

West Hartford Public Schools  
Board of Education  
Special Board Meeting  
March 25, 2015

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

Special 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*

Diane Duva, 24 Arundel Ave., addressed the Board to request consideration for an amendment to the proposed motion to allow for clarification in the language for future interpretation and potential change.

*Public Communications*

Mr. Putterman moved, seconded by Mr. Schmitt:

*Motion by Bruce  
Putterman and Terry  
Schmitt to Accept Policy  
1700 – Second and  
Final Reading*

THAT the Board of Education review as a second and final reading the following proposed new policy put forward by the Board Policy Subcommittee:

1700 School Nicknames and Images

Mr. Putterman provided background of the three options proposed and the selection of the compromise of Option #3. He emphasized that the policy does not prohibit potential changes that may result from future discussions.

Student representative, Paul Zeuschner expressed his opinion and shared feedback from students not previously voiced regarding reservations about retaining the school mascot names. Board members acknowledged his comments and addressed them with statements of the goals of Board with this action and expressed confidence and hope in the students, staff and community to move forward.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schmitt moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

*Motion to Create a  
Committee to Develop  
Official School Images*

THAT the principals of both high schools will each, in consultation with the Superintendent, appoint a committee at their school, composed of school administrators, teachers, non-

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certified employees, students, parents, and other members of the school community, to develop new logos and related images by June 15, 2015, with funding by the Board of Education to engage a marketing or graphic design professional to support this work

Mr. Schmitt emphasized that the unusual directive of this motion to school personnel breaks precedent and is limited in scope to the willingness to fund those efforts.

Board members outlined the conditions of adherence to the policy including prohibiting the production of any new products with Native American imagery and eliminating the usage of current items by the 2015-16 school year. Concerns about the practicality and budget impact to replace existing items before their typical life span expired were raised. The potential for private fundraising was presented. The necessity of expediting the changes to demonstrate respect for the intent of the new policy was stated.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Tom Moore announced the successful NAEYC reaccreditation process for the Early Learning Centers at Aiken and Whiting Lane Elementary Schools. He shared that receiving the equivalent of an A+ was a testament to the teachers and staff. The last day of the 2014-2015 school year was announced Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> and graduation for both high schools will be Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Zydanowicz shared the concerns expressed by some parents regarding the college application process.

Paul Zeuschner (Hall) reported the start-up of Spring sports and the upcoming Farm-to-Table dinner.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

1. 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
2. Tuesday, April 21, 2015, BOE meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, room 314, Legislative Chamber

Diane Duva, 24 Arundel Ave., addressed the Board to express appreciation for the opportunity to be heard and on the record to

*Superintendent's Report*

*Other Information and  
Discussions*

*Report from Student  
Board Representatives*

*Announcement of  
Meeting Dates*

*Comments from Visitors*

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clarify that the language in the new policy is not a mandate by the Board that school names can never be changed.

Chip Simplicio, 17 Walden Dr., addressed the Board regarding the Nicknames and Images policy.

Mr. Zydanowicz moved, seconded by Mr. Sarzen:

That the Board adjourn at 7:40 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*

*Adjournment*

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