

## **WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### *MINUTES ~ REGULAR MEETING*

Thursday, March 15, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.

Waterbury Arts Magnet School, 16 South Elm Street, Waterbury, Connecticut

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

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent Ouellette, Chief Operating Officer Paul Guidone, Attorney Maurice Mosley, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

### **1. SILENT PRAYER**

President Stango called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

STANGO: I would especially like to welcome our visitors from Parents Supporting Educational Excellence sitting over there on the side. And I also welcome the winners of the Black Jeopardy Contest here tonight. We're gonna have our prayer. After the prayer, we're gonna have the pledge led by Vernial Walker from that group of parents. But before we start our prayer Vice President Harvey would like to say something.

HARVEY: I just want to recognize the passing of Dorothy M. Moore. She worked for the City of Waterbury for 20 years as an English Teacher. She taught Walsh School and Rotella. And even after her retirement, she still continued to teach. She will be sorely missed and please keep her and her family in your prayers. Thank you.

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

Vernial Walker led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### **3. ROLL CALL**

CLERK: Commissioner Brown.

BROWN: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner D'Amelio.

D'AMELIO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt (absent). Commissioner Harkins.

HARKINS: Here.

CLERK: Vice President Harvey.

HARVEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Hayes.

HAYES: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Morales.

MORALES: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Van Stone.

VAN STONE: Here.

CLERK: President Stango.

STANGO: Here. Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt called and she's involved with her real job until later, past this meeting, so she will not be able to be here tonight.

#### **4. COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file the following communications:**

1. Copy of communication dated February 28, 2012 from Civil Service certifying Katherine Christ for the position of Human Resources Assistant – Education.
2. Copy of communication dated February 28, 2012 from Civil Service certifying Stacy Guisto for the position of Attendance Counselor.
3. Copy of communication dated February 28, 2012 from Civil Service certifying Robert Szoldra for the position of Maintainer I.
4. Copy of communication dated March 1, 2012 from Civil Service certifying Ryan Casey for the position of Maintainer 1.
5. Copy of communication dated March 1, 2012 from Civil Service certifying Karen Tessier for the position of Library Page.
6. Email communication received March 1, 2012 from John Theriault regarding CMT/CAPT test scores.
7. Copy of communications dated March 5, 2012 from Civil Service certifying Kenneth Underwood and Jack D'Alessandro for the position of Maintainer 1.
8. Copy of communication dated March 6, 2012 from Mayor O'Leary to Governor Malloy requesting Waterbury be included in his education tour stops.
9. Copy of communication dated March 6, 2012 from Civil Service certifying Veronica Rinaldi for the position of Food Service Helper.

STANGO: Motion made and seconded. Any discussion? All in favor, all opposed, motion carries.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Brown and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the Committee Meeting of February 9, 2012 and Regular Meeting of February 16, 2012.**

**6. PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD:**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:36 p.m.**

STANGO: Motion made and seconded. All speakers are encouraged to submit prepared written statements to the Commissioners. Comments shall be limited to a maximum of three minutes. There will be no responses this evening to any questions or concerns raised; they will be referred to the Administration for review and response.

**Gregory Hadley, 61 Ives Street, had the following comments:** I come before you as a WOW Community Learner Center Director and as a grandparent. At your last meeting, March 1, there was a discussion that centered around acknowledging or recognizing students. I feel that as a Board, your customers are your students and there shouldn't be a discussion or a criteria established to recognize students that have done positive things. This Board needs to be careful in the message that you send. If it's a budgetary problem, which I don't think giving out certificates should be a budgetary problem, I'd be willing to donate a case of certificates. We have to focus on the positives. This Board has several challenges before you; I don't think this should be an issue. I would not like to see a criteria. Any student that does well should get recognized. We tend to harp on the negatives but we've got to do positive things for our students. Thank you.

**Justin Normadind, WAMS student, had the following comments:** I'm having this problem with a couple of teachers, kind of, so I'm here because I feel discriminated against, because well, I'm gay, I like to wear makeup and I feel singled out and discriminated against because of the fact that I have been asked to remove it but not only that it's because they said it was a distraction and actually, in some of the cases, they said it was wrong. And this was the third time it's happened and I can't wear eyeliner because, I was told I can't wear eyeliner because I'm like in a gang or something. I don't know. They said, they didn't say you can't do this and you can't do that because you're gay but that's the thing I'm getting out. And it says Article 5, School Attire, reducing distraction and loss of self-esteem caused by teasing and competition over clothing. I understand that, but I have been wearing eyeliner in this school for three years and no one's every teased me or bullied me or I've never felt down about myself until recently when these teachers started saying this, Ms. Glass, she's one involved. The first time this has happened she said that it was offensive to her and that anything offensive to her was not dress code. I actually found that to be very offensive and she said that what I was doing was wrong because she asked me, she said "why do you do this" and I said it makes me, I feel good about it, I didn't say that but I didn't exactly know what to say and I just don't understand why I have to take it off because of, and then, she was saying it was a distraction the third time but with all the gauges

and the multiple colored hair and just all this other stuff and it makes absolutely no sense and I'm being singled out because when I went to her, when she called me up the third time because I got written up for not taking it off...

**Katrina Dupont, Waterbury Arts Magnet School student, had the following**

**comments:** First, it's the same thing as Justin was saying about the makeup. We got over 400 signatures in favor for helping him to feel, to be treated equally. They're from Waterbury Magnet School and mainly Region 15. We found articles online from Rants, Thoughts, and Other Things saying, it says a high school principal has suspended four teenage boys for violating the dress code by wearing eyeliner. Eyeliner on males is a symbol of gangs, violence, and drug use.

**Raeann Byk, Waterbury Arts Magnet School Student, had the following**

**comments:** Justin is not involved in any gangs or violence or drug use and he just wears eyeliner to express himself.

DUPONT: Which is hard to do in this school because of the dress code. So it's one of the multiple ways we can address ourselves. Again with the hair and...

BYK: The dress code does not say anywhere that guys cannot wear eyeliner and teachers are specifically singling Justin out just because he's a guy wearing eyeliner. Here, and another girl Tia, they wore the same eyeliner the next day and they got nothing said to them for it. Just because they aren't guys, they're females. And the guidance counselor said to him that it wouldn't matter if he was a guy or a girl, either way he would get in trouble for wearing that much eyeliner. But they wore more than him and they didn't get in trouble at all.

**State Representative Larry Butler, 70 Blackman Road, had the following**

**comments:** Good evening Superintendent Ouellette, President Stango, Vice President Harvey, and honorable members of the Board of Education. I am the State Representative in the 72<sup>nd</sup> District here in Waterbury and I am here in that capacity to inform you about a Bill that I have pending in front of the General Assembly and it's an An Act Concerning the Eminent Domain process and the acquisition process of property, it's House Bill 5454. And it pretty much addresses the situation that we saw up on Birch Street where their property was taken for the new Waterbury Career Academy and the process as it stands now in statute, says that the State requires you to get two independent appraisals and the city municipality must make the offer of the average of the two appraisals to people for their property. And in this distressed housing market it had really bad repercussions for the residents up on Birch Street. In the past that formula would usually yield the dollar amount above what your house is assessed for taxes. In this case up on Birch Street, it yielded an offer much less in the case of the Thompson Family, \$28,000 less than what the City asked them to pay taxes on. My Bill that's in front of the Planning and Development Committee, which is gonna be heard at a public hearing tomorrow, will simply state that for the formula, when it's used, that if it yields an amount less than the amount that's assessed for tax purposes, that the municipality will make them an offer equal to the amount that the city expects them to pay taxes on. That's simply what the bill says – no more, no less. So I'm here tonight asking you to sign on a letter of support because it's gonna be, nothings cut and dry at the State and all the support I can get up there to help this pass will be appreciated. I have quite a few Aldermen that have already signed on and some Board

of Education members that have signed on and the Mayor himself. I'm going to just pass this letter of support around to the rest of you Commissioners and hopefully you'll sign on and tomorrow I'll present this to the Committee on Planning and Development and ask them to actually pass this Bill, so that in the future when you acquire a property that residents won't suffer the same fate as those on Birch Street and we know you're looking to build another school soon in the East End, so let's do something now before it happens again in the East End. Let's save the future residents in the East End. I know the plan right now doesn't call for taking property around residential property but that may change tomorrow. So I ask for your support. I'm gonna pass this around. I will pass it at one end and collect it on another end. I appreciate this time to speak and your support. Thank you.

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Hayes and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 6:49 p.m.**

STANGO: Motion has been moved and seconded. All in favor, opposed. We're back to the regular order of business, item number seven, Superintendent's Report, followed by the Board Recognition. Superintendent.

#### **7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT/BOARD RECOGNITION:**

SUPERINTENDENT: Actually, Mr. President, I'd like to reverse that order this evening and I would like to give great recognition to this Waterbury Board of Education. March has been designated as the Connecticut Board of Education Member Recognition Month and this gives me an opportunity to officially thank all of you, our Board of Education Commissioners, for all the work you do on behalf of our Waterbury Public School students. To each of you I say thank you for your dedication and commitment to the children of this wonderful school district. Those listening at home may not realize but serving on the Board requires a large time commitment, not only for the time spent during our weekly Board of Education meetings or workshops, but also the time spent reviewing information prior to meetings or participating in all the community education related functions and so on. And as a token of my esteem, I would like each of you to accept this small gift of appreciation in celebration of Connecticut Board of Education Member Recognition Month, it's there for you. I urge everyone to join me in recognizing the dedication and hard work of our local Board of Education Commissioners in preparing today's students for future success. So let's give them a nice round of applause.

STANGO: Thank you for that Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT: And with that I think I'll move over to the awards if I might, could I keep with the theme of awards and turn it over to Vice President Harvey.

#### **8. AWARD PRESENTATION**

HARVEY: Okay, as Dr. Ouellette and President Stango move over to the podium, on February 28 we had a Black History Jeopardy Contest and I believe we had six teams and it was, required a tremendous amount of study on the part of the students and the

team that won was the team representing Zion Baptist Church and at this point, I would like to call up Destiny Hofler, Kenneth Hofler, Jr., Sierra Kee. This Black History Jeopardy Contest was sponsored by Granville Academy and the YMCA. So in addition to their winning, they won a trophy and also a year membership to the YMCA. So we want to thank you and we want to recognize your achievement. We appreciate your coming down and keep going. Let's do a repeat next year. Again, give them a big hand please.

**SUPERINTENDENT:** And just some formal remarks for you. As the Superintendent of the Waterbury Public Schools, I am very pleased to congratulate the six teams that participated in the Third Annual Granville Academy/YMCA Jeopardy Contest that was held at the Mattatuck Museum and just wanted to state by competing in this challenge you have demonstrated a thorough knowledge of black history, especially local black history. You studied the lives of famous figures in Waterbury such as Reverend John Reed, Dr. William Evans, and Bena Dean. You have heard, learned how they contributed to the community and, hopefully, you were inspired by their lives to study hard, go to college, and perhaps return to your home town to make similar contributions be it a teacher, principal, superintendent, one of those. I'd especially like to recognize as Vice President Harvey has recognized, the winning three-person team of Zion Baptist Church – Destiny Hofler, Kenneth Hofler, and Sierra Kee. You truly are great examples for your classmates to follow. Congratulations to all of you.

**HARVEY:** At this time I'm going to ask Ms. Michele Saunders to come up and address the Board. Michelle, you can give the background of this letter that you are about to read.

**MICHELE SAUNDERS:** Good evening everyone. This is an essay that I was asked to write for my English class this year. It was an essay that was assigned and you were given the opportunity to write about anything that was important to you and something that you would like people to know. So I decided to write about education and the importance that it plays in the lives of the children in our communities. And it reads as follows: Dear Community, many children living in our community, more so our minority children, are failing to understand the importance of planning to attend college or even recognizing that they have this as an option. They are failing to realize this due to the way society, social networks, and television has filled their heads with false truths. This has severely altered their sense of reality, moral values, and the value of education in their lives. If I could share something with these young people, I would want to let them know that education is the key that unlocks doors to new opportunities. Education is the way out of any situation, no matter the intensity, and a college degree will take you much farther than a fly jump shot or a hot single. We, as a community, need to instill these things in our children. Education is the key that unlocks doors for new opportunities. If we want to go places and do things we've never done before, this is the way to get there. In the society that we live in it is impossible to be successful with a high school diploma or with a GED. If you plan to be a viable citizen and live a somewhat stress free life, a college degree will be necessary. And while you are in college, it is up to you to broaden your horizons and make new friends. So put online social networking aside and get together with some people that have the same goals to better themselves as you do. And upon meeting these new people, network, and once you have a college degree you can begin to open doors of opportunity for each other. For example, if you have a friend who was a business major and you are an accountant

major, you might be able to help that friend with some financial decisions regarding their business. It's all about getting out there and obtaining as many keys as possible to open as many doors as your heart desires. Then you may be able to reach your hand back to the community from once you came and be able to open doors of opportunity for the people there. There's an old African proverb that says "it takes a village to raise a child" and you can help take part in this once you have your keys to success. Not only is education the key to success, but for some of our young people it's the way out of an unfavorable situation. Whether it be they come from a single parent home or maybe don't have parents at all because they've lost them to death or drugs, maybe they come from an abusive home or it could be that life is fine, but they would like to change their situation and do a little better than their parents have done. And they realize that the way to do this is education. Many minority children can relate to the poet Langston Hughes who once said "life for me ain't been no crystal stair", which means life for them has not been easy, whether it be their home life, school, or the chains of oppression placed upon them by society at a very young age.

According to statistics, by the time a Black male is in the third grade, based on his reading test scores, the government begins to calculate the number of jail cells they will need to build for that generation of Black males. Third grade – enough is enough, it's time for our children to have the crystal stair that they are very much entitled to and the way they are going to get this is by us instilling in them that education is the way out of a bad situation and to break the chains and cycles of oppression is to educate themselves. And while they are spending time at home watching TV and writing song lyrics, they need to be focusing on homework. The way to get out is to educate yourself. While you are educating yourself you'll find things far more interesting than what's on Drake's new album or who's on this season of Basketball Wives. We need to get our youth out of this mentality and teach them to think outside of the box. There's nothing wrong with loving music and sports, I'm a fan of these things myself, but what I do understand is that my music will never take me any further than my room where I play it and I can guarantee you by owning the team you will make more money than playing on it. For example, if they love to write music and they love writing poetry, teach them to be English and Journalism majors. These are the things that we need to instill in our children. We also need to tell them that if you can be on time for practice, you need to be on time for class. And if you know all the lyrics to the latest Mac Miller song, then know your school work just as well. The world is vastly changing and different topics are trending, hot fashions rise and fall, but the one thing that remains the same is the power that education possesses to change children's lives. The youth of today are in desperate need to understand the value of education and of attending college and the importance that it will play in their lives. The time for change is now. It's time for parents and leaders to stand strong and fulfill their God-given duties to do what he has entrusted them with to do with their children. I would encourage all that come across this essay, whether it be a youth spoken of or a parent to continue to enforce that education is the key to success that unlocks doors of opportunity. It is the way out of any situation no matter the intensity thereof and when it's all said and done, those who choose education over landing a record deal or being drafted to the NBA will be the last one standing.

I'd like to close with a quote from one of my favorite educators W. E. B. Du Bois; it says "to stimulate wildy weak and untrained minds is to play with mighty fires". Thank you.

HARVEY: Michelle, will you let us know what school you come from and the year.

SAUNDERS: I am sophomore here at the Waterbury Arts Magnet School.

HARVEY: Can we also have the winners of the Black History Jeopardy Contest come and tell us what school you represent, just so the Commissioners know that you attend school here.

DESTINY HOFER: I attend Kennedy High School where I am a junior in the SOAR Program.

SIERRA KEE: I represent Gilmartin and I am in seventh grade.

KENNETH HOFER: I represent Kennedy High School and I'm a sophomore.

STANGO: Thank you very much. Superintendent, now you have to top that.

SUPERINTENDENT: There's no way. I'm not even gonna attempt to compete with that.

*Dr. Ouellette read and distributed the following report:*

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education has offered members a number of webinars and other learning opportunities on Governor Malloy's proposed education reforms. In conjunction with a webinar on Senate Bill #24, CABA released a summary of its positions on the most important aspects of the proposal. (attached). The coalition of educators and businessmen who assisted in developing education reform strategies has released an information packet entitled "Senate Bill 24: Myths and Facts." It outlines the top myths that have been circulating among educators and the general public about the education reform bill and explains what is actually contained in the bill. (attached).

At Board members' request, Mayor O'Leary sent an invitation to Governor Malloy to conduct a town hall meeting on Education Reform issues in Waterbury. Today we received an announcement from the Governor's office scheduling the meeting of the Governor's Education Reform Tour next Tuesday, March 20, at Walsh School. The meeting with the Governor is scheduled from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. with doors opening at 6:15. This will be the eighth such meeting of the Governor's tour which will provide an opportunity for a conversation on proposed reforms to improve the State's public school system for parents, students, teachers, and other concerned residents.

Yesterday was CABA's annual Day on the Hill. The event drew a large crowd to the Capitol. Governor Malloy attended the morning session to speak about his proposed education reforms, as well as other legislators - Representatives Andy Fleishmann and Representative Larry Cafero. We were very proud to have 77 students from Waterbury Public Schools attend. They afforded a firsthand experience of democracy at its best. Congressman Chris Murphy's legislative aide and Education Policy Advisor Linda Forman led an hour long discussion on ways to reform No Child Left Behind last Tuesday. Although attendance was light, those present had a good opportunity to share their ideas on how this controversial piece of legislation should be reformed. Ms. Forman has been conducting similar discussions in other Fifth District towns, and she will be sharing the results of these forums with Congressman Murphy.



The Ray Allen (Boston Celtics) Foundation chose the Crosby High School Boys Basketball Team to be treated to a game at the TD Bank Center (Toronto-Dominon Bank- Boston Garden). Ray Allen sent tickets for the Varsity and Junior Varsity team members and three coaches. He also paid for a coach bus to pick up everyone at Crosby for the trip to Boston. Crosby Coach Nick Augelli reports that it was a great game, and the Celtics won in overtime. After the game, the Crosby students were invited to a room next to the locker room, where Ray Allen joined them. He spoke to the team and answered questions for about an hour. Everyone on the team acted like young gentlemen and were shining examples and representatives of Crosby High School and Waterbury Public Schools.

Wilby High School's basketball team has played very well in post season games. They advanced to the Class L semifinals match this Tuesday, but lost in an extremely close game to New Haven's Career Magnet High School, 64-63. Our compliments to Wilby for a successful season.

The Crosby High School Mock Trial team will be representing the City of Waterbury in the state finals of the Connecticut Mock Trial Competition on Wednesday, March 21st at 2 p.m. at the Superior Court in Hartford. This competition was previously scheduled for February 29; however, it was cancelled due to the snow storm that day. Crosby's Prosecution won over Valley Regional High School from Region 4, Deep River and Crosby's Defense defeated a team from South Windsor to advance. These students dedicated many hours of practice at night and weekends with teacher advisor Donna Mancuso and Attorney Cliff Comerford from Tynan and Iannone in Wolcott. Respectfully submitted. I'll take any questions you may have this evening.

STANGO: Are there any questions for the Superintendent?

## **9. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:**

STANGO: Moving on to my brief report. I'm just echoing the Superintendent's Report on CAFE Day on the Hill at the State Capitol in Hartford. I'm sure Commissioner Sweeney will comment further later. The students had an enjoyable and educational experience. To me any time we can combine enjoyable and education together it's a win for education and it's a win, win for the kids. We heard the Governor speak about his reform goals for education in Connecticut. The thing that stayed with me the most was his sense of urgency to make those changes. We cannot wait any longer he said. I tend to agree. We will all begin this crucial journey together but first we will proceed with thought and care. Now for the Consent Calendar.

*President Stango proceeded to read the list of Consent Calendar items.*

## **10. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar, Items 10.1 through 10.12, as listed:**

- 10.1 With the approval of the Committee on Finance, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of a Professional Services Agreement with Campion Ambulance Service, Inc. to provide ambulance service at high school football games for the period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2015.
- 10.2 With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to apply for the 2012 ING Run for Something Better grant.
- 10.3 With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to apply for the 2012 United States Tennis Association (USTA) New England grant.
- 10.4 With the approval of the Committee on Schoolhouses, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the attached Emergency Access Easement across the Wilby High School Property, as submitted by James Sequin, City Planner.
- 10.5 With the approval of the Committee on School Personnel, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the job specifications for, and new position of, Music/Theater Chairperson for Waterbury Arts Magnet School.
- 10.6 With the approval of the Committee on Building, the Superintendent of Schools recommends acceptance of the Crosby High School Asbestos Abatement Project, State Project #151-277 CV, as complete.
- 10.7 With the approval of the Committee on Building, the Superintendent of Schools recommends acceptance of the Barnard School Asbestos Abatement Project, State Project #151-280 CV, as complete.
- 10.8 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the 2012-2013 Facility Use Fee Schedule, as attached.
- 10.9 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the use of school facilities by school organizations and/or City departments, as listed.
- 10.10 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the use of school facilities by outside organizations and/or waiver requests, as listed.
- 10.11 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to C. Fann-Pierce, KHS, and seven chaperones to take 20 students to Charleston, SC from May 16 through 20, 2012 to participate in H.O.P.E. (Helping Out People Everywhere) Community Service Club.
- 10.12 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Mildred Martinez, KHS, and four chaperones to take 50 students to New York, NY to visit the Museum of Jewish Heritage & Bodies Exhibition.

STANGO: I didn't ask if anybody wanted anything removed from the Consent Calendar. Does anyone wish to have anything removed? Discussion? All in favor, all opposed.

### **11. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT**

*There were no items removed from the Consent Calendar.*

### **12. COMMITTEE ON GRIEVANCES**

#### **Item # 12.1**

SWEENEY: Ladies and gentlemen, the Committee on Grievances recommends WTA grievance 11-12-09, heard by the Committee on March 5, 2012, be denied. The Board established the Literacy Academy, pursuant to Management Rights, Article 22, Section 2 of the current collective bargaining agreement, and will continue the programs through the end of the 2011-12 school year. The Board will, during this time, arrange with the Connecticut State Department of Education for an independent audit of the Literacy Academies. **SO MOVED.**

HARVEY: **Second.**

STANGO: Moved and seconded. Any discussion? Commissioner Brown.

BROWN: Through the Chair. At this point how many schools have Literacy Academies?

SWEENEY: It's seven or eight.

GUIDONE: I heard seven, eight or nine. I think nine is the actual number, certainly in that range.

BROWN: They've been in existence for two or three years. Is that correct?

SWEENEY: No, Wendell Cross was the first roll out for a year followed by the addition of the additional six or seven last year.

BROWN: Thank you. I guess my question is is this, this procedure of asking the State to come in and evaluate our programs a precedent? Do we always do this? What is our current way to evaluate these programs?

SWEENEY: The evaluation was to address the concerns that have come from the academies that we have heard from, in particular the WTA, that were not addressed, we believe, under the contract but we felt that there was enough concern there that we needed to have some kind of a study done, some kind of a look at and the recommendation was that we go with an outside look at the academies.

BROWN: Okay, thank you.

SUPERINTENDENT: And let me just clarify. I believe that's a third party audit, it won't be from the State Department of Ed.

SWEENEY: Would you prefer we amended the language to say a third party?

SUPERINTENDENT: I believe the State is involved with that and they will not be conducting the audit, I don't want to give that impression, but they have usually used a third party audit for other issues concerning programs within the State, New London, and that was the recommendation as, when we work very closely with the State with our Cali work, our consultant, that was the recommendation that they gave.

GUIDONE: I think the third party phraseology encompasses what described . . . clarify that as part of the motion.

STANGO: Commissioner Hayes.

HAYES: Just through the Chair for those who might not be aware, Wendell Cross has been in place for almost four years now. It was set up as a pilot and what we saw after a couple of years of auditing it that it was successful and in light of the fact that the Vice President of the union, at the time, was one of the Literacy teachers at Wendell Cross, and we hadn't heard any complaints in three years, we thought it would be okay. But apparently in the rolling out to the other schools is where there's been some concern on how it was done. When I spoke to the Superintendent about it, she did tell me that the State was going to do that and that's probably the best thing for us to have someone from the outside come in and audit it. It's just something that I wasn't expecting to happen because we had been so successful at Wendell Cross and we didn't expect to have that. But I guess anytime you're trying something new it's probably got to be a little bit different for every school and that's probably what we're learning going through this process.

STANGO: Any other questions?

SWEENEY: Just for clarification, the final sentence of the motion will not read "the Board will, during this time, arrange with the Connecticut State Department of Education for a third-party audit of the Literacy Academies".

SUPERINTENDENT: Independent audit in collaboration with the State Department of Education.

SWEENEY: An independent third party audit.

STANGO: All in favor, opposed.

HAYES: No.

STANGO: Abstentions? Eight in favor, one opposed.

**12.2 Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Van Stone, with Commissioner Hayes voting "no", it was voted that WTA grievance 11-12-15, heard by the Committee on March 5,**

**2012, be denied. The Board established the Literacy Academy, pursuant to Management Rights, Article 22, Section 2 of the current collective bargaining agreement, and will continue the programs through the end of the 2011-12 school year. The Board will, during this time, arrange with the Connecticut State Department of Education for an independent third-party audit of the Literacy Academies.**

STANGO: Moved and seconded. Any discussion? Commissioner Hayes.

HAYES: Maybe under discussion, maybe clarify what my position was. When we got this put in place, it was done properly, and others were rolled in and it wasn't done properly, I feel we should assume some of that responsibility for that. Teachers have a right to pose some questions and since, in fact, they weren't done all the same, I just thought we've got to make sure that we take some responsibility for this. It was rolled out probably too quickly, wasn't done as thoroughly as it should have been done, and that's the reason. I just don't want to have these problems keep coming to us because they weren't handled properly by the administration.

STANGO: Any further discussion? All in favor, opposed.

HAYES: No.

STANGO: Abstentions? Eight in favor, one opposed. Motion carries.

### **13. SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Brown, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file items 13.1 through 13.4, Superintendent's Notification to the Board, as listed:**

13.1 Athletic appointments:

Stabile, Sarah – Assistant Cheerleading Coach, CHS, effective 01/18/12.

13.2 Grant funded appointments effective immediately:

Agati, Rosemary – Elementary Instructional Tutor, 10 months, 18 hours p/week  
@ \$31.00 per hour, no benefits.

Bala, Elona – 21<sup>st</sup> Century After School Learning Center Grant (replacing Maria Jimenez), Washington School.

Leonard, Cynthia – Secretary II, Human Resources Office, union position with salary and benefits according to the SEIU Agreement.

Mucciario, Ashley – Elementary Instructional Tutor, 10 months, 18 hours p/week  
@ \$31.00 per hour, no benefits.

Pace, Maura – Elementary Instructional Tutor, 10 months, 18 hours p/week  
@ \$31.00 per hour, no benefits.

White, Melissa – 21<sup>st</sup> Century After School Learning Center Grant, Washington School.

13.3 Teacher new hires:

Tedeschi, Shontel – Center Based Learning, Duggan School, MA+15/1, eff. 03/19/12.

13.4 Retirements:

Battistrada, Theresa – Gilmartin grade 3, effective 06/30/12.  
Calabro, Marita – CHS Family & Consumer Science, effective 06/30/12.  
Hurdle, James W. – NEMS Science, effective 06/30/12.  
Lattanzio, Joan – Sprague grade 4, effective 06/30/12.  
LaVallee, William – WAMS Art, change in effective date to 09/30/12.  
Minervino, Judith – Carrington grade 2, effective 06/30/12.  
Rutkowsky, Karen – Generali/W. Cross Social Worker, effective 06/30/12.  
West, Sharon H. – Driggs Math Coach, effective 06/30/12.

STANGO: Any discussion? All in favor, opposed, motion carries. Item #14, Unfinished Business of the Preceding Meeting Only. Vice President Harvey.

HARVEY: This was mentioned at the previous meeting so I'm gonna bring it up now. And it's in regards to recognizing students. I first want to thank Alderman Hadley for speaking on this and the reason why I'm bringing it up is because it has been discussed, so to speak, in the community. And first of all, it felt really good to present our students, to acknowledge their achievement. My view on this is any opportunity that the Board of Education gets, they should recognize our students. It should not matter if the students compete, if whoever is presenting the competition, if the organization is "outside or inside". The point should be that they are our students. As the Commissioners hear, the students that won the Black History Jeopardy Contest are students here in this district. We should lead the way. Now whether or not, I heard a comment about well, it shouldn't be the decision of one Commissioner. Our bylaws are silent to the fact, number one. Number two, I would think that that would be, I could recall being a high school student, I won an oratorical contest, I was called down to receive recognition, some "x" amount of years ago, and didn't matter that the oratorical contest was given by the Elks Club, it simply mattered that I won. So I think we're losing focus. It doesn't cost money to present these certificates; it's just simply recognizing our students. If I'm not mistaken, PBIS says to recognize students for positive behavior – this is what we're doing. And the Board of Education should lead the way; we Commissioners should lead the way. So anyone, any Commissioner, if you deem it necessary to recognize a student, please do so, I don't want to be the only one that's doing it. If you see something that students should be recognized for, we had some students that went on the Hill; they should be recognized for their achievement. We had Ms. Saunders state that it takes a village, now with school reform we're in a partnership, whether or not it's the YMCA, whether or not its Granville Academy, whether or not it's a church, the Mayor recognized Ms. Carr for winning an oratorical contest, I'm sure when he came down here, made a special trip down to address us and he mentioned that Ms. Carr won that oratorical contest, it didn't matter that it was an "outside", someone from the outside. So I think we need to focus on it takes a village, we're in a partnership with the community, with the parents, with anyone that wants to hold a contest and recognize our students when they win. So let us not lose sight of that. We were supposed to have a discussion, I thought this would be on our agenda for the workshop and it wasn't, so this is why I'm mentioning it and Alderman Hadley was here to also talk about it. So this is why I'm bringing it up. Thank you.

STANGO: Any other discussion?

HARKINS: Just a brief comment, through the Chair, regarding that point. I certainly agree with Vice President Harvey but I think that the comments here have gotten so overblown as far as making the Board sound like anyone on the Board is opposed to awarding the students. I don't think that's the case and if it is, correct me. I think the original discussion, and I wasn't involved in it, had to do with procedure, and it was purely sort of an internal procedure matter and now it's out here in this public forum making it look like there's a bunch of people sitting here who are against recognizing our own students which is simply not the case. So just to make that clarification.

STANGO: Any other discussion? Commissioner Hayes.

HAYES: I'd just like to add, it shouldn't just be a meeting where a Board member goes to, hopefully some of these organizations will report back to us when they have some of these things because if one of us can't make it and some kids do very well we should still figure out a way if we're gonna honor them as well. I just don't think the criteria should be whether or not a Board of Education member was at that particular event. Maybe we can get some reporting back. That's one of the things we're supposed to be doing when we go out to our schools and, hopefully, that's what some of the administrators are doing there, if any of their students receive anything, they should be bringing them to those Workshop meetings so we can have more of a discussion with them as opposed to what we have here. There's a lot of kids doing so many good things and it shouldn't be required that a Board of Ed member be at the meeting for them to get one. But, certainly, just because a Board of Ed member was there, shouldn't be a reason for not having an award either.

STANGO: Any other discussion? I'd like to say that we are gonna put this on the agenda for a future Workshop. I thought it best not to be on an agenda before these awards were presented so that it would not in any way infringe upon these particular awards at this time. I realize that we do need a procedure and we will look at a procedure that's fair and equitable for everyone. We need a clearing house, someone that will clear all these, and I hope that there are many, awards to be presented.

HAYES: I believe that we have someone that could handle that for us, our public relations person, I know she's supposed to get those reports, maybe she can be the one they can send the information to, Nancy Vaughn. Maybe they should send any recommendations to her and then she can put them all together for us because she's our community relations person and that would be someone that would be the point person, I think, as opposed to maybe putting it all on the Clerk.

STANGO: That would be a start, certainly we need a process and there will be one. Okay item 15, Other Unfinished, New, and Miscellaneous Business. Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: I will echo Dr. Ouellette's and President Stango's assessment of yesterday, it was a great day. I think almost Waterbury students owned the Capitol yesterday. They were in many places, we split them up, there were 71 students – they came from Wilby, Crosby, Kennedy, WAMS, and Enlightenment. We split them up into groups; some of them sat in and heard the full CUBE presentation. We had some students who met with Representative Berger. We had some students who met with Senator Markley. We had some students who sat in on some hearings, one of them

being the death penalty hearing which ended up being the buzz of the day, the kids were quite enthralled with the process with the ability to hear both sides of an issue. Some of them sat in on the Education Committee meeting. They all got a tour of the Capitol. They had lunch, thanks to Representative Berger and his assistant Dawn Marzik, they set up a cafeteria in the Hall of Flags for them, they all had their lunch in the Hall of Flags. I would like to especially thank the chaperones – Wilby/David Vecca, Kennedy/Pete McCasland and Carlin Thompson, WAMS/Michael Ieronimo, from Enlightenment/Dana Altomari, Melissa Levesque, Crosby/Mrs. Cafasso. I want to thank Paul Guidone and Jeff Hunter for arranging all the transportation. Mike Harris – without Mike Harris this doesn't come off, his Assistant Lynn Maia who helped to make all the luncheon arrangements with the cafeteria and with Representative Berger's office. Of course Jeff Berger, Dawn Marzik, Senator Joe Markley and his Assistant Pam Salamone. We could not have pulled this off without all the help of all of these people. I want to thank Dr. Ouellette for being there, for interacting with the students throughout the day. I think they greatly appreciated seeing their Superintendent there, that was a wonderful thing to see. So I just want to, again, say what a wonderful day it was. I do want to mention just before we got off the bus, our bus driver turned to us and remarked to Commissioner Stango and myself that his job is to drive for another district but whenever he gets the opportunity to drive for Waterbury whether as a fill-in or for field trips, that he finds Waterbury students, and these are his words, extremely respectful of themselves, of him, and of their property. And I thought that was just an amazingly wonderful thing to hear about our students. They are wonderful kids, they had a great time yesterday, we couldn't have asked for a better group of students, they were wonderful.

STANGO: Thank you Commissioner Sweeney, I concur with everything that you have said. Excellent report. Any others? Commissioner Van Stone.

VAN STONE: Thank you Mr. President. Yesterday I also had the opportunity to interact with some of our students; I was up at my second home, Chase School. This time they actually let me in the building so that was a nice change of pace. The Reading Department up there has, for the past few weeks, done a program along with part of the Literacy Academy getting children to read prior to the CMT's and continuing on a Dr. Seuss theme. Each of these classrooms had a contest of helping decorate their door, and I was honored to go up there and had the opportunity to be a judge, along with Ms. Marold who is still in the back there, and some of their staff. I just wanted to report that the kids all did a fantastic job. The creativity that was shown from the kindergarten up through the fifth grade was fantastic. The reading staff, Ms. Maffa, who is relatively new to that school and Ms. Lucian, did a nice job kind of implementing that program. It was the buzz, once the kids saw us in there as the judges, which is something apparently they've been talking about for a couple of weeks, when the judges were coming to make this happen, it was the buzz of the school and it was nice to be a part of that. I thought one of the important things is not only were the doors decorated in a way that was artistic and creative, each of the doors had a metric of how many books they were reading and the creativity they used even creating those metrics to show how many books they've read from the beginning of this program has been fantastic. I think they're about three weeks in and I think the school is now just north of 1,600 books read, I believe. They're doing a fantastic job and it was my pleasure to be up there yesterday for an hour or so.



STANGO: Thank you Commissioner Van Stone, very good. Commissioner Brown.

BROWN: I guess it was the week and month of reading. I just wanted to commend our Early Childhood Department and Kris Keidel for putting together just a wonderful event last Friday night at Barnes and Nobles and thank you to Barnes and Nobles for such a wonderful opportunity for the community to participate in a read-a-thon. Mayor O'Leary read, I had the opportunity to read. I think Superintendent was there and Dr. Sequeira, and many others. It was a great event and the children were just outstanding. It's just wonderful to see such a diverse community involved with this wonderful initiative around reading. So again thanks to our Early Childhood Department for launching that.

And just secondly in our packet we had the report of our review of the Food Service Department and I have to say publically that I was so impressed with the review and the outstanding review that it got and the idea that all of our schools and our Food Service Department are really promoting healthy eating and really making food choices for our students and learning all kinds of things. And they actually encouraged the Waterbury School Department to go after a Federal grant. So kudos to the Food Service Department and the administration for encouraging that kind of revolution in our food services. I just wanted to speak out to them.

STANGO: Thank you Commissioner Brown. Vice President Harvey.

HARVEY: While we're recognizing folks, I forgot to mention and thank Bunker Hill Grammar School. I attended their Black History Program. The kids worked very hard on their projects, they had posters of different African-Americans and their history and I was just really pleased with what I saw so I want to thank them and acknowledge them.

Next, on March 2, it was a Friday; we had a nurse save a child's life at Walsh School. From what I understand, when she arrived in the cafeteria the young student, his body was limp. So she literally brought him back to life. Apparently there was candy that was lodged in his throat, she immediately, she ran in, removed the student from the other students and did the Heimlich Maneuver. Unfortunately, I'm sure it painful, but the candy went that way instead of out that way. So either way it was dislodged from his throat. And we did, Commissioners, if you saw a letter in your packet, we did thank the nurse for her work and we're appreciative because we can only imagine what would have happened had the reverse happened and we lost that child. So I want to thank her for that.

But in addition, I think it's a wake-up call for this district to make sure our staff, all our staff are trained in this maneuver and CPR, etc. So I'm just gonna throw that out, Dr. Ouellette, that's probably something that we should invest in shortly.

SUPERINTENDENT: Upon my arrival in November, we had all our lunch aides in Manchester trained in the Heimlich, and I had recommended that and have recommended that all our aides are trained in that and that was a yearly PD that we provided in Manchester and I expect the same in Waterbury.

HARVEY: And lastly, just briefly, there were some comments made at our Workshop regarding parents and I just want you to know that I'm not giving up on the parents. We have to do all that we can in this district to increase parental involvement. If we

introduce a program and it's not working here, just because it's working someplace else does not necessarily mean it's gonna work here in this district. So that means that we have to continue on to improve parental involvement. So I just want to say to the parents, I'm not giving up on you, if we have to come, and I suggest that we do, if we can't get the parents to come here, to come to these meetings, then maybe we should go out to the community where it's easier for them. So I just want to make that statement. Thank you.

STANGO: Commissioner Van Stone then Commissioner Hayes.

VAN STONE: Just to follow up on that, I didn't take the comments last week to mean we were giving up on any parents, I actually thought it was a challenge to parents that we expect them to be in their children's lives, we expect them to be part of their children's education, and I think that could only be a good thing. As a parent myself I know the amount of time I spend helping in homework is more than I do, well I won't say more than I work because it will get me in trouble but the amount of hours spent at the kitchen table after the school day are intense and I think as much as we put pressures on our teachers and our administrators, this is a partnership, I would agree with that Vice President Harvey, but I heard comments last week not to say we were absolving them of anything or giving up on them, I think it's actually a challenge that we need them to meet us half way. And I think if we want any of our children to succeed, regardless of race, religion, creed, or background, we need to have that partnership. To go back to it takes a village mentality, the parents are a big part of that village and if we want our kids to thrive we're gonna need that partnership to be in affect coming both ways. And that's how I took the comments last week. If I'm wrong, someone could feel free to correct me.

HAYES: I think Commissioner Van Stone got what I was talking about. You know what, I bet if we look at these kids they got parents that are involved in their lives, we don't have to challenge those parents, they know what they need to do. We keep raising expectations for our students, if we don't raise them for our parents, if we got to provide extra babysitting, try to get them in, they sign up to be there for four days whether the program works someplace else or doesn't work here, so many of our programs don't work because the parents are not expected to do what they're supposed to do. We make excuses for parents all the time and when the kids see that it just passes right along. There's no excuses with these kids, I'm sure they do what they have to do, there's no excuses, their parents are there supporting them and that's what's gonna help us turn it around, not continue to try to find every program we can to see whether we can give them a door prize to get them to a meeting. Really it's not getting them to a meeting, what we need is a program similar to the one we had where it's actually working with the parents so they can work with their kids at home. We don't need them to come to a meeting, we don't need them to sell cupcakes, we need them to be able to work with their students at home and help them when they come from school and be a part of that. That was just something that when I first got involved with the PTA just a fact that you're showing an interest in those kids, they did better. And I think we had too many kids that are not being parented the way they should be parented and unless we acknowledge that and start challenging them as Commissioner Van Stone put it, things aren't gonna get better. We can have all the reform we want, it starts at home and we need to encourage those and challenge them and reward those as well. I think these parents deserve an award as well. I wish they would recognize the parents,

I was going to do that before we got into this part, but I would like the parents and guardians that are here to please stand up, and any of the parents that help us out, please stand up. (*applause*) You've done a great job with your kids, thank you; they really help our school system. That's about all. We got to start figuring out things, again we set up a program and say we need the parents to be there Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, whatever, and we'll provide transportation, we'll provide childcare, and no more excuses and then expect them to show up. I don't think that's a lot to expect.

STANGO: Thank you President Hayes. Commissioner Brown.

BROWN: Just something I'd like to put on the agenda for a future workshop is the whole kindergarten registration process in the City of Waterbury. I'm serving as the Co-chair of the School Readiness Council right now and hearing from parents and child day care centers that the hours are just not conducive in terms of the way it's set up right now. And I just thought it would be worth us to look at it to see how it's working. Right now you can only sign up, you have to go to the Intake Center on Jefferson Square. The hours are 8:00 to 3:00, 8:15 to 3:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday. There doesn't seem to be any weekends or evenings. I just think it's something we really need to look at. Is it convenient for people and there's certain days they have to be there, certain schools on certain days. People are very busy and I heard that this was getting very difficult for families so I would just like us to review it, maybe it's working and maybe there's some tweaks we can look at. I just thought I'd share that with the Board that some families are finding that a difficult process.

STANGO: Thank you Commissioner Brown, good point. Any other discussion?  
Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: I want to thank the fourth grade students at Hopeville. I had the opportunity to read for Dr. Seuss Day and it was my pleasure to find at my spot tonight this very nice card of thank you signed by all the students in that class. Everywhere I go I just find wonderful students. We just have a wealth here in Waterbury. I want to make sure that I recognize that fourth grade class at Hopeville for their wonderful artwork and I will find a very special place for this to be displayed in my home. Thank you.

STANGO: Would that be you on the cover?

SWEENEY: I would be hoping that would be me because that's pretty good looking.

STANGO: Any others? Vice president Harvey.

HARVEY: I just want to say this as we wrap up. Commissioner Brown, excellent point, and I think moving forward we have to stop thinking or taking a cookie-cutter approach thinking that things apply, whatever we did in the past should apply now. We should make it convenient for our parents, for our kids, if we want participation. In addition, we should be, I thought we were doing this, we should be assessing every single program that comes into this district to make sure that it applies or it's workable here in this district. So I want to thank you for those comments Commissioner Brown.

STANGO: Before we adjourn, note that next Thursday there will not be a meeting. It's the third Thursday of the month or whatever happens magically once or twice a year,

three times a year, it's an off night. So our next meeting will be two weeks from tonight, it will be a Workshop; I believe it is at North End. I would like to, once again, thank the parents who came tonight, I invite you to come back again and address this Board with your concerns any time you would like. I really appreciate it when we see people here. Thank you.

### ***ADJOURNMENT***

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Hayes and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:44 p.m. into Executive Session for discussion concerning pending claims/litigation AND evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools.**

Present were: President Stango, Commissioners Brown, D'Amelio, Harkins, Harvey, Hayes, Morales, Sweeney, and Van Stone, Dr. Ouellette (left at 8:30 p.m.), Mr. Guidone (left at 8:25 p.m.), Attorney Mosley (left at 8:25 p.m.), and Gail McTaggart (left at 8:25 p.m.).

The Executive Session ended at 8:44 p.m. with no votes taken.

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