity to be an advocate for school nurses because there are a lot of districts that don't have a school nurse in every school and most of you know it is a big, big deal if there isn't. You never know when something is going to happen and it is not the big things it's the everyday things. It is the child crying because they don't want to go into the classroom. If the social worker or psychiatrist is busy with something that child is yours to help. There are so many day to day things that happen and you pick up the pieces and carry on. This was an honor and she appreciates it and thanks everyone for honoring her tonight. Applause followed.

Neil said our next honoree tonight is Cinthia Fabian. Cinthia Fabian a senior at WHHS was recognized by the board for being selected as a 2012-2013 National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) Scholar. The NHRP was initiated in 1983 to identify outstanding Hispanic/Latino high school students. This program identifies nearly 5,000 Hispanic/Latino Students each year from the United States, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Mariana Islands and Marshall Islands as well as U.S. Citizens attending schools abroad. Students must take the PSAT and the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in October of their junior year and be at least ¼ of Hispanic/Latino descent, achieve the minimum required on the PSAT and the MSQT cut off score, achieve a grade point average of 3.0 or higher by the end of their junior

year and be a citizen of the United States or permanent resident. This is an important academic recognition and Cinthia's name along with a list of recognized students are sent to colleges and universities that are particularly interested in academically outstanding seniors of Hispanic and Latino Heritage.

Cinthia was also part of the National Merit Scholarship Program which is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. About 34,000 of the approximately 50,000 high scorers on the PSAT and MSQT receive letters of commendation and recognition of their outstanding academic promise. Commended students become candidates for special scholarships sponsored by corporations and businesses. Scores are reported on a scale of 20 to 80. Cinthia scored 73 in critical reading, 67 in math and 64 on the PSAT in her junior year. She is a peer advocate and part of the West Haven Children's Theatre and has a cumulative grade point average of 4.6 and is currently ranked 2 in the senior class. Neil congratulated her and she was presented with a framed certificate from the National Hispanic Recognition Program for Excellence in Academic Achievement. Patti Fusco took pictures of Cinthia with her father and Superintendent Cavallaro and Board Chairman Mark Palmieri. Applause followed.

Neil said we will break for cake in honor of our two honorees we will come back in ten minutes.

The board meeting started at 7:15 PM.

Chairman Palmieri welcomed everyone to the October 1, 2012 Board of Education Regular Meeting.

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Mark Palmieri stated the public portion is open and asked if anyone would like to address the board three times. There were no speakers.

C. REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Neil said we have reports from the last meeting that was cancelled as well as Dr. Druzolowski's annual report regarding where we are academically and how we are comparing throughout the State of Connecticut. Before beginning Neil wanted to thank all the administrators that are here tonight prior to turning it over to Dr. Druzolowski. Mrs. Paine had asked for an update on the uniforms and we have Tom Hunt here tonight to discuss how the pilot program is working at Forest School.

Tom Hunt, Principal of Forest School, passed out information that was sent to the parents of students at Forest the first week of school which detailed the dress code. This was mostly a guide to help with their purchases. This went very smoothly and compliance is greater and greater as the days go by. There are six children today that did not have uniforms and there have been six offers of assistance. His belief is as the wardrobes are being built there are some times when there is a deviation from the attire because something might not be washed or there might not be enough for the whole week. Three days worth of uniforms is about \$55.00 and we have

assisted six families to date. There have been donations and pledges made. We have enough to cover those families in need. All families are building their wardrobes and once built they will be able to hand them down to siblings. He said compliance is getting better and better and there are no dissenters at all.

Questions

Dorinda asked how many students are enrolled at Forest; 471. She said and only six have assistance. Yes. She wanted to know if those six were identified before the school year started. No once they started school; we did not identify them before. We also had a uniform night on August 23rd and transportation was offered to families who needed it.

Betsy asked how the atmosphere is; how do the kids and teachers feel; is there a change. Yes it is calm and we are still in our first month of school but it is a kind of calming effect; it is wonderful to see. The parents are very much on board with it.

Toni said Cebi had requested that the end of March or April you could come back and give us the details. Has it lessened up bullying, how is the atmosphere and is everyone still happy with it. Tom Hunt said this is the baseline data year and when we put it up against next year we will know where we are. We know where we were last year without uniforms and we will see where we stand this year in terms of achievement, behavior etc. and we are very optimistic. I said before that uniforms are only one small piece of the puzzle in school climate. Toni said that children are not losing their individuality because there are many colors to choose from in the shirts and two different colors for the pants. Tom said the school governance council will meet the end of October and discuss how we transitioned into uniforms. A further discussion took place. Neil encouraged board members who are interested to go to Forest and seeing the students and fee free to call Tom. The board thanked Tom.

Dave Cappetta and Matt Cavallaro gave the Last Fiscal Year End Report and the Current Fiscal Year Report. They passed out copies of the Budget to everyone. They came under budget by \$600,000.00 and with those funds we were able to pay for the Bailey Renovation Project in full. Due to the City Council's Resolution they were able to carry forward \$200,000.00 into this year for instructional purposes for the first time. Neil wanted to make sure we are on the same page with the city and that our numbers and their numbers are the same. He asked if there is anything else that could still come in. They have met with Joe Mancini and all the numbers are pretty vital. The city will be closing out the last fiscal year within the next 30 days so there are no numbers that we are going to get surprised with and we are on solid ground. It was decided that financial statements would be sent to the board members quarterly. A further discussion took place.

Dr. Druzolowski introduced Judy Drenzek, Principal of Mackrille who was previously the Early Childhood Coordinator and Maureen Blake a lead teacher in the system who is at Savin Rock and they updated us on the Summer School Program. Anne said their presentation segues into our whole presentation which will be given by her staff tonight.

The Alliance Grant money for the 30 districts across the state came to our attention in June and we had three weeks to hit and meet the early admission point. The Commissioner of Education defined what he wanted to see as priorities for the development of an Alliance Grant. They had specific initiatives they wanted to see addressed. You could extend initiatives already in place or

create new ones. We created mostly new ones but based within the context of our plan for improving our schools which has not changed at all. They liked the way we wrote the grant because it was not looking at different programs but rather at the whole. It had been decided we lacked resources for K- 3 so a group of teachers made the decision to augment instruction in grades K-4 with reading materials, supports to help teachers have more resources to better meet the differentiating needs of kids. We also continued to support the Early Childhood Coordinator who is now Judy Antignani because that communication piece between the community and what we do in Early Childhood and Pre K is critical to give our kids a head start because we have no full day kindergarten. With Talent Development Strategy we are choosing teachers to be leaders in their buildings and support each other so this is really sustaining everything we have done within a building. Our literacy and math coaches are also the individuals within the district that are teachers who are helping teachers so it is teachers helping teachers. We decided to maintain the whole piece about parent, family and community and extend it. We will be providing more training similar to what is done at the Family Resource Center for our parents and families across the district. These are the initiatives we put in place with the Alliance Grant. I believe it will be going to the board this month and it will be on time for Wednesday. The Commissioner's Office has to look at it and sign off on it then it will come back to you. Neil said we have been given every indication that because it made it to the Commissioner he will sign off on it. Everything we have done up to this point has put us in a very strategic spot. We are asking a lot from our teachers and they do deliver. This is a fine group of staff that we have. A further discussion took place. Patti Fusco has placed all the presentations given at the board meeting on the website for viewing.

Dorinda asked a question about the status of schools. Last time the board talked about the waiver for No Child Left Behind and how we don't have to honor those transfers from Washington School to Mackrille because we have the waiver but looking at class size and the racial makeup of the schools even though we are not required to transfer those students maybe we should strongly consider it. It is too late in this year but maybe going forward. Neil responded that we actually made several moves from Washington to Mackrille because of class size. We will get you the enrollment figures from October 1st 2012. Maria Giovannini puts these numbers together for us and I want to see the enrollment numbers and class size from October 2011 compared to October 2012 and as soon as I get the numbers I will forward them to all of you. Neil said the class sizes at the elementary schools are really good and pretty steady across the district.

Dorinda wanted to follow up on the earlier bus conversation two meetings ago and find out if there was adequate bus capacity. She looked at the bus counts that Neil had previously sent her and said the side of the bus states the capacity is 71 children. She said the highway standards say that because there are no seat belts students have to fit within that compartment to be safe. Elementary children can fit 3 to a seat but above elementary students should not be three to a seat. Therefore on the buses carrying over 44 students who are over elementary age we need more buses. Neil will look into this but doesn't think our numbers have ever been as low. Toni Paine asked what is being counted as elementary. Dorinda doesn't know that is why she sent out a question asking if elementary is considered 5th or 6th grade. The high school buses were fine and well under 44 and Bailey had 1 or two and Dorinda thinks Carrigan's 6th grade was the issue. She said one bus has 63. Neil said 63 is a lot and he is going to check on this.

Mark said this is a very important issue and what he would like to do is add it to another agenda. He would also like Neil to talk to Craig and the principals and make sure whoever belongs on a particular bus is on that bus and other students aren't switching buses. He would like this straightened out once and for all. We will add this to the next agenda and address it. Neil will get updated bus counts and send them out to board members as soon as possible. The assumption was that this was worked out but 63 is a lot. Mark said this is a large number and a safety issue so we will look into this and discuss it at the next board meeting. Neil will get everyone the numbers before then.

C.1.b. Student Representatives

Pam Gardner said she is so excited that Abdul has been selected to serve on the State Student Advisory Council on Education and she just received official word that they will have another finalist that will be entering on October 17th who will also serve on that council. This is pretty exciting and rare for a high school. Mark thanked Pam for this wonderful news.

The report from Abdul and Stacie Hurley follows at the end of the minutes.

C.1.c. Board

C.1.d. Committee

Dorinda Borer discussed what transpired during the Health and Wellness Committee Meeting prior to tonight's board meeting.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on September 4, 2012 at 7:00 PM.

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve D.1.a.

Patrick Egolum made the motion

Bob Guthrie seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present were in favor

The minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

D.3. Resignations: (Non-Certified)

12-129 Sabrina Brooks, Part Time Title 1 Math Aide – Savin Rock

Effective: September 2, 2012

Reason: Personal

12-130 Rhonda Festa, Part Time Cook – Savin Rock

Effective: September 14, 2012

Reason: Personal

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve D.3. items 12-129 and 12-130

Bob Guthrie made the motion

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present were in favor

D.3. Items 12-129 and 12-130 are approved

D.4. Leave of Absence: (Certified)

D.5. New Hire: (Certified)

12-131 Christina Schoeman, 132 Colonial Blvd., West Haven, CT 06516

Autism Learning Lab Teacher – Pagels School

Effective: October 1, 2012

Salary: \$55,466.73 (Step 9 BS+30)

12-132 John Collarini, 25 Walnut Avenue, Trumbull, CT 06611

Math Teacher – Bailey Middle School – Math Lab

Effective: September 18, 2012

Salary: \$50,771.62 (Step 7 BS + 60)

D.6. New Hire: (Non-Certified)

12-133 Tania D. Lima, 40 Sycaway Street, West Haven, CT 06516

Preschool Paraprofessional – Seth Haley School

Effective: September 24, 2012

Salary: Step 1 plus medical stipend

12-134 Helen Ogundipe, 1 Timberland Drive, West Haven, CT 06516

Medical Paraprofessional (Autistic Program) – Pagels School

Effective: September 24, 2012

Salary: Step 1 plus medical stipend

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve D.5. and D.6. Items 12-131 through 12-134 inclusive.

Dorinda Borer made the motion

Toni Paine seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present were in favor

D.5. and D.6. Items 12-131 through 12-134 inclusive

are approved.

D.7. New Business

F. Informational:

Mark asked if anyone had anything to discuss under informational.

Discussion:

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to adjourn

Bob Guthrie made the motion to adjourn

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

All board members were in favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola

Board Secretary

BOE Student Report
October 1, 2012

West Haven High School had a strong start to the school year. In conjunction with the School Governance Council, WHHS hosted its First Back to School Night on September 13th. There was a great turnout for the Activity Fair and many parents took advantage of the sessions on Naviance and Parent Portal. Parents and teachers enjoyed following the modified schedule.

The fall Blood Drive was held on September 20th.

This past Saturday, WHHS hosted the 7th Annual Homecoming Festival in the WHHS courtyard. Clinics for the Bailey soccer, volleyball and basketball teams were held at the same time. There was a huge turnout and we appreciate the support from the community at large.

On Thursday, September 27th, WHHS kicked off a month of activities with the 8th Grade Open House. Over 150 prospective students and families attended for a presentation and tours of the school. *Westie Wednesdays* start this month with the Honors Showcase on October 10th, the Electives Showcase on October 17th and an Athletics Open House on the 24th.

Sophomores have been busying completing the Fitness Test with their PE Teachers.

Our College Career Fair will be held Wednesday evening. The program begins in the cafeteria at 6pm and continues with the College/Career Fair in the gym at 7pm.

Tuesdays with Morrie was a huge success, entertaining sellout crowds on both nights. *Little Shop of Horrors* is in rehearsal now.

The Math Team placed in the top sixth of their last math meet.

Friday (October 5th) is Color War Day at WHHS - Freshman wear RED, Sophomores BLACK, Juniors WHITE, and Seniors BLUE. Faculty and staff are wearing GREEN.

Abdul Zachariah has been selected to serve on the *State Student Advisory Council on Education*. His first meeting was in September and they are working on improving teacher evaluations and improving the relationship between students, teachers and parents, and increasing the interest in the teaching profession.