

West Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
October 20, 2015

Present: Mrs. Exum, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Dr. Greenberg, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Zydanowicz, Superintendent Moore, Student Representatives Zacharie Mega (Conard), Rachel Schunder (Hall)

Regular Meeting – Town Hall – Legislative Chamber

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The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance/Revision to Agenda Order

Ryan Cleary and three students from Morley Elementary School shared information regarding their new project the “Buddy Bench”. They explained the benefits of the new project within the school community.

Student Participation

Mr. Moore spoke about the upcoming Hall/Conard College Fair. Over 140 colleges/universities plus military will be represented in the fair. Congratulations to Jamahl Hines, Assistant Principal at Conard High School for being honored at *100 Men of Color* Black Tie Gala Event that will be held at the Bushnell. State Senator Beth Bye will be at Webster Hill School student run farmers market to support *Growing Great Schools*. All eleven elementary schools and King Philip Middle School will participate. The Equity and Diversity Committee (EDC) met to organize the work of the council. The EDC will meet next week to discuss several programs within the district. Veterans Day activities will take place in all schools throughout the district. Professional development will be held for all staff during Election Day.

Superintendent’s Report

Chip Ward and Assistant Superintendent Andrew Morrow presented to the Board on the enrollment numbers as of October 1, 2015. All program numbers were discussed. The district currently educates 9,482 students. Enrollment in the elementary school is slightly lower than expected with a decrease of 143 students. At the middle school level enrollment increased by 21 students. High school enrollment has increased by 73 students, which is higher than originally expected. Class size was also discussed at all grade levels. Average class size in the elementary level was at 19.5, middle schools at 20, and high schools at both Conard and Hall were at 21. Enrollment projections will be discussed at the next scheduled Board meeting.

Enrollment and Class Size Analysis

Mr. Moore introduced Dr. Andrew Morrow, Chief of Police Tracey Gove, and Director of School Security and Safety, Mr. Eric Dency. Dr. Morrow discussed the importance of safety and security for students. He explained the various roles of the school resource officers. Chief Gove went through the different roles the WHPD has had in the schools throughout the years - starting in 1927 with traffic direction and including the first police officer in the schools in 1969. Mr. Moore pointed out the positive work the WHPD has done with parents and school administration within the last two years. The Board of Education complimented the police department on their positive work with the school district. Chief Gove explained there is a 57% decrease in arrests. WHPD with the WHFD have performed drills in the schools along with in-service training. Dr. Morrow introduced Eric Dency who joined the district this summer as Director of School Security and Safety. New card access has been installed in all schools which has improved our school safety. Panic buttons have also been put in place. Eric Dency has visited all schools to look at plans that have been put in place. West Hartford will participate in a state drill on school security. Improvements will be made at secondary schools to the video surveillance systems. Video surveillance will be introduced at the elementary schools. The projected date of completion for these improvements is June, 2016. Discussion continued on the ongoing work that is being done throughout the schools to improve safety.

*Safety and Security
Update*

Dr. Greenberg moved, Mr. Zydanowicz seconded:

THAT the Board of Education approve the minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of October 6, 2015.

Approval of Minutes

The motion passed unanimously.

Student Representative Rachel Schunder reported that the college application process is underway for seniors. The Hall blood drive went well. *The Answer* had their first show of the year. First pep rally will be held next Friday. Student Representative Zacharie Mega reported that all concerts held last week went well. The drama department will perform *The Seagull* this week. Conard math team placed first in their meet. College Fair will be held at Conard on Wednesday, October 21. Athletics have been working hard to raise money for cancer research. Mental health has been a strong topic in several committees that he has attended. In a competitive school district comes emotional stress. Also, he attended the Safe School

*Information and
Reports*

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Climate Committee meeting and this was also discussed.

Board members asked follow-up questions regarding needed resources to help in the schools with the on-going concerns of mental health.

Mr. Terry Schmitt noted that a town-wide run event will take place in the elementary schools. Students from University of Hartford will help as pacesetters.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

1. Tuesday, November 17, 2015, Board of Education meeting, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314
2. Tuesday, December 1, 2015, Board of Education meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314.
3. Tuesday, December 15, 2015, Board of Education meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314

*Announcement of
Meeting Dates*

Mr. John Joyce, 170 South Main Street, commented about mental health concerns and enrollment numbers. He also mentioned SEPTA will meet.

*Comments from
Visitors*

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Ms. Exum

THAT the Board adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

ATTEST:

Mark Overmyer-Velazquez, Chairperson Terry Schmitt, Secretary
Respectfully submitted by: Mrs. L. Hamel, Acting Clerk of the Board

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