

West Hartford Public Schools  
Board of Education  
Regular Board Meeting  
**March 19, 2013**

Present: Ms. Katz, Mrs. Ma, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Schmitt (via phone), Mr. Zydanowicz, Superintendent List, Student Representative Kendall Teare (Hall), Tyree Seymour (Conard)  
Regular Meeting – Town Hall – Legislative Chamber

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

*Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance/ Revision to Agenda Order*

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

*Revision to Agenda Order*

THAT the Board of Education revise the agenda to accommodate the report from Mayor Slifka upon his arrival

The motion passed unanimously.

John Joyce, 170 S. Main St., addressed the Board regarding the postponement of the Webster Hill vote and the petition opposing the 'spot redistricting' proposal.

*Public Communications*

Ms. Katz moved, seconded by Mr. Sarzen:

*Proposed Calendar for the 2014-2015 School Year – Second and Final Reading*

THAT the Board of Education accept and approve as a Second and Final Reading the proposed calendar for the 2014-2015 school year

Mr. Putterman outlined the approach for discussing the options and voting recommendations. Ms. Katz provided background on the adoption of past calendars and summarized previous debates on shortened February vacations and consideration of a March vacation. Dr. List offered data on the increased number of snow days in recent years and stated the last day of school is scheduled to be June 25 with a high school graduation date of June 24 to be finalized on April 1, 2013.

Board discussion reviewed parent support recently expressed for the elimination of February and April vacations and replaced with a single week in March. The practice of regional calendars and the conflict for teachers and staff with children in surrounding districts was discussed. The challenge to support the wide age range and varying degree of purpose and need for vacation times between elementary and high school was highlighted. The four options were summarized and the

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possibility of generating a survey was raised. The Board decided to table the discussion and include discussion on the previously approved calendar for 2013-2014.

Ms. Katz moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

THAT the Board of Education table the discussion on the calendar until the next regular Board meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Slifka arrived and commended the student representatives for assuming the responsibility and shared that he once held the same position. The Mayor provided background on his budget experiences in his roles as Mayor and on the Town Council. He acknowledged the improved collaborative relationship between the Board and Council and commended the accomplishments of many town departments. On-going challenges were noted and positive indicators were summarized. The Mayor extended his gratitude to Board members and to the administration. He was available to answer any questions.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez moved, seconded by Mrs. Ma:

THAT the Board of Education review and revise as appropriate the proposed annual Board meeting schedule and adopt a final meeting calendar for the 2013-2014 school year

The motion passed unanimously.

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

THAT the Board of Education accept as a First Reading the following bylaws which were revised by the Board Policy Subcommittee:

8143 Secretary of the Board

8144 Clerk

Mr. Schmitt reviewed the bylaws and stated the proposed changes were reflective of actual practice over the last several years. Mr. Tom Moore and Attorney Kimberly Boneham were available to address questions and concerns of the Board.

The motion passed unanimously.

*Motion to Table  
Calendar Discussion*

*Budget Outlook for  
2013-2014  
Mayor Scott Slifka*

*Adoption of the Annual  
Board Meeting Schedule  
for 2013-2014*

*Motion by Bruce  
Putterman and Terry  
Schmitt to Accept  
Revised Bylaws 8143  
and 8145 – First  
Reading*

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Mr. Sarzen:

THAT the Board of Education approve the following bylaws which were reviewed by the Board Policy Subcommittee:

- 8140 Offices and Auxiliary Personnel
- 8141 Chairperson
- 8142 Vice-chairperson
- 8151 Ad Hoc Committees/Advisory Committees
- 8220 Remuneration and Reimbursement
- 8230 Conflict of Interest
- 8357.1 Parliamentary Procedure

Mr. Schmitt introduced the recommendations and described the changes as minor and recommended that the Board pass the motion. Mr. Tom Moore and Attorney Kimberly Boneham were available to answer questions and concerns of the Board.

Board discussion included clarification on bylaw 8230 to determine the scope and meaning of 'relatives'.

The motion was passed unanimously.

Further clarification on bylaw 8230 was sought after the motion was passed. Explanation was provided that the bylaw addressed contracts for money or services and any potential real or perceived influence by a Board member.

Dr. Karen List acknowledged March as Boards of Education Appreciation Month and expressed gratitude to the Board members and the student representatives for their time, effort and diligence in their dedication and service to the community. Dr. List announced upcoming workshops for the community, stated that a vote on the Webster Hill redistricting will occur in early April and presented a video featuring two students at Charter Oak explaining the core essence of the IB program.

Dr. Nancy DePalma, Mr. Glenn McGrath, Mr. Ed D'Addio, Ms. Diedra Dietter and Dr. Teresa LeBel, in response to the tragedy that occurred at Sandy Hook, delivered a presentation intended to provide an overview of the incorporation of mental health issues and ensuring the overall emotional well-being of all students. Common disorders and national and district data on the rate of identification, referrals and school-based initiatives and counseling programs from pre-k through post graduate levels were reviewed. The challenges and barriers of

*Motion by Bruce Putterman and Terry Schmitt to Approve the Reviewed Bylaws 8140, 8141, 8142, 8220, 8230, and 8357.1*

*Superintendent's Report*

*Mental Health: Prevention, Identification and Intervention*

stigma, access and costs related to seeking individual treatment were identified. All were available to address the questions and concerns of the Board.

Board members expressed an interest in tracking intervention success rates and understanding the historical evolution, parental support and involvement, information development and diverse cultural worldviews. Concerns about efforts and strategies to connect and become familiar with students were discussed. The panel stressed the importance of creating a welcoming environment and establishing a culture of building trusting relationships and reinforcing a responsibility to care and support students, staff and each other within the community. Areas of need were reviewed and the requirement to continuously adhere to clinician to student ratio guidelines and maintain manageable caseloads was highlighted.

Mr. Rick Ledwith presented the personnel report and reported on recent recruitments efforts including the annual Teacher Career Fair and participation in the CREC Minority Teacher Recruiting Fair. An update was provided on the current principalship searches and summarized the number of applicants, interview process and anticipated timeframes.

*Personnel Report*

Mr. Sarzen moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

THAT the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the regular Board meeting of February 27, 2013

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Zydanowicz moved, seconded by Ms. Katz:

THAT the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the regular Board meeting of March 5, 2013

The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Ma provided a reminder about the Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools annual fundraiser, *West Hartford's Cookin'*.

*Reports from Other  
Board and Organizations*

Tyree Seymour (Conard) reported on the Concerned Parents' workshop, the start of spring sports and the upcoming 'Peter Pan' musical.

*Report from Student  
Board Representative*

Kendall Teare (Hall) reported on the start of spring sports and the

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accomplishments of the swimming/diving team, the Pops 'n Jazz schedule and shared students' concerns about the condition of the restrooms.

Mr. Putterman announced the following meeting dates:

1. Wednesday, March 27, 2013, Public Hearing followed by Budget Workshop #3, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chambers, room 314
2. Tuesday, April 2, 2013, Regular Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chambers, room 314
3. Tuesday, April 9, 2013, Regular Board Meeting, Adoption of the 2013-2014 Budget, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chambers, room 314

John Joyce, 170 South Main St., addressed the Board to share a personal perspective on issues discussed.

Mrs. Ma moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

That the Board adjourn at 9:50 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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

*Announcement of  
Meeting Dates*

*Comments from Visitors*

*Adjournment*

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