

West Hartford Public Schools  
Board of Education  
Regular Board Meeting  
**March 17, 2015**

Present: Mrs. Exum, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Schmitt,  
Mr. Zydanowicz, Superintendent Moore, Student Representatives Henley Solomon  
(Conard), Paul Zeuschner (Hall)

Regular Meeting – Town Hall – Legislative Chamber

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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

*Roll Call/Pledge of  
Allegiance/Revision to  
Agenda Order*

Bill Condon, 55 Rumford St., addressed the Board regarding the learning process for the community with the Chieftain name and logo issue.

*Public Communications*

Mr. Putterman moved, seconded by Mr. Schmitt:

*Proposed Calendar  
Options for the 2016-  
2017 School Year –  
Second and Final  
Reading*

THAT the Board of Education accept and approve as a Second and Final Reading one of the proposed calendar options for the 2016-2017 school year

Mr. Putterman provided an overview of proposed calendar options one and two and highlighted the start and end dates, alignment with the CREC Regional calendar and impact on the launching of the new Charter Oak opening..

Option One: Failed 1-5

In Favor: Mr. Schmitt

Opposed: Mrs. Exum, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Zydanowicz

Option Two: Passed 5-1

In Favor: Mrs. Exum, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Zydanowicz

Opposed: Mr. Schmitt

Mr. Putterman moved, seconded by Mr. Schmitt:

*Motion by Bruce  
Putterman and Terry  
Schmitt to Accept  
Options 1, 2 and 3 for  
New Policy 1700 –  
First Reading*

THAT the Board of Education review as a first reading the following proposed new policy options put forward by the Board Policy Subcommittee:

1700 School Nicknames and Images

Mr. Schmitt described the background of the motion and the history of the issue. Mr. Putterman clarified the three options presented which included; option one, keeping the status quo with the addition of an increased educational component of the Native American cultures and heightened awareness and sensitivity; option two, eliminating and prohibiting all association of mascots, symbols, images and names to any race or ethnicity and enhancing education of Native American cultures; and option three, a compromise involving the prohibition of the use of mascots, symbols, nicknames and images associated with any race or ethnicity but exempting the use of the names “Chieftain” and “Warrior”.

Board members individually expressed appreciation for the process and all who participated, the major points learned and understood, and discussed each option and stated the reason they supported one, two or three.

Mrs. Exum moved, and Mr. Sarzen seconded:

THAT the original motion be amended to allow a vote on each option individually

The motion passed unanimously and a vote was taken.

Option One Failed 2-4

In Favor: Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Zydanowicz

Opposed: Mrs. Exum, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Schmitt

Option Two Failed 3-3

In Favor: Mrs. Exum, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Putterman

Opposed: Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Zydanowicz

Option Three Passed Unanimously 6-0

Mr. Tom Moore offered congratulations to recipients of an Honorable Mention for the production of a movie to be viewed at the White House and to Webster Hill Grade 5 students for their efforts to qualify for the Guinness Book of World Record. A reminder was provided about the Salt Box Gallery Art Beat and the upcoming “*West Hartford’s Cookin’*”.

Dr. Andrew Morrow, Mr. Bob Palmer and Mr. Bryan D’Orlando of Fusco Corporation presented an update on the Charter Oak project

*Motion to Amend  
Original Motion to Split  
the Vote*

*Superintendent’s Report*

*Charter Oak Update*

stating the site was now mobilized and the work is progressing forward. Appreciation was expressed for the adoption of the school calendar allowing for a slightly later first day of school start date. The successful bidding process yielded strong competition with bids submitted under budget. Priority considerations including delivery schedules, adherence to Town noise ordinances, respectful boundaries with neighbors and street parking, and appropriate cooperation with staff and students were reviewed. All were available to address the questions and concerns of the Board.

Board members discussed maintaining orderliness, routine clean-up and insuring safety precautions remain in place. The review by the school with Town officials on emergency evacuation plans was stated. Enthusiasm and the opportunities for positive promotion of the school for future enrollment was expressed.

Mr. Rick Ledwith reported on changes in certified staffing and provided a summary of recruitment efforts including hosting of the annual Teacher Career Fair and attending NEAG/UCONN Career Fair and CREC Minority Teacher Recruitment Fair. Mr. Ledwith stated that eight retirements had been received and no new administrative openings to date but that was subject to change. The status of union negotiations was shared. He was available to answer questions of the Board.

*Personnel Report*

Mr. Zydanowicz reported on the West Hartford Girls Travel Basketball teams.

*Other Information and  
Discussions*

Henley Solomon (Conard) reported on spring sports, CAPT Science, the spring Jazz Show, clothing drive and the annual musical performance this year, *Hello Dolly*.

*Report from Student  
Board Representatives*

Paul Zeuschner (Hall) reported on the start-up of Spring sports, final performances of *Pops n' Jazz*, and Empty Bowls fundraiser.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

*Announcement of  
Meeting Dates*

1. Wednesday, March 25, BOE meeting, 7:00 p.m., followed by Public Hearing and Budget Workshop #3, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, room 314, Legislative Chamber
2. Tuesday, April 7, 2015, regular BOE meeting, Adoption of the 2015-2016 Board of Education Budget, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 314, Legislative Chamber
3. Tuesday, April 21, 2015, BOE meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town

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Hall, room 314, Legislative Chamber

Sara deBeer Zeiger, 51 Randal Ave., addressed the Board to compliment members on the thoroughness and civility with handling the names and images issue.

*Comments from Visitors*

Rob Cersosimo, 112 Tunxis Rd., addressed the Board to express his support for the traditions tied to the Conard Chieftain name and thanked the Board for the process.

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Mrs. Exum:

*Adjournment*

That the Board adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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Mark Overmyer-Velazquez, Chairperson      Terry Schmitt, Secretary  
*Respectfully submitted by: Ms. K. Lawrence, Clerk of the Board*

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