

West Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
December 20, 2016

Present: Mrs. Blanks, Ms. Exum, Dr. Greenberg, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Pauluk,
Mr. Zydanowicz, Superintendent Moore, Student Representatives Hugo Barrillon,
(Conard), Sarah Berman (Hall)
Absent: Mr. Sarzen

Regular Meeting – Town Hall – Legislative Chamber

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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm	<i>Roll Call/ Pledge of Allegiance</i>
Superintendent Tom Moore introduced the King Philip Singers lead by Brian Jones, Director of the King Philip Singers. The King Philip Singers sang two songs from their winter concert.	<i>Student Participation</i>
No public communications to report	<i>Public Communication</i>
Tammy Exum moved and Mark Zydanowicz seconded: THAT the Board of Education Approve Reviewed Policies 3000, 3100, 3120, 3150 and Revised Policy 3110- Second Reading. Motion passed unanimously	<i>Unfinished Business</i>
Dr. Greenberg moved and Mark Zydanowicz seconded: THAT the Board of Education accept as the first reading the following new policy which is proposed by the Board Policy Subcommittee: 5635- Physical Activity and Student Discipline Motion passed unanimously	<i>New Business</i>
Mrs. Blanks moved and Mark Zydanowicz seconded: That the Board of Education approve policies 3140, 3210, 3220, 3230, and 3240, which were reviewed by the Board Policy Subcommittee Motion passed unanimously	

Superintendent Tom Moore introduced Dr. Gretchen Nelson, Director of Pupil Services, who has started in the role as Director as of July of 2016, for purposes of a report on Special Education in West Hartford Public Schools.

*Staff Communications
and Reports*

Dr. Gretchen Nelson thanked the Board for inviting the Special Education Department to the meeting. Dr. Nelson explained that Special Education starts with Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) and the student's response to those interventions. Dr. Nelson introduced her team of presenters who will provide in-depth information on Special Education and the process of determining eligibility. Presenters Migdalia Fletcher, Pupil Services Curriculum Specialist, Jeff Duquette, School Psychologist at Charter Oak, Melissa Caballero, Special Education Resource Teacher at Charter Oak and Alanna Goldberg, Speech Language Pathologist at Charter Oak spoke on the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) referral process and how students are determined for eligibility. Dr. Nelson explained the process starts at the school level, involves a comprehensive evaluation, and a determining if a student is eligible for special education. Topics centered on identifying student's strengths and needs using multiple data sources and formal testing as well as observations and input from teachers and parents. Migdalia spoke on the components of Comprehensive Assessment and the goal to understand how the student is doing in the classroom. Migdalia also noted that eligibility is determined through Connecticut State Guidelines. Jeff Duquette spoke about the Psycho-Educational Evaluation and the role of the school psychologist. School psychologists take an in depth look into specific strengths and weaknesses, typical developmental history, as well as cognitive assessment to help better understand why a child may be struggling in school. Typical cognitive assessments are completed in a one on one setting. Tests are norm based. Melissa spoke on the Academic and Comprehensive Assessment to help understand how children perform in reading, writing, and math and how this measures with other students in the classroom. Alanna spoke on speech and language. Speech focused on production and articulation, while language was focused on the content, vocabulary, listening skill and expressive skill. Additional assessments may be completed by an occupational therapist, physical therapist, hearing impaired therapist, and nurse if needed. The Board thanked the presenters for putting this presentation together and asked questions with regard to what determines the practice of people who sit at the table to determine the student's needs and the timeline from identification to placement, as well as what supports are available for families of speakers of another language and if there a similar evaluation for physical disabilities as well. Questions were also asked with regard to consistency throughout the

*Special Education in
West Hartford Public
Schools*

process and if parents are aware of advocates that are available to them, as well as the use of paraprofessionals and what training they have. The Board expressed deep thanks to all the teams for providing such an in depth presentation.

Dr. Nelson introduced the presenter for The Bridge, Pat Tyler. Ms. Tyler spoke on the collaboration between West Hartford Public Schools and The Bridge with focus on the building of relationships as the best way to help students. Ms. Tyler provided an overview of what they offer in the schools for students who need extra support. Those extra supports include counseling, school mentoring, consultation workshops, anti-bullying and crisis intervention. The Board asked questions regarding mentors and how programs are promoted so that students are aware the program exists.

The ADOS 2 Team, comprised of Monica Lacroix and Noreen Branley, spoke on Autism Specific Assessments, the referral process, and guidelines to the recommendation of ADOS 2 testing. They spoke on the collaboration between teams and families and the assistance for families with in-home services, as well as support groups. Questions were asked by the Board with regard to the school diagnosis and medical diagnosis, as well as how long the ADOS Team has been in place and if there was a relation between ADOS testing and a rise in diagnosis.

The Post-Secondary Team comprised of Department Supervisor Ted Dillon, Psychologist Neil Cummings, Beth Pettinelli, Danielle Vaivoda, presented on the program held at Wampanoag Drive. Mr. Dillon spoke on the purpose of the program and the services that are provided for students until the age of 21. The team discussed the components of the program and the goal to increase independence for all students by providing work experience as well as instruction to students on daily living skills such as shopping, banking, and public transportation. All of these are a part of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Goals and Objectives for each student.

Mr. Rick Ledwith reported on the changes in staff over the last few months. He also spoke on the Diversity Conference held on December 1st and 2nd that was sponsored by the NAACP. Mr. Ledwith spoke on the great opportunity to network with Deans of Education with a chance to talk about minority teacher recruitments.

Personnel Report

Chip Ward gave a presentation to the Board on the Financial Report with highlights on specific areas by Mr. Pauluk including salaries, staff maintenance, and retirees as well as transportation costs and tuition.

Financial Report

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Recommendation: THAT the Board of Education approve the Financial Report for the Period ending October 31st, 2016

Motion passed unanimously

Motion was made and seconded by Tammy Exum:

THAT the Board of Education approve the revised minutes of the Regular Board of Education meeting of November 15, 2016

The motion passed unanimously.

Conard representative Hugo Barrillon reported that there were 76 holiday helpers who donated money and gifts to families in need throughout the district, winter sports are up and running and that Conard's holiday concerts have started. Hall representative Sarah Berman reported that community service club is having a drive for clothes and basic necessities for those in need and that *Homecoming* had about 500 students in attendance on December 2nd. A report on Human Rights Day was given.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

1. Tuesday, January 3, 2017, Board Workshop, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 400
2. Tuesday, January 17, 2017, regular Board of Education Meeting, Presentation of CIP, Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 314, Legislative Chamber, 7:00 p.m.

No comments from visitors at this time.

Tammy Exum moved and Mrs. Blanks Seconded:

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

The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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

*Approval
Of Minutes*

*Information and
Reports*

*Announcement of
Meeting Dates*

*Comments from
Visitors*

Adjournment

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