

West Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
October 6, 2015

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

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*

Conard Student Mugda Gurram shared the speech she gave to the Charter Oak community during their International Peace Day celebration on September 21, 2015. Four students from Charter Oak were then introduced by Principal Juan Melian to share their inspirational quotes in both English and Spanish.

*Student
Participation*

John Joyce, 170 South Main Street, inquired about suicide prevention efforts.

Public Communications

Mr. Tom Moore congratulated Conard student Kate Olguin for being recognized as a Scholar in the College Board’s National Hispanic Recognition Program and Conard graduate Katherine Riedling for being one of two students in CT named a State AP Scholar. The first meeting of the Equity and Diversity Council, chaired by Roszena Haskins, was held and is off to a good start. Warriors for a Cure, which consisted of students from Hall in the Relay for Life, were the second largest fundraisers in West Hartford. He noted that everyone is conscious of the powerful stew of emotion that seniors are experiencing now as the college application season is upon them. He encouraged anyone needing help to reach out.

Superintendent’s Report

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Nancy DePalma and Mr. Paul Vicinus updated the Board on the test results for the AP program noting that 2015 was another record breaking year in West Hartford with 1,137 students taking 2,285 AP exams. In addition, it was noted that the participation rate was the highest it has ever been. Mr. Vicinus continued with a breakdown of results based on a variety of demographics as well as specific participation and exam results from Conard and Hall. Mr. Vicinus outlined the statistics of students included

*High School Advanced
Placement Test Score
Results*

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in the AP Scholars program by level and noted that the district has met the Board performance indicator for the ninth straight year. Board members followed up with questions and discussion regarding the impact on teachers, understanding reasons why some tests are not taken and the benefits of encouraging students to challenge themselves with or without an AP course.

Dr. Nancy DePalma and Mr. Paul Vicinus reported that the SAT will replace the Smarter Balanced literacy and math tests for grade eleven within the mandatory state testing program. Based on the increased importance of the SAT and the community interest in the PSAT (as evidenced by the turnout for the grade nine and ten pilot), West Hartford Public Schools will offer all nine-eleven grade students opportunity to take the PSAT on October 14. Mr. Vicinus provided an outline of the redesigned test as well as an overview of the progression of skills the test expects to measure throughout the high school years. The score reporting mechanism has changed and was reviewed by Mr. Vicinus. He also noted that College Board has partnered with Khan Academy to provide practice tests and study guides free of charge. In addition, students may share their individual scores with Khan Academy for a more personalized program.

Executive Director of Human Resources Rick Ledwith provided the Board with an update on Personnel Actions noting that five teachers were hired the first month of school due to late summer resignations.

Dr. Greenberg moved and Mr. Zydanowicz seconded:

THAT the Board of Education approve the minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of September 15, 2015.

The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez noted he and his family ran in the West Hartford Relay for Life and that there was a great turnout.

Student Representative Zacharie Mega reported on new lunch options at school. The Yearbook Club is working hard and progressing. He noted that the Conard-Hall boys' soccer match went well and there was a noticeable lack of conflict. Finally, he said that counselors would be

PSAT Programming

*Personnel
Report*

Approval of Minutes

*Information and
Reports*

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available to seniors during the PSAT administration for college application help. Student Representative Rachel Schunder noted that Voices for Others hosted a viewing of “Remember the Titans” outside at Hall which also featured a table to help raise funds for Syrian refugees. The Fall Festival was a big success. They are working on a Homecoming for Hall and a blood drive will be held on October 20 sponsored by the National Honor Society.

Mr. Zydanowicz noted that he and Mr. Sarzen visited all of the schools during the last three weeks which was a very positive experience. He also mentioned that the upcoming WHC TV debates were held which were highly complementary of the administration.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

1. Tuesday, October 20, 2015, Board of Education meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314
2. Tuesday, November 17, 2015, Board of Education meeting, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314

Mr. John Joyce, 170 South Main Street, commented about the AP gap and the presentation on suicide.

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

That the Board adjourn at 9:04 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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

*Announcement of
Meeting Dates*

*Comments from
Visitors*

Adjournment

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