

West Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
December 1, 2015

Present: Mrs. Blanks, Ms. Exum, Dr. Greenberg, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Pauluk, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Zydanic, Assistant Superintendent Morrow, Student Representatives Zacharie Mega (Conard), Rachel Schunder (Hall)
Absent: Superintendent Moore

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>Student leaders of Unified Theater at King Philip Middle School gave a presentation about their roles in the production and demonstrated an activity with Board members</p>	<p><i>Student Participation</i></p>
<p>Ms. Hannah Roditi, 225 Auburn Road, commented about students viewing movies with violent content.</p>	
<p>Mr. Mark Kaplan, 225 Auburn Road, commented about students viewing movies with violent content.</p>	<p><i>Public Communication</i></p>
<p>Mr. John Joyce, 170 South Main Street, commented in support of the previous speakers and regarding the report of Early Childhood Development.</p>	
<p>Dr. Morrow reported that because of the lack of snow the school district is currently on track to finish on June 8, 2016. The schools will be presenting their holiday concerts – please check the calendar for dates and details. Schools will observe International Human Rights Day on December 10. He offered bittersweet congratulations to Dr. Nancy DePalma who will be retiring at the end of this school year after 45 years in education, 29 of which have been spent in West Hartford. He summed up everyone’s feelings by saying simply “she is the best person we know.” Finally, with the winter months upon us, he reminded everyone to take extra time with drop off and pickup at the schools and to be mindful of snow banks.</p>	<p><i>Superintendent’s Report</i></p>
<p>Dr. Nancy DePalma, Mr. Paul Vicinus and Ms. Kerry Jones gave a presentation on the District Development Plan. Mr. Vicinus gave a detailed review of the district goals, district strategic efforts in support</p>	<p><i>District Development Plan</i></p>

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of the Board goals, and the indicators of progress which help to align the Board goals with accountability measures used by the CT State Department of Education. He noted that everything is grounded in the district's mission statement. Behind the mission statement is the Model of Continuous Improvement which he expounded upon. He reviewed the Board goals, offering examples of how each is addressed.

Board members followed up with questions about the communication between administrators, staff, and parents which helps to determine obstacles and measures of success related to school outreach and parent satisfaction. Discussion also surrounded communication regarding supports and challenges in communicating with parents regarding delivery of new curriculum.

Dr. Nancy DePalma, Ms. Kerry Jones and Mr. Chip Ward gave a report on the research on Early Childhood Development and an update on the planning and anticipated budget for the 2016-2017 school year. Ms. Jones noted that birth to five years are more critical than previously thought and that those years provide a "window of opportunity for dramatic growth." In addition to oral language and literacy, social and emotional development is critical as well with the goal of having all students equitably ready to learn in elementary school. Mr. Ward presented a history of Pre-K in West Hartford along with the cost of the program. He then reviewed budgetary and tuition options for the 2016-17 school year including the use of grant monies to offset the cost.

*Pre-K: Background and
Research on Early
Childhood Development
and Update on
Planning/ Budget for
2016-17*

Board members followed up with comments and questions about how this fits in to the global standards of education, the quality of the program, possible future funding concerns, the possible impact on private Pre-K programs, and the benefits of early intervention.

Mr. Rick Ledwith provided the Board with an updated personnel report, noting changes in certified staffing.

Personnel Report

Ms. Exum moved and Mr. Sarzen seconded:

THAT the Board of Education approve the minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of November 17, 2015.

*Approval
Of Minutes*

The motion passed unanimously.

Student Representative Rachel Schunder reported that the Hall Robotics Team won a design award at its last competition. The Theater Arts department put on a performance of *Kiss the Girls and Make Them Cry*. There will be a hypnotist at Hall tomorrow night. There are Human Rights Day activities planned for December 10 and winter sports tryouts are coming up. Student Representative Zacharie Mega noted that Conard won the Hall-Conard Football game and that it was a great community event. Winter sports are starting and the winter concert will be held on December 16. Homecoming will be held Saturday at Town Hall and is sold out. Students are participating in a Model UN conference at the University of Hartford. Red Zone will be focusing on Hour of Code. Human Rights Day activities are planned and on Saturday the Solo Choir will be performing at the Governor's mansion.

Information and Reports

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

1. Tuesday, December 15, 2015, Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 314, Legislative Chamber, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting
2. Wednesday, January 6, 2016, Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 400, 6:00 p.m., Board Workshop
3. Tuesday, January 19, 2016, Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 314, Legislative Chamber, 7:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting

Announcement of Meeting Dates

Mr. John Joyce, 170 South Main Street, commented about disseminating information to the public and early childhood programs.

Comments from Visitors

Ms. Exum moved and Mr. Sarzen seconded:

THAT the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 9:19 p.m. to discuss teacher contract negotiations.

Executive Session

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Exum moved and Mr. Sarzen seconded:

THAT the Board of Education return to Regular Session at 9:55 p.m.

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The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Exum moved and Mr. Sarzen seconded:

That the Board adjourn at 9:56 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

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ATTEST:

Adjournment

Mark Overmyer-Velazquez, Chairperson Carol A. Blanks, Secretary
Respectfully submitted by: Mrs. K. Hickey, Acting Clerk of the Board

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