The Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the Council Chambers of the City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on January 7, 2013. The meeting was called to order by Mark Palmieri, Chairman of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS
IN ATTENDANCE: Mark Palmieri, Chairman
M. Toni Paine, Vice Chair
Patricia Libero, Secretary/Treasurer
Dorinda Borer
Patrick Egolum
Robert Guthrie
Cebi Waterfield

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Eric Murillo
Betsy Davis

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

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mayor John M. Picard
Chief John Karajanis
Deputy Chief Joseph Perno
Captain Richard DiMeola
Sergeant David Tammaro

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES
PRESENT: Abdul-Rasak Zachariah
Chairman Palmieri wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcomed them to the January 7, 2013 Board Meeting of the West Haven Board of Education.

Chairman Palmieri requested a moment of silence for Nancy Perona a Special Education Teacher who taught at Pagels School. Mrs. Perona taught for over 30 years in our district and passed away last week.

B. Public Portion

Mark Palmieri asked if anyone would like to address the board.

Board Member Cebi Waterfield, 70 Seaview Avenue, West Haven thanked the board on behalf of the West Haven Sea Hawks Football Players who had an amazing trip to Florida and performed extremely well. The Junior Midget Team is second in the nation and the Pee Wee Team lost their second game so didn’t get to play in the championship game but 3rd and 4th in the nation isn’t too bad either. They all wrote thank you letter to the sponsors as well as essays from the Junior Midget Team as to what their favorite part of the trip was. They did all their homework and had a really great time. Applause. The board gave thanks.

There were no other speakers. The board gave thanks. Public Session closed at 7:05 PM.

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

Neil Cavallaro said we are here tonight to honor many of our students. Around this time we receive notification from the State of Connecticut of students who are currently in our junior class that took the CAPT Test last year as sophomores scored at the advanced level in the mathematics, reading, writing and science part of the test. Neil is pleased that there are so many people here tonight to acknowledge not only the kids but the families of the students as well. This year is one of the highest totals we have had with eleven students scoring at the advanced level and that is great. Hopefully we are doing something right and we know that the kids and their families are certainly the main reason for this success. Applause. Neil read a letter from the Commissioner of Education that each individual student received. All eleven students received their framed letter from the Commissioner and had their picture taken with Mayor Picard, Superintendent Cavallaro and Board Chairman Mark Palmieri. The following students were recognized: Anthony D’Amico, Florence Diaz, Amanda Ewry, Maria Gagne, Devin Hickman, Michael Kiaunis, Vincent Madar, Tamia Randolph, Daniel Schapira, Alexander Scranton and Yingxian Guo.

Superintendent Cavallaro said that Ms. Marcella informed us that Yingxian Guo auditioned for the Connecticut Music Educator Association Southern Regional Band and she will be performing in the CMEA Southern Region Festival in January. Her regional audition score was high enough to qualify for CMEA Allstate Audition as well. Ying is
the first instrumentalist at West Haven High School to ever qualify for an all state audition. Everyone in the band, choral and drama department is very proud of her and we are too. Applause.

Superintendent Cavallaro stated that each year the Mayor’s Office asks the students to help to design the Mayor’s Christmas Card. We traditionally have the card framed as a memento and a thank you because this is sent to thousands and thousands of people every year. Both students are from Bailey Middle School and Mrs. Shea their art teacher is here tonight to help out. Damien Marino and Emani Stallings were recognized for their artwork. Pictures were taken of the students with the Mayor, Superintendent and Board Chairman. Mayor Picard thanked all the students and stated they did a great job and we are very proud of them. Neil thanked all of the families for coming tonight stating that we are very proud of all of the students’ accomplishments. This concludes are presentation and at this point there was a short recess.

Superintendent Cavallaro stated that a lot has been made of school safety and security since the tragedy in Newtown. We have certainly done our share in raising the level of conversation and taking the measures we have taken to make sure our buildings are safe and secure and I certainly believe that they are and I certainly believe there are always things we can do better. Neil stated that before he could get to work on Monday the police department had already reached out and offered their help and assistance. They have been to meetings with our administrators and have been to all of our schools. We have met with Mayor Picard and he has taken a keen look at what we are doing and how we can make improvements. They have increased patrol at the school and they have been great. Officers check the schools at night and randomly check the doors. Through our meetings they have given us a lot to think about. We are in the process of putting together a task force which will be headed by Mr. Turcio on our end who is Assistant Director of Special Ed and Sgt. Dave Tammaro who is in charge of our school resource officers. The board has been kept updated and we are certainly welcome to ideas from the board members, PTA’s and parents on how we can do things better. Neil then introduced Chief John Karajanis.

Chief Karajanis spoke about what was being done at the schools and what was planned for. He stated that a physical security assessment was being done at each and every one of the schools and building in the city and they have looked at 15 so far. They look at the physical structure of the building, surrounding neighborhoods, evacuation points, staging points for media, and we train for this regularly but we do it on the fly. We respond to a scenario and assess that situation and use our training and experience to determine where we need to deploy and where we need to set up these things. With the schools I want to take it a step further and put some structure there and put a solid plan in place for each school. We want to look at the process of lockdown and discuss that and make sure we are all on the same page and if things happen that they happen in as seamless a fashion as we possibly can to enhance the current safety of the schools and make it even more secure. Most important is preventing these incidents from happening. Once they happen it is already too late you are reacting to it we want to prevent them. A further discussion continued.
Chief Karajanis wants to install a threat assessment team in each school. The team will work directly with one of our police officers. Whenever any incident happens involving a student such as bullying, a fight or any incident we can look at it, examine it through cross disciplines of the police department, school administrators, mental health specialists and evaluate that and recognize what could possibly be the signs of something to come and intervene and get that individual the help they need and not have a scenario occur. That is the current process we are working on right now.

Mayor Picard thanked Chief Karajanis, Deputy Chief Joseph Perno, Captain Richard DiMeola and Sgt. David Tammaro for attending tonight’s board meeting. He thinks Superintendent Cavallaro has done an excellent job in communicating with the police department. He stated that Sgt. Tammaro has been to every school and then some in West Haven. The goal is to work together as we do and everybody has been working very well together and he does believe we have safe schools and the goal here is to make them even more secure and do everything we can to protect our children and residents. I just want to say thank you for being here.

Chairman Palmieri asked if there were any questions for Chief Karajanis; there were no questions. The board gave thanks.

Dorinda thought there would be a presentation after the Chief spoke from Sgt. Tammaro; we aren’t getting any information tonight? Dorinda is curious what their analysis is showing of our schools; your initial reactions. When will we see any deficiencies or gaps, or what we have to consider? Are you going to present that to the task force?

Sgt. Tammaro stated he would present it to his chief and then he would present it to all of you. There is not much that we have seen as a big problem. I feel safe going to all these schools; my children are in these schools. Obviously we have been going into all these buildings and they are not meant to be fortresses.

Dorinda asked Neil if he had any timing as to when the task forces would be in place. Neil said from the initial meeting Chief Karajanis designated Sgt. Tammaro and we have Jim Turcio who has many years of experience with crisis planning and intervention through years of work with the State of Connecticut. The police are still assessing the schools and I would hope we could meet shortly.

Mayor Picard said instead of driving by the schools patrol officers go into the elementary schools daily and as stated Sgt Tammaro has visited all the schools to make an assessment and meet with the chief and if at some point the board chairman sees fit maybe they could call a special meeting.

Dorinda is just anxious as a board member; I’m comfortable and know that our schools are safe but nothing is perfect and I just want to know if there is anything we need to address as a board and if we need to put funding towards any improvements that we know as soon as possible so that we could help them support you in your efforts.
Neil said there are improvements and there are financial impacts. Some things we can do now such as sonitrol cards to make sure only people who should have access to the building are able to access it. We were looking at night and weekend activities to the gyms and auditoriums and what is required of those who use the gyms. These are things we can do with no financial impact. Things such as camera systems and locks on doors and shades are things we are in the process of assessing and the final report won’t take long.

Pat Libero said she and Toni Paine went to the security symposium today and if people are NIMS certified you are able to get grants through the Federal Government. It was stated that if there is a need for funds the police department has gone through NIMS training and there probably would be a way to access it through that department. A discussion ensued.

Mayor Picard stated that he thinks the things that are being done by the Superintendent on a short term basis really don’t require a lot of resources; they are doing them now. We should let the Sgt. and the team do the assessment and see what we should do. We should be doing what we are now doing and it is working well as you heard the Sgt. say. Board of education member Mrs. Borer said that the schools are safe; it is what we can do to make them more secure. The short term assessment with limited resources is what we are doing right away. For what we can do in the future we will wait for the presentation because they are the experts and Mayor Picard stated he has full faith in that department.

Chairman Palmieri told Sgt. Tammaro that the police department does an excellent job and you have a game plan and the last thing you want anyone to know is every point of your game plan; the security end of it. That is your job and as a taxpayer with children in the schools I appreciate the job you do to keep our children safe. I believe you can not let everything out; just the basics. Sgt. Tammaro said absolutely. Obviously there are things we keep to ourselves and don’t put out publicly so everyone would know what our operational plan is and it is all in the name of safety; that is what this is all about. A further discussion took place.

Toni Paine attended the security symposium and she stated that each building is unique. What is good for one school may not cover for another school so I don’t see how a presentation could be made at this point until everything is done; all the assessing is done. At that point she thinks the report probably would state we have looked into everything and things are be taken care of; you are not going to get a detailed report. It was stressed very strongly today as Pat can attest to that not all the information should be out there because that could compromise safety. I would like to wait until after the report is complete. A further discussion continued.

Chief Karajanis said you have to recognize that everything you do has to be done with reason and it has to be tempered with what you are trying to achieve and at the same time allowing that building to continue to function in what it is designed to do. Both
Superintendent Cavallaro and Mayor Picard stated that was very well said Chief Karajanis.

Cebi Waterfield said it is a very fine line to walk between overcompensating for safety and making sure the kids are secure. After 911 happened mom’s were not allowed to bring baby formula on airplanes and she is afraid we will react overly strong and especially because we are doing this in front of children you also want them to feel secure going into school without them having to think that something could happen to them. I definitely think it is certainly a difficult job that I would not have to undertake and I appreciate you guys going through and trying to figure this out.

Mayor Picard said it is a fine balance. We have so many wonderful afterschool things going on whether it is sports, plays, musicals, concerts and the last thing you want to do is tell these kids all of a sudden at 4:00 PM the schools are shut down and now there is nothing else for them to do. Then you are letting the people who shouldn’t be winning win so there is a fine balance here but I do think the chief made a very good point. We don’t want schools to become prisons we want them to be schools. One of the things we are famous for is the community we have and the use of our schools to learn in so many different ways. You saw evidence of that in a lot of different ways tonight. We have some talented children in our school system.

The board gave thanks. Joe Falzone briefly summarized what was discussed during the Security Symposium that was held today at Aqua Turf. They emphasized community partners whether it is ERS, Fire Departments, Police Department or First Responders; these are the people that should be involved when putting any sort of a plan together. We are not experts in security and all of the things that really have to be taken into consideration when you are putting something together like this. We already have a plan; almost all school districts do. Neil said at that time Deputy Chief Smullen went through all the buildings and created a report. Joe said this is pretty detailed and we can update this and take a look at the emergency management plan. They look at four phases:

- prevention/mitigation
- preparedness
- response
- recovery

Prevention/mitigation - All plans are unique and tailed to the individual district and the individual building. In summary prevention is obviously to try and decrease the likelihood that an even or any sort of crisis will occur and mitigation is the action to eliminate or reduce the loss of whatever is involved. It is designed to assess and address from the very beginning. You want your safety ad integrity of the facilities involved and you are looking at security of course but also the culture and climate of the schools. Of what you really want to put forth as the image. They also discussed that you don’t want them to be a police state but you still have to take security extremely seriously. This is for any sort of an emergency situation and it is an ongoing process. They gave examples of
what can be done; nothing too specific but fencing in hazardous areas, anchoring outdoor equipment and control measures.

In regard to the New High School they discussed how to design a building with regard to security. It is more of an open floor plan with a lot of levels and glass. Classrooms are in a zigzag pattern. Neil said the principal should be able to walk out of the main office and see all of your main corridors. There main focus is information so when they pull up to a scene they need to know what is happening, where in what area of the building, they want to be able to see into the classroom so they can see where students are. For them to get through quickly it is better if they can see quickly where any trouble is. They talk about designing it with a lot wider sidewalks where the driveways and cars are not close to the building so you can’t just park right up in front. The glass is so principals and teachers can see possible trouble coming to the building; that is the intention.

Preparedness – As it relates to building access you want to know who is entering the school building. Locking doors when it is practical. We talked about access cards and code and entry locks. He likes the idea of an identification card that enables you to get into the building which everybody should wear. Pat Libero pointed out that this is not for just something catastrophic it is also for a medical emergency etc. They talked about having a plan in place and everybody knowing what the plan was and practicing it and talking about it and making it part of your curriculum. They emphasized school climate and relationships. A further discussion took place.

Response - Toni Paine said that students are more adaptable that adults as far as training or changing plans and when you do a drill you change how you do it. You can have an exit be closed for the drill and you would use another plan that is already in place. Cebi said you also need to know how many doors it is to the exit door if you can’t see your way out during a fire. People in a classroom should know that it five doors to the exit door. Her dad drilled this into her when she was a kid. When you are on an airplane how many rows to the exit; the same when at the movies. If it is dark and smoky they should know how many doors it is to a way out of the building. Cebi mentioned that one thing she read was that one school had laminated green cards hanging by their door and if there was an intruder in the building they would just shut their door and slide the green card under the door meaning that their room had no intruder in it so when they walked the hallway and saw the green cards they knew that room was safe and when there was no green card outside the room they would focus their attention on that door. They could start that at school tomorrow. Cebi said you should not be afraid to ask who a person is if they aren’t supposed to be where they are and have no identification or badge on. For the most part we have become such a polite society that we don’t ask people what they are doing and where they are going. That is our culture. She thinks we need to make sure that we are all in charge of our own safety and make sure that the people that are around us are where they are supposed to be and doing what they should be doing.

Pat Libero said there was a course talked about at the Symposium that dealt with mental health and teachers and people who aren’t mental health workers can take so that they are comfortable answering questions from kids when something happens.
Toni Paine stated at the end of today’s symposium which lasted 7 ½ hours she left feeling reassured that we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. There are some things that can be revisited and make sure they are still going on but she felt secure when she left there. Pat Libero said absolutely and Joe Falzone said he believes we are doing a lot of things right which is great.

When you are looking at a plan you want to look at all the elements of a response from working with the first responders to accounting to the students and faculty; where did you tell them to meet up and where are the parents going to be staged. It is a pretty comprehensive plan and they have it in detailed management which is the NIMS System they try to shoot for almost a fail safe. You think of everything as much as possible prior to so you leave nothing to chance.

Superintendent Cavallaro said both Chief Karajanis and Jim Turcio have said that these plans have to become second nature where you are so familiar with it that you just go into mode right away and react accordingly and we will be working that out.

Recovery – The recovery portion is something we never have to worry about getting to. The talked about mental health resources in the community.

Superintendent Cavallaro and the board thanked Joe Falzone and also Toni Paine and Pat Libero for attending the symposium. Neil will meet with all of those who attended the meeting and make some priorities and we will go from there.

Neil said the Business Network is going to come to a meeting on February 4th to talk about security from the networking point of view and update us on some other areas.

Dorinda asked for a summary on our whole recycle program district wide because when she talks to people from the district such as principals, custodians, and city people their stories don’t always jive. Neil said it is pretty simple right now we have a bin at every school that any recyclable single stream can go into. It is real simple. Dorinda said then do you want me to ask question now or wait. Neil said hold off. The next meeting we can talk about recycling.

**C.1.b. Student Representatives**

Abdul-Razak Zachariah shared the following information with the board.

Students Shauna Edery and Morgan Hotchkiss both seniors are being filmed by MTV for a type of anti bullying campaign. Cameras are not disrupting any classes they are in the back of the classroom.

The student government is trying to be an umbrella organization for any groups that are trying to send stuff to Sandy Hook. We are trying to facilitate what the other groups are trying to do.
The class of 2013 Student Council is having something set up called the 26 Acts of Kindness. People would sign up to do this and we would make a Face Book Group and people would post acts of kindness that they have done and everyone should do 26.

The School Counseling Office is also doing something for Sandy Hook. They decided that they would give their work study people in the counseling office who are graduating the book, “Oh The Places You Will Go.” They will give each classroom at Sandy Hook that book. There will be a bookmark drawing competition at the high school and we will all make bookmarks for those books.

Midterms will be January 22nd to the 25th

The auditions for the Spring Musical Once Upon A Mattress are this Friday and Saturday. This will take place on March 14, 15 and 16.

Three students were accepted into the UNH Program where they leave high school and take classes at UNH. Rebecca Norman, Yasani Spencer and Sally Spio.

Before the winter break there was a food drive run by Student Government, a book drive run by the Peace Program and Mrs. Martinez and a Toys for Joy Drive which was run by the Peer Advocates an all were very successful.

There will be six teachers taking part in the Polar Plunge.

The board gave thanks.

C.1.c. Board

Dorinda thanked those participating/donating to the Ward Heitman Trees of Hope Event. Cebi attended the Bailey Holiday Concert which was great. The curtain in the auditorium is gorgeous. Cebi stated that Mrs. Mustakos had thanked Neil and the board for allowing her to get the curtain. Special thanks were given to Sean Maher for having the curtain hung so professionally. It looks wonderful and makes a huge difference. Cebi commended Neil and Anne because she was very comfortable sending her kids back to school after the Sandy Hook tragedy. The emails that were sent out were excellent. All the teachers were ready to go and all the kids seemed to be in routine. Her kids did not come home scared or nervous or worried and she was very comfortable dropping her kids off. Pat went to the West Haven Choral Concert at the West Haven Congregational Church where the West Haven High School Cantabile performed. It was a great concern and they were so professional; they are incredible. She saw many of her Carrigan and Bailey students and it was great. She also went to the Pagels and Mackrille Concerts and they were both kid oriented which is what it is supposed to be and she loved both of them. Toni went to the Carrigan A Christmas Carol which they did such a great job on. She and the board received a video from Seth Haley which was very nice. Bob stated that January 25th is CABE’S Legislative Breakfast at Betsy Ross School on Kimberly
Avenue in New Haven at 7:45 AM. Mark wanted to thank Mr. Stancil for that video it was very nice.

**C.1.d. Committee**

Dorinda has been attending the ACES monthly meeting because she is the liaison. They had their holiday card contest also and there were some West Haven winners. The students do amazing work there. It will be nice to have ACES come and do a presentation because we provide funding so new board members can see what our funding is attributed to. It will be beneficial to have a short presentation. Dorinda stated that she has been sending questions to Neil from the various PTA’s and he has been answering them very promptly and they are very appreciative.

**D.1. Approval of Minutes**

**D.1.a. West Haven Board of Education Regular Board Meeting** held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on December 3, 2012 at 7:00 PM

**D.1.b. West Haven Board of Education Policy Committee Meeting** held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on December 3, 2012 at 6:45 PM.

**D.2. Resignations: (Certified)**

13-01 **Stacey Hawes**, Special Ed Teacher – Bailey Middle School  
Effective: December 4, 2012  
Reason: Personal

13-02 **James Flanagan**, Special Ed Teacher – Pagels School  
Effective: January 13, 2013  
Reason: Personal

**D.3. Resignations: (Non-Certified)**

13-03 **Mary Ann Lipsett**, 10 Month Admin. Secretary – Savin Rock Community School  
Effective: January 1, 2013  
Reason: Retirement

13-04 **Paula A. Giordano**, Paraprofessional – West Haven High School  
Effective: January 2, 2013  
Reason: Retirement

**D.4. Leave of Absence: (Certified)**
Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve D.1. through D.4.
Toni Paine made the motion to approve D.1. through D.4.
Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion but abstained on items D.1.a. and D.1.b. as she was not present at that meeting.
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
   Items D.1. through D.4. are approved

D.5. **New Hire: (Certified)**

13-05 **Patrick Fielosh**, 611 Dogwood Road, Orange, CT 06477
World Language Teacher; Spanish - West Haven High School
Effective: December 10, 2012
Salary: $43,256.02 Step 5 BS + 30

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve D.5. #13-05
Cebi Waterfield made the motion to approve D.5. #13-05
Dorinda Borer seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
   Motion passes
Item 13-05 is approved

13-06 **Patrick Toole**, 64 Mohawk Drive, West Haven, CT 06516
Girls’ Basketball Coach – Bailey Middle School
Effective: Immediately
Salary: $1,950.00

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve D.5. #13-06
Dorinda Borer made the motion to approve D.5. #13-06
Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
   Motion passes
Item 13-06 is approved

13-07 **Lyndsay Gurnee**, 42 Patmar Drive, Monroe, CT 06468
Special Ed Inclusion Teacher – Forest School
Effective: January 2, 2013
Salary: $46,715.01 Step 6 BS + 30

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve D.5. #13-07
Dorinda Borer made the motion to approve D.5. #13-07
Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All board members present were in favor  
Motion passes  
Item 13-07 is approved  

D.6. New Hire: (Non-Certified)  

D.7. New Business  

13-08 Request from Angie Alston, Head Coach of the West Haven High School Cheerleaders to allow the Cheerleaders to attend the National High School Cheerleading Championships in Orlando, FL from February 7 – 12, 2013.  

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to approve items 13-08  
Cebi Waterfield made the motion  
Dorinda Borer seconded the motion  
Discussion: None  
All members were in favor  
Item 13-08 is approved  

F. Informational:  

There was nothing to add.  

Mark Palmieri asked for a motion to adjourn  
Cebi Waterfield made a motion to adjourn  
Patrick Egolum seconded the motion  
All board members were in favor  
The meeting adjourned 8:15 PM  

Respectfully submitted,  

Marylou Amendola  
Board Secretary