

West Hartford Public Schools  
Board of Education  
Regular Board Meeting  
**November 18, 2014**

Present: Mrs. Exum, Ms. Gilcrest, Mr. Putterman, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Zydanicz, Superintendent Moore, Student Representatives Henley Solomon (Conard), Jacob Cantor (Hall-Substitute Rep)  
Absent: 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*

Judy Kelly, 52 Thomson Rd., addressed the Board regarding eliminating the use of Native American mascot and name.

*Public Communications*

Judy Borden, 673 Fern St., addressed the Board to emphasize the long standing nature of the Native American mascot and name issue and request that the practice end.

John Joyce, 170 S. Main St., addressed the Board regarding sufficient services for students and the accuracy of bullying statistics reported.

Mr. Tom Moore shared the passing of two long-time employees, Richard Gable, Residency and Security, and Gary Riley, Security Officer. He acknowledged their service and dedication and offered condolences to their families. The successes of the annual Red Wagon Brigade led by students from Morley Elementary School delivering food for the West Hartford Food Pantry, Sedgwick's Unified Theater production, and the Energy Challenge kick-off were all reported. Mr. Moore also stated the recent survey regarding parent notification for weather cancellations and delays had closed and results would be shared. Mr. Moore also provided a brief update on the Charter Oak construction project management.

*Superintendent's Report*

Mr. Chip Ward prepared the annual report for the 17<sup>th</sup> year and provided a broad overview of student enrollment from 1948-2014. He explained the major driver in projections related to the number of births and the challenge of projections during the transition period into Grade 6. He described the rare occurrence this year of losing 100 projected kindergartners and the search for answers but not determining satisfactory explanations. He reported that classroom space was adequate and acceptable for future needs. He was available to answer the questions and concerns of the Board.

*Multi-Year Enrollment Projections*

Board members raised concerns about the future impact of the missing kindergartners on space needs and the budgetary implications of a potentially declining enrollment. The role of Charter Oak opening and the ability to attract a sufficient number of students was discussed.

Dr. Nancy DePalma, Ms. Kerry Jones and Mr. Paul Vicinus presented the challenge of meeting the demands of required testing and the amount of instructional time devoted to that assessment and testing. The need to determine the amount of assessments occurring in the classroom and the relevance and application of the data collected was described. The goals and expectations of undertaking an assessment inventory were presented. All were available to address the questions and concerns of the Board.

Board discussion sought clarification on meaningful and hidden assessments, identifying gaps and defining assessment and the shift required in professional development and teacher training to effectively utilize data.

Ms. Gilcrest moved, seconded by Mr. Zydanowicz:

THAT the Board of Education approve the minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of November 5, 2014

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schmitt reported on a CAFE Convention presentation, *Lessons from Finland*, which he attended with Mr. Moore regarding reducing the impact and influence of poverty on student performance. Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Putterman, Mr. Jared Morin and student Board Rep Henley Solomon attended the Saturday CAFE Convention where a presentation was given by Mr. Jared Morin and Mr. Bruce Putterman, *Integrating Town and School Services*. Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez reported on an upcoming workshop and panel to host discussions on mascots, logos and names.

Student Board Rep Henley Solomon (Conard), expressed his appreciation on attending the CAFE conference and reported on recent incidents, the letter issued and planned next steps and announced upcoming performances and pep rally.

*Assessment Audit  
Introduction*

*Approval of Minutes*

*Reports from Other  
Boards and  
Organizations*

*Report from Student  
Board Representatives*

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Jacob Cantor (Hall substitute) reported on the December 10<sup>th</sup> workshop and panel to address social and human rights issues and provided a reminder of the upcoming Hall/Conard football game.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

1. Tuesday, December 2, 2014, regular Board of Education meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314
2. Tuesday, December 16, 2014 regular Board of Education meeting, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Legislative Chamber, room 314

*Announcement of  
Meeting Dates*

John Joyce, 170 South Main St., addressed the Board regarding enrollment numbers and correlation to the budget and shared his observations.

*Comments from Visitors*

Jill Pollack Lewis, 36 Lost Brook Rd., addressed the Board to express appreciation for the response to previous concerns about Norfeldt class sizes.

Mr. Zydanowicz moved, seconded by Mr. Schmitt:

That the Board adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

*Adjournment*

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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