

West Hartford Public Schools
Board of Education
Regular Board Meeting
October 4, 2016

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Present: Mrs. Blanks, Ms. Exum, Dr. Greenberg, Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez, Mr. Pauluk, Mr. Sarzen, Mr. Zydnowicz, Superintendent Moore, Student Representative Sarah Berman (Hall)

Absent: Student Representative Taylor Steer (Conard)

Regular Meeting – Town Hall – Legislative Chamber

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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

No Student Participation

Student Participation

No Public Communications to Report

Public Communication

No Unfinished Business to Report

Unfinished Business

No New Business to Report

New Business

Superintendent Tom Moore updated the Board on the upcoming ‘October mini break’ noting the decision to plan the teacher in service between the two holidays, Columbus Day and Yom Kippur, was well received. He also stated the decision to have this teacher in service between Columbus Day and Yom Kippur will hopefully provide for less crowded schools on Election Day. Superintendent Moore noted this will also be a good opportunity for students to visit colleges.

Mr. Moore reminded the Board of Charter Oak’s community open house on October 6th from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Members of the community will have the opportunity to tour the new building and learn the history of the school. He congratulated Jessica Blitzer, Social Studies Department Supervisor for Conard and Sedgwick, who was invited to be a part of a national group of university professors, religious scholars, and teachers embedded in the work of religious studies meeting in Washington D.C. to develop an appendix on religious studies for the Common Core Standards.

Staff Communications and Reports

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Moore presented on the District Profile and Performance Report (PPR) for the 2014-2015 school year. These reports replace the Strategic School Profile Report (SSP). The State Department of Education produces annual reports for all school districts in the state. In 2012 the State of Connecticut stopped publishing these reports, however the district has continued to produce them to the state. The state has published the 2013-2014 report and the 2014-2015 report. The law is very specific that the most recent report must be shared with the Board. All of the reports are available on our website. Superintendent Moore touched on areas of the report including Special Education, students placed outside the district, as well as a new section of the report entitled College Entrance and Persistence. The Board asked questions relating to the charts and a definition of arts access, as well as college entrance and persistence and target rates relating to students with disabilities. Questions were asked on the options for students who don't go right into college. Superintendent Moore stated that this report held much information for families new to our district. Superintendent Moore added that this report will go into the District Performance Index (DPI).

Profile and performance Report

Paul Vicinus presented with Kerry Jones and Anne McKernan on the State Assessment Results. Mr. Vicinus mentioned that this report is available on the BOE page of the WHPS website. This report presents the spring 2016 results of the Connecticut State Testing Program for West Hartford Public Schools. This represents the second year for mathematics and literacy performance under our new state assessments for math and literacy (Smarter Balanced). Mr. Vicinus shared that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has established four achievement categories for the tests and has designated Level 3 as meeting grade level targets. The tables in the report show the two year results for grades 3 through 8. Individual school scores reports are expected to go out via student's backpacks within the next two weeks. This report shows detailed information on student score results. Mr. Vicinus reported that as a whole our overall scores place West Hartford in the top third of the state for both literacy and mathematics. Literacy showed modest growth while mathematics was up 3 points overall. We posted record scores in science over the last few years. Comparative data from Connecticut for this year shows we are 14.7 points above the Connecticut average. Mr. Vicinus spoke on the trends of performance with our demographics reference group (DRG). He explained overall our tendencies for performance have matched the DRG, noting that West Hartford has a very different demographic profile from the other DRG B towns. West Hartford stands out among other districts relative

*State Assessment results
(Literacy, Mathematics
and Science)*

to economic diversity with 2-4 times the percentage of students participating in the free and reduced lunch program than other DRG B schools. Also mentioned was the association between the incidence of socio economic need and overall academic performance. He highlighted the performance disaggregated by student groups and identified strategies to close the gap as a consistent goal, noting West Hartford is making headway on closing the gap within the district. He touched on student performance, versus years in the district, noting the longer students are enrolled in West Harford the stronger the overall achievement levels are. The Board thanked Mr. Vicinus for the data and mentioned an appreciation for the value of this analysis and the importance of testing. Questions were asked by the Board on the participation rate, closing of the math gap, and free and reduced lunch. Ms. McKernan spoke on the individual schools, meeting with the teams and looking at student data and growth. Ms. Jones touched on her examination of trends and the connection to professional learning needs. She noted efforts of math and other instructional coaches working with schools based on needs identified within the global trends. On October 17th, there will be a parent/teacher council meeting (a parent/teacher leadership group with representation from every PTO across town) with a math presentation in order to get feedback on math specific needs of families.

Rick Ledwith spoke on the changes incurred including employment of interim teachers, resignations and leaves of absence. He touched on the current process of hiring a Wolcott Elementary Principal, noting there were 49 applicants. He has been working with the parent and teacher community to develop a leadership profile which helps to identify the leadership characteristics, traits, and experiences that are important for the community to see in its next principal. 80 people took part in a survey and then he met with 35 individuals to further develop the profile. Mr. Ledwith described the stages of the hiring process and stages to identify the best candidate. The Board thanked Mr. Ledwith for the process and asked questions regarding an extension if the right candidate was not found in the current pool of applicants.

Dr. Greenberg moved:

THAT the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Education meeting of September 20, 2016.

The motion passed unanimously with one abstention

Personnel Report

*Approval
Of Minutes*

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Mr. Zydanowicz commented on his visit to Conard with Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez and thanked Conard principal Julio Duarte and Student Representative Taylor Steer for a wonderful lunch and for being great hosts. Mr. Zydanowicz commented on the amazing job that the cafeteria and custodial workers are doing at Conard.

Representative Sarah Berman reported on the marching band and the Park Road Parade. She noted on October 15th the Student Association will be hosting their Fall Festival with food, games and a dunk tank. PSAT's will be held in October. The Madrigal performances will take place in November.

Dr. Overmyer-Velazquez announced the following meeting dates:

1. Tuesday, October 18, 2016, Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 314, Legislative Chamber, 7:00 p.m.
2. Tuesday, November 1, 2016, Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 314, Legislative Chamber, 7:00 p.m.
3. Tuesday, November 15, Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, room 314, Legislative Chamber, 7:00 p.m.

No comments from visitors at this time.

Mr. Pauluk moved and Mrs. Blanks Seconded:

THAT the Board of Education move into Executive Session at 8:22 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.
Executive session ended at 8:48p.m.

ATTEST:

Mark Overmyer-Velazquez, Chairperson Carol A. Blanks, Secretary
Respectfully submitted by: Mrs. C. Rogers, Clerk of the Board

*Information and
Reports*

*Announcement of
Meeting Dates*

*Comments from
Visitors*

Adjournment

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