

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**September 21, 2020**  
**Regular Board Meeting**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on September 21, 2020 at West Haven High School Cafe, McDonough Plaza, West Haven, CT. Cebi Waterfield, Chairperson of the Board of Education called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Alliance.

**BOARD MEMBERS  
IN ATTENDANCE:**

Rosa Richardson, Vice Chair  
Patricia Libero, Secretary/Treasurer  
James Morrissey  
Anne Heffernan  
Andrea Talamelli  
Robert Guthrie  
Patrick Egolum  
Rosemary Russo

**ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Neil C. Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Anne Druzolowski, Assistant Superintendent  
Matthew Cavallaro, Finance Director

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES  
PRESENT:**

Anthony Ventrella  
Mackenzie Gardner

**B. Public Portion of Meeting**

Peter Sulkis - 77 Court St – Mobilization Chair for the WHFT, a teacher at Mackrille and Savin Rock School. I'm sure most of you know of the concerns and the unhappiness of our union members in regards to the reopening of schools. One of the greatest concerns I have and the teachers that I speak with daily have is the lack of information or transparency. Teachers across the district are starting to hear that the district is moving to full day reopening in the beginning of October. They are hearing this from cross guards and bus drivers. I'm hoping you can speak to these rumors, and allowing for full disclosure. I am also hoping you can address when the WHFT will be informed of any schedule changes and lastly I would like to know how the Distance Learning piece would work since we are developing a

rapport with our students and parents. When I say parents, I mean the little ones I would be curious to hear your responses to that.

Dwight Knowles, 29 Woodmont Rd, – wife and I have a daycare center of school age children. With the kids not in school eating lunch, they are bring home all the food and not eating it. The company does not care how much food is tossed out. They come home and eat the food that we have prepared for them. The parents want to give it to us. And they give chocolate milk which is against our rules.

Public Portion Closed 6:09 pm

## **REPORTS**

### **C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools**

Marissa Acampora, COVID Liaison – see attached

Superintendent Cavallaro reviewed enrollment numbers. Distance Learning is at 32%. We are getting more students returning to schools. Buses at 50% capacity. I want to address Peter's concerns. I am having a principal meeting on Thursday. There is no definite date to return full time. We need to be prepared to return. How will the Distance Learners be serviced? Teachers will have less time to work with them. Principals were contacting retired teachers to see if they are available. We might bring the teachers out on COVID in to do Distance Learning. We will be able to support them with staff from their buildings. We have 2500 devices on order. I received an email from Kristen Scanlon the day after their Executive Board meeting. Kristen is hearing teachers did not get what they need. To our knowledge, we are getting out supplies as quickly as possible. Plexiglas was not ordered for every teacher in the district. WHHS removed some density in the classroom. Taping floors. We have to teach a little differently. If the teachers need something they should tell the principal and we will do our best to get it. We contacted Tracey Acquarulo after receiving the email from the union. She met with Tammy to review the orders. Any supplies that we received we are getting them out as fast as we can. I wish I could tell you the schedule but I can't. Our goal is to get back to a full day. Many school districts are on hybrid. At the Superintendent's meeting it was discussed to go back on 1 October, November is more realistic, but it would depend on the cold/flu numbers. Teachers on FMLA will be back in November. It will be easier to move to a full schedule. Nothing is definite yet, you will be the first to know and we will work with the union. We are close to a MOU, several items have been agreed upon, and we are moving the process forward. Neil addressed the wasted food issue. The first week of school. Without knowing how many students would show up we over prepared. They will adjust and order less.

Rosa Richardson – do Distance Learners have the opportunity to get lunch?

Neil – Distance Learners come to WHHS to pick up lunches. WHHS was closed for two days; it was out of our control. The Health Department closed it for a non-school related situation. We have to close if they say so. We are helping with the contact tracing

Rosemary Russo – we will not close for one or two. What is the perimeter to close for 20?

Neil – we would look at the teachers. Can we deliver a high level of instruction with what we have left?

Rosemary Russo – what happens if the child goes to the nurse. When does the student come back to school?

Marissa- we remove a systemic student. Quarantine is recommend and we consult with the Health Department.

Rosemary Russo – if the child is not tested they quarantine for 14 days?

Marissa – yes, we are maintaining the quarantine period per the Health Department

Cebi Waterfield – it is based on criteria. Closing of schools depends on contact tracing. Each case is different.

Neil – K-8 cohorting is easier. It is changeling at WHHS limiting contact.

Rosa Richardson- What are Special Education outsourced students doing.

Joe Lucibello – the outplaced are following the school they go to.

Neil – students come in to receive services.

James Morrissey – any additional COVID cases?

Neil – none that I know of.

Rosemary Russo- can we have an accounting of what we spent on COVID at the next meeting?

Cebi Waterfield – heard from several people, positive feedback. They are happy the kids are back. Teachers feel much safer than they thought. That was nice to hear. Glad we pushed this a little bit. Thank you for all your hard work.

Ken Carney, Chairman Building Committee – see attached

### **C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report**

Mackenzie Gardner – gave update on returning to school

Anthony Ventrella – gave an update on online learning and the soccer team

### **C.1.c. Board**

Rosemary Russo – toured schools, very impressed how clean they are. Kids look happy to be back. Teachers were apprehensive they are giving their all. It is nice to see them teaching the

younger grades how to use Chromebooks. Glad to hear we have supplies. Thank you to all the staff.

Patricia Libero – Thank you to Marissa for the report. I am very impressed people going above and beyond working extra hours. Teachers and para’s are happy to be back looking forward to normalcy.

Rosa Richardson – I had a chance to go into schools. Very welcoming, seeing our kids with smiling faces through a mask. They are in tune with what’s going on. It is heartwarming seeing kids moving along with what the new norm is with big smiles.

James Morrissey – visited Carrigan and Seth Haley. As bad as the pandemic is there are a lot of positive things happening. The vent ducts were cleaned and the ceiling tiles replaced. I called Chris and Mike, shout out to those guy’s the schools are spotless. It’s nice to talk to staff and students. They obviously want to be back also. It’s our job to make sure they return safe. Good job by everybody. Schools look amazing. Look forward to the schools opening in a timely manner. Hope and pray everyone is safe and things go well in the next several months.

Anne Heffernan- happy about touring schools. Thank you the t-shirts and for all the hard work.

Cebi Waterfield – Thank you Chris, I call you all the time. I think Anne and Andrea would understand this. When you are first going into a situation, it is scary. You’re so anxious it is almost consuming you. That is what we were faced with in March in the hospital. Your not sure if you are hearing the right information, do we have the right PPE. As we moved through it, we all got a level of ok so this is what we do. We are in a place now that you guys will get to in a couple of months. As health care workers, we know where you are; please know you have our support. I did hear, because I work at Yale New Haven Health at a Town Hall meeting that the flu season might not be so bad based on the fact that everyone is wearing a masks, social distancing and handwashing. It will have a positive effect on the upcoming flu season. However, get your flu shot.

## **D.1. Approval of Minutes**

**D.1. the West Haven Board of Education Meeting** was held in the WHHS Auditorium on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 6:05 PM.

Chairwoman Waterfield asked for a motion to approve the minutes **D.1.**

Rosa Richardson made the motion

Andrea Talamelli seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present were in favor

Abstained: Rosemary Russo

Minutes **D.1.** were approved

**D.2. Resignations: (Certified)**  
**All-inclusive: 20-81**

Chairwoman Waterfield asked for a motion to approve the resignations **D.2.**

Andrea Talamelli made the motion

Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

Discussion: none

All board members present were in favor

Resignations **D.2.** were approved

**D.3. New Hire: (Certified)**  
**All-inclusive: 20-82 – 20-86**

Chairwoman Waterfield asked for a motion to approve the new hires **D.3.**

Robert Guthrie made the motion

Rosa Richardson seconded the motion

Discussion: None

All board members present were in favor

Items **D.3.** were approved

**D. 4 New Business - none**

**Informational**

Chairwoman Waterfield asked for a motion to adjourn

Robert Guthrie made the motion

Anne Heffernan seconded the motion

All board members were in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Tamara Mursko