WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES
September 2, 2003

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 Guthrie at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond Collins
John Carrano
Joseph Esposito
Robert Guthrie
Anne Heffernan
Sandy Lorusso
Paul Messina

BOARD MEMBER ABSENT: Toni Paine
Ursula Reilly

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Superintendent Paul Tortora
Assistant Superintendent Neil Cavallaro

PUBLIC PORTION

Chairman Guthrie asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Debra Martinez said she is upset with Minutes of the last meeting. She said she spoke regarding problems regarding her son. Some items were left out and other notes that she did not want recorded were left in. She also filed a request for information under FOI a week ago and has had no response. Also, her son did start school last week and she is consulting with her attorney as to whether or not to go forward with the law suit. Another thing is her son was strip searched from February through June of last year. She said she is astounded that this would happen in the town she lives in.

Anne Heffernan arrived at 7:10 p.m..

Lynette Bodie said she has a child in the 12th grade and her academic level is 5th grade. She sent letters regarding her education needs and not one Board member acknowledged her letter. She had several meetings with the Superintendent and Dr. Lally and her needs are now being addressed. She said she will vote for the people that truly care about her needs.

Nancy Rossi said she requested many items under FOI and thanked Superintendent Tortora, Neil Cavallaro and Rose McDonnell for their help.

Ms. Rossi said she has a copy of the management letter. She is concerned with Accounts Payable as to what is recorded and what is not recorded. Some bills were e-mailed to the Hearing Officer and she wants to see the e-mails. She said the Hearing Officer should not be in contact with the Assistant Superintendent's office prior to any hearings. Also, she again suggested the Board hire an in house Attorney to cover the hearings. Ms. Rossi requested the number of PPT’s we have and what the criteria is on whether or not we have an Attorney present. Superintendent Tortora said there is no criteria. She then asked how a Board this size operates without knowing how many PPT’s we have.
Chairman Guthrie asked three times if anyone else wished to address the Board. No one spoke so the Public Portion of the meeting was closed.

REPORTS

Superintendent Tortora reported the following:

The City Counsel amended the 5-year capital improvement plan for the Stadium and Forest School. At Forest all improvements will be made except the addition of two extra classrooms, and at the Stadium everything will be completed. Mr. Tortora thanked the Counsel for their help.

The State Board of Education published a book on Successful School Practices and Molloy School was included for closing the achievement gap.

The West Haven Chess Club was acknowledged in Chess Life Magazine.

School openings went very well. There were 4-5 more instances of mold which was remedied immediately.

Racial balance statistics were distributed. A 15% swing is allowed. All elementary schools must comply. At this time all schools are in compliance with the exception that Thompson, Forest and Molloy are impending inbalance.

Chairman Guthrie asked Mr. Tortora what is being done regarding Carrigan Middle School. Mr. Tortora said a Task Force has been put together and they are working on a plan. When completed the plan will be presented to the Board for review.

Neil Cavallaro said he will have an accurate bus count by the next Board meeting. He reported there were the usual opening of school problems and we able to deal with them. He said New Haven opened several magnet schools and approximately 300 of our students are taking advantage of them. However, we are required to provide transportation for those students.

John Carrano asked if there is a limit on the amount of time a students spends on a bus and was informed no more than 30 minutes.

Raymond Collins visited Haley School. He said the school is in great shape and Rite Pepe and the entire staff at Haley should be congratulated.

Anne Heffernan asked about the Grievances from the prior meeting and was informed they were all resolved.

Paul Messina said he toured the schools prior to opening day and the teachers and administrators should be commended for the fine job they did in getting everything ready for opening day, especially with all the mold problems we had this year.
D.1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

John Carrano said in D.6. of the previous minutes his opposed vote was intended only for Agenda Item 03-159 not for 03-160.

Regular Board Meeting of August 18, 2003

Chairman Guthrie asked for a MOTION to Table the Minutes due to possible errors or omissions. A MOTION was made by Paul Messina, SECONDED by John Carrano to Table the Minutes of August 18. The MOTION was unanimous.

D.2. RESIGNATIONS- Non-Certified

03-168 Matt Cornelius, Paraprofessional at Bailey Middle School, RE: Career Change
03-169 Tracey Amendola, Paraprofessional at Bailey Middle School, RE: New Job
03-170 Colleen Vitale, Paraprofessional Inclusion at Seth Haley

A MOTION was made by Joseph Esposito, SECONDED by Paul Messina to approve Item D.2. as presented and SO VOTED unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS:

All recommendations and appointments are contingent upon each candidate providing proof of Connecticut Certification/Official Transcripts, verification of fingerprints, police record, Department of Children/Family and medical clearances. If the candidate fails to obtain or meet this criterion for the position for which he/she was employed by December 30, 2002, the West Haven Board of Education shall have no obligation to honor the contract and the appointment shall become null and void.

All recommendations and appointments are contingent upon each candidate providing proof of Red Cross certification, CPR certification and eligibility for Connecticut Coaching Permit. If the candidate fails to obtain or meet this criterion for the position for which he/she was employed, the West Haven Board of Education shall have no obligation to honor the contract and the appointment shall become null and void.

D.3. APPOINTMENTS-Non-Certified

03-171 Lisa Gayne Rica, 32 Main Street, West Haven, Title One Aide at Washington effective September 3, 2003
APPOINTMENTS-Non-Certified-Continued

03-173  Francine Stratton, 40 Morgan Lane, West Haven, 10 month clerk, Savin Rock Community School, effective September 3, 2003

A MOTION was made by John Carrano, SECONDED by Joseph Esposito to approve Item D.3. as presented and SO VOTED unanimously.

D.4. APPOINTMENTS-Certified

03-174  Karen Zito, 20 Pine Knob Terrace, Milford, Special Education Teacher Molloy/Mackrille Schools, effective August 26, 2003

03-175  Lauren Fernandes, 207 Cooper Place, New Haven, Special Education Teacher at Pagels, effective August 26, 2003

03-176  Richard Hardy, 398 Warpas Road, Madison, Math Teacher at West Haven High School, effective August 26, 2003

A MOTION was made by Joseph Esposito, SECONDED by John Carrano to approve D.4. as presented and SO VOTED unanimously.

A MOTION was made by John Carrano, SECONDED by Joseph Esposito to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. The MOTION carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Bernardi

*These minutes are subject to the approval of the Board of Education