A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on November 5, 2018 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 6:04 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
Lauren Aceto
Robert Guthrie, Vice Chair
Susan Walker, Secretary/Treasurer
Patrick Leigh
Patricia Libero
James W. Morrissey
Karen Pacelli
Rosa Richardson

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**
Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Matt Cavallaro, Finance Director

**CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:**
Brendan Carew
Sumedha Chowdhury
Julia Walker

**B. Public Portion of Meeting**

Chairwoman Russo said before public session I would like to take a moment to say that West Haven Public Schools, especially West Haven High School, suffered a tremendous loss last week in the passing of Principal, Pamela Gardner. She was a devoted wife, mother and educator. Pam touched countless lives and will always be remembered for her positive attitude and unending determination. Mourners were lined up to pay their respect to this courageous and caring woman. Pam will be long remembered in our community as one of those people who truly made a difference in our world. On the day she was laid to rest there was a beautiful, vibrant rainbow right over West Haven High School and I
believe this was Pam once again reminding us she will always be watching over her students at the high school as well as the entire West Haven community. At this time I would like to pause and have a moment of silence. Thank you.

Chairwoman Russo opened the meeting to public session and asked if anyone would like to address the board this evening. Dana Parades, 54 Barbara Lane thanked all the board of education members, Superintendent Cavallaro, and Assistant Superintendent Druzołowski for the outpouring of support, condolences and kind wishes we received over the last week. Loosing Mrs. Gardner was incredibly difficult for the whole school community and we appreciate all the support you have shown us over the last week. Thank you. Chairwoman Russo thanked Dana for all the support she has given the kids and the teachers she knows it was very difficult.

Stanley Heller, 11 Norwalk Street taught 40 years in West Haven most of it at Bailey School and it is nice to see the kids are doing so well. He also recognizes a lot of former students of his on the board. Mr. Heller talked about two topics that have impact on the school system. The first is the University of New Haven and the second is the UN Report on Climate Change. The University of New Haven has had a program that puts its world renowned programs in criminal justice, national security and forensic science studies at the service of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its next generation of security professionals. Since the murder of Saudi reporter Khashoggi this service has become a national story and now since the Aljazeera reported an international story the good name of the City of West Haven has been shamed. Most colleges have relationships with schools in their towns and he assumes UNH has some with the West Haven Board of Education and hopes it will be made public and perhaps re-examined. He invited everyone to come to a special meeting November 8th at the West Haven Library on Elm Street at 4:00 PM to discuss the situation between UNH and the King Fahd Security College of Saudi Arabia. Mr. Heller went on to talk about science curriculum that is connected to climate change and does connect with Saudi Arabia because the Saudi Aramco Company over the last hundred years is the single biggest carbon dioxide polluter on earth. The United Nations intergovernmental panel warned that the world must cut carbon dioxide emissions in half in just a dozen years or face terrible effects to the world’s climate. In Bridgeport, CT the last coal burning power plant in New England is being phased out but to be replaced by a methane burning power plant that will produce six times as much carbon dioxide. Mr. Heller asked what is the state of climate education in the schools; does it incorporate the great warnings of the United Nations, does it teach the scientific consensus that we must not burn the bulk of the world’s reserves of fossil fuels, and that we must go to 100% renewal in just decades. If this science is not being taught at all levels it should. He works part time for a group called Promoting Enduring Peace and they would be happy to assist in studying this question and improving curriculum. The board gave thanks. There were no other speakers. Public Session closed at 6:12 PM.

REPORTS
C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools
Superintendent Cavallaro talked about Pam and the events of the last couple of week. He told everyone present that he has never been so proud to be the superintendent as when he watched how everyone handled Pam’s death and her illness over the last fifteen months. There had to be very difficult circumstances when the leader of the building wasn’t there but Pam never stopped working. You could always reach Pam by email, by text and she was always available by phone even when walking into chemotherapy. Everyone at the school and the entire community handled this as well as they did due to Pam’s leadership and the tone that she set and the positive climate and environment at West Haven High School. This is attributed to the respect that everyone has for her and they were not going to let her down. Pam was a tremendous leader for that school and always did the little things with the staff and most importantly the kids in mind. On a personal note West Haven suffered a big loss. We lost the leader of our high school, we lost a community activist, a hockey mom, a band parent, a girl scout leader and a member of the library board just to name a few. Pam believed not only in West Haven High School but also in the entire city and did everything to put West Haven’s best foot forward. Most importantly on a personal note I lost a friend and it is going to be a difficult time, if I ever get over it. I miss her tremendously and don’t know if it is going to get easier. The impact that she had will always be remembered and I hope it will get easier as time goes by. We will make do and we will try to move forward as best we can.

Pictures were placed in the board room of different portions of the new high school. These pictures were going to be at the Fall Festival to get people interested in WHHS and the new building and the programs but because of the weather it was cancelled actually a few days prior to Pam’s passing. We will try to get them out and placed so the community can see them and get excited about the new high school. The five year plan for the city was passed by the MARB last week. There are some contingencies that the city has to do but we feel it will help us in our planning and budgeting going forward. We have done pretty well with our negotiations but we do want to ask for some things we have been putting off in the past like technology, vehicle programs and possibly some leasing. We have the Business Network Group at our next meeting and we have been working very closely with them. Now that the high school will be taken care of with the new project we will be able to get some more computers into the classroom. That is our goal and hopefully we will be able to achieve it. The Alliance Grant work was completed and bills and receipts were sent up to the state. The work done in the parking lot at Washington School really made a big difference and it makes a nice area for the preschool and kindergarten classes. We went a couple of dollars over but will handle it out of our maintenance account and were able to do all of the schools with new intercoms and phone systems. This is a good thing for the district and good for safety and security. The nurse’s contract passed and is basically the same agreement the board passed with the teachers. This was well received by MARB. Under informational there was a nurse opening and we hired two nurses and the combined salary is less than what a top step nurse’s salary is. We thought this was a really good value. We have been having a really difficult time getting substitute nurses so this will help us out and we will save a little bit
of money. We anticipate some retirements and it is nice to incrementally replace the nurses and not all at once. The board gave thanks.

Bob Guthrie asked Matt in preparation of the next budget please show us what the area is paying for substitute nurses; actually where we stand and what we are competing against. Neil said we do an hourly rate of about $30 an hour which is the same as teacher coverage. This is roughly $200 a day for a substitute nurse and frankly we can’t find them because nurses would rather work at a hospital because the money is just not that good. Rosa Richardson asked where the nurses will be going. One nurse will be a floater and one will be assigned to West Haven High School. We transferred Gail Curren to Mackrille as we like the idea of a new nurse working with a more experienced nurse.

C.1.b. Student Representatives’ Report
Superintendent Cavallaro asked Sumedha to tell the board about the plan she led the way for regarding a communications plan. Sumedha said three high school students me, Zack Kerzner and Ciara Walker will be handling the school’s communication along with helping out Catherine Przybylowski. Zack and Sumedha will be running the Instagram Account for West Haven High School and Sumedha will run the Twitter Account. The three will collaboratively work together with webmasters from each school and Catherine Przybylowski for the schools’ websites. Each of us have 3 or 4 schools that we are assigned to. Neil said and Sumedha is also on snow watch with him. The board gave thanks. Awesome thank you. The complete report will be found at the end of the minutes.

C.1.c. Board
Jim Morrissey echoed Superintendent Cavallaro’s comments about Pam also. We lost a great leader last week in Pam Gardner. She was a great principal great wife, great mother and an all-around great person. The number of people from this room who went to the wake and funeral was a great tribute to a great woman. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family. Pam’s childhood friend, Gale Pimer, gave a wonderful eulogy on Pam’s behalf during her Mass at St. Louis Church. She met Pam in high school and she said when you talk about Pam talk about her with a smile on your face as she knows Pam would like that. Our hearts are broken unfortunately and though Pam is no longer with us she will always be in our hearts. We are certainly going to miss her as her good friend says let’s talk about Pam with a big smile on our face. Thank you very much. Jim went to his adopted school last Wednesday as Savin Rock School had a Halloween Party there. All the kids were dressed in their costumes and it was a very nice time. It was great to see so many parents there and so many happy faces on the children. It was a great day. He sees Mr. Heller here tonight and Jim was one of his students back in 1973; where does the time go! Time marches on and he doesn’t know if we will ever get over missing Pam Gardner but he wanted to thank Neil, the staff and Dana for doing a great job with the students and teachers and he wanted to say thank you for all you have done.

Rosa Richardson echoed her condolences to everyone who is grieving and suffering right now. All of you will continue to be in Rosa’s thoughts and prayers. Rosa also stopped by her school Mackrille and Linda Miller happened to be subbing that day. Rosa is looking forward to all the festivities and holiday events that our schools put on and she wants to ask the Chair to consider the letter that was received by Beth Sabo.
She wants to express her support in finding a way to recognize Mrs. Gardner in an awesome way so that she will be remembered forever. While this is still fresh in our hearts and minds it is a good time for us to collaborate and find that awesome Pam Gardner memorial that she so deserves. Thank you.

Patrick Leigh echoed the condolences to Pam’s family, her friends and the community at large. The best way to describe Pam is that she was just a beautiful soul. She really had an impact on the community and we saw that during the last week. Patrick was honored to be able to help out during the Mass and be able to give out communion and he agrees that there should be some sort of way to recognize and remember Pam in our community. Karen Pacelli echoed everyone else and sends her condolences to her family and friends because we all know how hard it is to lose someone that is well known, needed and supported. Karen knew her through the Board of Education and said she was a wonderful person.

Bob Guthrie said there are two Gardner’s left behind that the community will continue to support both Kevin and Mackenzie. They are both very strong like their Mom. Gale did a wonderful eulogy and she did it on point that Pam will continue to be here and help people in the future and it is up to us to remember that and go forward and support her and support her family. Bob also had the opportunity to visit Seth Haley to share the idea of each board member to support a school. Bob was able to talk to the principal and PTA President and they were pleased with Chairwoman Russo’s idea. Seth Haley is doing a brick fundraising campaign and the bricks will be installed in the courtyard outside the front door. A 12 x 12 brick would cost us all a whopping $11.00 and we can design it. The front door area has been cleaned up very nicely and it will be a fitting memorial for Seth Haley now. The Legal Issue Workshop from CABE had a date change to December 7th and next week is the CABE Delegate Assembly and we are entitled to one voting member for our district based on our student enrollment.

Lauren Aceto sends her love and prayers to everyone with the loss of Pam. She read one of the articles about her and saw she was teacher of the year in three different towns in Connecticut. Lauren said she knows that grief comes at different times so it is nice to know that you have a tight knit community in West Haven High School and you all take care of each other. As far as her role as the liaison at West Haven High the PTSA has a meeting on Wednesday night. She let Dana and the students know that they can reach out to her for anything they want to invite her to or any information you would like her to pass along to the board.

Pat Libero said it has been a really hard couple of months and she doesn’t know if this was a mistake to come tonight but she was the first grandchild born and she was very special to all of us. We never thought she was going to learn how to walk because we all carried her everywhere. She has always been somebody in the family that we always went to but she is not only my niece she was my friend and when we were principals together she was my colleague and it is a huge loss. I am happy on one hand because the little boy you saw here today I had him with me every Monday last year and we would visit Pam every Monday and he put a smile on her face every time. He would put a bigger
smile on Scott’s face because he would leave his mother to go to Scott so he was happy with that. Pat appreciates and can’t even begin to imagine what was happening the night of the wake and the funeral. Jon Capone and all the people who got the sports teams in did a great job; it was well organized and people really worked together to make it happen. The kids were great who came through and Scott and the kids were happy that people came to pay their respects for Pamela. It has been a long 16 months since she was diagnosed and she is hoping that they had information when she had her surgery that that information in the medical field leads to something so that someone doesn’t have to suffer the way she did because that is what she would have wanted. She appreciates everything that everyone has done because people have really pulled together and she hopes we can remember this as time goes forward. Thank you for all your support.

Neil thanked Pat for all her support as they have had a lot of private conversations and the Belmore and Gardner families have been able to share some information and stories, some good things and some not so good things thank you.

Sue Walker commended the students and teachers at the high school and maybe especially the teachers because they had to remain strong for the students even though their hearts were breaking. Years ago at Bailey they lost two teachers in one year so she knows how hard this is to deal with and they also lost students. She hopes that Pam’s shiny example will help kids and inspire the students to do something wonderful with their lives and that would be one of the best things to happen from this terrible situation. Thank you.

As Chairwoman Rosemary Russo said at the opening of the meeting it is a terrible loss to her family and West Haven as a community is here to support you in any way that we can. She also believes in signs and she really believes the rainbow was a sign and that she is watching everybody especially the students and faculty at West Haven. Rosemary also wanted to thank Neil, Dana, Jon Capone, and Yvonne Corrado because there was a lot of work behind the scenes by all of you and she doesn’t know if she has everyone that she should be thanking. Neil said Joe Lucibello and his staff did a really great job of being there and having counselors and other support in place too. Pat Libero said Taylor Parades made the program for the Mass; the man is a saint. Dana said he would anything for Pat. Rosemary said that too is also a tribute to Pam the number of people who wanted to do things to help and to support the students. Dana said Taylor had made thousands of programs and he said this will take all day to fold. Dana texted one student who said give us 15 minutes and then we had 30 plus kids there on ten minutes notice to fold the programs and that is a testament to the kind of impact Pam had on the kids.

Chairwoman Russo said Rosa as far as the point you brought up with the letter from Beth Sabo for a way to memorialize Pam she thinks that is at the front of everyone’s mind and she thinks we will come up with the best way to remember her so that future generations also will know the name Pam Belmore Gardner. Rosemary thanked the board for Adopt a School; it is so great hearing that you have visited and are looking out for your schools and she really appreciates it. Rosemary went to Pagels which is her school and she attended Trunk or Treat. She was overwhelmed by the way the parents decorated their
cars; they went all out and the kids had a ball. It was a nice event. It is nice to see that everyone is taking it seriously and going to their schools. The PTA is struggling for more involvement and they need help. The PTA does a lot of enrichment for our kids and a lot of fund raising as we all know which all goes to our kids. If there is any way you can support the PTA at your school or any other PTA and PTA Council it would be appreciated. Rosa Richardson said she sold 45 pies for Mackrille’s PTA and wished for luck trying to keep them frozen until they are delivered because the pickup is Saturday.

C.1.d. Committee
Karen Pacelli said the curriculum committee did meet before the last board meeting and Dr. Druzolowski shared all the work that was done over the summer regarding curriculum. They are doing a shift in learning and teaching to apply what they are learning. A lot of work was done in the Science Curriculum for the K-12 area. There is a lot of work being done at the high school and Anne is there three days a week to work with a team of administrators to determine the needs of the curriculum. For the new high school they are looking at the classrooms and learning situations and the centers and they are all working together to solve any problems that come up through conversation so when the high school is completed we have what we need. They shared a lot of work that was done over the summer to meet the needs of students and the changes in curriculum. Chairwoman Russo said this was a very good meeting and there was a lot of information given out. Karen said and you can also read the minutes from this meeting.

Rosa Richardson said she thinks it is wonderful that we have our student reps here that can give us hands on pros and cons and positive or negative feedback if necessary. Their voices were heard at that meeting in a very positive way. Rosa thinks it is wonderful that they are here and we can communicate with them. Chairwoman Russo said the students add a lot to the board and she thinks one of the best things on the board is to be able to have their feedback. Hopefully they will always be here for years to come.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. The West Haven Board of Education Curriculum Committee Meeting was held in the Board’s Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 5:30 PM.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Curriculum Committee Meeting minutes D.1.a.,
Rosa Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion
Discussion: Pat Libero abstained as she was not present during this meeting.
All other members were in favor
Minutes are approved

D.1.b. 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, October 15, 2018 at 6:05 PM.
Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve the Regular Meeting minutes D.1.b.,
Patrick Leigh made the motion to approve the minutes
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion
Discussion: Pat Libero abstained as she was not present during the last board meeting.
All other board members were in favor
Minutes are approved

D.3. New Hire: (Certified)

D.4. New Business

18-85 Settlement Agreement between the West Haven Board of Education
and the West Haven Federation of Nurses, AFT Local 1547 Wage Reopener 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to approve item 18-85
Rosa Richardson made the motion
Bob Guthrie seconded the motion
All board members were in favor
Item 18-85 is approved

Chairwoman Russo said the rest is informational but before we adjourn she hopes they
were able to read the job description for the medical support Technician that was hired.
She wants everyone to look at that and think about what we are having them do and then
look at how much a para gets paid. Not that we can change anything right now but that is
something you have to keep in your head that we have people who are in charge of a lot
of needs kids and have to do things that most people would not want to do; they are very
special and I wanted to point that out.

Rosa Richardson wanted to know if the purchase of the brick had to be put in the form of
a motion. The response was no. Bob Guthrie said on this brick he would also like to
include the student reps names. Does that require parental permission I would only be
putting their last name on a brick? Neil doesn’t think so but he will take care of it.

Chairwoman Russo asked for a motion to adjourn
The motion was made by Rosa Richardson
Karen Pacelli seconded the motion
The meeting adjourned at 6:42 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary
BOE Student Rep Report
November 5, 2018

1. Congrats to the football team for their win this past week.
2. SCSU on-site decision day is on Nov. 15.
3. Outstanding Seniors application due Nov. 14
4. FAFSA Day is on Nov. 14
5. Senior class is doing their annual cookie dough fundraiser.
6. Bailey 8th grade Open House is Nov. 13
7. Two weeks left for City Hall v. BOE food drive
8. MDA Fundraiser done by the National Honor Society has their field day on Thursday, November 8th
9. No School Tuesday, November 6th for Election Day (Go Vote!); WHHS students will be volunteering at campaigns