

Board of Education
September 27, 2022

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, September 13, 2022 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: Mr. Cascio, Mrs. Di Roberts, Mrs. Drew, Mrs. Granato, Dr. Regan-Lefebvre, Mr. Reilly, and Chairperson Carey. Also present were: Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett; Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Curriculum and Instruction, Sally Dastoli; Business Manager, Matthew Kozaka; Wethersfield Public Schools Director of Special Education, John Karzar; WPS Director of Security & Residency (WPS Liaison--COVID-19 Response Team), Michael Baribault; WHS Technology Teacher, Sue Coco; WHS Social Studies Teacher, Stephen Carr; WHS Art Teacher, Andrea Haas; and WHS Student Representative, Ryan Fazzina. Members of the public were also present.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

WHS Art Teacher, Andrea Haas led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Student/Staff Recognition/Presentations

There were no student/staff recognitions or presentations.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

a. September 13, 2022 Board of Education Regular Session Meeting

Mr. Reilly MOVED to approve the minutes of the Board of Education Regular Session Meeting of September 13, 2022, as submitted. The motion was SECONDED by Dr. Regan-Lefebvre and VOTED unanimously, with Mr. Cascio abstaining.

4. Public Comment

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

5. Communications

Mr. Emmett indicated the State released a grant application for monies to improve HVAC and ventilation. This is a matching grant program, and the State is holding two (2) bidder's conferences to provide details on the funding source and how the district can apply these funds. Mr. Emmett has spoken with Wethersfield Physical Services Director, Sally Katz who is also interested in this program. This Friday morning, Business Manager, Matthew Kozaka and Mr. Emmett will be attending one of the two bidder's conferences to get additional information and begin the planning process. Beginning tomorrow, Mr. Emmett will attend the New England Association of Schools Superintendent's Annual Conference which is being held in North Hampton, MA. This year's theme is "Profiles of the Future."

Mr. Emmett mentioned that the district continues to work on transportation efficiencies. There has been improvement since school began. A few bus runs are still inefficient with late arrival times. A bus run at Webb School and an afternoon bus run out of district both remain areas of focus. A lack of consistency of drivers and a high volume of substitute drivers has impacted route familiarity. The district is making sure that communication through the *ParentSquare* App occurs with parents in the event there is a substitute driver or if it is known that there will be a late bus.

Mr. Emmett also mentioned that the *Stopfinder* App will be rolled out to district parents gradually within the next month. This App will allow parents to figure out exactly where their child's bus is and what the timeframe is for when their child's bus will arrive. There will be more information at the next Board of Education meeting about this App.

Mr. Emmett noted that a total of eight (8) covid cases have been reported to the district as of today (7 children, 1 adult) with said cases spread among the schools. He indicated there is no major impact with regard to a need for substitutes thus far.

Mr. Emmett gave a shout out to D'Esopo Funeral Home who donated antibacterial wipes to WPS. He thanked St. Paul Lutheran Church whose school supply drive provided some supplies to our district elementary schools through each school's social workers. Additionally, he thanked Coldwell Banker for its donation of school supplies that was just delivered to his office. Those supplies will be delivered to the elementary schools as well.

6. Action Items

NOTE: WHS Technology Teacher, Sue Coco; WHS Social Studies Teacher, Stephen Carr; and WHS Art Teacher, Andrea Haas commented on the International School Field Trip Requests noted in **Recommended Motions a.-e.** below. **Board Comments:** Dr. Regan-Lefebvre, Mrs. Granato, Mr. Reilly, Mr. Cascio, and Mrs. Di Roberts commented.

a. Recommended Motion: Approval of the International School Field Trip Request

Mrs. Drew MOVED that the Board of Education approve the International School Field Trip Request for Peru during the Spring of 2023. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Reilly and VOTED unanimously.

b. Recommended Motion: Approval of the International School Field Trip Request

Mrs. Drew MOVED that the Board of Education approve the International School Field Trip Request for Rome/Paris in the Spring of 2024. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Reilly and VOTED unanimously.

c. Recommended Motion: Approval of the International School Field Trip Request

Mrs. Drew MOVED that the Board of Education approve the International School Field Trip Request for Iceland in June 2023. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Reilly and VOTED unanimously

d. Recommended Motion: Approval of the International School Field Trip Request

Mrs. Drew MOVED that the Board of Education approve the International School Field Trip Request for Belize in April 2024. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Reilly and VOTED unanimously

e. Recommended Motion: Approval of the International School Field Trip Request

Mrs. Drew MOVED that the Board of Education approve the International School Field Trip Request for South Africa in June 2023. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Reilly and VOTED unanimously.

7. Reports/Discussion Items

a. Announcements/Information

Chairperson Carey 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. He advised Board members to verify their attendance at Committee Meetings with the Committee's Chairpersons, the Administrative Chairperson, and Mr. Emmett.

8. Board of Education

a. Meetings Held

CREC Council: Mrs. Granato noted the meeting began with a welcome back to the 2022-2023 school year with a short video of CREC's Opening of School. Council members were urged to sign up for committees for this school year, and the Consent Agenda was passed, unanimously, on accepting the CT Technical Education and Career System related services, as well as the renewal of the Chef Technical Service Agreement. CREC Executive Director, Greg Florio, Ed.D. showed a short video of the staff members commenting on why they enjoy their work for CREC. He commented on a more positive school year with the hope of the pandemic as behind us. CREC Superintendent of Schools, Tim Sullivan also spoke of a more positive start to the school year and discussed staffing issues with the hope that positions are soon filled. CREC has also been dealing with bus driver shortages. CREC has added a Pre-K school to its magnet schools. This school is located at the former *Soundbridge* School building in Wethersfield. CREC's Head Start program is 80% filled, and Wethersfield children are eligible for the program. CREC & CABA Legislative Liaison to the General Assembly, Patrice McCarthy provided a legislative update and noted the legislature is not in session currently due to elections. She noted there are some very controversial issues to be brought up at the next session. The meeting concluded with council members discussing what CREC means to each member. Mrs. Granato commented to the group that as a BOE member in a small town, knowing what is happening in the region and in individual towns has been important information for her as a Wethersfield BOE member. Information about CREC and CREC meetings (Minutes) can be found on the CREC website: <https://www.crec.org>

Finance & Information Management Committee: Mrs. Drew noted there was a discussion about last year's financial report, which is now in audit. The year ended at zero, and the monthly forecast was reviewed. The district is on target with financials, and budget line items such as special education placements and transportation continue to be closely monitored.

b. Meetings Scheduled

Student Programs & Services Committee and CREC Council

9. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

10. Public Comment

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

11. Board Comments

Mr. Reilly noted his attendance at the Career Advisory Board (CAB) meeting held yesterday evening. It was reported that \$1,500.00 was raised from the Puerto Vallarta fundraiser event held in June. CAB meeting dates have been determined and will be scheduled for this year. Seven (7) students are interning with placements by October. The WHS Career Fair is scheduled for the week of April 17th in 2023. Lunch and Learn sessions, as well as mock interview sessions, will begin next month. Ideas for increasing membership (such as student involvement, higher education representatives, local/district/state officials, rotating members every few years) were discussed. A skill sets training (not company/corporate) focus was done in conjunction with *Chick-fil-A*. CT Center of Advanced Technology, Director of Partnership and Outreach Leader, Eileen Candels made a presentation. There will soon be a meeting at the CT Convention Center with 90 companies. October 13th from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., a manufacturing company will be making a presentation.

Mrs. Granato noted the *Wethersfield Education Foundation* (WEF) will hold its first meeting of the school year tomorrow evening, 7:00 p.m. at Wethersfield Country Club. She also noted the fall fundraising event presented by WEF that will be held on Thursday, October 6, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Wethersfield Country Club, 76 Country Club Road, Wethersfield, CT. Tickets are \$40.00 per person [and there are eight (8) people to each table]. Light appetizers and a cash bar are available. WHS Graduate Dana Luby Neves, Vice President & General Manager of WFSB Channel 3 will discuss the topic, "Fact or Fiction: Where does NEWS come from?" Refer to the following link for information: www.wethersfieldeducationfoundation.org

Mrs. Drew requested a correction to the BOE Committee Meetings schedule regarding the date of Saturday, January 7, 2023 noted for a Student Programs & Services Committee meeting. She believes the meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 17, 2023.

Dr. Regan-Lefebvre extended a Happy Rosh Hashanah to the Jewish community. She thanked the teachers and paraeducators for all they did in preparation for the Open House event recently held at Hanmer Elementary School. She also thanked PTO liaisons Mr. Carey and Mr. Reilly for spearheading BOE efforts to communicate with the elementary schools and noted Board members will also join their efforts as PTO liaisons in the schools.

Mr. Casio thanked the WPS Administration for a successful Teacher Convocation event held prior to the start of school.

Chairman Carey noted his appreciation for the Open House events he attended at Charles Wright Elementary School and WHS.

WHS Student Representative, Ryan Fazzina commented that WHS Eagle Crew met during the WHS Open House and continues to meet. A focus area in 2022-2023 school year is to develop the student body to be more involved in leadership. There were four opportunities for students to participate in school spirit and engagement. One opportunity was for Eagle Crew students to help with Open House by helping students/parents/guardians navigate through the event. He congratulated the WHS Marching Band for their performance of “Phoenix Rising” in the 23rd Annual Battle of the Bands in Rocky Hill. He noted the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation visit to WHS in November. He noted that students, teachers, staff and the Administration have worked very hard on the mission, core value statements (ability to communicate, problem solve, and collaborate), and the belief in learning, all of which complement the vision of a WHS graduate and will guide education at WHS through the next ten (10) years. He commented favorably of the WHS cafeteria’s return to pre-pandemic lunch waves and that the décor of the cafeteria positively showcases the mission and vision of WHS.

12. Proposed for Executive Session

Mr. Cascio MOVED to leave public session and enter into an Executive Session at approximately 7:31 p.m. for: **Discussion of Superintendent Goals for 2022-2023**. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Drew and VOTED unanimously.

Present for executive session:

C. Carey, J. Cascio, J. Di Roberts, A. Drew, B. Granato,
J. Regan-Lefebvre, J. Reilly; Administrators: M. Emmett

Mrs. Drew MOVED to leave executive session and re-enter public session at 8:12 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Granato and VOTED unanimously.

Dr. Regan-Lefebvre MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. The motion was SECONDED by Mrs. Di Roberts and VOTED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John F. Cascio, Vice-Chairperson – Secretary

Minutes Recorded by Ellen Goslicki, Recording Secretary