

**MINUTES**  
**WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**January 7, 2019**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**Board Meeting Room**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on January 7, 2019 in the Board Meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Rosemary Russo, Chairwoman of the Board of Education. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS  
IN ATTENDANCE:**

Rosemary Russo, Chairwoman  
Robert Guthrie, Vice Chair  
Susan Walker, Secretary/Treasurer  
Lauren Aceto  
Patrick Leigh  
James W. Morrissey  
Karen Pacelli  
Rosa Richardson

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Patricia Libero

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Anne Druzolowski, Assistant Superintendent

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES  
PRESENT:**

Brendan Carew  
Sumedha Chowdhury

**B. Public Portion of Meeting**

Chairwoman Russo asked if anyone would like to address the board three times. There were no speakers. Public Session closed at 6:05 PM.

**REPORTS**

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

Superintendent Cavallaro said Matt Cavallaro has the flu tonight. He thanked all the board members who attended the tour tonight and thought it served the purpose that we were trying to achieve that being there is starting to be a sense of excitement. For board members who couldn't attend, Lauren and Rosemary, if you would like to tour the

building it is something we can arrange. Student Reps Brendan and Sumedha were not able to attend the tour tonight either but we will try to arrange another tour for you.

Anne Druzolowski said she has been working with a team of coordinators at the high school and then comes back and does some things here. We work with the administrative team as one group with meetings every week and handle different thoughts and issues based on the building of the new high school. We would have preferred to build the program then build the high school but we had to rethink that so we are retrofitting that with some different ideas. Dana is taking a leadership role there and Anne and the coordinators aren't they are supporting whatever is going on and trying to get people to look at teaching and learning a little bit differently than they have in the past. People have told Anne what they like; they appreciate our thoughtfulness and that we are there to determine what the resources might be and what you don't have rather than relying solely on department heads. We have delivered on behalf of the board what they need for resources. Anne sees some progress already and is pleased. They have worked as one solid team and it has worked very well.

Superintendent Cavallaro said with the construction the timing couldn't be better to start to have these collaborations and talk about new ideas and how things can be done a little bit differently. It all seems to be coming together very nicely.

Karen Pacelli said as Neil had mentioned possible block scheduling is there going to be some training for teachers to get them ready for that. Dr. Druzolowski said we are in training for the type of instruction that needs to be done and it is a little bit different because you don't want youngsters to have the same type of instruction day in and day out for whatever the block of time is. We are offering professional learning and have been using teachers who are exemplars in that area on our professional development days. We are having them try different things and it has been quite interesting. Science has pretty much lead the field. Karen said because that is hands on to begin with so...Neil said because they have the block schedule with the lab periods. Right. Anne said their questioning techniques are another big piece. When you start questioning more than telling or talking you get kids thinking more about all the lefts and rights you can take instead of the straight way and that is most important in all the subject areas. It has worked in mathematics to its highest potential and she was quite impressed. Youngsters have been actively involved and she doesn't know if they realize they were learning. That is what you want; to discover not necessarily learn, it is discovery because the learning was already done in the basics. Rosemary asked about block scheduling and if you are in the process of thinking of changing the schedule. No it has been shared with department heads and at department meetings and it is not a question of is it appropriate or is it not appropriate. The NEASC Report indicated that we didn't have enough time for teaching adequately so there it is. We are looking at a schedule where the amount of time will allow for passing and for people to be able to deliver instruction in a little longer amount of time than in the past. 43 minutes is not enough time by the time everyone sits down. Even though there is not much traveling in the hallways. Given the size of the building the youngsters are really going to have to get to where they need to be when they need to be there. It is a lovely place to work and she has never met such a nice group of students.

They are a product of their families and are a product of the standards that we all set in the building and the high expectations that we are working on to get universal. Rosemary asked if Anne and the coordinators go into the classrooms. Yes. Dr. Druzolowski said she does not stay in the office. It is just as before except we are more accessible right now. With the areas we are most concerned with English/Language Arts we have bought new books a lot of non-fiction so the teachers can start distributing them and the students don't have to read the same information all the time. We will need to increase the number of books as they are important and we will give students a choice. Sumedha asked what the block scheduling will look like roughly. Dr. Druzolowski suggested that the three student reps speak to their principal and let her go into any detail she feels you need to know. All she can state now is that you are probably going to have 15 minutes more of class with everything the same. Neil said you won't have all eight periods in a day you drop one class per day and we are planning on bringing it to the board to explain but you are able to speak with your principal before then.

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

The report will be found at the end of the minutes.

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

Jim Morrissey wished everyone a Happy, Healthy New Year! Jim was able to tour the new high school today and is very excited about it as it will be a state of the art high school. Everything is going along very well and on time. He is very excited for our students and staff when it gets completed.

Rosa Richardson said it was really heartwarming to walk through that building today and see the massiveness and technology and all the modernization that will be presented to our students; it was great.

Patrick Leigh echoed their sentiments and said it is really neat to see how large this building is going to be. Especially looking at the auditorium and all the space behind it to utilize for the administration and how the café comes in behind it and all these pieces are going to fit together. It is really neat to know that it is all going to come together by August and that whole part will be open for the upcoming school year.

Karen Pacelli echoed what everyone else said and wished everyone a Happy New Year!

Bob Guthrie said it was nice to attend the High School National Honor Society.

Congratulations to our three student reps for being there; it was a nice time and a nice recognition for all of you.

Lauren Aceto asked the student reps to explain a little more about the UNH Program.

Sumedha and Brendan said high school students with the qualifications to apply, which are that you have a certain GPA and be in the top 10% of your class, go through an interview process with members of the admissions committee at UNH and get selected.

Those who are selected can attend UNH full time, take four classes and they do not have to come back to the high school. They complete their requirements at UNH for the last semester of high school. Lauren said and it is free. Yes. So their senior year they attend West Haven High School for the first half and then they go to UNH and take courses there. Yes cool.

Sue Walker congratulated the Honor Society Members that we have on our board and said the ceremony was very nice. Sue enjoyed the tour of the high school today. She had

been a student at West Haven High School and a faculty member there for five years and knew her way around the school like anything and that won't be true anymore. It was really nice to see things like the auditorium and the media center and she thinks it will be very nice. As she has been around Connecticut and has been to many high schools through her work with the Teacher of the Year Program, West Haven High School is starting to look like some of the very modern schools that she has been to and that is excellent. Superintendent Cavallaro said we will have to look at that second media specialist given the size of that area.

Rosemary Russo sent kudos out to all the schools for their winter performances, their concerts, bands, choral and everything. Rosemary attended a few of them including those at the high school, Carrigan and Pagels. She saw Bailey's during the last board meeting presentation and has enjoyed all of them especially with the high school it was like a night out. It was superb; excellent. She congratulated all the students inducted into the National Honor Society which was nice to attend. It was great to see so many students excelling and really putting forth a great amount of effort to get good grades.

#### **C.1.d. Committee**

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

**D.1.a.** The **West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting** was held in the Board's Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on Monday, December 17, 2018 at 6:00 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Regular Meeting minutes D.1.b., Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion: All board members were in favor

Minutes are approved

#### **D.2. Resignations**

**19-01 Elizabeth A. Fridinger**, Eighth Grade Science Teacher – Bailey

Effective: December 21, 2018

Reason: Personal

**19-02 Kristen Bataille**, Science Teacher – Bailey

Effective: January 3, 2019

Reason: Personal

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve items 19-01 and 19-02 inclusive

Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes

Karen Pacelli seconded the motion

Discussion: Superintendent Cavallaro said one teacher did accept a position in another school district but we are holding that person to the 30 days and the other was a sudden resignation so we are looking to fill the two positions right now. Patrick said so we hold

them until February? If we find a teacher sooner we will release that teacher but they know they are obligated to stay 30 days and most districts reciprocate that way. OK cool.  
All board members were in favor  
Items 19-01 and 19-02 are approved

**D.3. New Hire: (Certified)**

**19-03 Amanda Miller**, 118 Kings Highway, Apt. 2, Milford, CT 06460  
Position: Fourth Grade Teacher – Washington School  
Salary: \$45,333.00 Step 1 BS + 30  
Effective: January 2, 2019

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve item 19-03  
Karen Pacelli made the motion  
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion  
Discussion: Superintendent Cavallaro said on the last agenda you accepted the resignation of a teacher and Amanda has been in that position from the first couple of weeks of the school year because the teacher had originally gone out on a maternity leave. It is nice that the classroom will have the continuity there and she is doing a very good job.  
All board members were in favor  
Item 19-03 is approved

**D.4. New Business**

Chairwoman Russo said the rest is informational and wanted to comment and wish Christine Bartley the best of everything.

Rosemary asked for a motion to adjourn  
The motion was made by Karen Pacelli  
Patrick Leigh seconded the motion  
The meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola  
Board Secretary

**BOE Student Rep Report**

**January 7, 2019**

1. There is no school January 21st for Martin Luther King Jr. Day
2. The NHS held its induction ceremony on January 3rd. Thank you to those who attended!
3. There is a shortened day this Wednesday, January 9.<sup>th</sup> Teachers have professional development.
4. Seniors selected for and participating in UNH's Outstanding Seniors Program (Leanna Corvera, Dehil Dharani, and Jonathan Saier) will have their last day on Jan. 18th. Good luck to them being in college full-time before graduating high school!
5. The 33rd Martin Luther King Tribute Ceremony hosted by the West Haven Black Coalition will be on January 13th at the Center Church in New Haven. The WHHS Choir will be singing their own piece, a piece with Co-op's choir, and a tribute to Mrs. Gardner. Hope to see some of you there!
6. Thank you all for your donations to the senior citizen holiday drive! With your help (and donations from school administrators and people from around the community), we were able to put together 100 bags of gifts for the seniors at Regalcare.
7. Mr. Westie is back this year! It will be near the end of month.