The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on March 20, 2017 in the Board’s Meeting Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order by James Morrissey, Chairman of the Board of Education at 6:00 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  
Rosemary Russo

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:  
Patricia Libero  
Mark Palmieri  
Rosa Richardson

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

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:  
Mayor Edward J. O’Brien

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:

B. Public Portion of Meeting
Chairman Morrissey welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked three times if anyone would like to address the board during public session. There were no speakers. Public Session closed at 6:03 PM

REPORTS
C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools
Superintendent Cavallaro said the three student reps are not here tonight because they are all preparing for Annie which is this week and they would love to see as many people as possible attend the show. Neil turned the meeting over to Dr. Druzolowski but before he did he wanted to thank all of the administrators for coming tonight. The work that we are doing is paying off with our scores. We are doing well. The way the state tracks accountability now is a good thing and all of our schools are showing progress. If there are questions that need to be answered we have the whole team here tonight.
Dr. Druzolowski thanked the board for giving them the opportunity to talk a little bit about what the data looks like. You had received the original data which was student based and that gives teachers the opportunity to look at individual student scores and plan accordingly to use it in school improvement plans. The State Department has continued to work on their growth measure. This is a more fair way of looking at student progress especially in larger cities where there is a great mix on diversity of students and abilities run the gamut. This equals the playing field and really speaks to the growth that each child makes in the district over the past two years. For kids who were in grade three and are now in grade four we can see how well they have done. Dr. Druzolowski has put the entire presentation on the website. She said that this is just the beginning of tracking the progress on not only of what the district needs to do differently but also what the schools need to do differently. They do this through their school improvement plans as we do through our district improvement plan. We have stayed the course over the past eight years. When Common Core came in and became the Connecticut State Standards we stuck to that and as a result of understanding from a teaching perspective how to use curriculum and how to transfer that into what resources we need; how much time do we need to spend and what types of activities we have to do this changed the whole atmosphere of the classroom. The data shows where we need to provide more support for our teachers through mentors and coaches. Most importantly it allows us to recognize successes. This data shows that every child is improving in one way or another in one content area or another across the grade levels. It also promotes transparency so that everybody can see any of this data by getting on site. The complete presentation is on the website.

Questions
Jim Morrissey asked that Dr. Druzolowski go over number 10 Post Secondary Entrance Rate. Dr. Druzolowski said when a child graduates from high school they have a year to commit to postsecondary being a two year school or four year school and this gives you points as well. The state average was 71.9% and we had 65.3% for postsecondary. Karen Pacelli asked for the Physical Fitness and Arts are those only high school points or is that throughout all schools. Physical Fitness is everyone but the Arts is just at the high school. Karen Pacelli asked if this data is for students who actually go to our schools without our outplaced students. Yes. Most of the kids we have outplaced are not taking these assessments. The Magnet Schools do take our kids and take our scores. Karen asked if they look at technical classes and shop classes. Yes that is a CTE absolutely. Rosemary Russo asked the high needs student breakdown. High Needs includes Special Ed, ELL and free and reduced lunch students. Patrick Leigh asked what population of students is that compared to the over-all percentage. Dana said it is about 81% of the cohort. Patrick asked for today in Physical Fitness how do you pass the class; is it just participation? Patrick understands that they are two separate things but what is the pass? They have a curriculum and criteria for each of those tests. (In so many minutes; so much time etc.) Jim Morrissey asked if there is a ranking on the categories. Dr. Druzolowski said Category 1 is the highest. Jim understands that. We do not rank them by order. Dr. Druzolowski doesn’t want competition with our schools. She would rather have the schools work together; which they do very well. She would rather have that then have it
competitive. Anne said of the 298 39.5% of all the schools in the State our schools fell right in here so we have six schools in level 2. If you look at this as a grade perspective you could say Category 1 is an A, Category 2 is a B, Category 3 is a C and we have no schools at Category 4 or Category 5.

Patrick Leigh said you said we could meet with you and go over the data elements. Yes. Karen Pacelli said when you said the 298 schools in Category 2 are similar school; is it based on size. No it is a score. Karen said this is the whole state. Yes. The only schools that would not be in it are schools that only have one grade level or some abnormality where they couldn’t use the data. OK so this is the whole state. Yes. OK thank you.

Jim Morrissey said in 2013 at the high school four years ago the rank would be a D basically is that correct with the four categories there but are you saying that is not all the information we are looking for. Dr. Druzolowski said there isn’t any; none exists and that is the problem. They went as far as 8th grade and it became difficult when they went to the high school because it is so departmentalized. They tackled the first problem common core and in the high school they had an agreement they would use SAT but this is only the second year we used the SAT so there are no norms on it; there is nothing there. The data we need is what everybody else in the state needs and we don’t have it. Superintendent Cavallaro said to him it would make sense to look at kids and how they performed post-graduation from the high school as far as their success and he knows there are some measurements. Dr. Druzolowski said we do get that data and it is voluntary. Across the nation they have found a problem gathering that information. Mayor O’Brien said using this standard every high school back in 2013 kind of stood still. That is right. That doesn’t seem fair. No it doesn’t but it does put you in a position of looking at what is out there and we have been looking for the past few years to find a good measure that was objective enough to give us a better idea to the progress being made for our high school students. Patrick Leigh asked if we create our own assessments. Ann said we do have our own assessments. Patrick said so we have our own assessments but the state has to recognize those assessments. No this would be purchasing an assessment; right now we just have a data bank like our benchmarks. What we need is beyond that. Patrick asked how do we get there. Right now we have been looking to make sure you don’t spend money twice and we are trying to get the best deal and will be coming to the board with what the best deal is and what the teachers want. Patrick said you are basically looking for a data mining tool. It is a data mining tool but it is a test an assessment and it is computer adaptive so it gives you the kids’ growth. Patrick said so this is purchasable. Yes. Do you know what the cost is approximately? We are getting that right now. Patrick said we have to keep up! The board thanked Dr. Druzolowski for the presentation and Chairman Morrissey thanked Anne and all the administrators and teachers who came to tonight’s meeting and before the teachers left he thanked them for all their hard work on behalf of our students. Superintendent Cavallaro thanked everyone for coming tonight. Applause followed.

C.1.b. Student Representatives’ Report

There is no report tonight as all student reps are attending the rehearsal for Annie.

C.1.c. Board
Karen Pacelli congratulated everyone in all the schools on their great job with all that data; she knows how difficult it is to move students along so that is an excellent job. Patrick Leigh commended everyone for their efforts. Rosemary Russo said congratulations it is a really hard thing to accomplish and you all should be really proud of a great, great job. Susan Walker congratulated all the schools and teachers, administrators and paras for the great job they have been doing. Sue also congratulated Bob Guthrie for his recent appointment. Mayor O’Brien congratulated all the teachers and said this is really great news for the city. He also reminded everyone about the play Annie this Thursday, Friday and Saturday; this weekend. Chairman Morrissey thanked the staff, teachers, paras for their efforts; we can see great improvement here. Keep up the great work you do on behalf of our students. Jim gave a little shot out to Cathy Johnson (Cathy Sweeney Johnson) who went to St. Lawrence grammar school with him and West Haven High School and was always at the top of her class. You all should be proud of yourselves; great job.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Special Board Meeting held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on March 6, 2017 at 5:00 PM.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve the Special Meeting minutes D.1.a. Karen Pacelli made the motion to approve the minutes
Patrick Leigh seconded the motion
Discussion:
All board members were in favor
Minutes are approved

D.1.b. 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 March 6, 2017 at 6:00 PM.

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes D.1.b. Patrick Leigh made the motion to approve the minutes
Bob Guthrie seconded the motion
Discussion:
All board members were in favor
Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

17-10 Danielle Metrano, Special Ed Teacher – Seth Haley
  Effective:  June 14, 2017
  Reason:     Relocation
Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve item 17-10
Karen Pacelli made the motion to approve
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion
Discussion: Superintendent Cavallaro said Danielle is relocating at the end of the year and this is a position that will need to be filled that we budgeted for. Patrick Leigh asked what step she was. Neil said she has only been here a couple of years. OK. All board members were in favor
Motion Carries
Item 17-10 is approved

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

17-11 Sheila Krajcir, 2 Park Ridge Road, West Haven, CT 06516
   Head Softball Coach – Bailey Middle School
   Effective: March 21, 2017
   Salary: $1,950
Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve item 17-11
Karen Pacelli made the motion to approve
Bob Guthrie seconded the motion
Discussion: All board members were in favor
Motion Carries
Item 17-11 is approved

17-12 Steven Carden, 8 Botte Drive, West Haven, CT 06516
   Head Baseball Coach – Bailey Middle School
   Effective: March 21, 2017
   Salary: $1,950
Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to approve item 17-12
Bob Guthrie made the motion to approve
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion
Discussion: All board members were in favor
Motion Carries
Item 17-12 is approved

D.4. New Business

F. Informational

Chairman Morrissey asked for a motion to adjourn
Karen Pacelli made the motion
Patrick Leigh seconded the motion
All board members present were in favor
The meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary