

West Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
October 15, 2013

Unofficial Minutes – Pending Approval on 11/6/2013

Present: Ms. Katz, Mrs. Ma, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Zydanowicz, Student Representatives Jordan Gelber (Hall), Randa Griffin (Conard)
Absent: Mr. Sarzen

Regular Meeting – Town Hall – Legislative Chamber

INDEX

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

*Roll Call/Pledge of
Allegiance*

Ms. Katz moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

*Revision to Agenda
Order*

THAT the Board of Education revise the meeting agenda order to present agenda item #VIII. B. 1. Growing Great Schools after Public Communications

The motion passed unanimously.

Student Participation

Dr. Karen List introduced students from both Hall and Conard High Schools participating in the 'Lead by Example' initiative. The students provided a summary of the program and its mission and goals. The positive role-modeling provided by senior students and specifically athletes and the collaboration with Link Crew members was highlighted. Board members discussed the powerful impact of the message delivered by students to students rather than adults and applauded the leadership initiative demonstrated by participants. Expanding the vision beyond the walls of the schools and into the community was explored.

Robert Milne, 3 Osage Rd., addressed the Board regarding Town revenue and property assessments.

Public Communications

Linda Dinapoli, 214 Mohegan Dr., addressed the Board regarding Town revenue and employee salaries and contracts.

Representatives from the organization, Growing Great Schools, led by Sallie Mancini and Stephanie Greco provided an update on their mission and vision to promote a culture of wellness and outlined the current initiatives underway. All were available to address the questions and concerns of the Board.

*Non-Staff
Communications and
Reports:
Growing Great Schools*

Board members expressed support for the group and their efforts and discussed changing school menus and updating the nutrition curriculum and the potential long-term fiscal impact on the district. The desire to continue an open dialogue, recognize cultural differences,

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preferences and perspectives of students and families and provide an equitable distribution of resources to all schools was explored.

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Mrs. Ma:

THAT the West Hartford Board of Education ratify the negotiated agreement between the West Hartford Public Schools Professional Employees CSEA, Local 2001 SEIU and the Board of Education for the period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2016

*Ratification of the West
Hartford Public Schools
Professional Employees
CSEA, Local
2001SEIU Contract*

Mr. Rick Ledwith summarized the composition of the union members and the challenge of the negotiations due to the number of issues that needed to be addressed. The history of the mediation efforts and the changes and terms of the proposed contract were discussed. Mr. Rick Ledwith, Mr. Tom Moore and Mr. Chip Ward were available to address the questions and concerns of the Board.

The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. List announced that John Mastroianni, music teacher at Hall, was the recipient of the Connecticut Teacher of Year Award. She emphasized the award recognizes the value and commitment the district and community places on Fine and Performing Arts education. She shared additional awards received by staff and the district including Rosey Bonner for her statewide leadership, CAFE Communication awards and offered special recognition to Amy LaRose, graphic artist. The retirement of Norfeldt principal, Caryn Falvey was also announced.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. List introduced the **Great by 8** presentation and Dr. Nancy DePalma, Ms. Kerry Jones, Ms. Mary Stone and Representative Beth Bye provided an update on the community partnership. The mission of **Great by 8** and the abundance of information available on their website and connections and involvement with a variety of town organizations were discussed. The data driving the community plan, the percentage of kindergarten students without preschool experiences, the efforts involved to assist with the transition to Kindergarten and the measures of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) were presented. All were available to address the questions and concerns of the Board.

Great by 8 Update

Board members discussed the Kindergarten Transition Form and members applauded the comprehensive presentation and the collaboration and ability to identify and provide services to students in

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need. Alignment of Board goals with previous initiatives and leadership by the Administration to recognize the value of early investment in the preschool years was highlighted and greater understanding of EDI and the use of and learning from data was sought.

Mr. Chip Ward provided an annual report comparing the projected and actual enrollments across elementary, middle and high school levels. There was a slight decrease in the actual enrollments. A summary of the average class sizes at all levels was detailed. Mr. Ward was available to address the questions and concerns of the Board.

*Enrollment and Class
Size Analysis as of
October 1, 2013*

Board discussion stressed the importance of class size issue for teachers and parents and specific schools and trends were reviewed. Research on recommended optimal class size and various factors that influence or impact learning was discussed.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez moved, seconded by Mr. Schmitt:

Approval of Minutes

THAT the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 1, 2013

Clerk noted correction to the spelling of student representative.

The motion passed 5-0-1
Abstained – Ms. Katz

Jordan Gelber (Hall) reported on Fall Fest and some of the past and upcoming performing arts events.

*Report from Student
Board Representatives*

Rana Griffin (Conard) reported on the NEASC visit, the golf tournament and donating to scholarships.

Mr. Putterman announced the following meeting dates:

*Announcement of
Meeting Dates*

1. Wednesday, November 6, 2013, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314
2. Tuesday, November 19, 2013, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

Adjournment

That the Board adjourn at 9:40 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

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ATTEST:

Bruce Putterman, Chairperson Naogan Ma, Secretary
Respectfully submitted by: Ms. K. Lawrence, Clerk of the Board

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