WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
March 3, 2014
Regular Board Meeting
Harriet North Meeting Room

The Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Board of Education was held in the Harriet North Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, Connecticut on March 3, 2014. The meeting was called to order by Patricia Libero, Chairwoman of the Board of Education at 7:00 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Patricia Libero. Chairwoman
James W. Morrissey, Vice Chair
Betsy Davis, Secretary/Treasurer
Patrick Egolum
Robert Guthrie
Mark Palmieri
Rosa Richardson
Rosemary Russo
Cebi Waterfield

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:
Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent of Schools
Anne Druzoowski, Assistant Superintendent
David Cappetta, Director of Finance
Matt Cavallaro, Grant Manager Internal Auditor

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:

Catherine DePino
Alice Obas
Jesus Yanez
Chairwoman Libero welcomed everyone to the first board meeting of 2014. March is the board of education appreciation month and in case you don’t know the people that sit up here volunteering their time to do the best for the children of West Haven. There was a round of applause for all the people that volunteer their time on the board. Chairwoman Libero then asked if anyone would like to address the board. Public Portion began at 7:03 PM.

B. Public Portion of Meeting

Tracy Morrissey, PTA Council President, 305 Country Hill Drive. Tracy invited everyone to their annual Founder’s Day Dinner where we honor the district and the community individuals who come throughout the year to help our students. The event will take place on Wednesday, April 9th at West Woods at 6:30 PM and the ticket price is $27.00. The PTA Council and the individual PTA’s work extremely hard to make this a success and all proceeds are donated to scholarships and a portion goes to project graduation. You are all invited and if you can’t attend we would appreciate donations for this worthy cause.

As a former parent Tracy stated she would like to speak about the high school grading system. She is very disappointed and concerned that she has been raising this issue for the past five years during high school PTA meetings, at school governance meetings, parent advisory meetings and lastly several times before this board (except for the new members.) She would like some discussion about this after tonight’s meeting and some follow up and some change. We can put a man on the moon but we cannot align our grading system to be more accurate at the high school. Five years is an unrealistic time frame. This is very important and our students are not on a competitive playing field with other students. Our students work very hard and are very bright.

Over the years we have had crazy GPA ranges from 5.3 and down in our top 25 also. These scores are not aligned with our SAT scores which are very low in comparison. This sends up a red flag to colleges because they are not accurate and colleges are not recognizing our grading system. It is unrealistic to have these inflated GPA’s. Colleges are recalculating because they do not accept the 5.3 it is unheard of and they have to recalculate. In our research most schools were around 4.0 so the appearance of the grading system is not doing justice to anyone. As a parent I was shocked to find out my children’s GPA was not accurate. I am confident there are very few parents that even know this. How many students know that when they apply to college their GPA is recalculated? We must put an end to the fantasy. We want parents and children to know their true progress. If they know their real GPA they aren’t put into a false sense here. They know what their kids are up against when applying to these colleges. Her friend’s son goes to another district and is very smart and takes AP classes and honor’s classes and his GPA is a 3.8. Our 5.3 GPA scores are not realistic. There are two weights at WHHS. We have the honor’s classes and AP classes which are weighted the same and then you have the academics. Originally Tracy thought the AP classes should be weighted more because you get a college credit but in reality that is not the truth. Your reward is getting the AP credit to go to college so maybe it should be weighted the same
as the honors classes. The honor’s classes should be rated at a much lower scale than we are rating them. I think it is around a .23 or .22 that is the added weight for an honor’s class which brings the scale up even when you are talking the middle of the pack. Kids think they have a 2.5 or 3.5 but it really is not a 2.5 or 3.5 because if you put them on the regular playing field with everybody else this grading system is definitely over inflated and I think if the parents know it and the kids know it they will work a lot harder. In the real world it comes down to the better you do the higher your SAT scores and the more scholarship money you are going to get. Parents get a wakeup call when their kids are applying to colleges and the rejection letters are coming back when their kid was #3 in the class and couldn’t get into some schools. How can you have a 5.2 and not get into these top schools? I know Pam Gardner has been working on this and we need to help her and get the resources to convert this GPA system because it really isn’t fair. I’m in favor of a new high school but we need to fix our curriculum and test scores. Our test scores are really at the bottom and we have to start turning them around. It is too late here but freshman year when these kids come into school they need to know where they stand. Don’t lead them into some fantasyland thinking they are really smart and at the top of their class and then they get to college and they are struggling and not prepared. She hopes she will be contacted so she can sit down and discuss this. She has sat down with Pam Gardner and Rose Paolino and they all feel the frustration. We should start putting some emphasis on this and if we need to hire a consultant I think we need to put our resources there and resolve this issue. We really want our kids to be on a competitive edge when they go to college. She thanked the board for their time and hopes to hear from them. The board gave thanks.

Andrew Miranda, 161 West Spring Street, West Haven, CT has a son in third grade at Mackrille and he and his wife are requesting a formal hearing. A specific area of concern is the Americans with Disabilities Act and Public Law 11-232. His son is an exceptional student who has done an outstanding job academically. His IQ scores are above average and he is considered to be academically at the end of 5th grade while he is now in third. He is also a special needs student who has difficulty with social interactions especially on the bus. We have presented all the necessary documentation of his condition. His therapist and his psychiatrist have been to the school this year three times and we feel we have been ignored. We look forward to hearing in writing when and where this hearing will take place. Thank you for your time. The board gave thanks.

Dana Martinez, 54 Barbara Lane, West Haven, CT. Thanked all the board members who came out for our first annual Tip a Teacher, a benefit for the PTA which was held at Duffy’s Tavern. We had 18 teachers participate along with our Mayor and a number of community members and several board members came out. We really appreciate the support and we were able to raise almost $1,000 to support senior scholarships. We appreciate all the help and support Duffy’s gave and we are really excited that our first benefit was such a success thank you. The board gave thanks.

David Riccio, 667 Washington Avenue, West Haven, CT thanked all of the members for serving on the board during these challenging years and he is confident they will do a
tremendous job. He is the minority member on the City Council they have the $132,000,000 high school project before them. The sentiment of the council is they understand the need for this. They have the responsibility of trying to see exactly what is going on within the budget. He understands there might have been another additional situation that happened last weekend with a problem at the E wing. He wanted to know if there were any added expenses that might added to the $132,000,000 price tag that is before us. Again, we reiterate, there is no tug of war between the Board and City Council. I think you know we have an understanding that the city does need a new high school and we are trying to make sure we get the best bang for the buck. That is our responsibility to make the best fiscal decision that we can make and hope you get that school. He is in favor of it and is on the record as in favor of it. Hopefully we can work together on this and we can make the children happy and the people in the City of West Haven happy also. Thank you. The board gave thanks.

Bart Chatterton, 270 Richmond Avenue, West Haven, CT. He welcomed everyone to the new session; he knows it snowed. He had a couple of things that concerned him. He said there was an article in the newspaper that said the new Board of Ed budget is $89,000,000 and he hopes the new Mayor gets a better look at it. The financials of the City are in rough shape and he would like to see the budget looked at again. He didn’t come to argue about the budget he would like to see you consider the financial situation of the city and how we can work with each other.

The other thing that concerned him was that there was a survey on the BOE website. He understands taxpayer’s money was spent trying to make it better for everybody as a result of the survey. He was told last year it was just going to be the teachers, students, parents but anybody can get on the website and take the survey. He doesn’t see how that survey is practical at all. He would hope you guys can make some changes in the future. Stop wasting the money on something like a survey when you are going to change somebody’s job you want to make sure it is done right not with a survey that anyone can take and can take 1,000 times. Good luck to everybody. The board gave thanks.

There were no other speakers. Public session ended at 7:20 PM.

C. REPORTS
C.1.a. Administration/Status of Schools
Superintendent Cavallaro addresses some of the concerns mentioned during the public session. He just had a conversation with Mrs. Gardner regarding the grading system. She is in agreement that changes need to be made and has been working on this and has developed some plans. The implementation of this plan is one of the complications. How do we do it with kids that started under one set of rules and now will be finishing under another set of rules? His suggested that before the board take any action we will have Pam come to our next meeting and we will put this under Administrative Reports. Pam and her team have done a lot of work on this and she would probably agree with a lot of what Mrs. Morrissey is saying and has tried to address those needs. There is some concern as to how this actually gets implemented. She will share how colleges look at and convert those grades so that they are on par with other kids. Pam has put a lot of
work into this based on concerns raised by parent groups and PTA’s and this will be on the next agenda.

Dave mentioned an issue with the E wing which I am not familiar with. When he was at the high school last week it was brought to his attention that there was a filing room where there might be some leaks and there was a concern of mold. We immediately contacted someone to test the air in that room and take some samples and we are waiting on the results of the samples. The leaks have been brought under control. He does not believe that would affect the price of the new high school. We certainly are cognizant that the price has gone up on the high school and know that the city is in a difficult financial condition. He doesn’t think this has changed from the last administration to this administration. I don’t want to speak for the board however we want the project to go through however we understand that we are not the financial authority for that project and I know there has been a lot of debate and council people have contacted me to ask me my thoughts and there has been a presentation regarding the increased price to the council. We have talked about at what point do we bring the committee and there has been some debates as to what the makeup of that committee is to the board to do a similar presentation. Our goal is to work with the administration and the council because we want the project. The $64,000.00 question is how much the city is willing to put toward that project. I have spoken with the Mayor and Corporation Council and I know he has done a lot of work behind the scene as far as how the bonding works and financing and those kind of things. We certainly want to be involved because we are very concerned about the programming; that is our area of concern. In other words what programs do we need to make that building successful and what kinds of equipment do we need to make it successful. They have assured us when they are ready to move forward we will have that say.

As far as Mr. Chatterton is concerned $89,000,000.00 is a lot of money; it is a large budget. Our record here with the last couple of boards and this board and my administration, if you saw the letter I sent to the Mayor with regard to our request we certainly consider this an ongoing process we see it as constant communication back and forth between the city administration, the finance department, and eventually the council comes into the mix. We will do the best we can to work with what we have but at some point we are going to advocate for what we need to operate the board of ed in the way we feel it needs to be run.

Jim Turcio is here tonight to talk about the climate survey and I think there are some misconceptions which he is alluding to and we will have some answers for you tonight. I think it is important to answer questions asked by people who come to the meetings. We try to give them immediate feedback.

We have some really important presentations tonight the first being the $450,000.00 grant and how we are going to implement the new testing system. Neil thanked everyone for being here tonight. He thanked all the administrators, Scott Farrace from the business department has helped us set up for the testing, all the library media specialists who are here and the different business teachers and computer teachers from Bailey and Carrigan
have really helped us because this is new testing and all but 12 districts in the state have opted to be part of the SBAC Testing so it has been quite an endeavor. Jeff Grande from the Business Network will discuss the equipment that we bought and how we will actually move the kids in and out so they are all given ample opportunity to take the test. Our principals and the media specialists and business teachers have done a terrific job of making sure the equipment is in good working order and we are maximizing the time as best we can. This is a big deal and the one criticism Anne and I have is that we are concerned about the amount of time it is going to take up. We expect that whatever we do will get better as we move in. This year the test doesn’t count; we are testing the test. All the right people are here tonight to answer how we are going to make this happen and I think we have a good plan in place.

Susan Misur has done a terrific job in communicating with the public on face book and twitter and our new website which you will hear about tonight. She has done a lot of training at all of the schools with the administrators and teachers and our goal is to try and keep this as current as possible. This will keep the public, parents and kids informed. A further discussion took place.

On the agenda is the calendar adoption for the next school year. We are going to ask that you not vote on that tonight. Neil received a packet on Friday which is a common calendar that is part of new legislation. Next year it is not mandatory but we are going to try and comply so we need to make some adjustments. The teacher’s union wants to review it and if there are any suggestions or ideas we can discuss them tonight. Pat Libero asked if it conflicted with any of the teachers’ contracts. No it doesn’t. A further discussion took place.

Neil congratulated Alice Obas and said her essay was very inspiring. Alice wrote an essay and there were five or six winners and she was chosen to read her essay about her history and background. Neil had no idea Alice was an ELL student and to see where you were and what you have overcome and the type of student and person you are today you should be really, really proud. That was one of the most inspiring essays I have heard in a long time and I want to congratulate you. Applause followed.

Chairwoman Pat Libero brought in cupcakes for the board and Neil is planning on something for the next board meeting because it is important to know that the board serves without compensation and it is more than for just a meeting there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes. There is certainly a lot of work that goes on and a lot of time given and we do appreciate this and are planning something. Pat also thanked the board secretary because the last few months have been hectic with board meetings on and off and snow days so she has done a lot of work for us.

Neil discussed the enrollment projection paperwork that board members received which shows over the past 10 years enrollment has decreased and more than likely will continue to decrease. When submitting a project and getting some kind of reimbursement on that project everything is based on enrollment and that was one of the rationales for the time we put in for the high school project. We figured this was the time when enrollment
would be at its highest. This is good information to have moving forward. This was the end of Neil’s report.

Bob Guthrie asked if we have a work in progress for a capital plan. Neil said we have a work in progress for our capital plan and are going off the basis we used a couple of years ago when we had a major engineering firm come in and look at Bailey and Carrigan for a start. Quite a bit of work needs to be done and at some point we need to decide what the timeline is for the high school. A further discussion took place.

Bob said he knows the CIAC is changing to championship format and we keep hearing about injuries but he would be interested to hear about the impact on academic time; student athletes loosing hours. Neil said while it is final today he thinks there are a lot of questions that may come up and Superintendents’ Groups and other groups may get involved and I will pass on any information. Bob thanked Neil.

Jeff Grande from the Business Network talked about the equipment that was purchased with the grant. This equipment will help with the SPAC online testing. He has talked with Neil, Anne and David Cappetta about this for about three years and the day has come. We start ramping up for online testing. He discussed how they will overcome physical challenges with respect to the age of our schools, the equipment they have to use and ultimately creating a very fair and equitable environment where the technology works for everybody during every minute without failing and that is very challenging. He is working in a lot of different districts said we still have a lot to overcome with redundancy and resiliency but West Haven stands at the head of that pack and a good portion of that is because of planning and resource allocation of the board and particularly of the administration. The overhead presentation is on our website. Questions were asked and responded to. Neil wanted to add that there certainly are two goals here. The first short term goal is to make it through the testing and make any corrections we need to make; this is one of the biggest changes in our school system and in all the school systems since the inception of the Connecticut Mastery Test 25 or so years ago. We see this as an opportunity because of what we can do with this equipment going forward. We want to make sure once the testing is done we are using this equipment as part of everyday lessons. Neil said he can’t thank Jeff enough for all of his work and he thanked all the administrators and teachers who are here tonight they have really done a great job.

Neil said we are unveiling our new website on Wednesday since Susan Misur, Communications Director, has come here in September she has done a tremendous amount of work getting it ready and training teachers. Susan gave a brief overview of the new website. The home page of the website is on the website so everyone can look at it. Starting on Wednesday they will begin transitioning to ten new websites. There will be one for the district and Board of Ed overall and then one for each school. If you are at home or in another city it will take a little longer for the servers to pick up the news so if you don’t see it Wednesday it should be done by Friday. We are changing website companies so we are now working with SharpSchool instead of Final Site. She said the home page is now more organized and it is easier to find things. These websites are more
user friendly for all of our users; parents, students, staff, teachers and people in the community. Susan discussed all the new options and important parent links. The calendar is also included and Board of Ed meeting dates and any changes. For the individual schools you can have report card reminders, field trip reminders etc. There are news areas currently showing information on the Spelling Bee. We hope parents will use these sites more often and we will try to keep them update. She has been training teachers at all of our schools and eventually everyone will be trained to do a teacher web page and a lot of teachers have them already. Students in the higher grades go on there to find study guides or what they will be working on that week. She has trained teachers at four elementary schools and she plans on heading over to Savin Rock and maybe Washington and then will move on to Bailey, Carrigan and the high school. Each school has certain people that update memos, newsletters and calendars so they will be getting one on one training. We have received really positive reviews. People think the new web looks better and is much easier to use. A further discussion took place. Questions were asked and responded to. The website for the district will be wschools.org for the district and the schools will have their own website with their name like Pagels.wschools.org. The board said the home page looked great and thanked Susan.

Jim Turcio, Assistant Director of Pupil Services gave an update on where we are with the school climate survey. Last year the state required all the districts in Connecticut to administer a school climate survey under the Bullying Laws. We have had several communications from the State to talk about what the school climate survey should look like and how it should be administered. We have reviewed various other school’s survey. In the end the State had created a survey that really captured all the information they wanted us to collect so we decided in conjunction with meeting with the union and administration that was the survey we were going to administer. We kicked it off last year for the first year. A majority of the school districts throughout the state are in the same boat and the second year we all are administering the survey. We are looking at what information we receive from this and how we can help it improve our system. The intent of the whole survey is really to understand how we are doing in the school system; it is really a climate a bullying piece. He gave a quick snapshot of some of the questions they are asking. For the students they are asking how are other kids treating you while you are in school. We are asking parents does your child feel safe coming to school; do they have an adult or somebody they can trust and talk. We are asking the staff if they feel like they are part of the process; can they go to the administration with a problem. Do they feel that they are respected by the students. We collect this data and share it with the building administration so they can see how kids are feeling and how is the staff doing within our schools and can we make a positive change. Anyone can go in and take the survey and I have talked with a few other districts and they are doing it a similar way. Last year we had a conversation with the union and we really want to keep it anonymous whether it is a student or a staff person being able to share information with us knowing they can be honest and give us the information and share it with us and we will really look at it and take that into effect. Do we really need to make a change in our school system. We also want to know what the perception is; are people thinking there is a problem in our schools. If they are thinking this we really need to help and address this. We are doing the survey again this year around January and run it until April. We are
trying to get parents to really respond. With Susan’s help this year we actually did face book and twitter. A further discussion took place. Questions were asked and responded to. The School Climate Survey results are included as (Schedule B) at the end of the minutes. Neil said we have not spent any money on this survey we took this from the State and put it on line. If we can do this better we will look for ways to do this better but we are not seeing any abuse with this and we want to get more people to take this survey before we make any changes. A further discussion continued.

C.1.b. Student Representatives Report
Catherine DePino, Alice Obas and Jesus Yanez gave a report which is attached as (Schedule A) at the end of the minutes. The board gave thanks to the students.

C.1.c. Board
Bob Guthrie attended the Spelling Bee and Miss Richardson also attended the workforce customer service graduation and that was definitely appreciated. He attended the Black Coalition Dinner and they also acknowledged the Fire Service Academy with WHHS Students and he also attended the Black Heritage Celebration here and Alice Obas’s speech was definitely inspiring and held everyone’s attention. The WHHS coaching staff and players held a clinic that drew over 100 kids and the feedback from parents is very positive about our student athletes.

Jim Morrissey said during Black History Month WHHS students were honored last week in this room and Rosa was also in attendance and Alice’s speech was one of the greatest speeches he has ever heard from a high school student and he wanted to congratulate her. Alice became emotional and that was a good thing because she got him emotional too. You talk about reaching for the stars you keep on doing that you will get there! You are an outstanding student. I am also very proud of all the other high school students that were there. You all make West Haven very, very proud.

Jim said also mentioned earlier tonight his wife mentioned about the grading policy and asked about a committee. Neil said we will have Pam come to our next board meeting. Jim said Pam has been great. He doesn’t know how we have gotten to this point where we give our student’s 5.3 or 5.5 it just doesn’t make any sense to him. We want to get this corrected and in line with the other schools in Connecticut.

Rosa Richardson said in addition to the same events mentioned she did read today at the Community House and our Superintendent looks really good in the hat from Cat in the Hat. Rosa also said the Alice Obas did an awesome job.

Cebi Waterfield thanked the City Council Members for sitting through presentation which was very long but very informative. They asked a ton of questions about the new high school building project and everybody was very involved in the discussion and there was a lot of information given out. Cebi was very glad she attended.
Rosemary Russo said she has been able to tour the schools and Dr. Cordone and Mrs. Gardner, Mr. Lopes and all the principals were very hospitable and she appreciates them taking the time. It was great to see the students and teachers in action.

C.1.d. Committee
Chairwoman Libero said there were no committee meetings so we will move forward to approval of the minutes.

D.1. Approval of Minutes

D.1.a. 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 December 16, 2013 at 7:00 PM.

D.1.b. West Haven Board of Education Special Finance Meeting held in the Board of Education Meeting Room, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT on February 10, 2014 at 6:00 PM.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve the minutes D.1.a and D.1.b
Robert Guthrie made the motion to approve the minutes
Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members present were in favor
Minutes are approved

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

14-01 Bernice Lattanzi, Math Teacher - WHHS
   Effective: March 1, 2014
   Reason: Retirement

14-02 Ann Valanzuolo, Language Arts Coordinator – Central Office
   Effective: August 31, 2014
   Reason: Retirement

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve Resignation 14-01 & 14-02
Rosa Richardson made the motion
Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion
Discussion: Neil asked the board to add with regret as both of these employees are long time employees. I have had the privilege and opportunity to work with Mrs. Valanzuolo as an administrator when I was a principal, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent. He thanked Ann for all the work that has been done especially over the last few years to prepare for the common core, the new testing and all the work you have done with professional development; it is really appreciated. He certainly enjoyed the last 15 years working very closely with Mrs. Valanzuolo. (Applause)
Pat Libero said she worked with Bernice Lattanzi at the high school and she was an excellent teacher. Pam Gardner said unique about Bernice is that she worked in the district for 37 ½ years and never had one sick day! (Applause) We should get her a perfect attendance award.
All board members present were in favor
Resignation 14-01 and 14-02 are approved

D.3. Leave of Absence: (Certified)

D.4. New Hire: (Certified)

14-03 Robert Piccuillo, 33 Elberta Avenue, Trumbull, CT 06611
Science Teacher - WHHS
Effective: January 2, 2014
Salary: $42,145.53 (Step 4 BS+30)

14-04 Gayle Morton RN, 76 Lake Street, West Haven, CT 06516
School Nurse – WHHS/Float
Effective: January 22, 2014
Salary: $43,135 (Step 3)

14-05 Eric Rice, 48 Pleasant Street, Chester, CT 06412
Science Department Head – WHHS
Effective: January 13, 2014

14-06 Joan Czarkowski, 92 Deepwood Lane, Northford, CT 06472
School Nurse – Float
Effective: March 10, 2014
Salary: $41,425.00 (Step 2)

14-07 Julianne Zapatka, 53 Briarwood Road, Naugatuck, CT 06770
Preschool Teacher – Forest
Effective: March 6, 2014
Salary: $61,899.12 (Step 10 BS+30)

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve New Hires 14-03 through 14-07 inclusive.
Cebi Waterfield made the motion
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members were in favor
New Hire 14-03 through 14-07 are approved

D.5. New Business

14-08 2014 Operating Budget Transfers
Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to do this separately after the other two items. Rosa Richardson made the motion put this on the table. Bob Guthrie seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mark wasn’t sure if Rosa said she was tabling the transfers. Rosa said no we put it on the table to discuss after everything else. OK. Pat said she didn’t want to do them all together. All board members were in favor.

14-09 John McKee is requesting approval for approximately ten 11th and 12th grade DECA students to attend the DECA-ICDC in Atlanta Georgia from May 2 – 6, 2014 where they will participate in International Testing and Presentations in 52 events for scholarship funds.

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion for 14-09 so the students can go to Atlanta Georgia. She said John McKee is here to answer any questions.
Rosemary Russo made the motion
Bob Guthrie seconded the motion
Discussion: Jim Morrissey said his some attended this trip last year and it was a great time for the students and it is a very good thing for the kids. John did a great job. Pat said DECA is a great organization. Cebi said she attended in 1984.
All board members were in favor
Item 14-09 is approved
Pat thanked John and told him to have a great time.

Chairwoman Libero said back to 14-08 Operating Budget Transfers
Mark Palmieri said there is also an addendum item under New Business for 14-12
Pat thanked Mark and said you are right we can do this first.

14-12 Permission to hold a Spring Festival from May 9th – May 11th on the grounds of Bailey Middle School

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to hold a Spring Festival.
Mark Palmieri made the motion
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
Discussion: Superintendent Cavallaro said this is not unique to the school system. Washington School has done this for years and Ron Quagliani is in charge and he was a former Police Chief and has been involved with the Lady of Victory Carnival. Dr. Cordone will keep us aware of what is going on throughout the process because there are permits and things that need to be handled. There will be no problem.
Bob Guthrie said he reached out the Mr. Quagliani because he had a question about insurance and he said it would be covered through the Marenno Amusement Company and the Bailey PTSA.
Neil said one of the things Dr. Cordone and I discussed is that certainly if anything should happen they will try and hold the Board of Ed liable since we are the biggest agency but that can happen with anything when any event is held there. I don’t think that should ever stop us from holding events at the schools that is what they are there for. Certainly to say we would be immune would be wrong.

All board members were in favor
No board members were opposed.
Item 14-12 is approved

14-10 West Haven Department of Education School Calendar 2014 – 2015

Chairwoman Libero said we are going to table item 14-10 the school calendar is that correct Neil. Neil said that is correct however if anybody has any discussion or questions or input we can discuss it tonight. I am happy to pass it along to the teachers and make a final recommendation hopefully for the next meeting.

Bob Guthrie made the motion to table item 14-10
Cebi Waterfield seconded the motion
Discussion: Rosa Richards said she is an advocate of not having school during primaries and before we approve the calendar I would like us to really consider…Mark jokingly interjected not having primaries? (laughter) Rosa said that would be awesome but this is something we really need to discuss. Neil wouldn’t disagree but said the police department has been great. We sent out today for some coverage and the plan for tomorrow. A primary like the one taking place tomorrow is not one you can anticipate. The one in September you can have a day off and in November there is no school for next year. Rosa said any primary next year would be on August 28th so it is not an issue but is something that needs to be addressed and brought before policy. It is an action the board can take however just to reassure you if you choose not to take it we have done what we can do to make sure the buildings are as safe as possible. We have extra police coverage, if voting takes place in the cafeteria elementary students will eat in their classrooms. Tomorrow we don’t have to worry about outdoor recess. A further discussion continued. Rosa said she doesn’t think it is solely the responsibility of the board it is something for the City in general because there are other options available; other venues that can be opened but this needs to be addressed.

Bob Guthrie said there is a discussion with the Secretary of State trying to make it mandatory; no school on election day. Perhaps it could be brought to her attention or the appropriate authority about whether it is a primary in March or August because it is still an election day. He has expressed his concerns to the superintendent and agrees with the increased police protection but certainly think that should come out of the proper department’s budget; that being the Registrar of Voters Office because it is an election under that agency’s auspices. Perhaps going forward that can be expressed to them or the Mayor’s Office.

Chairwoman Libero asked if all were in favor or tabling the school calendar
All board members were agreeable to tabling the calendar
The school calendar is tabled

Pat said on the addendum she missed 14-11 under resignations so we can do it now.

D.2. Resignations: (Certified)

14-11 Leandra Fernandez-Cosme, Spanish Teacher – WHHS
   Effective: March 4, 2014
   Reason: Personal

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to approve item D.2. 14-11
Cebi Waterfield made the motion to approve items 14-11
Rosemary Russo seconded the motion
Discussion: None
All board members were in favor
Items 14-11 is approved

Pat said now we can do the transfers.

D.5. New Business

14-08 2014 Operating Budget Transfers
Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion on item 14-08 Operating Budget
Patrick Egolum made the motion to approve item 14-08
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion
Discussion: Bob asked if they received any back up for this? He and Rosa said they didn’t get it. Bob said that is why he was looking for a motion to table it. Bob said he didn’t receive the 10 year enrollment plan either.
Cebi asked if this was a critical time. Pat asked if there were any deadlines on this.
Chairman Libero asked for a motion to rescind the motion to approve Item 14-08
Patrick Egolum rescinded the motion
After discussion Pat Libero said we will do this at the next board meeting.
Pat asked if there was anything to discuss under informational.
There was nothing further to discuss

F. Informational

Chairwoman Libero asked for a motion to adjourn.
Cebi Waterfield made the motion
Rosa Richardson seconded the motion
The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.
Respectfully submitted,

Marylou C. Amendola
Board Secretary
Student Report – March 3, 2014

Congratulations to the winners of the Academic Integrity Committee’s essay contest: Junior Kharl Reynado won the $50 1st place prize for writing about how people who cheat and plagiarize cannot take any satisfaction from a job well done and greatly diminish their own character. Kharl's essay will now be submitted to the statewide Laws of Life Essay Contest run by the School for Ethical Education based in Milford. Sophomore Christina Chao won the $30 second prize for writing about people who cheat because of the You Only Live Once mindset hurt their own future and will always have bad karma. Junior Angela Riehl and sophomore Jeremy Borelli both won the $20 3rd place prize. Angela wrote about how a person with integrity is one who consistently demonstrates honesty and truthfulness. Jeremy discussed how Abraham Lincoln demonstrated integrity in fighting against slavery and preserving the Union.

On Saturday March 1, the WHHS Debate Team performed very well in a Yale Urban Debate League tournament at Yale University. WHHS students competed against Hillhouse High School, The Sound School, Co-Op High School, and Career High School. The debate topics included: Should all Americans be required to pass the U.S. citizenship test in order to register to vote? Should the media be banned from reporting on the private lives of politicians? Should gender quotas be implemented to increase the number of women in Congress? WHHS junior Tatiana Gay won 3rd place in the novice speaker’s category. WHHS senior Yingxian Guo won 3rd place in the experienced speaker’s category. WHHS junior Jamie Kelley also performed very well at the debate.

Junior Alice Obas was nominated for the Governor’s Scholars Youth Scholarship Program.

UCONN Undergrads from the School of Engineering met with students in Chemistry and Engineering classes last month to conduct workshops about alternative energy.

WHHS has partnered with EdgePrep to provide SAT/ACT preparation sessions online and with a teacher. The first class will begin on March 29th.

Students attended the Perry Outreach initiative in February and conducted mock orthopedic surgeries and conducted biomedical engineering experiments.

The Science CAPT is coming – March 13th. This Saturday, science teachers are offering science CAPT prep from 9am-noon for all sophomores. We hope that all students will take advantage of this great opportunity.

Get ready for Math Boot Camp this Wednesday afterschool for students who are struggling. Teachers provide small group instruction and individualized focused support for kids. Boot Camp has been ongoing since August and has seen great results.
Mark your calendars for the spring musical, Willy Wonka to be held the end of this month, March 27, 28, and 29.

Jesus Yanez and Alice Obas represented WHHS at the OneWorld Progressive Institute, Inc., Black History Month Teen Forum last Thursday, facilitated by Professor Brim. The Student Forum is posted on YouTube, facebook, and will also be broadcast on AT&T Uverse and public access channels around the state. Please check out this amazing dialogue among area teens.

The WHHS GirlUp Club has partnered with Southern Connecticut State University Women’s Studies Department and will be participating in Women’s History Month activities this month on campus.

Congratulations to swimmer Max Pedro who is making his mark in the pool. He has broken three records so far – 500 freestyle, 100 fly, and 200 Individual Medley.

WHHS chartered its first Leo Club, the student organization affiliated with the Lions Club. The students were inducted at App’s in February.

Last week, ten WHHS students were recognized at the 19th Annual Black Heritage Celebration last week.

Freshman Mya Berretta is putting the WHHS Girls Hockey team on the map – she has scored 60 goals thus far this season.
The following is a summary of the School Climate Survey results that were reported to the State of CT Department of Education in the 2012-2013 school year:

1. **Student Survey:** Based on the School Climate Survey (SCAI) that was administered to students, what are some of your school’s strengths:
   a. **Students feel safe**

2. **Parent Surveys:** Based on the SCAI that was administered to parents/guardians, what are some of your school’s strengths:
   a. **Parents feel that the schools are safe**

3. **Teachers/Staff Surveys:** Based on the SCAI that was administered to teachers/staff, what are some of your school’s strengths:
   a. **Staff feel part of the community**

The following is a brief summary of some of the questions that are asked in the survey 2013-2014:

**STUDENTS:**
3. This is how I feel about my school:
4. Most of the time, this is the way I feel when I am coming to school in the morning:
5. This is how much I like the children in this school:
6. In this school, I feel:
7. The children in this school like me: ...
8. The children in this school like each other: ...
9. The adults in this school care about me:
10. How often does this happen to you during the day?
   - Another child says something nice to me
   - Another child says something mean to me
12. This is how I feel in each of these places

**PARENT**
5. My child likes to come to school each day.
6. I feel the students in this school are friendly.
7. I feel that this school is physically safe.
8. I feel comfortable sharing my thoughts and ideas at this school.
9. I feel my child’s peers treat him/her fairly.
10. I feel the adults in my child’s school treat me fairly.
13. I feel there are trusted adults in the school who my child can go to/talk to for help.
16. My child has been the target of hurtful communications through social media.
17. My child has participated in hurtful communications through social media.

**STAFF**
6. The culture and emotional climate of the school is positive and supportive.
8. I feel like I am a part of a school community (shared mission, values, efforts and goals).
9. I feel my contributions are valued and important.
10. I feel comfortable going to at least one member of the administrative team if I have a problem.
11. Our administrative team is committed to finding fair and balanced solutions to problems.
12. I feel respected by students.
13. I hear students speaking inappropriately. (e.g., about/to peers and or staff, using profanity, etc.)
14. I hear colleagues speaking inappropriately (e.g., about/to peers and or students, using profanity, yelling, etc.)