Board of Education
May 9, 2023

The regular session meeting was live streamed on COX channel 16 or Frontier channel 6101 and may also be viewed on: YouTube® Channel, "Wethersfield Government Access TV" at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfuf-C0gYVVxmD5iIfFTnsQ

The Wethersfield Board of Education met in regular session on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. and was streamed from the Town Council Chambers, Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway. The following Board members were present: Mrs. Di Roberts, Mrs. Drew, Mrs. Granato, Mr. Healy, Mr. Laccavole, Dr. Regan-Lefebvre, Mr. Reilly, and Vice Chairperson Mr. Cascio. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett; Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum and Instruction, Sally Dastoli; Business Manager, Matthew Kozaka; WPS Director of Security & Residency (WPS Liaison--COVID-19 Response Team), Michael Baribault; Highcrest School Principal, Christine Mori; Highcrest School Teachers: Sarah Meyers (Grade 1), Leeann Silver (Reading Consultant), and Ryan Boothroyd (Grade 6). Members of the public were also present.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Highcrest School members: Principal, Christine Mori; Teachers: Sarah Meyers, Leeann Silver, and Ryan Boothroyd led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Student/Staff Recognitions/Presentations

Highcrest School Principal, Christine Morey commented on the Fund for Teacher grant program and introduced the three (3) teachers from Highcrest School who have each been awarded a "Fund for Teachers" grant for travel over the summer. The teachers then discussed their plans for bringing content to their instruction from experience learned from their grant funded summer trips. Highcrest School teachers, Sarah Meyers (Grade 1) and Leeann Silver (Reading Consultant) commented on their educational plans for bringing content to their instruction from experience learned after they visit Iceland, and teacher Ryan Boothroyd (Grade 6) commented on his educational plan for bringing content to his instruction from experience learned after he visits Egypt. Board Comments: Mrs. Granato, Mr. Reilly, Dr. Regan-Lefebvre, Mrs. Drew, and Mr. Cascio commented. Mr. Emmett also commented.

3. Board Comments

Mrs. Granato commented favorably of the SEPTO Meeting she recently attended at Webb School. New members are always welcome. The Center for Children's Advocacy's Director and Senior Staff Attorney, Kathryn Scheinberg Meyer spoke to the group, and there was a PowerPoint presentation on the issues of suspension and expulsion, PPTs and the 504 process. There was also a discussion regarding SPED classroom sizes and caseloads. Mrs. Granato also commented on the Keane for Kids Coalition meeting she recently attended. Keane on Kids After School Program Director, Caroline Fazzina reported on a successful enrollment in the Spring session of Keane on Kids After School Enrichment programs, as well as the success of the science enrichment program in the elementary schools. [Mrs. Granato mentioned the success of the ENCORE After School program at SDMS.] Two (2) musicals, *Willy Wonka* (program offering at Highcrest School--performances are 05/05 and 05/06) and *Matilda* (program offering at Webb School--performances are 05/12 and 05/13). The 2023 Annual 5K Run/Walk fundraiser event is June 4th at 11:00 a.m. (registration begins at 9:30 a.m. on event day or can be done online in advance by using the following link: https://keanefoundation.org/images/pdf/2023-5K-Registration.pdf). Also visit the *Keane Foundation* Home Page for more information about programs and events: https://keanefoundation.org/

Mrs. Di Roberts reminded everyone of the scholarship fundraiser walk in honor of WHS graduate, Vallerie Perrault, who passed away on October 9, 2022 from a rare form of cancer. The walk is being organized with the help of Vallerie's favorite WHS teacher, John Sand, and is scheduled for Saturday, May 13, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. Participants are to meet in front of the WHS Pool entrance. [A scholarship foundation is being formed and a scholarship in Vallerie's name will be awarded to a WHS student on awards night.]

Mrs. Drew noted Teacher Appreciation Week and gave a shout out to WPS teachers and staff for their hard work and dedication.

Dr. Regan-Lefebvre thanked Vice Chair, John Cascio and the Memorial Day Parade Committee for considering her request to remove the musket firing portion of the Memorial Day Parade

event. She commented on the reasoning behind her suggestion (stress to children and the public from gun violence/noting a generation greatly moved/affected by gun violence).

Mr. Reilly commented favorably of the WHS Band's practice session he witnessed this evening at WHS. The WHS Marching Band is traveling to FL and will be performing at Disneyworld.

Mr. Cascio commented favorably of the Memorial Day artwork now displayed in Town Council Chambers. He thanked Emerson-Williams School Art Teacher, Erica Richard and the students for their energy and input for the collaboration.

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

a. April 25, 2023 Board of Education Regular Session Meeting

Mrs. Drew MOVED to approve the minutes of the Board of Education Regular Session Meeting of April 25, 2023, as submitted. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Di Roberts and VOTED unanimously.

5. Public Comments

There were no comments made by the Public during this portion of the meeting.

6. Communications

Mr. Emmett noted that in addition to Teacher Appreciation Week, it is Nurse Appreciation Week. May 1st was School Principals Day. He thanked the district's school principals, teaching staff and nurses for all they do. One day this week, the district is providing the teaching and support staff in each school a taco bar luncheon prepared by Chartwells Dining Services.

Mr. Emmett, Business Manager-Mr. Kozaka, Chairman Carey, and Finance Committee Chair-Mrs. Drew reviewed the two (2) RFPs, and the process of completing due diligence is occurring with reference checks being completed on both proposals. The Committee expects to have a selection for Board consideration as an action item at the next Board of Education regular meeting.

Mr. Emmett noted that the WHS Marching Band was at WHS earlier this evening, as Mr. Reilly indicated, preparing for their trip to Walt Disney World. The band will be marching at Walt Disney World, and Mr. Emmett wished them the best of luck. He commented favorably to the

hard work of the group and thanked Mr. Reilly and all the chaperones (including Mr. Maltese and Mrs. O'Connor) for their help on the trip.

Mr. Emmett mentioned WHS Class of 2023 Graduation is one (1) month away. The district is preparing for the ceremony to be outdoors. He met with the Project Safe Grad Committee to discuss the event taking place after the graduation ceremony on Friday evening, June 9th. There is a plan clearly in place so in the event WHS is used for the Graduation Ceremony due to rain, an adjustment would be made with the start time for the Safe Grad event. A walk through was done today, and additional walk throughs will be done a couple more times before the event as to ensure everyone has what they need.

Mr. Emmett indicated there are a variety of spring events on the horizon, and the end of the school year will arrive quickly. Spring musicals at High Crest (last weekend) and Webb (this weekend), 6th Grade Parent Night at SDMS (tonight), Hanmer's Got Talent (tomorrow night), graduations, step-up ceremonies, WHS athletic playoffs/tournaments, and many other events occurring for the students to look forward to.

7. Action Items

There were no Action Items

8. Reports/Discussion Items

a. <u>Announcements/Information</u>

Vice Chairperson Cascio reviewed the items in Board Members' packets and reminded Committee Chairpersons/Board members to review their calendars with scheduled dates and times pertaining to upcoming meetings and note changes to committee meetings. He advised Board members to verify their attendance at Committee Meetings with the Committee's Chairpersons, the Administrative Chairperson, Mr. Emmett, and Executive Secretary, Dio Markopoulos. Use of email by Board members for communicating meeting attendance and ensuring a quorum for committee meetings was encouraged.

b. <u>Safety/Security Updates</u>

WPS Director of Security & Residency (WPS Liaison--COVID-19 Response Team), Michael Baribault commented on the Safety and Security Grant the district recently filed with

the State of Connecticut. The State match is approximately fifty-seven (57%) percent if the district is awarded the grant. The district is looking to replace servers that support the camera system and fobs and update panic buttons in the schools. He also commented on the safety and fire drills being done in the district schools, as well as staff safety/security training. Board Comments: Mrs. Drew, Mrs. Di Roberts, Mr. Laccavole, Mrs. Granato, Mr. Healy, and Mr. Cascio commented. Mr. Emmett also commented.

9. Board of Education

a. Meetings Held

Board of Education Special Session Meeting 04.26.23 @10:30 a.m.): Mr. Emmett reported the meeting pertained to a confidential student matter.

Human Resources Committee (04.27.23 @6:00 p.m.): Mrs. Drew reported the Committee heard a presentation from WPS Director of Human Resources. Trent Donohue regarding staff absences and attrition. There was a discussion pertaining to additional work on the interview exit policy.

Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative (WECC) (05.08.23 @ 4:30 p.m.): Mrs. Di Roberts reported the results from a recent survey of TLC Preschool parents was discussed. 50% of the parents who have their children enrolled in TLC had responded to the survey. Parents suggested an increase in the program hours, and a it was also suggested that a developmental sports program be added to the program. It was noted that thirty-seven (37) children have received scholarships for preschool from The Mayor's Charity Ball event over the years. The OEC Blue Ribbon Panel, Transition to Kindergarten one-week summer program sessions, and the UConn PEP Program Graduation Ceremony on May 25th (6:30 p.m. at Loretta's Dream Pavilion in Mill Woods Park) were also discussed. WECC will not hold a meeting in June. There will be a meeting scheduled at some point during the summer to discuss the WECC Annual Meeting. Refer to the following website for additional information regarding preschool classes/programs and other resources for children (ages birth to five): https://wps.wethersfield.me/district/early-childhood-in-wethersfield

b. Meetings Scheduled

Memorial Day Parade Committee (05.10.23 @ 7:00 p.m.), Student Programs & Services Committee (05.16.23 @ 6:00 p.m.), CREC Council (05.17.23 @ 11:30 a.m.), Finance & Operations Committee (05.23.23 @ 6:00 p.m.)

10. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

11. Public Comment

There were no comments made by the Public during this portion of the meeting.

12. Adjournment

Mrs. Drew MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Laccavole and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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John F. Cascio, Vice-Chairperson – Secretary

Minutes Recorded by Ellen Goslicki, Recording Secretary