

West Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
October 2, 2012

Present: Ms. Katz, Mrs. Ma, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Schmitt,
Assistant Superintendent Moore, Student Representative Tyree Seymour (Conard), Kendall
Teare (Hall)

Absent: Superintendent List, Ms. Brassil, Mrs. Brassil Spinella
Regular Meeting – Town Hall – Legislative Chamber

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<p>The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.</p>	<p><i>Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance</i></p>
<p>Mrs. Ma moved, seconded by Mr. Schmitt:</p>	<p><i>Revision to Agenda Order</i></p>
<p>THAT the Board of Education agenda be revised to allow item VI. B. 1. Legislative Update to be presented before item IV. Unfinished Business</p>	
<p>The motion passed unanimously.</p>	
<p>John Joyce, 170 South Main St., addressed the Board as a Webster Hill Parent Teacher Board Representative to report parents' reactions to recent test scores. Mr. Joyce requested additional Public Communications speaking time. The request was denied and the speaker refused to leave the podium.</p>	<p><i>Public Communications</i></p>
<p>Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Ms. Katz:</p>	<p><i>Recess</i></p>
<p>THAT the Board of Education move into a brief recess at 7:06 p.m.</p>	
<p>The motion passed unanimously.</p>	
<p>The Board of Education meeting resumed at 7:11 p.m.</p>	
<p>Mr. Putterman introduced the West Hartford Legislative Delegation. State Senator Beth Bye, Representative Andrew Fleischmann, Representative Joseph Verrengia and Representative Brian Becker announced that Diversity Schools Legislation was passed by both Chambers and signed by the Governor. They explained this legislation offered increased reimbursement from the State, from 40% to 80%, for any renovations or new construction for magnet schools. An overview of the qualifications and terms of the funds was provided. Representatives expressed their pride and excitement about supporting a basic tenant of the Board to provide families with choice and to be able to secure a tool to ensure that a special facility can be built. They</p>	<p><i>Legislative Update</i></p>

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emphasized that the decision on whether and how to use the available funds would be made by the community.

Board members expressed their reaction to the announcement and the implications for West Hartford. Members discussed developing a committee to oversee the project and identify the vision and desired features of a renovated or newly constructed school facility. An anticipated general timeline and next steps were outlined. The Board confirmed the funding reimbursement was guaranteed whether renovation or new construction was decided and questioned the possibility that the State could take the funding back. The historical patterns and impact to communities resulting from decisions to invest in land and new spaces was noted. What constituted an allowable expense was clarified and that the statute did not stipulate a minimum or maximum dollar amount, but rather reimbursement for a specific percentage (80%) was highlighted. Creative thinking and planning was encouraged.

Mr. Putterman noted that Superintendent List was away tending to a family emergency and Assistant Superintendent Tom Moore was her representative.

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

THAT the Board of Education ratify the negotiated pension agreement between Local 1303-39, AFSCME Council 4, Custodians and the Board of Education, for the period of July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2014

Mr. Rick Ledwith stated that the contract ratifications for both the Custodian and Maintenance unions would be discussed jointly but voted on by the Board separately. A history of the negotiations and averting arbitration on the pension issue was provided. The different pension models and related benefits and contributions that were presented and discussed with the union were reviewed. An explanation of the hybrid plan that was ultimately agreed upon was given. Mr. Moore commended Mr. Ledwith's handling of the negotiations and his skill in developing and presenting an acceptable solution. Mr. Ledwith, Mr. Chip Ward and Mr. Tom Moore were available to answer questions of the Board.

The Board inquired about the number of employees in both unions and the trend in the public sector to follow the lead of the private sectors approach to pension funding. The plan to revisit this issue as needed when contracts expire was raised.

*Ratification of the Local
1303-39, AFSCME
Council 4, Custodians'
Contract*

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Ms. Katz:

THAT the Board of Education ratify the negotiated pension agreement between Local 1303-61, AFSCME Council 4, Maintenance Employees' and the Board of Education, for the period of July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2013

*Ratification of the Local
1303-61, AFSCME
Council 4, Maintenance
Contract*

Mr. Ledwith confirmed that the negotiations were simultaneous between the unions and the contracts were identical.

The motion passed unanimously.

Assistant Superintendent Moore explained Dr. List's absence and shared her regret about missing the announcement from the Legislative Delegation. He remarked on the departure of Dr. Howley on November 30, 2012 and acknowledged her leadership. Mr. Moore summarized the major accomplishments and gifts that Dr. Howley leaves behind that will benefit all students. On behalf of Superintendent List, Mr. Moore thanked Dr. Howley for her dedication and time devoted to the West Hartford Public Schools. The appointment of Dr. Nancy DePalma, Principal at Whiting Lane, as the interim replacement for the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment was announced. Her administrative positions throughout the district were summarized. He also announced that Karen Kukish, Assistant Principal at King Philip was appointed as Interim Principal at Whiting Lane. The posting of the vacant assistant principal position at King Philip and recruitment plans were outlined and confidence was expressed about the quality of candidates. Mr. Moore also extended recognition to a recent Conard High School graduate, who previously received accolades for his academic and artistic achievements, had been selected by the U.S. Department of Education to display his art work in a featured exhibition of 2012 Scholastic Art Winners in Washington D.C.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Moore introduced the annual presentation of the SAT and AP exam scores. Dr. Howley, Dr. Cummings and Mr. Ward provided a framework for the SAT and AP results and reviewed the purpose for and differences between the two tests and the intention of the College Board. The number of students gaining college experience by participating in AP courses and taking the tests was highlighted. The AP Diagnostic was reviewed and the recognition of the district by the College Board for the number of participants, *AP Boot Camp*, and the

*High School Test School
Results: SAT and
Advanced Placement
(AP)*

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distinction of the program being rated as Advanced was shared.

Board discussion explored trends in SAT scores and State averages. Board members noted the subject area of AP tests preferred by Hall and Conard students. Student representatives shared their perspectives about AP selections. The goal of raising the level of rigor in every class and encouraging students to pursue areas of interest for challenging courses was emphasized. The Board was assured that funding was available for any student who lacked the financial means to participate in AP courses.

Mr. Rick Ledwith summarized the Administrative leadership transitions and reviewed the recruitment plans for the principal positions at Hall and Duffy and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment position. He stated the posting for the Assistant Principal position at King Philip would be on an interim basis and interest from strong internal candidates was expected.

Ms. Katz moved, seconded by Mrs. Ma:

THAT the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 18, 2012

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Katz provided details on a fundraiser being held for a student at Charter Oak International Academy. Mrs. Ma announced the Park Road Parade was scheduled for October 6, 2012.

Tyree Seymour (Conard) reported on the upcoming dates for PSATs, the successes of Fall sport teams and the scheduled musical and theater productions.

Kendall Teare (Hall) reported on the upcoming annual Fall Fest, the Freshman concert and the outcry about the removal of specific items from the cafeteria. She stated students were working directly with Nutrition Services towards a resolution.

Mr. Putterman announced the following meeting dates:

1. Tuesday, October 16, 2012, Regular Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314
2. Wednesday, November 7, 2012, Regular Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative

Personnel Report

Approval of Minutes

*Reports from Other
Boards and
Organizations*

*Report from Student
Board Representative*

*Announcement of
Meeting Dates*

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Chamber, room 314

John Joyce, 170 South Main St., addressed the Board about incorporating religion in the schools.

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Mrs. Ma:

That the Board adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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

Comments from Visitors

Adjournment

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