

Weston Public Schools
 Board of Education Meeting
 Weston Middle School Library Resource Center
 April 20, 2015

Attendance:

Philip Schaefer, Chairperson	Dr. Kenneth Crow, Assistant Superintendent
Dana Levin, Secretary/Treasurer	Dr. Jo-Ann Keating, Director of Finance & Ops.
Nina Daniel	Lewis Brey, Director of Human Resources
Denise Harvey	Jack Seigenthaler, Student Representative
Elise Major	
Sara Spaulding	<i>Absent:</i> Ellen Uzenoff, Vice Chairperson
Dr. Colleen Palmer, Superintendent	Jackson Marvin, Student Representative

I. CALL TO ORDER, VERIFICATION OF QUORUM
Philip Schaefer, Chairperson

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Matters Pertaining to Personnel

- Non-Renewal of Long-Term Substitute Teachers
- Non-Renewal Long-Term Building Substitute Teachers
- Non-Renewal Reduction in Force – Teachers
- Non-Renewal of Teachers Hired Post-Retirement
- Other Non-Renewals

III. RESUME PUBLIC SESSION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Schaefer, Board Chairperson, welcomed State Senators Boucher and Hwang.

IV. RECOGNITION

Ms. Watkins, Weston Middle School Principal, presented the middle school Mock Trial Connecticut State Champions and Dr. Marotto, Weston High School Assistant Principal, presented the high school Connecticut State Mock Trial champions. Faculty advisers Mr. Holderbach and Ms. Jorgensen, and middle school coaches Ms. Moore and Ms. Nordlinger were present.

Ms. Falber, Weston Intermediate School Principal, presented the intermediate school Odyssey of the Mind State champions.

Senator Boucher commended the students, teachers, and coaches for their success and read a citation from the Connecticut State Assembly honoring the Weston High School Red Team. Senator Hwang thanked the Board for all their work and commended the parents, teachers, coaches, and students for maintaining a standard of excellence, and

presented the citation for the middle school team. Dr. Palmer expressed appreciation to the senators for their attendance and keeping key education issues in the forefront.

Motion: Moved that the Board of Education recognizes the Weston Middle School and Weston High School State Mock Trial champions. Motion by Ms. Harvey, second by Ms. Spaulding, all in favor. (6-0)

Motion: Moved that the Board of Education recognizes the Weston Intermediate School State Odyssey of the Mind champions. Motion by Mrs. Levin, second by Ms. Major, all in favor. (6-0)

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board voted to approve the minutes from March 16 and March 19.

Motion: Moved that the Weston Board of Education approves the minutes of the March 16, 2015, Regular Meeting and Executive Session and the March 19, 2015, Special Meeting and Executive Session. Motion by Ms. Major, second by Ms. Spaulding, all in favor. (6-0)

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT – No report

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Gifts

Dr. Palmer, as per Board Policy #3280, has accepted, with appreciation, the following gifts from the Hurlbutt Elementary School PTO:

- \$473.00 for the purchase of recess equipment;
- \$620.00 for the Me Moves program;
- \$5,357.00 for the purchase of benchmark reading level books that support classroom instruction;
- \$4,500.00 for kindergarten carpets;
- \$2,000.00 for an author visit; and
- \$888.99 for the purchase of a refrigerator for the Hurlbutt Elementary School staff room.

Dr. Palmer, as per Board Policy #3280, has accepted, with appreciation, the following gifts from the Weston Intermediate School PTO:

- \$4,000.00 for Odyssey of the Mind
- \$3,000.00 for the WIS literary magazine;
- \$1,500.00 for the purchase of recess equipment;
- \$3,350.00 for the purchase of library books;
- \$1,000.00 for the science fair;
- \$250.00 for flag framing; and

- \$11,000.00 for courtyard renovation.

Ms. Spaulding reminded the public that the upcoming Memorial Day Fair is the biggest fundraiser for the PTOs.

2. Resignation

Motion: Moved that the Weston Board of Education notes the resignation of Amy Jonsson, .6 FTE Hurlbutt Elementary School Math Intervention Teacher, effective June 30, 2015. Motion by Ms. Daniel, second by Ms. Major, all in favor. (6-0)

3. Non-Renewal of Long-Term Substitute Teachers

Mr. Brey, Director of Human Resources, explained that in order to comply with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-151, the Administration is recommending that the following long-term substitute teachers not be renewed for the 2015-2016 school year: Ryann McCabe, Lisa Kilcourse, Gregg French, Caitlin Weir, Patricia Howells, Laurie Warfield, and Mary Jane Strasser. This action is necessary based on the duration of their long-term substitute employment, which approximates or exceeds ninety (90) days in the same assignment and does not reflect on their service to the Weston Public Schools.

Motion: Moved that the contract of employment of the long-term substitute teachers listed by Mr. Brey not be renewed for the 2015-2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such persons in writing of this action. Motion by Ms. Daniel, second by Ms. Major, all in favor. (6-0)

4. Non-Renewal Long-Term Building Substitute Teachers

Mr. Brey, Director of Human Resources, explained that in order to comply with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-151, the Administration is recommending that the following building substitute teachers not be renewed for the 2015-2016 school year: Christine Auber and Steven Walker. This action is necessary based on the duration of their long-term substitute employment, which approximates or exceeds ninety (90) days in the same assignment and does not reflect on their service to the Weston Public Schools.

Motion: Moved that the contract of employment of the permanent building substitute teachers, as listed by Mr. Brey, not be renewed for the 2015-2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such persons in writing of this action. Motion by Mrs. Levin, second by Ms. Daniel, all in favor. (6-0)

5. Non-Renewal Reduction in Force – Teachers

Mr. Brey, Director of Human Resources, explained that in order to comply with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-151, the Administration is recommending that the following teachers not be renewed for the 2015-2016 school year: Peter Dey, Sarah Dimock, Brie Drumm, Brittany Gilman, Elizabeth James, Kimberly Meachen,

Janet Palazini, and Lesley Baldwin. This action is attributed to the lack of an available position related to staff reduction(s) under consideration in the school district's budget and/or the return of a tenured teacher(s) from leave for the 2015-2016 school year.

Motion: Moved that the teachers listed by Mr. Brey not be renewed for the 2015-2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such persons in writing of this action. Motion by Ms. Harvey, second by Mrs. Levin, all in favor. (6-0)

6. Non-Renewal of Teachers Hired Post-Retirement

Mr. Brey, Director of Human Resources, explained that, while Connecticut law allows for the hiring of retired teachers for positions, teachers who are hired out of retirement could accumulate tenure rights, and thus must be notified of non-renewal. This action does not reflect on their service to the Weston Public Schools. There is one teacher that falls under this category: Mark Feeley.

Motion: Moved that the contract of employment of the retired teacher listed by Mr. Brey not be renewed for the 2015-2016 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person in writing of this action. Motion by Ms. Spaulding, second by Ms. Major, all in favor. (6-0)

7. Other Non-Renewals – No report

8. Summary of Climate Survey

Monika Edman, Assistant Director of Pupil Services, presented a summary of the results of the school climate survey. Questions by the Board followed on safety items at the elementary level, the development of the survey by the State, frequency of survey, Board access to the raw data or summarization of data, specific comments, forthcoming steps in response to the survey results, the method of disseminating the survey, parents' access to the results, and areas for improvement for future surveys. Board members asked Mr. Seigenthaler, Student Representative, for his thoughts and any student feedback he obtained. Mr. Seigenthaler suggested that focus groups might be more effective than surveys for high school students. Dr. Palmer, Superintendent of Schools, explained the limitations of surveys and the need to dig deeper after an initial set of data is reviewed.

9. Seventh FY 2015 Financial Update and Approval of Transfers

Dr. Keating, Director of Finance and Operations, provided a monthly financial report, including transfers for special education out-of-district tuition, the Tri-State visit, overtime related to inclement weather, and the EPA's review of the Zenon plant.

Motion: Moved that the Weston Board of Education approves the transfers as presented by Dr. Keating in the seventh FY 2015 financial report. Motion by Mrs. Levin, second by Ms. Harvey, all in favor. (6-0)

VIII. OLD BUSINESS – No report

IX. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

1. Next Regular Board Meeting is Monday, May 18, 2015, at 7:30 p.m.

2. District Update

Dr. Palmer, Superintendent of Schools, announced June 12 as the last school day for students and the date of graduation, and June 11 as the date of the moving-up ceremony. She emphasized the transition of students between schools as typical points of stress in any school system and applauded the work of the school administration, counselors, and teachers to communicate with parents and work collaboratively to ensure positive experiences during the transitions. Dr. Palmer also discussed the high school internship program and thanked the community members who have contributed to the success of the program, the conversion of family and consumer science instructional space to maker-spaces, the secondary school reform act and graduation requirements, and the upcoming Westport Mini-Maker Faire that Weston has teams participating in.

3. Principals’ Reports

Dr. Marotto, Weston High School Assistant Principal, discussed hosting the Special Olympics on May 9 and the Day of Awareness, the trip to China over April vacation and the upcoming Chinese student visit to Weston, Builders Beyond Borders in Guatemala, the Science Olympiad gold medal winners, the excellence of the athletic teams, and the student talent in the musical *Barnum*. Ms. Watkins, Weston Middle School Principal, discussed the Mini-Maker Faire, a video chat with Jim Cantore, and the upcoming State National History Day Competition. Ms. Falber, Weston Intermediate School Principal, commented on the Science Fair, musical events, an upcoming incoming third-grade parent night, and the Cornerstone. Mrs. Kaddis, Hurlbutt Elementary School Principal, highlighted kindergarten orientation and the civic engagement social studies unit.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. WHS Student Representatives’ Report

Mr. Seigenthaler discussed the video by Eric Benninghoff on autism awareness, a Food Pantry donation, Spirit Week, and Relay for Life.

2. Communications Committee

Per Ms. Daniel, development of the May insert was discussed at the March 23 meeting and April 10 work session. She thanked those who provided text and photos for the insert. The next meeting is scheduled for May 4.

3. Curriculum Committee

Per Dr. Craw, during the April 1 meeting, the Committee debriefed on the Tri-State visit and discussed STEM, maker-spaces, the family and consumer sciences transition

to STEM, and the writing initiative. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for May 13.

4. Finance Committee

Per Ms. Harvey, in addition to what was discussed previously in the agenda, the following items were discussed at the April 8 meeting: student activity fees, the FY 2016 budget, security discussions with the Board of Finance, results of the health insurance rebidding, awaiting a reply on the food service RFP, facility use fees, the enterprise initiative, remaining arts program funds, funding for the softball scoreboard, and methods of reducing energy costs. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for May 8.

5. Facilities Committee

Ms. Major discussed the following items from the April 7 meeting: project close-outs, lighting upgrades, a security grant update, opportunities for green energy, the new softball field scoreboard, a scoreboard for the soccer field, and fencing between the South House playground and the bus garage. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for May 6.

6. Policy Committee

Mrs. Levin announced the upcoming Tri-M Honor Society induction ceremony and discussed the following items from the April 7 meeting: graduation requirements, a policy on reports of suspected abuse and neglect of children, and Board bylaws. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for May 5.

7. Negotiations Committee

Per Ms. Harvey, the Committee is in the organizational phase of negotiations of the contract for non-certified staff.

8. CES

CES meets on the first Thursday of each month. Ms. Daniel discussed school turnaround projects in Bridgeport, STEM and STEAM institutes for teachers, and advocacy regarding the burden of proof issue.

9. CABE

Ms. Major discussed the policy highlights newsletter that CABE provides regularly.

10. Weston Education Foundation

Ms. Harvey highlighted a presentation by Dr. Palmer and Dr. Craw on digital learning and the kitchen tour fundraiser.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Motion to adjourn by Ms. Daniel, second by Ms. Major, all in favor. (6-0) Meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jennifer Markov, Board of Education Clerk.

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