REVISED MARCH 21, 2006

WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Board Meeting
March 6, 2006

The Meeting of the Board of Education was held at the Blake Building, 25 Ogden Street, West Haven. The meeting was called to order by Chairman M. Toni Paine at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond Collins
George Monahan
Robert Guthrie
M. Toni Paine
Howard Horvath
Eric Murillo
Mark Palmieri
Krista Pickering

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Gerald Calabritto

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Superintendent Neil Cavallaro
Mayor John Picard

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES: Kara Marcello
Monica Senior

B. PUBLIC PORTION
Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Patty Fusco, 311 Shingle Hill Road, very briefly I would like to speak about the fact that April 1st is coming. Mr. Cavallaro is probably going to ask you to non-renew non-tenure teachers. I would like you to think hard about that. Last year we had a lot of trouble filling positions in science, math and English. If you send people a letter, making them feel like they are not coming back. Even though you say it a routine thing. They start looking for another job, Killingworth has tons of openings. We don’t want to lose our good teachers. We want to keep them. Think about who you might lose, you can always non-renew them or lay people off. You don’t have to non-renew them. You can lay them off if it’s a budget thing. You non-renew people you don’t want to come back. I am just asking you to think about that.

Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Nancy Rossi; 12 Robin Road, First the article in the Voice, it’s sad, when and I won’t even call it a newspaper. Has to fabricate a story and out and out lie to turn it around to a personal attack. Anyone that was here at the meeting and there was only a few of us. I did get up after the meeting, I spoke to the Chair about a Freedom of Information request and then I did speak to Mr. Collins, I did not tell him to burn in, and we won’t even go further, I did not say any rude things to him, I was defiantly not screaming or yelling. It is unfortunate that the new members have not seen. I have been here for five years. In five
years, I have not screamed at anyone, I defiantly have not sworn at anyone, I have not done any of things they have said. To turn it around with a person writing a story that was not even here. It’s sad there should be a journalistic ethics board. Writing this story, then a board member commenting on this story without calling me or calling Mr. Collins is despicable to say the least. This is only to bother me, upset me, maybe to make me go away. That’s not going to happen. As far as asking about how he voted, I don’t tell anyone how to vote. The reason being, all of you are elected officials, what makes or breaks if you get reelected is the voters. Not me, the voters. It would not be fair for me to ask about how you vote. What I did ask Mr. Collins about, was the demeaning made about the past Chairman, the idea that he went behind peoples backs to do something. He, to me brought integrity, business, and finance background to this board. Unfortunately all of you did not get a chance to work with him. But anyone who did could see that, he did put the children first. No matter how many times I called him, and it was many. He always answered the phone or called back and listened to my concerns. It’s just unfortunate that the newspaper should be called the West Haven Enquirer feels it necessary to fabricate, and that’s the best word I can use. Because they had no quotes from anyone board member other then the one that was not privy to the conversation, there was one other person who was present, but that person was not quoted. So I think that is very sad. I also wanted to talk about Molloy School, I went and pulled out some of the literature that was sent o my house during the last election, I not going to read all of it, because I am saving the rest for the city council. Will invoke the resources to assure a quality education system, now Molloy School is in my district. We have paid to fix many other schools, when you walk into Molloy School again I am not taking about teachers. The teachers are fantastic, I think the same thing about Carrigan teachers. But it not fair, when it time to add on to Molloy and repair Carrigan, now we are going to put everything on hold. What about their computer lab, they were the only ones who could not do the power school presentation. I understand there are deficits, although I have not seen any documents. So I don’t know what is going on. Being on City Council I would appreciate seeing the documents sooner then later. I have sent a letter to the Mayor Office requesting the information and documents. I would like to go over them myself. But again I ask, Molloy Schools need attention, it is not fair, it was ready and I keep hearing everyone wants their kids to go to school in their own district. So do we, I don’t think there is any parent that says will you bus my child all over town. I just think that would be an exciting adventure. We would like to send kids to their own district. But don’t tell me that Pagels, Mackrille, Forest, Haley any of the schools that you have done improvement at. If you walk into Molloy School its not the same. It’s not fair. One last thing, it seems the unions are asking their raises, I find it interesting that we have a posting for an Executive Secretary, the reason I say this is: my understanding was and again I could be wrong. These duties have been divvied up and of course we have a board clerk who does the minutes. My question is it going to be more, less, the same as paying the salary and benefits. Single benefits are some where between six and seven thousand dollars. My problem is if you’re asking for the unions to give back. I would think that you would not be hiring. Thank you
Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.
Maria Miranda, 44 1st Ave, I live in the Thompson School district, I read in the West Haven News in the back it talks about the Molloy School addition and the closing and moving the student from Thompson School. I live in this district and did not know they were going to close down the school. I should not have to find out in the paper. Is this a defendant plan?
Chairman Paine: More information will become available

Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.
Robert Wittosski, 93 Dalton Street, I come here to complain for my daughter. I have come here before and we have had meeting because she is struggling. I don’t see her learning anything. She is struggling more and more, that she does not want to go to school. That’s not my daughter, she loved school. I have tried to work with the teachers. Every subject they want her to stay after the same day. They find more excuses not work with my child. I don’t think it’s just my child. She did great the first few years. Then she went to Carrigan and it’s a whole new personality, maybe it is the way the student stalk to teachers. Teachers don’t want to be there or are afraid to say anything. All I know is this city has an obligation to teach my child and they are not doing it. It’s not happening. I am going to find a way to hold this board of education responsible to educate my child. I am not a teacher; I teach my child what I know. It’s up to the system to teach my child with books and reading. It’s not happening. Maybe the union, I hate unions, they make the working man lazy that’s exactly what is happening. I am getting frustrated. I want my tax dollars back or someone is going to teach my child.

Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.
Ann Heffernan: 271 Kelsey Ave- Chess team won state championship Fundraiser March 26th at Johnnies, Dart Tournament, more information to follow.

Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.
Dorenda Borer: 821 Main Street I just wanted to address the all day kindergarten lottery, I understand that it will be a public forum. I think that is a great first step to restore the confidence in the board. My son will be part of that lottery, who gets full day, gets full day. I hope you publicize that, there are a lot of parents questioning it.

Superintendent Cavallaro: we had a meeting last week, we did in anticipation of the kindergarten registration. At the registration you will get the dates of the lottery. Another thing I read an article about putting the capital improvement projects on hold. I don’t know why we would ever consider putting the Molloy School or the Magnet School projects on hold. The reimbursement rate is 95%. Molloy School has been scheduled for a number of years. We made a comment to do all the grammar schools. Make them healthy, safe and state of the art. We did Mackrille, Pagels, Haley and Forest. Molloy was next on the list. I think we need to stay on the course, every child in the city deserves to
go to school and feel comfortable and proud of the school they go to. I would ask that you continue on that course. We were really investing in the education system and recently we asked to put construction projects on hold, and cut funding. Thank you

Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.
Jacky Grady: 83 Hoffmann Street Thank Mayor Picard for proclamation, she was recently honored by ATT Net Work.

Chairman M. Toni Paine asked if anyone wished to address the Board.
Chairman M. Toni Paine asked for a second time if anyone wished to address the Board.
Chairman M. Toni Paine asked for the third and final time if anyone wished to address the Board.

Public Session closed at 7:25 P.M

C. Reports:
Superintendent Cavallaro: This is my first meeting as interim Superintendent and I would like to share a couple of things with the board. I would like to put your minds at ease we will do what ever we have to get through the rest of the school year. That is working with all of the board members, if there is anything you think we need to do. Please make sure you let me know. If there are things you think we should not be doing and you feel we need to put them off. That is understandable. Our primary goal is to bridge the gape between Superintendent Tortora and Dr. Andrees who is coming on July 1st. It will be a smooth transition; I spoke with Dr. Andrees we will be communicating regularly. I updated her on some things that have happened over the last few weeks, including the Mayor announcement the other day. We will be communicating regularly. My final pledge to her, was she would not walk in here with any surprises. Anything that is going on with the district, she will be made aware of; she will be ready to deal them, if not ready to prioritize. So she can make her goals. I want everyone to know where I am coming from; I will do what ever it takes for the rest of the school year and make it a smooth transition. One of the thing Board Member Calabritto was concerned about and I know all of you are. Was keeping the board informed about our finance situation as we get to the end this fiscal year. So what we plan on doing once a month between now and July 1st. is scheduling a Finance Committee meeting before our board meeting. We will have Garth here and he will give a status report and certainly any questions you have, if he can’t answer we will get the answer back to you. Paul left us in good shape, and with a balanced budget. We don’t want there to be any surprises. At the Capitol Improvement meeting the Special Education account was mentioned. Gary Palermo will be here at the next meeting. Why if we fall into the red in that account. Again that has to do with some of our magnet schools. So, please plan on that 6:30 before the next meeting. We have John McKee here tonight to talk about their annual trip, Larry Frattini is here for the school readiness grant and Francine Coppola is here for the Adult Grant. So any
questions you have, you may address the appropriate person. As many of you know CMT testing began today, as you know we had to delay because the snow days last week but the state does give you a window of opportunity, it will give us enough time and allow time for make-ups. The Middle School was scheduled to begin today, we have a week of testing and that will leave us time for make-ups. CAPT testing begins tomorrow, again we feel we have enough time to get that in. We will do our best to improve the percentage of kids taking that test. At our next meeting we have schedule member s of the accreditation committee to be here. They are required as part of the accreditation to give the board a community profile. The CAPT lunch was held today, it was very well done by Mr. Stancil, for the student who scored at or above goal. It looks like the number our increasing. Finally everyone at Blake has gone out of there way to offer their help for the next few months.

George Monahan: there appears to be a mind set to minimize out of school suspensions and keep them in school and do some behavior modifications. The data shows that when we keep these students with behavior problems in the school, the number of reported incidents went up. The argument would be that by leaving that problematic child in the building, that behavior becomes contagious or draws reactions from their peers. So that is a concern. Your hope would be that we are going to modify the behavior of these children.

C.1. Status of Schools-Report, Carrigan Middle Schools, PBS Dr. Robert Cipriano
He has done work national level on positive behavior plans; we put him in touch with Patty Libero and Paul DeFonzo at Carrigan School.
Presentation enclosed

Dr. Cipriano: A cross the country 2 to 6 % of the students are real scotches, so that’s where a lot of the problem is coming back. I don’t believe in out of school suspension, because that’s a positive reward for the student who is at home, eating, sleeping, watching TV, they are not working. I have two student s who will be working with the students to develop a plan. Where they will sign a contract, to develop positive behavior skills. That way it can’t be about the kid who is disrespectful. They can’t be the leader of the pack. We are starting with kids in the 5th grade; it would be wonderful if we could start in K. We are working on Grants now.

George Monahan: there appears to be a mind set to minimize out of school suspensions and keep them in school and do some behavior modifications. The data shows that when we keep these students with behavior problems in the school, the number of reported incidents went up. The argument would be that by leaving that problematic child in the building, that behavior becomes contagious or draws reactions from their peers. So that is a concern. Your hope would be that we are going to modify the behavior of these children.
C.1.a. Administration

Superintendent Cavallaro: I need to pull (removed) 06-13 Patrick Morrissey, Baseball Coach at Carrigan Middle School, we could not get a replacement and he has agreed to stay on. Along those lines I know the board currently has a hiring freeze on. The only positions I would like to post now are coaching. We have a few resignations and in order to let the teams function in the spring. We would have to fill those positions. There are a couple of assistant coaches right now. For example at the High School right now there is a second assistant baseball and a second girl’s softball. We can do without some of them. But for instance the Bailey the baseball job needs to be filled to keep the program running.

Robert Guthrie: Mr. Cavallaro, when I came forward with the hiring freeze, it was that it would not affect classroom or child’s aid. Obviously we are not talking about classroom, but we have the same responsibility to our athletic program. To provide supervision through the programs.

Superintendent Cavallaro: then if you would like I will have a meeting with the High School and I will follow through. That’s great.

George Monahan: When you said you wanted to call a meeting to clarify the Special Education budget before the end of the year. If you could arrange for a Special Education Committee meeting to convene before the next board meeting. So we can dialog with the supervisor of the department and see what their feelings are on the possible impact. You could combine it with the finance if you would like.

Chairman M. Toni Paine: How about 6:00, a half hour each.

Superintendent Cavallaro: that’s fine.

George Monahan: We talked about the accreditation process and the governing bodies that are reviewing that process. They looked at our district and our school make-up. The last two years they expressed some concern with the staffing at the Administration Level, the board of education made some changes at the High School to respond to those concerns. They also expressed some concerns about with respect to Administration responsibility here at the Blake building. We fortunate with the talents of Tortora and yourself, we have been able to get by with two people. The board has provisioned as the result of Mr. Tortora retirement the opportunity to get you some help. Although we did provision that, the Mayor requested that we not spend that money. That we try and get by with you holding the fort. I think it is naive to think one person can run this system when we were told two can’t do it. To think you can do it alone, is asking a lot. Your primary job now is the interim Superintendent duties. The duties Mr. Tortora was handling. What issues do you feel will have to be placed on the back burner. Maybe if you can prioritize those for us, which are the less risk and which ones you would be concerned about putting on the back burner. I would appreciate if you could get back to the board. If you can answer tonight that’s fine, I would appreciate that you get back to the board by the next meeting.

Superintendent Cavallaro: Like I said I will do all I can, if the board wants to fill positions. That is certainly up to the board. Dave Russell has agreed to over see any problems with non-certified. I will still have to handle expulsions; it would take to much time to train someone else. In the one week I have been in charge, Garth has given me a tremendous education, I met with him regularly. To get myself up to speed on the budgetary process. I am not leaving anything to chance. I familiarizing myself with the day to day operations of the business office. I think between now and July we will get by. I gave my job description to Toni Paine. I have a copy of Dr. Andreess which I can get to Mrs. Paine.
Robert Guthrie: Request that the meeting should be a meeting as a whole. So there is no confusion between the new board and the previous board. Just a couple of items that would be the Para contract and the bus contract. So we can see the status.

Chairman M. Toni Paine: do you want a separate meeting? Executive session?

Robert Guthrie: You probably could schedule an executive session for the purpose of contracts.

Superintendent Cavallaro: I have spoke with the bus company and some options we might want to look at. Let me see what he comes back with. Then I will bring it to the board immediately. Regards to the Para Contract, I spoke with Mr. Clark today. He is in the process of setting up another meeting with our Para group.

M. Toni Paine: will that be before the next meeting.

Superintendent Cavallaro: I don’t know, he is suppose to get back to me with some dates, when I know I will let you know.

Robert Guthrie: I think it would be best to have a meeting as a whole, just with the recent changes in the financial landscape. Then the negotiation team if there is a sense of changing direction. Rather then bring it back to the table not to see clearly.

Mayor Picard: I just want to clarify; Paul Tortora obviously does not have to be brought in to three days. If Mr. Cavallaro needs him. Thank you

C.1.b. Board

Mayor Picard: I have a meeting with department heads, union chiefs, Superintendent, Mrs. Paine, just to bring everyone up to date on the state of the operating budget. The city is in a financial crisis and I don’t want to see us locked into anything. See enclosure for Operating Budget Deficits, Schedule of General Fund Bonded, and existing Debt Service. I just want people to know what is going on. Capitol Projects are on hold not only because of money, but because they were being done wrong.

C.1.c. Committee

Krista Pickering: the ADDS are in and Bobby and I will be meeting with Donna Kosiorowski. We will have walk through at the schools.

Chairman Paine: we are very lucky that Bobby and Krista are so knowledgeable and can help with this.
Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve minutes D.1.a
D.1.a West Haven Board of Education Regular Meeting, February 9, 2006 (rescheduled from February 6, 2006) at 7:00 p.m. at the Blake Bldg.
MOTION was made by George Monahan and SECONDED by Raymond Collins, Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve minutes D.1.b
D.1.b West Haven Board of Education Budget Meeting, February 22, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. at the Blake Building
MOTION was made by Raymond Collins and SECONDED by Krista Pickering, Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve minutes D.1.c
D.1.c West Haven Board of Education Athletic Committee, February 6, 2006 at 7:31 p.m. at the Blake Building.
MOTION was made by Krista Pickering and SECONDED by Mark Palmieri Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve minutes D.1.d
D.1.d West Haven Board of Education Curriculum Committee, February 6, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. at the Blake Building
MOTION was made by George Monahan and SECONDED by Krista Pickering, Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously
Superintendent Cavallaro: Just a reminder Madden Chair remove 06-13
Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve D.2. Resignations :(Certified) 06-12, 06-14, 06-15 removing 06-13
06-12 James Mastriano, Baseball Coach at Bailey Middle School Effective: February 3, 2006 Reason: Personal
*** (removed) 06-13 Patrick Morrissey, Baseball Coach at Carrigan Middle School Effective: February 17, 2006 Reason: Personal
06-14 Janna Pniewski, Psychologist at Carrigan Middle School Effective: March 3, 2006 Reason: Personal
06-15 Lois Peccerillo, English Teacher at West Haven High School Effective: June 30, 2006 Reason: Personal
MOTION was made by Robert Guthrie and SECONDED by Raymond Collins, Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve D.3. Leave of Absence: (Non-Certified) 06-16 Kristin M. Harvey, Paraprofessional at Bailey Middle School, Request for Temporary Leave September 2006 through December 2006
MOTION was made by Robert Guthrie and SECONDED by Eric Murillo, Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve D.4 Resignations: (Non-Certified) 06-17 Patricia Doheny, Paraprofessional at Stiles Alternate School Effective: March 17, 2006 Reason: New Position  
MOTION was made by Krista Pickering and SECONDED by George Monahan, Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve E. New Business 06-18 Grant Revision for Adult Education  
MOTION was made by George Monahan and SECONDED by Raymond Collins, Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve E. New Business: 06-19 06-19 School Readiness and Child Day Care Grant Application  
MOTION was made by Raymond Collins and SECONDED George Monahan by , Discussion:  
Robert Guthrie: Mr. Frattini I assuming its just a type over, but I’m assuming there is a change in Mayor Designee, correct?  
Mr. Frattini: the elected official?  
Robert Guthrie: one of my documents had a previous human resource director that has since been changed. correct?  
Larry Frattini: I’m not sure which document.  
Robert Guthrie: the list of the Readiness Council and the Mayor designee that’s the human resource director. That’s been corrected?  
Larry Frattini: yes  
Chairman M. Toni Paine: any more discussion? Any objections?  
Motion passed unanimously  
Superintendent Cavallaro: the kids are here tonight, they always do a nice presentation  
Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to approve E. New Business: 06-20 06-20 West Haven High School, Request for Field Trip Approval to Dallas, Texas on April 29 to May 3, 2006 for National DECA Competition  
MOTION was made by George Monahan and SECONDED by Raymond Collins, Discussion: John McKee introduced two DECA Officers, President, Jasmine Grant and Delisa Pullen:  
Good evening I am going to give a quick overview of DECA, Distributive Education Clubs of America, there are chapter all over the United States, including the Dominican Republic. West Haven Chapter currently composed of 437 students. Students can join DECA their junior year and continuing through their senior year. I chapter was established by Ronald Stancil and our current advisor John McKee. We are responsible
for events like the Winter Formal, Career Day, Fashion Festival; we also participated in the West Haven apple Festival for the second time this year. We have a state officer. She serves as our state advisor. We are sponsored by several companies, just to name too few American Express, J.C. Penny. We are about leadership, marketing and management, Business Ethics. We have 48 members that will be competing to go to the nationals. They will be in Dallas Texas. Nationals are a very big deal. We expect to see where we stand with skills and abilities at the Nationals.

Chairman M. Toni Paine: any further discussion? All in favor:

Motion passed unanimously

Robert Guthrie made a MOTION to add E. New Business 06-21 to the Agenda
Naming of the Cyber Café after Paul D. Tortora. This is the idea of my colleague Mr. Calabritto who could not be here tonight. It is my great pleasure to make the motion and I’m sure it would be humbling to Paul if all of my colleagues seconded the motion. SECONDED by Eric Murillo, Krista Pickering, Howard Horvath, Mark Palmieri, Toni Paine, Ray Collins and George Monahan: Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman M. Toni Paine: now we need a motion to approve.
06-21 Naming of the Cyber Café after Paul D. Tortora
MOTION made by Robert Guthrie and SECONDED by Eric Murillo, Krista Pickering, Howard Horvath, Mark Palmieri, Toni Paine, Ray Collins and George Monahan: Discussion: No Discussion: Motion passed unanimously

Chairman Paine asked if anyone had any questions:
F. Informational:
Robert Guthrie:
F.1 West Haven Public Schools Wellness Policy Committee Meeting, February 1, 2006,
Robert Guthrie asked if a notice of meeting goes out for this committee. We have minutes, does notice go out?
Superintendent Cavallaro: my understanding is that this is something that is being run by Donna Kosiorowski, Alan Belchak, Jon Capone, I know that Eric Murillo was there as a member of the committee. It is just a group of our people meeting. What they will be doing is bring forth a policy.
Eric Murillo: we are working on a policy.
Robert Guthrie: I understand it is mandated, was just curious since we are being provided minutes, if there is an actual notice of meeting going out.
Eric Murillo: no there is no notice, but if you would like to be notified I can contact you.
WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
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F.8 Letter from Neil Cavallaro regarding restitution for Food Service due to the bomb threat on November 22, 2005 to Attorney Floyd Dugas

Robert Guthrie: In regard to F8, I realize it’s too late for the board to have any input, since this dated March 3rd. Why is it coming up now? Please don’t get me wrong, I agree with the concept. Was there any discussion with any other agencies such as police, fire, and state police? To recoup any of the other costs. Just curious why we only have food service. I know we had concerns with notifications of notification,

Neil Cavallaro: said he talked to Floyd, it was the only thing that they could put a dollar amount on. It was all we could prove.

Chairman Paine:

George Monahan - No

Raymond Collins – Just a couple of things, what Superintendent Cavallaro and the Mayor were talking about. We have a couple of very tuff months coming up. Financially, changing guard and short staffed. I think as a board we owe it to ourselves, the children and the staff to work along to get through what is coming up. Also we are not always going to get along, that is obvious. But I think we should utilize the forum which is this room to discuss. The differences of opinion and not the media. I know myself I get a nervous reck picking up the paper in the morning. I think we have gotten enough attention in the media. But if all possible, I would like to keep negations, discussions and disagreement within this room instead of in the public. Councilwomen Rossi, many times we did not see eye to eye. But I will give you one thing, you have always been professional. For the record she did not say burn in hell. Although she is scaring me dressing in red tonight. That’s all.

M. Toni Paine – Fashion fest was wonderful, also CAPT lunch was wonderful.

Howard Horvath - No

Mark Palmieri - No

Krista Pickering - When is Founders Day? - Toni Paine: Tuesday night

Eric Murillo – No

Chairman Paine asked for a MOTION to Adjourn
MOTION was made by George Monahan, and SECONDED by Krista Pickering

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose McDonnell
Board Clerk