

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 1, 2016
Regular Board Meeting
Board's Meeting Room

The Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the Board's Meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut on February 1, 2016. The meeting was called to order by James Morrissey, Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS
IN ATTENDANCE:**

James W. Morrissey, Chairman
Robert Guthrie, Vice Chair
Susan Walker, Secretary/Treasurer
Patrick Leigh
Karen Pacelli
Mark Palmieri
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Patricia Libero

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

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES
PRESENT:**

Evelyn Fabian
Andrew Gordon

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Chairman Morrissey welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if anyone would like to address the board. There were three people who spoke.

Teresa Heaney, 98 Cynthia Drive, West Haven, CT. Teresa stated she is here on behalf of West Haven High School Counseling. Today is the first day of school counseling week and these are little gifts to say thank you to the board members, Superintendent Cavallaro and Dr. Druzolowski for always supporting us. Tomorrow and Thursday is coffee with the counselors from 7:30 to 8:00 in the Library Media Center. You are invited to stop by and have a chat with the school counselors. Thank you again for your support. The board gave thanks.

Kristen Malloy Scanlon, 678 Sawmill Road, Kristen is President of the West Haven Federation of Teachers and Nurses. Kristen is in favor of the Superintendent's January 19th Budget and is baffled why the BOE would even consider cutting this budget before it is brought to the city. These possible cuts would affect teachers and students considerably. This district has made great strides and we are moving in the right direction because of the staff and resources we currently have. If cuts are made this district will be moving backwards and our results will be in the past. We need to retain what we have. This board must advocate for our schools, staff, resources, teachers, school nurses and most importantly the children of West Haven. Make the right decision and approve the Superintendent's budget thank you. Applause. The board gave thanks.

Patricia Fusco, 311 Shingle Hill Road, West Haven, CT asked the board to support the Superintendent's budget. You were elected to ensure that all students in West Haven receive the best education possible. If the budget is cut before it goes to the Mayor and City Council where the budget has always been cut in my 38 years. In her experience a BOE has never cut what the superintendent felt that he or she needed as adequate to educate the children. She has never seen a board knowingly and purposely adopt a budget that will force layoffs. We have had a revolving door over the years and when the pink slips go out teachers start looking for jobs elsewhere. We have lost a lot of very talented teachers as a result of this and if they get a job elsewhere they are not going to come back and take the chance of being laid off again. We have worked hard with the administration to stop that process. We don't want to lose teachers that will be difficult to replace. Patti read a list of shortage areas from the Commissioner of Education's list and there are not a lot of people applying for these shortage areas. We want to keep the staff we have that we believe are the best of the lot. We don't want to take the leftovers when the budget settles down and we have to take whoever we can get rather than the skilled staff we have right now because if we don't do this the students will suffer. Students only have one shot through the school system they are only in first grade once hopefully all the way through. Please do not be the first BOE to cut the budget before it goes to the Mayor. Do you want that to be your legacy? Thank you. Applause. The board gave thanks. There were no other speakers. Public Session closed at 7:08 PM

REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Neil thanked Pam and Dana for their report tonight. They did a great job and put a lot of work into that as well as into the course selection catalog and making sure our kids have a lot of choices and options at West Haven High School; one of the things that we are very proud of at the high school.

The budget questions have been coming in and we are trying to get you the answers as quickly as possible. If you need some clarification don't hesitate to call and Matt and I will get you a pretty quick turnaround to help you make the decisions.

Roger LaFleur is here to discuss the Alliance General Improvement Grant. We are talking about the small construction grant. A couple of weeks back we received an award letter of the 1.5M or 1.6M we applied for; we are eligible for 1.7M. We were approved for

1,218,147.00 and we were disappointed on the doors and windows. We will put that into the Capital Plan for next year. It is eligible for reimbursement so we will get it for a much lower rate. We are planning on moving forward with the auditorium at Carrigan. There is still one more round that we can apply for. Neil turned the meeting over to Roger LaFleur, Project Manager for the improvements to Carrigan School. The bad news is that you were denied for the windows the good news is that we have not submitted the application to the state for a school construction grant which is a different grant and the windows will be put into that grant. The only difference is that grant doesn't pay quite as well as the Alliance Grant would 100%. This grant will pay about 60% of the windows so West Haven will have to assume a little more debt to put the windows in. Patrick Leigh asked why we weren't approved for the windows and was told they inquired twice and have not received an answer. He is working with other districts which also were denied their windows. He thinks the Alliance Grant is set up to pay for things that don't normally qualify under school construction grants but in the application it stated windows and doors and that is why most people that applied for it felt justified to put in windows and doors. Neil said number one on the list says eligible improvement projects include replacing windows and doors. Another application for a grant went out on January 29th for the Carrigan auditorium renovations and if approved it will pay for all new seating, a new stage curtain and new HVAC primarily air conditioning. The current unit is not repairable; it is pretty well shot. He hopes to get a quick answer because his concern is that if they take another three months before they tell us we may not have enough time to get the specifications and bids to do it during the summer. He will continue to stay on them and see if we can get an answer quickly. A further discussion continued about items still on course that will move forward this summer such as the interior lighting, new pool cover, various HVAC throughout the school, student lockers and selected paving (areas in the worst shape). All of the windows will be in the second application. The difference unfortunately is about \$160,000.00 of additional debt to West Haven as a result of not getting covered under the Alliance Grant but out of a total package of 7.2M that is not too bad. Neil said we are also within whatever the city allotted in the 5 Year Capital Plan so we are adding \$100,000.00 to next year's bonding the city will do which falls below what they had put aside for us or anticipated bonding for. We sat down with Kevin McNabola last week to make sure it was OK to go ahead and it was. The board gave thanks.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

The student rep report is located at the end of the minutes.

C.1.c. Board

Mark Palmieri congratulated Dr. Cordone on the nice article in the paper about Mrs. Mitchell and Mr. DiGioia. It shows the curriculum is working. We are intertwining English with Science and won 30 Chrome Books (laptops) and 500 science books for Bailey. This is great.

Mark spoke with Mr. DeGroff from UNH and he would like to come on March 7th. Can we have the meeting at Carrigan because the high school has a play taking place on the 7th. There will be two videos totaling four minutes. They will bring the jazz band and the program will be explained. Chairman Morrissey said we can hold the meeting at

Carrigan School on the 7th and Neil said that will be fine. Mark asked if there is a white board there. All this will be looked into beforehand. There will be a little performance by the jazz band. Mark thanked everyone.

Karen Pacelli attended the advisory council meeting last week which Dr. Rose Paolino runs. It is a nice program and Rose is currently inquiring about internship programs to begin at the high school and is reaching out for sites.

Patrick Leigh thanked Neil and Matt for all their support in getting him the information he requested; it has been very helpful.

Rosemary asked her fellow board members to sign up and adopt a school. Just let her know which school you want to adopt. Thank you.

Susan Walker wanted to congratulate Sherry Mitchell and Matt DiGioia for obtaining the Chrome Books and science books for Bailey. She is sure the students who work with them have a wonderful time doing so knowing Sherry and knowing Matt.

Bob Guthrie attended the spelling Bee and saw a couple of board members and city council members there. It was an impressive tournament and one of the longer rounds with some very challenging words. All the students did very well and the district was well represented.

Superintendent Cavallaro said we would like to invite Mr. DeGioia and Mrs. Mitchell to either the first or second meeting in March to recognize them. This was a national contest and they really did well by our district. Our district will benefit greatly by the chrome books and the other books that were received.

Chairman Morrissey was also at Bailey last week for the presentation with Mr. DeGioia and Mrs. Mitchell. They did a wonderful job. The students were so excited it was a great time. This was a nationwide event and they came in second place among thousands of applications. It is an amazing thing that these teachers did. Mrs. Mitchell is a veteran teacher who has been here for many, many years and taught his two daughters. Mr. DeGioia is a newer teacher so it is great to see our veteran teachers and younger teachers get together and receive this award of 30 chrome books and 500 science books. It was a great effort. We can't wait to have them come here so we can thank them for all their hard work. Jim also attended the spelling bee contest with Bob and Rosa stopped in and it was quite an event. It went 26 rounds. Neil said they had almost 100 words which is almost double what we normally get to. Jim said all the kids did a wonderful job. Jim said you might be seeing a 5th grader from Carrigan School when they have the finals in April or May; he was outstanding. Neil said he was very, very good.

Jim went to a fundraiser for a young boy Blake Byrd who is one of our students who is fighting cancer. We want to extend best wishes to him and his family. Our thoughts and prayers go out to him. Jim thanked the teachers who ran the fundraiser. They did a great job on his behalf.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on January 19, 2016 at 7:32 PM.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.a.

Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

D.1.b. Special Meeting Board as a Whole for Finance was held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on January 19, 2016 at 6:00 PM.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.b.

Patrick Leigh made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

D.1.c. Special Meeting Board as a Whole for Finance was held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on January 27, 2016 at 6:00 PM.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.c.

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

16-06 Lauren Smith, Kindergarten teacher – Forest

***Effective: February 2, 2016 New date**

Reason: Personal

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve D.2. Resignation #16-06

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Bob Guthrie seconded the motion

Discussion:

All board members present were in favor

Item 16-06 is approved

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

D.4. New Business

16-07 Approval of Field Trip for approximately ten students to attend the International Career Development Conference (ICDC) in Nashville from April 22, 2016 – April 27, 2016, under the supervision of John McKee to compete for scholarship funds ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000 in 52 various event categories.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve D.4. #16-07

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve item 16-07

Mark Palmieri seconded the motion

Discussion: Patrick Leigh asked what the cost of the trip was. Rosa Richardson said the cost is incurred on the students correct? Yes. There is no cost to the board. Mark Palmieri said the students raise money all year for this.

All board members present were in favor

Item 16-07 is approved

16-08 Vote on the Proposed Budget for 2016 – 2017

Chairman Morrissey said 16-08

Rosa Richardson made a motion to approve item 16-08 as recommended

Mark Palmieri seconded the motion

Patrick Leigh made a motion to extend the proposed budget and table it ...Rosa Richardson said you have a motion on the floor; point of order...until the new estimate is available we have a 30 day extension from the Mayor. Rosa Richardson said there is a motion on the floor to approve. Chairman Morrissey said we can have discussion on this and there will be a vote on this. Rosa said correct. Chairman Morrissey said and then another motion...Rosa said if necessary.

Discussion: Patrick Leigh thinks we should wait until the 30 days is up. He knows there is an extension letter to the Superintendent.

Chairman Morrissey said there is a letter sent by the Mayor to James O'Brien, Chairman of the City Council. Chairman Morrissey said he would read the letter into the record.

The letter is attached at the end of the minutes (Schedule B). Chairman Morrissey said we have until that date to submit the budget to the Mayor. There have been discussions between the Mayor, administration, and Superintendent Cavallaro concerning the budget and they are working together to go over the budget and see if there are ways to work together and get more information concerning the BOE budget. He feels there is no need to rush tonight to approve it at this meeting and if we work together we can see if we can come up with a number between now and March 4th. We can have meetings throughout February if need be to discuss the budget further.

Rosa said are we not asking the Superintendent to do what he would normally do once the budget is passed. We are asking him to make the appropriate cuts that we would be asking him to make once the budget is passed. We as a board can spin our wheels and once the budget is passed we have to make the appropriate adjustments.

Mayor O'Brien said that is what we are trying to avoid. Patti Fusco said it perfectly for 38 years she has been involved and the Superintendent presents a number that gets knocked down to something that the city can afford and you go back and rework the budget. We are trying to avoid all that and skip that for the first time in 38 years. Mayor O'Brien said he has been working with Superintendent Cavallaro and the Finance Director (not related) Matt Cavallaro. We are trying to work together to come up with a number so that when it is presented we can afford it; it is something the city can do and then we can move on from there without playing that game that we play. If I as the Mayor can give the BOE 15%, 20% I would do that but the city cannot afford to give what we don't have so we are trying to come up with something we both can work with that the city can afford and the BOE can live with. Rosa is afraid if the board makes cuts in the budget and then the city and council cut it again we will still be stuck with those critical decisions that we will have to make as a board. Rosa asked if there is a number that is going to work for the city; is it 1% is it 3% is it 2%? Mayor O'Brien said he is waiting for the Superintendent to come back with a number that is something he can work with and something the city can afford. Mayor O'Brien said he is not going to put a percentage out there and doesn't think it solves anything to shoot a high number out there just to get it knocked down and have everybody say that somebody doesn't care about education because that is the furthest thing from the truth. There is only one pot of money that everybody in the city has to use and as you know that includes the police department, education, and services. We are trying to come up with a number that everyone can live with. Mayor O'Brien feels it makes more sense to change the way we do things because the way we have done it for at last the 38 years has been counterproductive it is just infighting for no reason. You are going to ask for a high number and you are going to get what we can afford anyway. A further discussion took place.

Bob Guthrie said you are working to agree on a number, and he appreciates that, but you can't guarantee that is the final number back once the Board of Finance and City Council do their deliberations; that is his concern.

Mayor O'Brien said you are absolutely right he can't guarantee that. Bob said it is nice that people are working towards a number but there are still other steps in this process that could ultimately change that number. Correct but Mayor O'Brien's hope is that it is a number we can live with, the Superintendent can afford and he doesn't know why the City Council would reduce it just to reduce it if it is something we all can agree on before we get to that point.

Rosemary Russo said she looks at the budget book and sees numbers that haven't changed and numbers that have changed drastically without us questioning it. She wants to know what we are spending and she wants to know how it will affect education. We are not talking layoffs we want to be conscientious. No, we are not talking layoffs nobody on this board wants layoffs. She understands as a teacher that is what you are thinking but it is not. She wants to understand the budget more and to really know what we are spending and how it is affecting children and this budget book so far hasn't really told her how we are spending it and how it is affecting children. She doesn't want to be handed a notebook again next year on Friday afternoon and have to vote on it Monday

night. This is a lot and as a board we need to look at it and understand it. Let's just review it. If we have to ask for 4% we ask for it maybe we can ask for 3 million or 2 million she wants to look at it as a board and discuss it.

Mayor O'Brien said in his opinion that is the role of the board the oversight not just have the Superintendent give you a number and everybody passes it. Your role is the oversight to look at the budget and approve it. It is your job as a board to look at it.

Mark Palmieri said his concern is that 89% of the budget is contractual and the other 11% is whatever all the miscellaneous is but the factor that comes in every year is the workman's comp, the benefits, the tuition and in the past we have worked on all those items but whatever you do cut whether it is a program or not is still going to affect the people attached to that program. If you are going to cut a program you are cutting personnel. This is a very difficult thing. In the past it always seems as though it is the board that takes the major cuts. He hope this time around that the Mayor, the City Council and the finance people take a look and maybe cut us a bigger slice. The state money keeps going up and the city end keeps going down and sooner or later it is going to catch up to us so we need to catch up to that before it catches up to us. Thank you.

Chairman Morrissey said he agrees with Rosemary Russo in that this is an awfully big budget to look at and make a decision on in a couple of days. He doesn't think it would hurt to look at the budget and see if there are any additional cuts that could be made. This is a 91M budget and there are a lot of things in here that need to be looked at. You have an additional 29 days where you can have the board meet and set up a work shop as Rosemary suggested and come in with more questions. We will see what the Superintendent can live with and the city can live with. Chairman Morrissey said he will make this perfectly clear we want to make sure our teachers are taken care of and that is the truth. The last thing we want to do is to hurt the teachers; we have one great staff of teachers in our system. He doesn't think it would hurt to look further in the budget and come up with some more suggestions to balance it both on the BOE's needs and the city side. He would be voting against approving the budget tonight. There was no further discussion.

Chairman Morrissey said the motion is to approve the 2016-2017 budget as presented by Superintendent Cavallaro. Item #16-08 He asked for a roll call vote. A yes vote would be to approve the proposed budget and a no vote would be to oppose the proposed budget.

Mark Palmieri	Yes
Rosa Richardson	Yes
Karen Pacelli	No
Robert Guthrie	Yes
James Morrissey	No
Patrick Leigh	No
Rosemary Russo	No
Susan Walker	No

There were 3 yes votes and 5 no votes. The motion is denied.

Item 16-08 is denied.

Chairman Morrissey asked if there was another motion.

Patrick Leigh made a motion to table the vote on the budget until more numbers come in from the Superintendent. Superintendent Cavallaro said since the board did not pass the budget as is you do not need a motion to table you would just continue on with the discussion but will defer to the Chair's decision. Jim feels there should be a motion to table and asked for a motion to table the Superintendent's 2016 – 2017 Budget until further discussion. New Item #16-09.

Mark Palmieri	Yes
Rosa Richardson	Yes
Karen Pacelli	Yes
Robert Guthrie	Yes
James Morrissey	Yes
Patrick Leigh	Yes
Rosemary Russo	Yes
Susan Walker	Yes

All board members were in agreement to table the Superintendent's s proposed budget until further discussion during the next several weeks. Item #16-09 is approved.

Pam Gardner asked that she be able to announce that Jeremy Borelli who is currently the Valedictorian for the senior class this year and is also a hockey player was voted the CPTV State of Connecticut Player of the Week. Applause

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to adjourn.

Rosa Richardson made the motion
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion
All board members were in favor
The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary

BOE Student Report – February 1, 2016

Good luck to the Cheerleading squad who will be competing in the National Cheerleading Competition this weekend in Disney World.

Children's Theater performed this weekend in a student created play, Fairy Tale News.

The Dance Team is sponsoring a **Wear Red Day** on Friday in recognition of heart health.

The cast and crew of the spring musical, *Cabaret*, are busy at work preparing. Mark your calendars and plan to attend on March 17, 18 and 19.

As part of School Counseling Week,

- ✓ 9th and 10th grade parents are invited to Coffee with the Counselors tomorrow or Thursday from 7:30am – 8:20am in the Library Media Center to hear the School Counselors' Recipe for Success while enjoying a cup of coffee and pastries.
- ✓ Grade 12 students and parents are invited in for assistance with FAFSA on Thursday, February 4th at 12:45pm.

Junior Class rings that were purchased in November will be distributed in the Café on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 from 8:00 am - 1:30 pm.

Senior final cap and gown orders will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2016, in the Café from 8:00 am-1:30 pm.

A dozen students attended the *School Climate and Public Policy* forum held at the Savin Rock Conference Center on January 14th and will be meeting to review the topics presented to combat anti-bullying and look at options for implementation at WHHS.

WHHS is gearing up for the Connecticut SAT on Wednesday, March 2nd with a number of free offerings for our juniors:

- There will be a **FREE Diagnostic SAT Practice Test** by First Choice College on Saturday, February 20, 2016 at WHHS from 9:00am-12:00pm. Interested students should sign up with their school counselor.
- **Two Sunday SAT Strategies Sessions** will be held on Sunday, February 21st focusing on math and on Sunday, February 28th focusing on evidence-based reading and writing. Both sessions will run from 4-7pm and include pizza and salad.
- **Two Parent Meetings** will be held to offer parents an opportunity to learn about the new SAT and the Connecticut SAT on Thursday, February 18th at 6pm and Saturday, February 20th at 8:30am.
- School Counselors will be working with juniors to create accounts with College Board and link them to accounts with Khan Academy. This will link their SAT scores and Khan Academy will offer SAT practice based student performance on the SAT.
- Junior teachers in English, Social Studies, and Math will be practicing with their students all month as well.

WHHS is also partnering with Kaplan to offer an SAT prep course, at a discounted rate of \$385, for 9 sessions in preparation for the May SAT. This is great discount from the \$899 regular price. The course will run on Tuesday nights beginning March 1st at 5:30pm.

WHHS is preparing for 2016-17 with student course registration at both WHHS and Bailey Middle School. Current grade 9, 10 and 11 students will participate in Program of Studies Day on February 8th and will be able to register online, through the Powerschool Parent Portal, until February 26th.

The timeline for Bailey 8th graders begins with a Registration Meeting for parents on February 11th, followed on Friday, February 12th with assemblies by team. The registration powerschool parent portal will open on February 11th and close on February 26th for Bailey students. Members of the high school registration team will meet with students on February 17-19 for online registration in the Bailey Computer Lab.

Registration for the Lil Miss Westie Pageant are now being accepted. The pageant, a fundraiser for Blue & White: Up All Night, will be held on Saturday, March 26th. Please visit their facebook page (lilmiss Westie) or email lilmisswestie@whschools.org for more information.

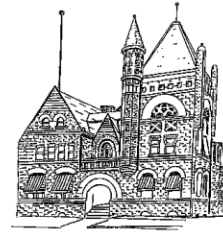
Congratulations to West Haven High School senior Max Padro, who has signed a letter of intent to attend and swim for Southern Connecticut State University next fall! He's broken a WHHS record in nearly every swim stroke and last year became the first Westie to win a boys Class L swimming event in school history.



Edward M. O'Brien
Mayor

Office of the Mayor

City of West Haven
355 Main Street
West Haven, Connecticut 06516



City Hall
1896-1968

February 1, 2016

James O'Brien
West Haven City Council
355 Main Street
West Haven, CT 06516

Re: Extension for Budget Estimate of the West Haven Board of Education

Dear Chairman O'Brien:

As you know the budget season is upon us and budget estimates by the first Thursday in February. Section 1 of Chapter XIX of our City Charter states as follows:

"The head of each department, office or agency of the City, including the Chairman of the Board of Education shall not later than the first Thursday of February each year, file with the Mayor, on forms prescribed by him a detailed estimate of the expenditures to be made by his department or agency and the revenue other than tax revenues to be collected thereby in the ensuing year and such other information as may be required by the Council or the Mayor."

This section of the Charter also vests the Mayor with the authority to grant an extension of not more than thirty (30) days to any department to present its budget estimate. I am informed that the Board of Education will not have its budget estimate completed by Thursday, February 4, 2016. Therefore this letter constitutes notice to the council that I am granting the West Haven Board of Education an extension of 29 days through and until 3:00 p.m. on Friday, March 4, 2016 in order to deliver its budget estimate.

Sincerely yours,

Edward M. O'Brien

EMO/es

cc; James Morrissey, Chairman of the Board of Education
Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools