

WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES ~ REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Waterbury Arts Magnet School, 16 South Elm Street, Waterbury, Connecticut

PRESENT: President Brown, Commissioners Harvey, Hernandez, Pagano, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and J. Van Stone.

ABSENT: Commissioners Rodriguez and T. Van Stone.

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Kathleen Ouellette, Chief Academic Officer Darren Schwartz (6:52 p.m.), Interim Chief Operating Officer & Chief of Staff Gary Miller, Director of Personnel Robert Brenker, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

1. SILENT PRAYER

President Brown called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. with a moment of silence.

SUPERINTENDENT: As we take a moment to remember those who have passed this evening, please remember one of our students who passed away today. Sharmaya Ogman. Sharmaya was an excellent student in Ms. McCool's third grade class at Duggan School. She was a great role model and was loved both by students and staff and she will be so greatly missed. Let's keep Sharmaya Ogman and her family in our thoughts and prayers this evening.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

President Brown led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. ROLL CALL

CLERK: Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Hernandez.

HERNANDEZ: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Pagano.

PAGANO: Here.

CLERK: Vice President Rodriguez (absent). Commissioner Stango.

STANGO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner J. Van Stone.

J. VAN STONE: Present.

CLERK: Commissioner T. Van Stone (absent). President Brown.

BROWN: Here.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file the following communications:

1. Communication dated February 14, 2016 from Jean Cipollone in support of naming Waterbury Career Academy's Library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
2. Communication dated February 17, 2016 from Joyce DeCesare in support of naming Waterbury Career Academy's Library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
3. Communication dated February 17, 2016 from James Uriano in support of naming Waterbury Career Academy's Library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
4. Email communication dated February 23, 2016 from Karol Washington in support of naming Waterbury Career Academy's Library in honor of Kay Wyrick.
5. Email communication dated February 25, 2016 from Robert Goodrich of R.A.C.C.E. regarding the planning process and the use of funds for the MTTR Planning and Implementation Grant.
6. Email communication dated February 26, 2016 from Pat DiDomizio in support of naming the Kennedy High School football field in honor of Charlie Donato.

BROWN: Discussion? All in favor, opposed, motion carries.

5. PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner J. Van Stone and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:40 p.m.

BROWN: Discussion? All in favor, motion carries. All speakers are encouraged to submit prepared written statements to the Commissioners. Comments shall be limited to a maximum of five minutes. The Chairman will disallow a speaker from continuing to speak if slanderous or defamatory remarks are made. There will be no responses this evening to any questions or concerns raised; they will be referred to the Administration for review and response.

Danielle Albert, 93 Kelsey Street, had the following comments: I'm here tonight as a parent and as President of the Gilmartin School Governance Council. I would like to discuss the article School Reform Trigger Misfires . . . this brought to the forefront a question I've been asking myself for quite some time – are the School Governance

Councils in our City doing the job of which they were intended. It seems that the acknowledgment of issues and significant change only happens in this district when stories are brought to the forefront in the newspaper. I became involved with the School Governance Council because it seemed like a vessel created to help make our schools better. My initial impression was that a governance council would be a step above the normal cookie cutter parent/teacher groups, a council set up to work with the Board of Education and in a sense help govern our school. The truth is we never received a true orientation. With some disappointment during our first module training we were told if you could get through the editing of your bylaws the first year consider yourselves lucky. I understand that every group needs structure to function but as I sat through the first five months of our own meetings at Gilmartin, all I thought was that I didn't take time away from my family to edit bylaws. I, along with fellow Council members became very frustrated. Some left but I stayed and I began to research everything – articles, the City and State Department of Education websites, and legislation. I reached out to community resources, people like Judy Carson, Patty Avalon, and even most recently Ms. Athena Wagner. As I read through the school websites I was very surprised to find that minutes, agendas, and contact information was somewhat outdated and some of the councils were functioning like parent/teacher groups. The real purpose of school governance councils remained unclear. Was it because city leaders didn't know themselves how to implement them or was it so parents, teachers, wouldn't know how much of an impact that we could have. There are so many unanswered questions. We are a failing district; shouldn't every school in Waterbury have a council? Why was the one school that requested reconstitution really denied? Have any councils made a reconstitution recommendation? Where's the data that shows how the councils are affecting student achievement in a positive way? Have some schools been denied the right . . . to participate in the hiring of school administrators? I'm going to tell you what the perception is, it's make us feel like we're doing something but the less the parents know the better. The article mentioned reorganization. Gilmartin is . . . third year and until recently there was no real discussion or understanding or reorganization or reconstitution models. If parents were aware of the capabilities that the councils are supposed to have we'd be reading a very different article and seeing a very different result in our schools. The situation even at Gilmartin might have been quite different if our own council knew of its power. When it comes down to it there's two conflicting sides – what the councils are doing versus what they should be doing. At Gilmartin School over the last three years under the leadership of Don Burzler we did customize our bylaws but we also formed a relationship with the Gilmartin Community Club, put together a proposal to get the Spanish language into our K-8 schools, created a compact and are finalizing a parent involvement plan. We created a student council and are even working on a handbook. We even looked to all of you two years ago to help us set up a non-profit to help our students with available scholarship money that we were being given but sadly that was not followed through. These are all wonderful things, just like . . . mentioned in the paper but is that where our focus should be? We have consulted with budgeting, focused on attendance improvement, or ways to enhance our two and three percent test scores in academic achievement. There was a wonderful presentation on attendance and truancy last year but where was the oversight to ensure that the councils were being held to task? All of our minutes go downtown and no one told us we weren't making the changes that we were supposed to be. There needs to be more oversight and opportunities for all of us to network and share what we are doing. Last week there was a lovely event held here . . . data charts and graphs. All 40 or so people that attended know attendance is a problem but we

need to make solutions. There's so much more that can be done with better collaboration. After reading the article initially I was disappointed and then I looked what we had done at Gilmartin, we created change, as painful as it was we reconstituted ourselves not by plan or design but it happened. We proved that success can happen even with turnover. I sit at a table every month with parents and staff and visitors, a team of people that care about what happens in our school, it's time to up the ante. You as district leaders have a responsibility to your councils – encourage collaboration, provide guidance, support a plan that when implemented properly will promote the success of all of our children. And every single person that sits on a council needs to know that they have the power to create positive change and that we're all on the same side and that's the side of our children.

Lisa Lessard, Pearl Lake Road, had the following comments: I'm here for two purposes this evening. First I want to mention that I saw you yesterday at the Capitol Ms. Elizabeth Brown and I'm sorry I didn't have a chance to say hi. Also, I went to the State Board of Education meeting yesterday. I went with my tape recording. I figured what better way to get your message across then tape record what's coming off your . . . on your TV which basically was with Ms. Ann Sweeney, Commissioner, stated about the Alliance Grant. I actually played the two minutes and 26 second tape recording for them. James Monroe was there, Cicero Booker was there, and I . . . say something to Mr. John Theriault when he spoke the other day when he said just because Ann Sweeney says something doesn't mean it's actually factually true.

BROWN: If you would please keep your comments to the issue at hand and not make...

LESSARD: I'm just telling you that basically at the State Board of Education I was...

BROWN: Keep to the topic.

LESSARD: It is to the topic, it's Alliance Grant and believe it or not I was told the City of Waterbury, Board of Education, district, the taxpayers are being fooled because that's not how the Alliance Grant is supposed to be used, that's not the law, and you will be receiving a letter on such from the State Board of Education. Actually, also, I'm here in accordance to Walsh School when it turned to Turnaround. We all know Erik Brown is a modest, just, and truthful individual. We all know he does what he needs to do for each and all children, as he always has. We all know he wanted nothing but the children within his schools to be educated so they can grow and prosper and be all they can be. We also know Principal Erik Brown . . . was in the school when the Turnaround money was there each and every child in that school would get each and every penny of the Turnaround money to be used so they can prosper with their education. We also know that basically this has been a witch hunt coming on for months since March 23...

BROWN: Excuse me, that's not allowed. I'm gonna say point of order. Please stick to...

LESSARD: My opinion, it's a witch hunt and believe it or not that's what it is.

BROWN: We're trying to maintain civility here.

LESSARD: I understand that but every time basically I speak and I speak about Erik Brown for some reason I get point of order. I remain calm . . . March 23, 2013 is when this started. He won his arbitration, all 10 counts, there wasn't one that he did not win. He's going to federal court, he will win that, I don't care what Mayor Neil O'Leary said on the radio, he will win that. Why – because he has people that are standing behind him still to this very day and will be there for the longest time because we are going absolutely positively nowhere and count my words on that. Basically I also want to let you to know when he was at Kingsbury School he was there for each and all children, we get phone calls daily from parents, from teachers. Now I think the teachers there are supposed to be under a gag order and they were told if they speak about this to anybody they'd be sent down to Darren Schwartz's office for discipline . . . they are speaking to other teachers in within other schools...

BROWN: Try not to . . . hearsay . . . because you're making it sound like this is absolute truth.

LESSARD: Excuse me, I'm just making the truth from the facts and if you don't like truth, I know you don't like truth because you basically hate truth but you know what it's truth and facts. Truth and facts is there, truth and facts are going to stand and you know what we're all standing with Erik Brown. We're going nowhere, we're gonna be there for him because he's know he's true, he's just, and he always loved each and all children within that school and I would like you to call the State Department of Education because they were upset yesterday when they heard the tape recording. I didn't say what you said, I played the tape recording, two minutes and 26 seconds and they said it was wrong. Thank you.

THERIAULT: Just a point of order Madam Chair, when people express their opinion and don't use a person's name that is not a violation of order. If you don't like it that she said the word witch hunt, you didn't like it when I said Gestapo. So I would be out of order too. I think you got to reread your statement and delineate when people actually name someone and call somebody names in terms of the defamation of their character or slander or liable. To say cut off a person because they're saying witch hunt or they don't agree or they mention a Commissioner's name, I have no problem with someone mentioning my name during the speaking portion or another Commissioner and I don't care if it's affirmative or it's derogatory, you can mention my name as long as you don't use a swear word before it, you can call me anything you want and I might resemble the remark quite honestly. Thank you.

Richard Wood had the following comments: I'll pass.

Athena Wagner had the following comments: Connecticut Mirror did the scores for all districts and in those scores Waterbury district, the school grade meaning for the district was based on a scale from one to 100, they received a 60. The English scores, and we're talking a district of about 19,000 students, English scores – 53.5. English high need scores – 51.1. Math scores – 44.2. Math high needs – 42.1. Science – 42.1. Science high needs – 40.1. Students entering college – 58%. Even the physical fitness was at 45%. Devastating isn't it? That's your district, that's our district, those are our kids, they're your kids. So when do you start having the conversations about academic improvement? When do you stop having the conversations and take action, the action that's needed for academic improvement? Millions of dollars to this district,

millions, and these are the scores posted today. That's disgusting. However, we are to believe, because that's what we're being told, that our Superintendent is doing a phenomenal job; I beg to differ. I called for her resignation a while ago and I'm calling for it again. This is not what should be at all and with all these degrees and expertise, with all due respect, this is horrible, it's not good at all. So what's the problem? What really is the problem? These are our kids, they're your kids, they're not being educated. Millions of dollars, we need more money, we need more resources, we need more staff. Millions of dollars and that's what you got for scores today. When does that change? When do you all figure out what needs to happen because like I said before, with all due respect, you don't know what you're doing, not with this result. But you refuse to listen to those that do, those that can help, those that might know because they don't have a title, because they don't make six figure salaries, but they're in the trenches, they may have some life experience that can help you but you know what they're not even welcome at the discussion table, like the parents, like the students, not even welcome at the discussion table and that's why the school governance councils aren't working like they're supposed to be according to the law, that's deliberate. Thank you.

Jimmie Griffin, 41 Pilgrim Avenue, had the following comments: You know how many times I have been down year and how many times over the past 20 years I've heard the same thing. Then the other night I really . . . newspaper on the weekend . . . disclosure earlier, Channel 30 news ran a report the other night and I felt sick on my stomach, that Waterbury with the test scores that we just talked about, were having all these issues with hiring, retention, firing, and a whole lot of other issues. Then last week you had a Workshop, I don't know who planned it, where they were gonna lobby, or the community was gonna lobby the Board of Education about the hiring practices. Jahana Hayes, a fantastic person, and I think that she deserves every recognition that she got, but for the last four months there seems to be that there's been this major distraction, you know all we see is the teacher of the year, teacher of the year, and all these underlining factors. As a matter of fact I didn't know that the Teacher of the Year and the Personnel Director . . . from the . . . got from you guys, Waterbury Public School District Action Plan to Increase Representation of Black and Latino Educators. So you had a hundred and something people down there the other night I guess defending the recruitment program. Lack of administrative support, lack of mobility and . . . The survey administered to certified staff revealed several findings in this area. Staff repeatedly cited lack of administrative support they feel in the respective schools. This includes feeling isolated, ignored, not valued by their peers and administrators with limited support from Central Office. Lack of mobility in the district was also cited as a major cause. . . . Civil Service process . . . Education staff is irrelevant and creates another hurdle for minority teachers to overcome . . . advance themselves. Specifically the needs for supervising vice principal and teaching vice principal exam with teachers . . . on a ranking list. Many see this process as an insult and injustice as they hold degrees from institutions of higher learning and Connecticut certification, and 092 certification from an accredited program and have passed the CT Administrators Exam, CAT. Nepotism is an ongoing challenge within the district and one that does not benefit minority teachers with those in the good ole boy network. Rules are adjusted to benefit some but not all. When reviewing the teacher comments one teacher summarized it very well with the following quote "the primary challenge is deeply rooted politics in a district with . . . individual schools and administrator and teacher placement decisions. The second challenge is a lower expectation of some of my . . . regarding our student population. And a third challenge is an indirect and sometimes direct teacher bullying

and frequently occurs. Outrageous, this came from your administrators in a report to the State in a grant proposal. The Mayor goes on the radio and I hear, through the grapevine, I hear that there's some people coming down here making trouble or they're out of order or they don't have their facts. Well . . . okay, I'm tired of us being treated like we're animals in this city. I grew up in this city, I went to school and dropped out of school in this city, and I came back to the city after going and working on administration at a college. I've never seen anything like this in the educational system in my life. This is terrible and you sit there and you look and you got the nerve to be upset with people because they come down here and they address this Board? You were elected to serve the people and you need to do that.

Giuliana Emrie had the following comments: I've come here many times to address the Board, I'm a concerned parent, I'm sitting here as a concerned parent, I'm not a politician, I don't need to smile in anyone's face, and I don't care who I piss off. I have had my son in this school district for eight years. In fact last week we celebrated being in Waterbury for eight years. I came here because I didn't get the educational help that I needed for my son in Bridgeport so I came to Waterbury to get that. I started getting some of that and then when he went to middle school I started having some issues and I continue to have issues no matter how many times I come to this Board and present my issues. I know there's one person on the Board that does try to help me as much as possible. There's a couple of times I wanted to speak the last couple of weeks but I chose not to because I'm just angry. Lisa Lessard who has always been my advocate, my best friend and always looked out for my son, all of them. I have two children with IEPs, special ed, and she has been going to every PPT with me for the past three years. And then she had spoken about some things that Wendy Owen had spoken about that she was down supervisors and teachers which was . . . together. And then she came and she said to the Board whatever she wanted to say for whatever reason she wanted to say it, which wasn't the truth. And I actually have a great respect for Wendy Owen; she was my son's Special Ed Supervisor for many years up until he got into the sixth grade so I have much respect for her. It is a problem because I see that supposedly special ed is doing so great but yet I have two children in special ed . . . great service so I just want to know why it's saying that special ed is great but then the parents, I know other parents that come to me and complain, come to Lisa and complain because they're not get the services that they need. Special ed supervisors are not at PPTs, they're not given notice that they need to be at PPTs, the parents aren't given notice that the special ed supervisor can't be available on certain days. So when the parent goes to a PPT expecting the supervisor to be there, someone who knows the law, they're not present. The person that really . . . would be my son. My son . . . who knows the law and is supposed to be there. Also I had to go to . . . many times myself to advocate for my son because there were things that were supposed to be done like FBAs and thinks like that, a psychologist had . . . behaviors that came out and you know I was given the information that he went MIA for almost a year, I couldn't get in touch with him. And this is acceptable in the City of Waterbury. Yes, he gets paid for being MIA. If I don't go to work I don't get paid. And when someone calls on me I need to be there. So I think that needs to be revisited because I'm still having the same issues and I'm making plans and I'm losing time from work and going to PPTs, Lisa is going with me, and we're making all these plans, suggestions, assessments, and those aren't being followed. They get followed for a little while. We might have a few teachers that get involved but then when it comes to the whole administration getting involved, they don't. Then I have administrators who are biased against my son and tell

him that whatever he does they're gonna give him a punishment for, which they have proven they will. Unless I go and fight for it, it happens. He's getting to the point where he goes to school and he feels he doesn't have a voice so he says nothing when something happens to him that's wrong. I want to know why, why is it that if special ed is so great, why am I not getting the services I need for my children then? Why is it then I have to come to this podium and speak on the same things I've been speaking about since my son has been in sixth grade and now he's in the eighth grade getting ready to go to high school? Am I gonna have to come here another four years while he's in high school because you obviously can't do what you're supposed to do. The sad part is is that I'm not a politician so you don't need to . . . and smile in my face but I am a concerned parent and I will be at this podium no matter how many times it takes because you will do what you're supposed to do for my son because I'm going to make some federal complaints and if that doesn't get you moving nothing else will but I'm gonna keep continuing to be here for my son and any child that has an issue with Waterbury's district. I'm not going anywhere, we're not leaving another place, you will do what you need to do by the law.

James Monroe had the following comments: Good evening everyone, James, Monroe, President of the NAACP. I guess I can start off by saying . . . I'm probably the most hated person in the City right now and one reason is because we can't communicate with one another. Most of the people that spoke here tonight . . . they have concerns about education, I take it offensive when we're labeled as people who come down here and act rowdy or crazy, we say things that are not true, I disagree with that. Everyone . . . sitting behind these chairs . . . treat you with respect. I ask you in the future to try to understand people are concerned about their children, they're upset with the way things are happening. I'm not making any excuse for anyone that becomes unemotional or anything of that nature, people are humans and everyone needs to start working together to hear their problems, that's your job and I keep saying to you over and over it's about the kids. You know I didn't want to get into it but I'm gonna have to say when Erik Brown left Walsh School you claim that it was a mess, what condition is it in now? How about the kids that were there and have moved onto other levels and still not getting the education they deserve. Every child is born with the right to have a good education and I ask this Board to starting acting and dealing with it accordingly. Thank you.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 7:10 p.m.

BROWN: Discussion? All those in favor, opposed, motion carries.

6. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Ouellette read and distributed the following announcements:

We have received notice that Waterbury has been awarded \$413,138 for a state technology grant, the amount for which we applied. Those funds will be used to purchase 15 mobile laptop carts (30 laptops per cart) to be distributed to 14 different district schools.

Mrs. Patricia Moran, our Supervisor of Early Childhood Education, was one of five educators awarded by France with an Academic Palm Award last Friday in New York during a ceremony held at the Cultural Services of the French Embassy. Mrs. Moran was cited for launching the Literacy Through School Libraries program here in Waterbury and for strengthening the collaboration between Waterbury and Toulouse, France. During the presentation, Mrs. Moran was congratulated for her “pioneering spirit,” her “exemplary work as an educator” and her commitment to help level the playing field for all students. Chief Academic Officer, Darren Schwartz was in attendance.

Students from Ms. Krislyn Petti's Public Speaking class at Wilby High School participated recently in Connecticut's Second Annual Social and Emotional Learning Week at Quinnipiac University's School of Law. The students created and presented a mural with the theme “Choosing Love” to Senator Richard Blumenthal and Scarlett Lewis, the mother of six-year-old Jesse Lewis, one of the victims of the Sandy Hook tragedy. They also shared short anecdotes about situations they had to overcome in their own lives, which prompted a standing ovation from the audience. Wilby was one of just six schools participating. Senator Blumenthal later brought the murals to Washington, D.C. with him to display during a meeting on Social and Emotional Learning.

Mr. Joe Gorman, Supervisor of Health and Physical Education, was among those advocating for continued support for grant programs such as the Carol M. White PEP grant during a “SHAPE America SPEAK Out! Day” that took place Tuesday and Wednesday during face to face meetings between teachers representing 45 states and members of Congress.

This weekend Wilby High School will host the New England district qualifying event for the FIRST Robotics competition. Thirty eight teams are registered to compete, including the Nuts & Bolts of Fury team from Kennedy High School and the Bullbots from Crosby. The event is open to the public on March 5th from the opening ceremony at 10:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on March 6th from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Elimination rounds at 1:00 p.m. – Awards to follow).

Members of all nineteen Waterbury School Governance Councils are being invited to share their successes and challenges with each other during an Ice Cream Social at Gilmartin School on Tuesday, March 29. The event is from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

7. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

BROWN: I just have a few comments. Yesterday was CABA Day on the Hill and Commissioners Sweeney, Stango, and myself attended and joined in efforts to advocate for public education. There are many education bills pending that have significant impact on school districts including expansion of professional development for paraprofessionals, banning use of recycled tire rubber at municipal and public school playgrounds, new requirements for high school reform, state oversight of minority hiring practices, ECS formula changes, studying of declining student enrollment, collective bargaining changes, and giving authority to municipal government over school line item budgets. It's important to understand the implications of this proposed legislation and engage in conversations with our legislative delegation to make sure new laws have a

positive impact for our school district. And I know Commissioner Sweeney is planning a Legislative Committee for Monday night so I'm hoping people can attend to weigh in on some of these proposed legislations.

I also announce tonight that under the leadership of Commissioner Harvey, who will Chair a new Ad-hoc Committee on Parent Engagement. The charge of the Committee will be to review current policies, practices, and ongoing initiatives related to parent engagement. And secondly, to reach out to parents in the community to get input as to how as a school district we can improve parent engagement. I want to thank Commissioner Harvey on her leadership on this. And that concludes my remarks.

Is there anybody who would like to remove anything from the Consent Calendar?

President Brown proceeded to read the Consent Calendar items 8.1 through 8.8.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar, items 8.1 through 8.8, as listed:

- 8.1 With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Marianna Vagnini, WAMS, and five chaperones to take 50 students to New York, NY on June 1, 2016 to attend a performance of Something Rotten.
- 8.2 With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Ana Garcia, CHS, and two chaperones to take 20 students to New York, NY on March 17, 2016 to visit Queens Theatre in the Park.
- 8.3 With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Jason Schumacher, CHS, and nine chaperones to take 45 students to New York, NY on April 7, 2016 to attend a performance of Phantom of the Opera.
- 8.4 With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Marianna Vagnini, WAMS, and 14 chaperones to take 50 students to Agawam, MA on June 3, 2016 to visit First Congregational Church of Agawam and Six Flags.
- 8.5 With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Joseph Brady, WAMS, and three chaperones to take 37 students to Jersey City, NJ on March 17, 2016 to visit Liberty Science Center.
- 8.6 With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Elaine Strobel, WHS, and four chaperones to take 50 students to Springfield and Boston, MA on March

16, 2016 to visit the Basketball Hall of Fame and attend a Boston Celtics game.

- 8.7 With the approval of the Committee on School Facilities and Grounds, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the use of school facilities, at no charge, by the following school organizations and/or City departments:

GROUP	FACILITIES AND DATES/TIMES
M. Magda	Wilby café: Friday, March 18, 6:30-9:30 pm (Sadie Hawkins dance)
K. Effie	WAMS library: Tues., March 22, 6:00-8:30 pm (workshop on bullying for parents) WAMS café: Thurs., March 24, 5:30-8:30 pm (PTSO middle school dance)
C. Lindley	Career Academy: Fri., Feb. 26, 6:30-9:00 pm (Junior Class fundraiser)
D. Currier	Chase café: Tues., March 8, 5:30-7:30 pm (Family Math Night)
M. Rocco	Career Academy: March 8, (snow date: 3/16), April 13 and May 10 3:45-6:45 pm (Homeless Shelter Family Nights)
D. Bakewell	Sprague gym: Thurs., March 3, 4:30-7:00 pm (Family Literacy Night)
Dr. Frageau	Duggan café: Tuesdays starting 3/1/16, 2:30-4:00 pm (Food Corp after school program)
T. St. Pierre	Duggan gym & café: Mondays, March 7 thru June, 2016 2:30-4:30 pm (after school program with Girls, Inc.)
*Pension & Benefits Heather Boyd	Kennedy auditorium: Wed., March 16, 4:00-6:00 pm (WTA MetLife seminar)
*P. Poulter	Regan all purpose room: Thurs., March 10, 5:30-7:30 pm (Book Bingo)
*C. Swain	WAMS media ctr.: 4:45-9:00 pm, Thurs. Mar. 31, Apr. 14, May 26 (Bd. workshop and Lighthouse training from CABE)

- 8.8 With the approval of the Committee on School Facilities and Grounds, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the use of school facilities by outside organizations and/or waiver requests, subject to fees and insurance as required:

GROUP	FACILITIES AND DATES/TIMES
Save Girls on F.Y.E.R. Jacquee Porter	WAMS atrium & 2 rooms: Sat., April 16, 9 am – 3 pm (empowerment conference for women)
Elizabeth Esty Stephanie Podwell	Career Academy lobby & cafe: Monday, May 9, 5:00 - 8:00 pm (Congressional Convention)
*Chabab Rabbi Eisenbach	Kingsbury gym: Sunday, March 6, 2:00 - 3:30 pm (education mtg.)

REQUESTING WAIVERS:

Literacy Vol. of Greater Wtby. Tina Agati	Career Academy café: Sat., Apr. 9, 9 am – 3 pm (Festival of cultures/Volunteers Appreciation Event) (Snow Date: 4/30/16) (\$588.)
Grandville Academy Maurice Mosley	Career Academy café, lobby, classrooms: Sat., May 7 8:00 am - 3:00 pm (Symposium on Human Trafficking) (\$672.)

Long Hill Bible Church	Rotella aud. café: Sat., Mar. 19, 4:00 – 9:00 pm	
Eric K. Lott	CANCEL (church performance)	(\$460.)
Rivera Foundation	Kennedy gym: Sunday, Mar 6 & 13	
Matthew Ocasio	9 am – 3 pm (middle school basketball)	(\$1176.)
*Wtby. Knights Cheerleading	Kingsbury gym: Saturdays 3/5-6/11/16, 10 am – 2 pm	
Shenquaya Clements		(\$2520.)

GROUPS NOT SUBJECT TO FEES OR WAIVER DUE TO TIME OF USE OR PREVIOUS WAIVER:

Waterbury Wizards	Maloney gym: Tuesdays 3/15-6/14, 5:30 - 8:00 pm
Bill Maisto	Gilmartin gym: Wednesdays 3/2-6/15, 5:30 - 8:00 pm (basketball practice & games)
Hoops 4 Life	Reed gym: 4/11-6/8, 2-3 weeknights per week, 4:45-9:00 pm (basketball practices & games)
D. Fryer	WSMS gym: 4/11-6/9, 2-3 weeknights per week, 4:45-9:00 pm (basketball practice & games)
	Duggan gym: 4/12-5/19, 10 weeknights, 5:00-9:00 pm (basketball practices)
*Girl Scouts of America	WSMS café: Mar. 8th & 22nd; Apr. 5th & 26th; May 3rd, 17th, 31 st , 6:00 - 8:00 pm (girl scout community troop mtgs.)
*Wtby. Knights Cheerleading	Career Academy gym: 3/8/16-6/10/16, 5:45-8:00 pm
Shequaya Clements	Tues., Wed., Thurs. (when gym available) Kingsbury gym: 3/10/16-6/9/16, 5:45-8:00 pm, Thurs.

BROWN: Any discussion? All those in favor, opposed, motion carries.

9. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT

There were no items removed from the Consent Calendar.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file items 10.1 through 10.5, Superintendent's Notification to the Board, as listed:

- 10.1 Grant funded appointments effective immediately:
 Arena, Daniel- Hall Duty Monitor, NEMS, \$90 p/day, non-union and without benefits, funded by Title I.
 Lehrman, Yocheved- Non-public Title I Instructional Tutor, \$32 p/hour, maximum of 18 hours per week, non-union and without benefits.
- 10.2 Walsh School's various extended day program appointments, effective immediately:
 Dente, Kathy- Substitute, Commissioner's Network After-school Program, maximum of 8 hours p/week, salary per MOU.
 Pawson, Erica- Substitute, Commissioner's Network After-school Program, maximum of 8 hours p/week, salary per MOU.
 Walluck, Robin- Substitute, Commissioner's Network After-school Program, maximum of 8 hours p/week, salary per MOU.

- Pawson, Erica- Substitute, Before and After-school Program, maximum of 10 hours per week, salary per WTA contract.
 Walluck, Robin- Substitute, Before and After-school Program, maximum of 10 hours per week, salary per WTA contract.
 Pawson, Erica- Substitute, ESH Program, maximum of 6 hours per week, salary per WTA contract.
 Walluck, Robin- Substitute, ESH Program, maximum of 6 hours per week, salary per WTA contract.

10.3 Wilson Family Resource Center Books and Basketball Before School Program appointments. March 7 through April 14, Monday through Thursday, 7 to 8 a.m., salary according to individual's contract, funded by FRC grant:

- Jessica Reho - Coordinator (Monday - Thursday).
 Kelly Fengler - Teacher (Monday - Thursday).
 Heather Grillo - Teacher (Monday and Wednesday).
 Linda Fitzgerald - Tutor (Tuesday and Thursday).
 Rebecca James - Paraprofessional (Monday - Thursday).
 Donna Orsatti - Paraprofessional (Monday - Thursday).
 Andrew Caruk - Substitute Teacher.
 Andrea Perrelli - Substitute Teacher.

10.4 Teacher new hires:

Name		Assignment		Step	Effective
Gundersen	Kimberly A.	Kingsbury	Gr. 5	BA/2	2/1/16
Healey	Tara R.	Wilson	Gr. 1	MA/2	2/8/16
Ryan	Kyle J.	Kingsbury	Music	MA/1	2/9/16
Bugryn	Lindsay M.	Regan	Gr. 2	MA/1	12/9/15
Sweeney	Sarah A.	Duggan	Spec. Ed.	MA/2	1/11/16

10.5 Retirements:

- Crane, Elaine - NEMS Special Education, effective 06/30/16.
 Krill, Elizabeth - NEMS Family/Consumer Science, effective 06/30/16
 Orzechowski, Kathleen - Gilmartin Speech/Lang. Pathologist, eff. 07/01/16
 Ruback, Naomi - NEMS Special Education, effective 07/01/16.
 Tuttle, Michelle - KHS Social Studies, effective 07/01/16.

BROWN: All in favor, opposed, motion carries. Number 11 – Unfinished Business of Preceding Meeting Only. Number 12 – Other Unfinished, New, and Miscellaneous Business. Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: I have to apologize; I've been snooping around again. I'm one of those Board members, as well as all the others, that take this job seriously. And I was very concerned about the conditions at Walsh School. When I was there I became very sick. I'm not saying it was because of the school, I am saying I became very sick to the point that my doctor said I don't know really what you're getting sick from but there's something really bothering you to the point that you have bronchial asthma and now you have pneumonia. Well just so happens when I quit Walsh School two years ago I haven't been sick since. But I did want to bring this to your attention because I did bring

it to the attention of Paul Guidone, not mentioning him in any derogatory way whatsoever, and subsequently John Cross who was our School Inspector, our new School Inspector, and the reason I'm saying that is because John Cross took the bull by the horns, did a complete environmental study by a company from Hamden and it came in with kind of mixed reviews, some rooms were locked, not available, coincidentally. But some of that report actually resulted in many remediations, solutions to many problems with regard to the possibility of mold, possibilities of asbestos. I say possibilities because you see I can't delineate that because I'm not a scientist and I know what the law is because if I say . . . somebody's gonna come back to me and say you're not the expert, how can you say? You know just like when I did the study of the schools, all that paint was determined to be lead paint but I couldn't say it was lead paint, all I could say it was chipped and peeling paint. But I digressed for a second. But I do want to compliment John Cross and his crew and his entire staff for the job that they did at Walsh School because the remedies that I asked for, I asked for the report and I asked what was done as a follow up which I couldn't do as a member of the public but I can do as a member of this Board and I did find a great deal of remediation, new equipment, the building was painted from top to bottom, as every building should be in Waterbury but they're not . . . but I did want to take this time to compliment John Cross, his custodial staff at Walsh School, and all the people that worked at Walsh School that accomplished much of the remediation that was done at Walsh School because it seems as though the environmental conditions in the basement where it seemed, notice the word seemed – not an expert, not a scientist, but I'm smart. So much of this was rectified due to his efforts and quite honestly the efforts of many members who are still on this Board. So my accolades to them. Now with regard to Walsh School, I'm not saying all the problems are solved, Walsh School currently has a score on literacy of 8.1. It's the lowest score in this City in literacy. One school as a score in math of 3.2%, that means 90% of the kids are failing to reach the grade level objectives. And it has a score in science of 41.9. Now the State average is 71.2. But, that being said, there are other scores that are equally delirious here you know that really need to be addressed. And when you look in the newspaper and you see an article that spells out who did what and it's written like your looking through fog covered glasses because you really can't understand the nomenclature or the pedageese means that we as educators use these fancy terms you know that people don't understand. We do it on purpose to keep you in the dark. But, that being said, I hope this board is gonna put this little item on the agenda, it's really just four sheets of paper and it really does spell out what each and every school is doing so you can't see the ELLs, the ILDs and the XYZs, and all this other stuff that gets in the way of the simple fact what's failing and what's passing. This is four sheets of paper that will just do it. So I've been working with the Board for about three weeks and hopefully, you know we've had a Curriculum Committee and other things going on and I'm sure this Board will help resolve these things along with the ILDs and other people and the Superintendent. So I thank the Board, especially the Chairman, for indulging me and giving me the opportunity for the public to hear what I have to say and especially my accolades and thanks and compliments to John Cross. Thank you.

BROWN: Thank you. Any other comments? Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Thank you. First, before I forget it, there's a person in the audience that this community really appreciates all that you have done for Waterbury while you were here,

I just want to acknowledge Carolyn Brown in the audience and thank you, good to see you.

Last week we had a presentation that was given by Jahana Hayes and Dr. Tucker in regards to the hiring of black and Latino teachers and administrators and it was, I thought, a good presentation. I thought it was a very good update. And during the presentation they mentioned one part of the presentation mentioned obstacles that the, our teachers mentioned in the survey. One of the obstacles was hiring practices which dealt with Civil Service. And I mention that if that is an obstacle then that's something I believe we can start working on as a Board. So I challenged the Personnel Committee that that's something that we can start working on. So I'm just reiterating that. I haven't heard anything . . . but I think that's something that we should take seriously and that we should start working on as soon as possible if we truly want to change things and hiring practices is an obstacle then that's something that we need to look at. So I again mention that.

We, on Monday, I think was the last day of Black History Month, and I want to thank the district, the students, the schools, in the recognition of Black History. I was at Wilson Elementary School on Friday, I really appreciate the hospitality, I spoke there, the kids were great, the program was wonderful. There were a few other programs that I could not make and I apologize for not being able to make those but I again appreciate the effort. Next year, you know I put the challenge forward, that we kind of expand, you know Black History is much more than you know, although he's one of my favorites, Martin Luther King and I Have a Dream speech. There is much more that's out there. I shared with the kids that a few of my role models, that I admired during coming up in school, Shirley Chisholm who was the first woman to run for president of the United States and it just happens she's an African American woman. Now many people think that someone else was the first woman, but it's Shirley Chisholm who was actually the person. Barbara Jordan who was an excellent orator from Texas and she was as I got older just her voice, her speech inspired me. And Martin Luther King. So there's so much more that's out there about Black History we have access to. We can Google things, we can, you know so I just hope that we can expand on this rich history that we have out there and to explore, just to expand a little bit more with Black History Month. So I'm just looking forward to that. But again, I appreciate the efforts that were made.

I hope also that in light of the fact that this district has, it's an urban district, there's so much more out there in terms of heritage, that this district would appoint someone or have a committee that would look into saying what the celebration would be, the next month. I think March is Women's Month, I'm not sure about that, there's just different things. March 7 for example, still Black History, known as Bloody Sunday because that's the day that we, folks were protesting about, actually not protesting but marching on voting rights and they were met with hoses and dogs and things of that nature and they were peacefully marching. So I hope that we could appoint a group or a person that would look after these things when it's Hispanic Heritage, when it's Black History Month, when it's Irish celebration, just look at these things so that we do not miss cultures and that everyone can feel proud of their heritage. And I think that's it. Thank you.

BROWN: Anything further? Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: At the expense of belaboring this issue in regard to some of the test scores. I found it very, very enlightening to read the paper and see that Walsh is no longer on the Governor's Network for Turnaround Schools especially with the scores that I just gave you. I find it incredible, absolutely phenomenal, incredible. How can you possibly say Walsh School is not on the Improvement Team for Turnaround? Now we had a guy that did the Turnaround Program, did a great job at it, tried to do a great job, unfortunately it was unsuccessful. It was unsuccessful. But Crosby is still on the block for the Turnaround. So I don't know who's managing the program anymore, I don't know where the funds went for the Director of that program but we'll find out when we see the ring around the bathtub because that's where it usually goes, right? We do our laundry and then we empty the bathtub and we see where the money went. So here's the scores from Crosby guys – Crosby literacy – 13.1, 87% of the kids in Crosby failed to reach the grade level goals for literacy. They're still on the chopping block. Their score in math was 3.1. Ninety-seven percent of the kids at Crosby failed to reach the grade level objectives in math. You didn't even know this. I'll bet half of the Board members up here didn't even know. I didn't know it quite honestly until I started doing the research. And then we get science – a passing score at the State, the average passing score is 77.2. You know what Crosby got, 41.2. I mean come on. I mean we don't need two schools on the Governor's Improvement Turnaround Program, we need about a dozen. But you know we're gonna take that Alliance money, that 21 million dollars, we're gonna take 14 million dollars out of last year and subsidize our budget. You want to talk about improvement, check the ring around the bathtub. Thank you.

BROWN: Commissioner Theriault. The good news is that I think when we look at the most recent scores I think all of us are going to be happy with the improvement. So we will be having a workshop so I think everybody, it's a challenge, but I think you're gonna be happy with some of the progress made.

SUPERINTENDENT: I think we're just, we're looking at apples to oranges right now. We're looking at the Performance Index that just came out yesterday, we made tremendous gains with regards to that. We will have a full workshop next week but I think you're referring to two years ago the Performance Index and classified criteria came out and Walsh was lifted from Turnaround as compared to other schools within the State. We had significant distinction. We got certainly a tremendous amount of work ahead of us but you know, Mr. Schwartz, do you want to just quickly, for the public's sake, clarify between what currently came out and what Commissioner Theriault was referring to two years ago.

SCHWARTZ: Well obviously we are pouring through the data, we just received it from the State. The Turnaround Schools are the lowest five percent in the State so that's how they're identified so Walsh used to be in the lowest five percent, they're no longer in the lowest five percent in the State, so that's why they're no longer a Turnaround School. I don't make the rules, we don't classify them, the State classifies them. So they've been lifted out of Turnaround, there's a lot of additional Turnaround schools that have been added across the State and we're pouring through that data from other districts similar to ours, not similar to ours that are . . . to the district, to the State Focus Schools and Turnaround Schools. So they just didn't meet that criteria according to the State but many schools did fall into that five percent category, not particularly in Waterbury but across the State.

BROWN: Thank you. Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Mr. Schwartz, while you're up there, isn't it true that the scores I just read were from 2014/15.

SCHWARTZ: I believe those scores are from 2014/2015, same scores that I presented out earlier in the year to the entire Board of Education.

THERIAULT: Have there been any other additional scores on the Smarter Balance Test, CMTs, CAPTs or otherwise since these scores?

SCHWARTZ: We're talking about two different things. You're talking about Smarter Balance Scores; we're talking about the Performance Index.

THERIAULT: Have there been any Smarter Balance Scores in the meantime? I know you're talking about a different kind of scores but we're gonna be taking the Smarter Balance Test again, aren't we?

SCHWARTZ: Yes. You were at the Curriculum Committee when we talked about that.

THERIAULT: So I mean I can appreciate you talking a different test but...

SCHWARTZ: We didn't take a different test.

THERIAULT: But I like to compare apples to apples too. I like to compare the Smarter Balance Test last year to the Smarter Balance Test that we're gonna take this year and I hope we're gonna, as President Brown said, we're gonna see tremendous improvements.

SCHWARTZ: Yes, that's one test. We're talking about the Performance Index which is the 12 indicators.

THERIAULT: Did we do that test prior to this year?

SCHWARTZ: It's not a test, it's 12 different indicators.

THERIAULT: Okay, but did we do that previous so we could have some sort of a brief reference or a benchmark?

SCHWARTZ: No. The State identifies Turnaround Schools based on the lowest five percent on the performance indicators. They took that baseline based on 14/15 numbers, actually based on numbers that we weren't even aware that they were going to be taken, and so that baseline just came out, that's the scores that you received yesterday and Smarter Balance obviously was the first year that we tested last year. We're currently starting a testing cycle now so we're looking forward to making those comparisons as well as you.

THERIAULT: I'm not trying to be rude and confront you here but we really don't have a kind of, you say you have a kind of a baseline for this new test right?

SCHWARTZ: The State has said that.

THERIAULT: We're gonna be able to compare it to one to the other. So we're gonna have the test you're talking about and we're also going to have the SATs for high school kids, the CMTs, I don't think we're gonna do the CAPT test in the high school.

SUPERINTENDENT: No, SAT; CAPT in Science.

THERIAULT: Then we're gonna do the Smarter Balance Test and now I see that the Smarter Balance Test they're gonna kind of whittle it off and they're gonna kind of, excuse my expression, it's not quite educationally correct but that's the way I look at it, they're gonna shorten the test because it's too hard for our kids, we're not gonna make it as long, right, so it's gonna be a kinder, gentler test. So instead of taking the test and spread it out over a three week period we're gonna take the test, we're gonna whittle parts of the test off, right, so to speak? We're gonna make it shorter, a shorter test, right?

SCHWARTZ: The State has determined to make it a shorter test.

THERIAULT: So we're gonna call it the shorter balance test instead of the Smarter Balance Test? Is that what we're gonna call it? Is that gonna make our kids smarter? What we can do is we can teach less and ask less questions and that will make the kids smarter.

SUPERINTENDENT: Mr. Schwartz, just for a clarification too, I know Mr. Theriault missed the presentation, where was Waterbury compared to the DRG with Smarter Balance?

SCHWARTZ: It depends on where what test we were taking. We were, as I stated to Commissioner Theriault at the Curriculum Committee meeting, we weren't in first place, we weren't in last place, but we were somewhere in the middle based on the assessment. Obviously we were coming back to talk about the accountability measures, it's not a test. Commissioner Theriault keeps referring to a test; it's actually 12 different indicators that the State is now using to assess districts. Mr. Theriault, I'd be more than happy to send you that presentation. I know it was before your election to the Board so I'll send that to you when I get back to my seat.

THERIAULT: I have followed these test scores religiously for the past 12 years including the CMT scores and for you to get up there and say, as I say I'm not trying to start an argument with you, I'm just trying to state the facts. For you to say that a score of 3.2 at Walsh School is somewhere in the middle or even if we go by the overall test for the City, for the City in literacy we were 26.1. The average score in the State was 55.4. The average score in math in this City was 13.3. The average score in the State was 39.1, really low so other kids have trouble in the State too. But 13.3, 87% of the kids failing to reach a level, a grade level accomplishment in math of the entire Waterbury system and your saying we're someplace in the middle?

SCHWARTZ: Yes, Dr. Ouellette's question was about our DRG so I answered the question compared to our DRG, and shared this information with you...

THERIAULT: I can appreciate the DRG and the ERG and other acronyms that come around but I like to really look at the whole picture, I like to look at the averages from the State, not the ERG or the DRG or the JERK or whatever, I like to look at it from a standpoint of how are we doing from the standpoint of the rest of the State of Connecticut and the answer is terrible.

BROWN: Thank you Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Science 43.3, the average in the State is 76.6. I rest my case. You can take these figures whatever way you want and you can blend them whatever way you want, in the end I'm gonna come back to the Smarter Balance Test and I'm gonna come back to the average of the State scores. Thank you very much.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Hernandez, it was voted unanimously to convene into executive session at 7:41 p.m. for discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

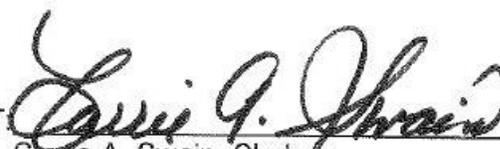
Present: President Brown, Commissioners Harvey (left at 8:00 p.m.), Hernandez, Pagano, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and J. Van Stone. Also present were Dr. Ouellette, Darren Schwartz, and Robert Brenker.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 8:07 p.m. with no votes taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:08 p.m.

ATTEST



Carrie A. Swain, Clerk
Board of Education