

## **WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### *MINUTES ~ SPECIAL MEETING*

Thursday, September 13, 2012 at 6:15 p.m.

Carrington School, 24 Kenmore Avenue, Waterbury, Connecticut

**PRESENT:** President Stango, Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Rodriguez, Sweeney, and Van Stone.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Harkins.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent Kathleen Ouellette, Chief Academic Officer Anne Marie Cullinan, Special Advisor to Superintendent Paul Sequeira, Chief Operating Officer & Chief of Staff Paul Guidone, Director of Personnel Ron Frost, Attorney Maurice Mosley, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

### **SILENT PRAYER**

President Stango called the special meeting to order at 6:24 p.m. with a moment of silence.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Dr. Ouellette led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### **ROLL CALL**

CLERK: Commissioner Brown.

BROWN: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner D'Amelio.

D'AMELIO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Harkins (absent). Vice President Harvey.

HARVEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Hayes.

HAYES: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Morales.

MORALES: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

RODRIGUEZ: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Van Stone.

VAN STONE: Present.

CLERK: President Stango.

STANGO: Here. Does anyone wish to address the Board this evening for matters of the Special Meeting only?

**1. COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

**1.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Hayes, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Aresta L. Johnson, Ed.D. as Instructional Leadership Director, effective immediately.**

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT: It gives me great pleasure this evening to recommend Dr. Aresta Johnson as one of our four new Instructional Leadership Directors. She was selected out of 64 applicants, she holds her Doctorate Degree at the University of Bridgeport, she comes to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge. I just want to highlight some of her accomplishments. She has provided effective instructional leadership to her school community in Bridgeport; developed a school-wide organization for optimum staff effectiveness; developed, implemented, monitored, and evaluated a long-range strategic plan which is inclusive and focused on instructional improvement; supervised and evaluated school staff to ensure optimum student achievement; supervised and evaluated administrative staff to promote instructional leadership; promoted parental, school, and community involvement; developed and implemented a comprehensive strategic plan to facilitate and improve student outcomes in science, grades K to 12; and utilized student assessment data to facilitate systemic program improvement. She left Waterbury schools in 2005 and we are so glad to have her back, and has returned to us, and she says, I quote, "give back to the community which has provided me with an excellent educational opportunity". So she's coming back to us to Waterbury. She's a progressive and innovative educational leader encompassing strong research and curricular skills to align herself with the potential to affect the educational teaching methods and learning skills exhibited by the staff and students under her tutelage. It is great pleasure that I present to you this evening Dr. Aresta Johnson.

STANGO: Is there any other discussion? Hearing none – roll call vote.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON ITEM #1.1:**

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Rodriguez, Sweeney, Van Stone, and President Stango – 9

*(applause)*

ARESTA JOHNSON: Good evening. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Board of Education for allowing me the opportunity to come back to Waterbury Public Schools where my educational journey began way back when I attended Sprague Elementary School and went to North End Middle School and graduated from Wilby High School. I am excited and I'm eager to be a part of the educational reform process which Dr. Ouellette, under her leadership, I'm excited to be back in Waterbury and excited to be able to work with the Board members, the students, the staff, and the entire Waterbury community. I thank you so much for this opportunity. Thank you.

STANGO: Thank you. Please come up and shake our hands.

**1.2 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Hayes, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Darren Schwartz as Instructional Leadership Director, effective immediately.**

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Dr. Ouellette.

SUPERINTENDENT: Thank you Mr. President. Again, it gives me great pleasure this evening to recommend to the Board of Education the approval of Mr. Darren Schwartz, second of our four new Instructional Leadership Directors. Once again, a reminder that there were 64 applicants for these positions. Mr. Schwartz comes to us with Masters in Education from the University of Connecticut and he also has a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership from the Teachers College of Columbia University. He also has a 92 Endorsement and has been the Principal of the Expeditionary Learning Academy at Moylan School, Hartford Public Schools. He also was an Intervention Resource Specialist at the Hartford Public Schools and a Principal Intern in Hartford Public Schools. Darren comes to us with, again, a wide range of experience, very impressive resume. He is an Instructional Leader for over 100 staff members and over 750 students in a redesigned neighborhood school under the Expeditionary Learning and Montessori Themes; practiced distributed leadership by employing multiple teams to use data driven decision making for school leadership, special education, school climate, operations and instruction; provided professional development and led the staff in writing literacy and math curriculums and assessments aligned with the Common Core State Standards; successfully improved the teaching and learning as evidenced by the third largest student achievement gap in the district of Hartford and an increase of 23% of students being proficient in the DRA2 from September to May; contributed to the district administration and teacher evaluation committees; he gathered and analyzed data, implemented research-based strategies, and used result indicators to inform decision making district and school improvement; designed and implemented protocols for learning walks and mini observations to provide administrators a more efficient and effective informal observation process; supported administration and teachers in underperforming schools; and directed summer school for the district in grades K through seven. He is an outstanding candidate and demonstrates the quality of excellence we are pursuing for our administrative vacancies and he's a very committed educational leader. We are truly thrilled to have him as part of our Instructional Leadership Director team. Thank you.

STANGO: Any other discussion? Roll call vote please.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON ITEM #1.2:**

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Rodriguez, Sweeney, Van Stone, and President Stango – 9

*(applause)*

SCHWARTZ: Good evening. Good evening Mayor O'Leary, Board President Stango, Vice President Harvey, Commissioners, and Superintendent Dr. Ouellette. I have no doubt that as we begin this challenging work together to reform the Waterbury Public

Schools that we will become the most prolific urban educational system in Connecticut. From my time at Teachers College at Columbia University during my tenure as a teacher, instructional coach, intervention specialist and principal during Hartford's reform movement, I've been guided by one simple yet powerful question – is this decision going to be what's best for our students? Many times the answer to that question means that we, the adults, who have been charged with the development of our youth, have to make the tough decisions and force ourselves to work harder and smarter for them. Working with underperforming school administrators as an intervention specialist and leading as a Principal of a redesigned school in Hartford, makes me firmly believe that Dr. Ouellette and the Board of Education's Reform Policy is what's best for our students in Waterbury. I look forward to being an essential member of the team to carry out your vision for the Waterbury Public Schools and at this time I'd like thank Dr. Ouellette and Chief Academic Officer Anne Marie Cullinan for their recommendation to the Board to appoint me as Instructional Leadership Director. I look forward to working collaboratively with the staff, family, students, and community of Waterbury as we educate and lead with a sense of urgency. Thank you.

*(applause)*

**1.3 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Hayes, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Shuana Tucker, Ph.D., as Talent and Professional Development Supervisor, effective immediately.**

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT: Thank you Mr. President. Again, it gives me great pleasure to recommend to the Board of Education this evening the approval of Dr. Shuana Tucker as the new Talent and Professional Development Supervisor. Dr. Tucker has a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, she has an 092 endorsement, she currently is the Director of Adult and Continuing Learning for Danbury Public Schools, has held positions including Director of Connecticut Administrative Preparation Program, Assistant Professor and Researcher and Evaluator of CommPACT schools for the University of Connecticut, and Facilitator of Strategic Alliances for the Hartford Public Schools. She also was the 2009 nominee for the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Women of Color Awards for the University of Connecticut. She's had many, many awards as you can see by her resume. She also, just to highlight, just a few more details on her resume, as she was an employee of the U. S. Department of Education, she was afforded the opportunity to be part of the Goals 2000 State and Local Reform Team, assisted in managing a 350 million dollar budget, and established policies that directly affected state and local reform efforts. In Hartford Public Schools she worked as a Facilitator of Strategic Alliances. At the University of Connecticut the NEAG School of Education which she was the Director of the Administrator Preparation Program. She recruited and employed and managed many staff in Danbury and more than . . . to service ESL students of more than 1,100 students located in a district location. She also was the Coordinator of the New Teacher Orientation and she was a member of the Superintendent's Cabinet assisting with district decisions. Shuana is an experienced administrator with more than 15 years of progressively challenging experience in educational advocacy, school reform, and a proven consensus builder and an advocate for high quality educational outcomes for all

children regardless of social status or context. It gives me great pleasure to recommend Dr. Tucker this evening.

STANGO: Thank you Superintendent. Any further discussion? Roll call vote please.

**ROLL CALL VOTE ON ITEM #1.3:**

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Rodriguez, Sweeney, Van Stone, and President Stango – 9

*(applause)*

TUCKER: Mayor O'Leary, good evening, Superintendent Ouellette and Board members. Thank you so very much for the opportunity to serve the students, the family, and the community of Waterbury. I am very excited to be here to work with all of you, be a part of the team, as you move your district forward with your new vision and strategic plan that is in place. Thank you for your vote of confidence and I look forward to working with all of you.

*(applause)*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Hayes and duly seconded by Commissioner Van Stone, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:41 p.m.**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Carrie A. Swain, Clerk  
*Board of Education*