

D. J. a.

**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
January 19, 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 January 19, 2016. The meeting was called to order by James Morrissey, Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:32p.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
- Rosemary Russo

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Patricia Libero
Rosa Richardson

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

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.

Jennifer Morrissey, 305 Country Hill Drive, West Haven, CT. Jennifer stated she spoke to the board during the January 4th meeting two weeks ago about midterms and she knows midterms are being held this week. She had asked two weeks ago if midterms

were going to be held or not and it was decided some classes would have them and some wouldn't have them. Dana said across the board midterms were eliminated and gave an explanation. Jennifer stated she was told two weeks ago that midterms were not going to be decided on and now midterms are taking place this week. So kids only have two weeks to prepare for midterms. In college we prepare for more than two weeks for midterms.

Jennifer also talked about modified scheduling and stated when she was in high school you could have a modified schedule for the last two periods only if you had proof you had a job. Now you can also have a modified schedule in the morning so you are telling me that kids who have the first two periods free have the option to come to school at 9:44 AM; that is a little ridiculous seeing that you are going to school for an education. She thinks it is really important for high school kids to realize the importance of an education. She knows college isn't for everyone but knows that high school is pretty important; it prepares them for the business world. She stated do you go to your job two hours late or leave two hours early.

Jennifer knows that leveling is still an issue and would like an update on it. The college credits are as good as they stand. Two weeks ago I was told we were keeping the midterms and hopes that we are not getting rid of finals. As a college student midterms are not optional you have to take it for every class. She doesn't think we should cut back on midterms now as it will only help the kids prepare for tests. In college they are two hours long. You talked about block scheduling and how it will help us with leveling because it is 90 minutes. I know you want more time in the classroom but it is important to block out these two hours. If this is what college is doing this is what we need to prepare students for. We need to get the GPA to a 4.0 scale on the 4.0 leveling. Colleges are looking at the GPA's and they are laughing. How did someone get a 5.3 GPA on a 4.0 scale? We need to take this seriously and adjust this as it is only affecting the kids getting into colleges. Kids with great GPA's are getting turned down. Not only is this bad for their self-esteem but as a school system the kids are not getting to the schools that they are choosing. The board gave thanks.

Nancy Rossi, 12 Robin Road, West Haven, CT. Nancy asked for all the documents that were given to the board tonight. She believes they are not confidential if they are fine. She asked them to be scanned and put on the website which includes the complete binder and the Special Ed information and the SRCS handout. Her reason is she is a firm believer of transparency and that everyone should be able to read this and you will have a lot more people on your side for funding if you give them this information so they can see what the costs are for Special Ed, transportation, salaries etc. The additional budget meeting request is a great idea. In the past they had three or four. If you don't want something in the budget find out beforehand what the consequence will be by removing it or reducing it. When you are talking about a child's education you want to make sure there are no missteps. She will definitely come and listen if she is available. You are the board that decides where this money goes. The Mayor doesn't cut line items he cuts the percentage. The budget will come back to you with the actual number given by the city in

May. She is all for looking over every line item but make sure if you cut something you can live with what the consequences are. The board gave thanks.

Tracy Morrissey, 305 Country Hill Drive, West Haven, CT. She hears there is going to be leveling and would like to know what the plan is for this. Will the kids be tested for the classes they are going to be placed in? Hopefully this will start September 1st. She is looking for some kind of outline on how the board plans to proceed with leveling at the high school. The board gave thanks.

There were no other speakers. Public Session closed at 7:44 PM

REPORTS

C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools

Superintendent Cavallaro replied to Jennifer and Tracy's comments and suggested they speak with Dana Parades as they have had a lot of conversations regarding a lot of the questions last week and they have the answers even with the leveling. Neil said he went to the high school the following day after the board meeting to discuss midterms. They felt at the high school that there wasn't enough time to fully implement them and that is why they went to the plan Dana talked about. We do intend to put them back in but this year it was a matter of timing. This is a temporary issue which we will resolve and work through. If you aren't satisfied after talking with Dana Superintendent Cavallaro said he will get involved and bring your other concerns to the board.

C.1.b. Student Representatives' Report

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

C.1.c. Board

Mark Palmieri went to Pat Libero's meeting at the Conference Center on bullying and he hoped we would be able to incorporate this in our district. The idea of kids having a super hero is a pretty neat concept.

Jason DeGroff from the University of New Haven has done a fabulous job with the UNH's band and has received an award from the President of the university. Everyone at the football games is very impressed at how he has built that band with baton twirlers, flag people and the band in general along with the music and the way they march etc. He would like to incorporate the jazz band and come to the high school. If we can have a board meeting at the high school he will have the band give a performance. Students interested in the band or jazz can see what is offered at the university, and if you qualify you receive half tuition. UNH has a great academic program especially in criminal justice, business and engineering. Jim said sure you can contact him.

Patrick Leigh asked about the modified scheduling. If a student is coming in late and leaving early is it the school's responsibility to provide transportation? No. Are they allowed to wander in the halls? No. If a student has a free period and is a senior (option only available to seniors) the option is to have a modified schedule and come in a period late or leave a period early or to have a study hall in the cafeteria or library. We can't

have them in the building unaccounted for. Can you track your modified student as to what time they arrive and leave? Absolutely.

Rosemary Russo agreed with what Mark said about Pat Libero's workshop last Thursday and she thought it was really well done and the presenters were great and made sense. She raved about it when she returned to her own school. It was inspirational and very informative. She thanked Jennifer Morrissey and hoped the board is able to get her answers to her questions.

Susan Walker attended the Bailey Middle School 7th Grade Winter Concert (chorus and band) it was a fabulous production and she was very impressed by the jazz band performance. They played a couple of numbers and only met seven times to practice; they were excellent.

Bob Guthrie attended the Washington Winter Concert and on 9:30 on a weekday morning they had nearly 250 family members present which was an impressive number. He attended the Carrigan Winter Band Concert with over 200 student musicians playing to a full house. With the work being done at Carrigan parents wanted to know if the auditorium seats are going to be included. Neil said if there is additional funding or money left over this will be the next place to put it. There is definitely work that can be done in the auditorium. Those are the original seats. Bob asked the Chairman to send out an email asking for board goals and the superintendent's goals so we can get that moving. Sure Marylou will get one out.

Jim Morrissey said last Friday there was a problem with the heat at Carrigan and he met Neil and Joe Falzone there. It was nothing to do with the boilers it was the controls. Neil said Mr. LaFleur asked for all the recent bills for Carrigan and we got them right over to him. The boiler is fine and is the standard, basic boiler. It is the controls and other types of connections that were causing the problem not the boiler.

Jim asked that a meeting of the curriculum committee be called to discuss the leveling situation. Jim thanked Patrick for a nice job as the Finance Committee Chairman and he believes they will hold a meeting next Wednesday at 6:00 PM to go over the budget. Neil said if there is anything you want in preparation for the meeting the quicker you get it to us the quicker we will get you the answers which will help you make any decisions you need to make.

Patrick thanked Neil and Matt for taking almost 2 ½ hours last Wednesday to answer all of the questions he had on the budget and he knows we will be talking more. Neil is happy to do this in individual small groups or whatever it takes. He doesn't want you to not be informed when you have to stand and defend something. Jim thanked Neil.

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 4, 2016 at 7:00 PM.

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

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

16-05 Pierre de St. Croix, 1403 Ann Street, Beaufort, NC 28516
Math Teacher Grade 8 – Bailey Middle School
Salary: \$71,000 Step 8 BS + 30
Effective: ASAP (Projected Date January 25, 2016)

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve item 16-05

Mark Palmieri made the motion to approve item 16-05

Susan Walker seconded the motion

Discussion: Neil thanked Tony Cordone and Nicole Danishevsky. This person happens to be moving up to Connecticut and we struck gold with him. He is an experienced math teacher and we are grabbing him before he goes out on the open market. We were very impressed by his sample lesson. Dr. Cordone said there were four of us in the class during his demonstration lesson and he just took command of the class and taught for 85 minutes straight and the kids were engaged for the entire 85 minutes. He did a great job and we felt he was a great choice. He has 10 ½ years' experience and he impressed us. Dr. Cordone spoke with his current administrator and his previous administrator and they both verified that what he saw is what he is and we have high hopes for him. Karen Pacelli asked if he had experience with block scheduling. No he did not. He works under a regular schedule of 45 minutes but his presentation took the entire 85 minutes and he was strong and the students were engaged. There was no further discussion.

All board members were in favor

Item 16-05 is approved

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mark Palmieri 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

**Board of Education
Student Representative Report**

1. **Cabaret Cast List**—came out. Show is March 17, 18, 19. Suzie and Andrew are in it
2. **Children's Show**—January 30th at 10 Am and 12 PM
3. **SAT Kaplan Course**-- \$385 per person, starts in January. See Dr. Paolino.
4. **Free Diagnostic SAT Test**—February 20th—see Dr. Paolino
5. **Mock Trial**—going to Quarter Finals on January 28th at Northwest Catholic at 5:30 PM. All three BOE representatives are attorneys.
6. **Yale Young Global Scholars Program**—Susie is recruiting high achieving rising Juniors and Seniors for a 2 week long academic summer program at Yale. See Susie Beyl if interested.
7. **Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Ceremony**—was January 10 at the Congregational Church on the Green. Bel Canto sang
8. **Jazz Band**—auditions are tonight.