

Board of Education
November 12, 2024

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-C0gYVVxmD5ilfFTnsQ>

The Wethersfield Board of Education met in regular session on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was streamed from Town Council Chambers, Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway. The following Board members were present: Ms. Callan-Carson, Mr. Carey, Mrs. Di Roberts, Ms. Hernandez-Williams, Mr. Reilly, Ms. Walters, Mr. Weiner, Vice Chairperson Laccavole; and Chairperson Granato. **Also present were:** WPS Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett; WPS Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum & Instruction, Sally Dastoli; WPS Business Manager, Matt Kozaka; WPS Director of Security & Residency, Michael Baribault; SDMS Principal, Tara Yusko; SDMS Assistant Principal, Scott Voisine; Kayla Evans (Instructional Supervisor of Special Education-Secondary); Carrie Anzidei (Crimson Team Leader); Meghan Dausey (Green Team Leader); Lisa Mandeville (Orange Team Leader); Kyleen Casasanta (Turquoise Team Leader); Kristen Fortuna (Magenta Team Leader); Kelli Russo (Indigo Team Leader); Eric Hennessy (Unified Arts Team Leader); and WHS Student Representative, Anxhelika Deda. Members of the public were also present.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

WHS students Eleanor (Ellie) Bradley, Nathan Liu, Erick Planko, and Xenia Valentin, who are named commended students for the 2025 National Merit Scholarship program, led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Student/Staff Recognitions/Presentations

WHS Principal, Siobhan O'Connor recognized and congratulated Eleanor (Ellie) Bradley, Nathan Liu, Erick Planko, and Xenia Valentin for being named commended students in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program for their exceptional academic promise as demonstrated by their outstanding performance on the PSAT NMSQT test they took in 2023.

Shannon McNiece, President of the Wethersfield Education Foundation (*WEF*) made a presentation regarding the grants awarded to Wethersfield schools from applications made to the foundation from district teachers. Information about the foundation and the grants awarded can be found by accessing the following link: www.wethersfieldeducationfoundation.org

Board Comments: Mrs. Di Roberts, Ms. Callan-Carson, and Mrs. Granato commented.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

a. October 22, 2024 Board of Education Regular Session Meeting

Mr. Carey made a correction to Page 9.

Add the following language after Item 12., as follows:

13. Adjournment

Mr. Laccavole MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Weiner and VOTED unanimously.

Mrs. Di Roberts MOVED to approve the minutes of the Board of Education Regular Session Meeting of October 22, 2024, as corrected. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Carey and VOTED unanimously.

b. October 23, 2024 Board of Education Special Session Meeting

Mr. Weiner MOVED to approve the minutes of the Board of Education Special Session Meeting of October 23, 2024, as submitted. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Carey and VOTED unanimously.

4. Public Comment

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

5. Communications

Mr. Emmett thanked WPS students and staff members for their efforts in recognizing Veterans Day and honoring those who have served in the military. The annual ceremony honoring veterans was held at WHS. There were activities in the schools including a visit to SDMS from a veteran, and a student-led presentation from Grade 6, with veterans, at Webb School.

Mr. Emmett held a moment of silence at this meeting in memory of 1) Robert “Rob” Sharkevich (Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Dept./Ret. Hartford Fire Dept./and employee of WPS) who died

while serving on October 22nd; and 2) Elizabeth “Liz” Catarius (Ret. Principal of Emerson-Williams School and WPS employee from 1989-2013) who died October 30th.

6. Action Items

There were no Action Items.

7. Reports/Discussion Items

a. Announcements/Information

There were no announcements/information matters.

b. Secondary School Improvement Plan Presentation (SIP)

An overview of the School Improvement Plan being implemented at SDMS was provided by: SDMS Principal, Tara Yusko; SDMS Assistant Principal, Scott Voisine; Kayla Evans (Instructional Supervisor of Special Education-Secondary); Kelli Russo (Indigo Team Leader); Kristen Fortuna (Magenta Team Leader); Carrie Anzidei (Crimson Team Leader); Meghan Dausey (Green Team Leader); Lisa Mandeville (Orange Team Leader/Math Teacher); and Eric Hennessy (Unified Arts Team Leader/Tech Ed Teacher). The department liaisons were thanked for their hard work. Board Comments: Mrs. Granato, Ms. Hernandez-Williams, Ms. Walters, and Ms. Callan-Carson commented. Mr. Emmett also commented.

8. Board of Education

a. Meetings Held

Board of Education Special Session Meeting (10.23.24 @ 6:00 p.m.): Mrs. Granato reported 1) the successor contract between Wethersfield Board of Education and Wethersfield Federation of Teachers was ratified; 2) Cooperative Educational Services was selected as the search firm for the district’s next Superintendent of Schools; and 3) Wethersfield Board of Education was established as the Superintendent of School Search Committee.

Facilities and Maintenance Committee (10.28.24 @ 6:00 p.m.) **CANCELLED**;

Policy and Planning Committee (10.30.24 @ 6:00 p.m.) **CANCELLED**;

Human Resources & Personnel Committee (11.05.24 @ 6:00 p.m.): Ms. Hernandez-Williams reported there will be more information regarding the staff gift at the next meeting. There was a discussion of creating a culture calendar for everyone to see what is going on in each of the

schools, and an update pertaining to absences/leaves of absence and hiring was provided. It was noted that negotiations went well with regard to the teachers contract and that the insurance wellness program participation rate is 95%. Meeting minutes can be found by selecting “Committees” at the BOE website: <https://wps.wethersfield.me/board-of-education/meeting-minutes>

b. Meetings Scheduled

Student Programs & Services Committee (11.18.24 @ 6:00 p.m.), Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative (WECC) – Annual Meeting (11.19.24 @ 5:30 p.m.), Policy and Planning Committee (11.21.24 @ 6:00 p.m.)

9. Public Comment

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

10. Board Comment

Mrs. Di Roberts commented favorably of the PTO meeting she recently attended at Charles Wright School and noted the group is busy planning events which benefit students and teachers. TSKP gathered information and ideas regarding new or renovate as new school buildings. Kindergarten teachers, Mindy Harrington and Linda Morrissey provided updates and noted self-help and attention skills of kindergarteners are much better this year, both of which are helping with a better start academically. This data is attributed to the change in age eligibility for kindergarten and the new reading program. The Hawk Helpers group is also helping with the success of the Weekend Backpack Program, and volunteers are always needed to help with the packing and delivery of back packs.

Mr. Carey congratulated the fall sports program athletes, coaches and staff as he commented on the season finales of WHS Field Hockey, Volleyball, Boys Soccer, and Girls Soccer. He also commented on WHS Football Team’s home game versus Newington High School on Wednesday, November 27th at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Callan-Carson commented favorably of the WHS Drama Club’s recent production of MacBeth and gave kudos to those who performed. She commented on yesterday’s meeting of the Building Committee and noted the group is doing a really good and professional job. The group is nearing the completion date of the Community Outreach and Feedback phase that will

be held before Town Council November 18th. She encouraged everyone to attend that meeting, as well as meetings of the Building Committee. She thanked TSKP for the feedback already provided.

Mr. Reilly commented of his attendance at WHS Marching Band's final competition of the season and the ceremonies of the various National Honor Societies (languages) at WHS.

Mrs. Granato commented favorably of the WHS Drama Club's production of MacBeth and of the Annual Celebration of Veterans Ceremony at WHS.

WHS Student Representative, Anxhelika Deda commented favorably of the WHS Drama Club's production of MacBeth and of the Annual Celebration of Veterans Ceremony at WHS. WHS students will be assisting Habitat for Humanity by helping to build a house. There is an upcoming monthly meeting of the National Honor Society. She noted many of the WHS sports teams made it to the first round or made it past the first round of State Tournament play. She noted that many WHS Girls Swim and Dive team members made it to the finals. She mentioned that Emily Finelli made Field Hockey First Team All-State and was selected to be part of the Junior Select Game. She commented that there is a varsity football game this week and that Homecoming is next week. The National Honor Society induction ceremonies (languages) were recently held. The English Honor Society induction ceremony, National Art Society's Paint Night, the semi-annual blood drive, and a meeting of the Interact Club will be held next week.

Ms. Walters clarified that the next WHS Varsity Football games are scheduled to occur at home (Cottone Field) Thursday, November 14th at 6:00 p.m. (vs. Farmington High School), and Wednesday, November 27th at 6:00 p.m. (vs. Newington High School).

11. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business discussed.

12. Proposed for Executive Session

Mrs. Granato MOVED to leave public session and enter into an Executive Session at approximately 8:01 p.m. for the purpose of a) Discussion of Superintendent Goals for 2024-2025. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Weiner and VOTED unanimously.

Present for executive session:
Wethersfield Board of Education Members:

M. Callan-Carson, C. Carey, J. Di Roberts, C. Hernandez-Williams,
B. Granato, M. Laccavole, J. Reilly, E. Walters, J. Weiner;
Administrators: M. Emmett

Mrs. Granato MOVED to leave executive session at 8:44 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Weiner and VOTED unanimously.

13. Adjournment

Mrs. Granato MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Carey and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Laccavole, Vice-Chairperson – Secretary

Minutes Recorded by Ellen Goslicki, Recording Secretary