

## **WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### *MINUTES ~ REGULAR MEETING*

Monday, May 18, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.

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

***PRESENT:*** President Hayes, Commissioners D'Angelo, Flaherty-Merritt, Harvey, Laccone, Pinto, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and White.

***ALSO PRESENT:*** Superintendent Snead, Assistant Superintendents Cullinan and Sequeira, Chief Operating Officer Paul Guidone, Director of Personnel Ron Frost, School Business Administrator Paul Mazzaccaro, Attorney Maurice Mosley, Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold, and School Inspector Herbert Greengas.

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

President Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. with a moment of silence and a prayer and Superintendent Snead led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

HAYES: I'd like to make mention of Manny Santiago, the student that was tragically killed from Kennedy High School. And I'd also like to ask Commissioner Stango to offer a remembrance as well.

STANGO: Thank you President Hayes. Certainly for the young man at Kennedy, our thoughts and prayers go with him and his family and for his classmates. Also this evening being the last meeting before Memorial Day, I would like to read, for the record and place into the minutes one last time, the names of those retired Waterbury teachers who have passed on during this school year. Most of these teachers have spent their entire teaching careers in Waterbury and have offered learning and guidance to scores of students and teachers alike. Hopefully members of this Board and people watching this broadcast who knew them or were fortunate to have them as a teacher, coach, or mentor, will recall their work and influence with a smile and remember them fondly for what they have given this district. Let us remember them in our prayer tonight. The honor roll of these teachers are as follows: Anthony Altieri, William (Billy) Cavanaugh, Emilia (Amy) DeLucia, Margaret Derwin, William "Pop" Doyle, Arthur Fisher, Dolores DeVito, Diane Gereski, Barbara Gervais, Margaret Haberman, Roberta Hurley, Patrick Marando, Joseph McGurk, Frederick Myers, Ruth Mary Phelen, Maureen Shackley, Helen Shiel, Leonard Solomita, Irene Sweeney, and James Walsh. Let us remember them tonight as we have our silent prayer and before this Memorial Day.

HAYES: And also with keeping Memorial Day in mind, all our service men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice that will be remembered this coming weekend.

### **ROLL CALL**

CLERK: Commissioner D'Angelo.

D'ANGELO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt.

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: Present.

CLERK: Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Here

CLERK: Commissioner Laccone.

LACCONE: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Pinto.

PINTO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Stango.

STANGO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner White.

WHITE: Here.

CLERK: President Hayes.

HAYES: Here.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

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

1. Communication dated May 5, 2009 from Leslie Wolfgang regarding supplies for homeschoolers.

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none - all in favor, opposed, motion passes unanimously.

**PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD:**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:39 p.m.**

HAYES: 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.

**Lisa Lessard, 905 Pearl Lake Road, had the following comments:** I'm here in accordance to last week's local school board workshop that was aired in accordance to

Mr. Daly, City Corporate Counsel Attorney that addressed you. I know you're all fully aware that that FOI complaint was from me because Mr. Daly said complainant Lisa Lessard. The reason why I'm here tonight is accordance to the whole reason of the whole FOI complaint. October 28, 2008, I was not able to be at the local school board workshop. I am always at local school boards or local school board workshops health depending. I was in ICU September 8, 2008 and the reason why I was not at the October 28, 2008 was because I was still under the weather and still recuperating. This actually, I was told to stay at home until I got the insulin pump which I now have and I'm doing awesome with so basically that's why I was not here. It doesn't really matter why I was asking for the minutes or that I was not here, in accordance to. However I did ask because the law stipulates the public can receive the minutes from local school boards or local school board workshops, period. Now my FOI case which I asked for the minutes of October 28, 2008 local school board workshop and was told in quote Carrie Swain, Clerk of School Board, through my e-mail no minutes taken at school Board workshop and then received a letter from City Corporation Counsel Lee Tierney, date of this letter December 31, 2008, third paragraph first sentence "third, the workshop you identified did not generate minutes". I will repeat – third, the workshop you identified did not generate minutes. In accordance to Coleen Flaherty-Merritt last week on television she was trying to explain to Mr. Daly in accordance to what was said. Well I know city clerk Carrie Swain knows her job, knows her position and would not have e-mailed me back when I inquired of school Board minutes from local school Board workshop of October 28, of 2008 where Carrie Swain quote unquote says no minutes taken at local school board workshop. This is her job; she knows what she's stating, so I don't know why people are backpedaling last week in accordance to trying to get out of this. I talked to Mr. Daly on Monday after air of school board workshop and we talked for 45 minutes. He said he is going through his paperwork, talked to the FOI attorney again in accordance to and he will be at next workshop to explain. What the FOI attorney stipulated, what she said, and why it was said. It wasn't done being malicious, mean or anything else. It was done so basically I, a parent, could get the minutes because there were some questions I had being at home watching a local school Board and I missed some things because I was doing some things with my insulin. Sorry, that's why I asked. I'm also here tonight, I know my minute is up, but I'm here tonight in accordance to asking for an apology from Mr. President Hayes in accordance to what he said with "that parent". I know he was considering me to be that parent because it was stipulated that that parent shouldn't be sitting at home she should come to local school Board workshops, local school Board meetings, and engage. That's what he used to do when he was out there being a parent. Well I hate to tell you I'm usually one of two or three that are usually at local school Board period or one of many at local school Board workshops, health depending. I know have my insulin pump, I'm more than happy and able and capable of being here but I was told by doctor's orders I was not able to that's why I asked for October 28, 2008. So thank you, God bless, and I'm going to stand here for a minute until, and I know my minutes is over, but I would really like seeing I was denigrated on public television with the defensive attitude of "that parent" . . . public apology. And I know it's time. So obviously if I don't get the public apology that means you don't care about parents here in the city of Waterbury and that's really unfortunate. Thank you and God bless.

**Mrs. Hill, Waterbury, CT had the following comments:** Please bear with me as I have a scratchy throat tonight and I have a couple of issues that my son will not come up to speak about, but I will. I'm here tonight to address the members of the Board

about the Olympics of the Mind currently coming up shortly. Currently 10 children at my child's schools, his grade level, have been selected by their teachers, only six or seven of these children will be going. Normally all selected attend and the alternate learn a valuable lesson and study and experience. Given these children work hard, study hard, meet this Board's expectations and reach the high bar for other students to grasp onto it would make mathematically sense to send the students submitted. The experience is more than winning the gold it's about learning; you climbed a high mountain – wow. I'm asking this Board to allow the names submitted to attend. Mrs. Culligan, Anne Marie, and this Board will be very proud to know at least one of her special ed students has made this list. That speaks for her staff, the teachers, the parents, this Board. After all special education students strive harder, parents strive harder, and I personally can tell you my child's health but his education is one you would be proud to hear on any doctor appointment, his interest in school. I personally want to thank President Hayes for giving me the golden opportunity to explain the Connecticut connection of the mastery test at the Rock Cat's game. My phone has yet to stop ringing. If ever I've seen Mary White's face light up that night when I explained how important it was to those children, the smiles on those faces, it was if you had your first grandchild. It was a Kodak moment that I will never forget. The smiles at the Rock Cat's game I will never also forget. Lastly twice my child was hurt at school last week. This time I believe appropriate steps were taken and I think a memo by Mr. Snead reminding our elementary schools about the warm weather and the incidents at the outdoor recess and lunch times will be helpful to principals and staff. And I've extended my hand to Mrs. Culligan or anybody on reward for the PBS and I will back this Board when you do all you have done for our children in Waterbury and you show that you care, decisions are hard by all of us to agree upon but this Board seems to blend together most times for the best interest of our children. For that I am very thankful. We have raised bars, we have uniforms, so many things that other cities are copying. I want to thank you. And lastly if you could please check on the Olympics of the Mind and get back to me. And have a good evening and a safe Memorial Day.

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Stango and duly seconded by Commissioner D'Angelo, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 6:48 p.m.**

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. All in favor.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** (Dr. Snead read and distributed the following report):

I met with State Department of Education officials here this morning - Adrian Wood, Lol Fearon and Mike Wasta – and members of the District Improvement Executive Team as a preliminary meeting prior to the formal site monitoring visit coming up in a few weeks.

Generali School held its Memorial Day Ceremony this morning. Veterans, invited guests, Generali fifth graders, and members of the Wallace Middle School Band participated in the annual event.

Fifth grade students at Maloney School are holding a Poetry Buzz this evening from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the school library.

Wilby High School is hosting a Technology Education Fair tomorrow. Parents from both Wilby and North End are invited to attend in the evening from 6 to 7 pm. Wilby students will be on hand to explain exhibits and demonstrations related to technology education courses.

Crosby's Super Senior Supper is Wednesday evening at 6 pm. Wilby's Awards Night is the same evening, beginning at 6:30.

Our annual Superintendent's Student Recognition Awards Ceremony is this Thursday afternoon at 3:30 at Kennedy High School. We will be recognizing students from around the district for their community and school involvement, leadership, and academic ability.

Waterbury's Citywide Arts Extravaganza is this Friday evening at Rotella Magnet. The program begins with the visual arts portion in the lobby from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., and then moves into the auditorium for the vocal concert beginning at 7 p.m.

The annual Olympics of the Mind competition for students is next Tuesday at the Holiday Inn. Students will be competing in third and fifth grade teams against each other, answering questions that might be found in their textbooks.

The results of the investigations conducted by our department in conjunction with the City's Human Resources Director will be presented at the Personnel Committee meeting following the Board meeting. In addition, we have been informed that the Police Department has concluded their investigation of various matters. Chief O'Leary will brief Mayor Jarjura and myself on their findings, likely later this week. The report will be distributed to Board members upon receipt.

And last but not least, schools will be closed on Monday for Memorial Day. Have a safe and happy holiday.

**PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:** I'd just like to clarify something. This is like on a personal privilege under President's Comments. Mrs. Lessard, I just want to clarify a couple of things. First of all if there's a question about something I've said I would appreciate it if you come directly to me. If you chose not to, send emails to everybody else, that's fine. The fact of the matter is you totally misunderstood what I said. What I said, and I did get some of the actual verbiage from that, my point is simple, if you really want to know what's going on, meaning "you" in general, as I mentioned for them for about 15 years for people who really want to know what's going on, and then formulate opinions and go to Board meetings and talk about issues, you need to hear the actual words coming out of the people's mouths. A few notes are not going to give you the advantage that you need to make those kind of statements. You actually sat and watched something as many people do and misinterpreted that even. The fact of the matter is my question is, is what cost; these are issues that were brought up by Commissioner Sweeney and Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt, asking me to put it on the agenda. My comments were simply if anybody out there really wants to know you have to be there. Secondly, at what cost, and that's the question we asked of Attorney Daly, at what cost? Do we need to go and keep all these minutes when actually it doesn't really help; it doesn't help people to get informed? The best way to get informed is to come here. And this Board in particular, you've talked about Committee Workshops, I

don't think you come to Committee Workshops, this is our Board meeting, Committee Workshops are the meeting prior to this and that's where everyone offers their opinion and as an advocate someone should listen at that meeting then you've got a week to contact us. And again, this is advice I've given to every parent out there. You have an opportunity with us, and with this Board, to come down and bring groups down or whatever and state your opinion based on what you have heard at the Workshop. We have a Consent Calendar here, we're gonna just have a vote and a couple of things, we might have some discussion, so I would suggest to anyone out there, while you have the opportunity to watch us live for our meetings when we're coming from here, you get to see our Workshops. I think this Board has gone above and beyond, I got to thank Commissioner Theriault, he did it for years. He's still doing it. We've got this being filmed twice. I think we put more information out there for the public than any Board has ever, ever sent out there for anybody. And my concern was with regard to our other committees, like we had a committee meeting prior to this, whether we need to have minutes, whether we need to have a Clerk here, whether we needed to have additional costs to take those notes which ultimately will simply say that a vote was taken, a couple of things were said, and you really don't know what happened if you want to formulate an opinion. There's a lot of people that used to just read the newspaper and the newspaper can't provide everything. Now at least I feel that because of the efforts that we made at this Board, again with Commissioner Theriault leading the way and then ultimately we decided to lessen the responsibility, but he's continued to still do that so he's sort of our backup. I don't think you are going to find other boards that are as open as we are that allow input from people and then, if you've got a problem with any one of us and what we say, and I'll tell anybody that, come to us, come to me if you got the problem with me. This whole idea of sending letters to the Mayor demanding an apology . . . put your efforts into some other things. I know you do a lot and I don't want it to be demeaning to you at all because I really appreciate parents who take the time to come here. But we make it easier for you to stay home, watch what's going on. We have the open mic to offer your opinions but all week long you can call us at home or e-mail us or whatever. So I'm hoping you understand what my comments were about and they weren't really about you, they were about people that don't do what you do and come to the meetings. But I would suggest to those people that if you want to get minutes or if you're looking to run a political campaign and try to find some words to use in the next few months in a political campaign, that can be done, we've got it there, we've got it on film, it's on tape. As I said, my words are here, there's no mention of you, I've mentioned "don't they have to come to something" or "how much detail are we supposed to provide? That's the problem, I spend a lot of Monday nights trying to tell parents instead of coming to a Board meeting, you come to Committee Meetings for, and then you'll hear the discussion". Now you can watch it on Wednesday night on TV, on reruns, we've made it really easy for everyone. So if you want to formulate an opinion and you want to be informed, minutes aren't going to do that for you, come to the meetings and we appreciate all input from everyone who wants to come to the meetings.

I want to just make a comment about the passing of a student from Kennedy High School. I think the way the staff and I know; Dr. Snead offered his ideas on how they could handle that. I know my stepdaughter is a senior at Kennedy and she attended the wake and the funeral. From what I understand, again, in such a tragic situation like this our staff, our students behaved in a really wonderful way and respectful way. And I'd like to thank all of those who took part in that.

Now we'll go onto our Consent Calendar. Does anyone want to remove anything on the current Consent Calendar?

D'ANGELO: Just 8.3 please for me.

THERIAULT: Eight point eight (8.8) please.

President Hayes proceeded to read the Consent Calendar items.

## **8. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar, items 8.1, 8.2, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, and 8.9 through 8.15, as listed:**

- 8.1 With the approval of the Committee of the Whole, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval for Waterbury Public Schools to participate in the "You Be The Chemist Challenge" sponsored by the Chemical Educational Foundation and Hubbard Hall.
- 8.2 With the approval of the Committee of the Whole, the Superintendent of Schools recommends acceptance of a donation from TD Charitable Foundation to Chase School per Board Policy.
- 8.4 With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval to apply for the Connecticut State Department of Education IDEA Grant for the period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011.
- 8.5 With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval to apply for the New England Dairy and Food Council "Fuel Up to Play Wellness Activation Grant" Program.
- 8.6 With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval to apply for the Earth Elder's Project Mini Grant for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century After School Program.
- 8.7 With the approval of the Committee on Building, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the ED049R for the Alternative Programs Enlightenment Facility I Project (State Project #151-0263).
- 8.9 With the approval of the Committee on Food Service, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of a Professional Services Agreement with Ambassador Wheelchair Services, Inc., to provide courier services for the Food Service School Lunch Program for the period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2012.
- 8.10 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to the following for use of school facilities school organizations and/or City Departments.

- 8.11 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to the following for use of school facilities by outside organizations/waiver requests.
- 8.12 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to L. Capolupo, KHS, and 11 chaperones to take 125 students to Agawam, MA on May 29, 2009 to visit Six Flags New England.
- 8.13 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to A. Mango, WHS, and four chaperones to take 50 students to Hyde Park, NY on June 4, 2009 to visit the Culinary Institute of America.
- 8.14 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to Mrs. Sieffert, CHS, and three chaperones to take 34 students to Agawam, MA on May 15, 2009 to visit Six Flags New England.
- 8.15 With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to B. Ayub, CHS, and three chaperones to take 30 students to Agawam, MA to visit Six Flags.

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. All in favor, opposed.

**9. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT**

- 8.3. Upon a motion by Commissioner Pinto and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, with Commissioner D'Angelo voting "no", it was voted to approve a Professional Services Agreement with Ambassador Wheelchair Services, Inc., to provide daily messenger and courier services for the Department of Education for the period of July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2012.**

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. All in favor, opposed, motion passes nine in favor, one against.

- 8.8 Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, with Commissioner Theriault voting "no", it was voted to approve to apply for the US Department of Agriculture Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program for various schools.**

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. Under discussion, Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: At our last meeting I was in fact off track so I'm gonna get right back on track, right back on the choo choo train. I asked with regard to this grant who the suppliers might be and I was told they might be bid or they might be our current suppliers. So I was told at the time we didn't know who our current suppliers were but now we do. But at the expense of being redundant, it seems that there are two suppliers and these two suppliers get to bid on these on a weekly basis and this Board

of Education and the Food Service Program gets the benefit of picking whatever company has the lowest price for that particular week which is a big disadvantage to us. However, one of the companies is Jarjura Fruit and Vegetables which I don't take complete umbrage with outside of the fact that I hope when these questionnaires go around to various politicians that if, in fact, the Mayor is associated with Jarjura and Son, that he would answer yes on the second question that was given to most of the politicians, not all, most of the elected officials. That's all I have to say, President Hayes. Now I'm back off of the choo choo and back on track. Thank you.

HAYES: I think Commissioner Theriault was making reference to the memorandum we got, there was a memorandum in our packet regarding the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. Any further comments, discussion? Hearing none – all in favor, opposed, motion passes nine in favor, one opposed.

## **10. COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

**10.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted, with Commissioner Theriault “abstaining” to approve the additional position of Language Arts/Drama Teacher for Rotella Magnet School. The position shall be funded by the Rotella Magnet School’s Operating Grant.**

HAYES: Motion has been made and seconded. Under discussion – Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Once again I spoke to this topic the other evening and I will just reiterate the same kinds of remarks that I had said before. We have two school systems here – a magnet school and a regular school system. Now I know some people may not want to hear that and they may want to say “well we have the money in our budget and that's all that is needed, its not really coming out of the General Fund it's coming out of our Operating Fund budget and that's all that is required”. And I don't have any problem with regard to the particular job that has been created; in fact I stated that I thought that this kind of initiative and this kind of creative thinking, with regard to creating new positions, would be very beneficial to all of our schools. But it's with concern that I would vote for this because as we had discussed in our last meeting, when this person is hired for a temporary job or a long-term job, I say temporary depending upon the funding and if the funding for the magnet school operating grant were reduced this position could then be reduced. Then that person according to the WTA contract would accrue seniority if it happened a year or two years from now and that person could bid against other people within the same system because whether they are a grant's position or regular position, everyone is entitled to their seniority under the WTA. I myself have taken a very staunch attitude with regard to new hires under the General Fund positions as well as grant positions because I feel that this Board will be encumbered with those positions should the other shoe drop. And inevitably, the other shoe is going to drop. As you know the State is looking at an eight billion dollar deficit, or more, it's probably growing day by day. And I think inevitably not only will the operating fund of the magnet schools inevitably be cut and so will, so might our ECS, our Educational Cost Sharing. So that being said it might be possible that we might be looking at layoffs of teachers and cutting of programs and so forth. We have already been cut three million dollars on our budget and we don't know what the Board of Aldermen is going to do currently with regard to the allocation of funds for our current

budget. So that being said, all of these things are very, very concerning to me in terms of the dollar amounts and the budget amounts of money that are available for the various positions. We certainly can't dispute that our magnet schools are the finest around. Our magnet school here that we're sitting in right now which we could put all of Washington School in this atrium which is magnificent, is the second best one in the Country and of course Rotella is number one and congratulations to the principal and all of the staff. So I think you should all vote your conscience and I will vote mine and we'll go forward on the issue. Thank you very much.

HAYES: Any further discussion? All in favor, opposed, motion passes nine in favor, one abstention.

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

**Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file items 11.1 through 11.5, as listed:**

11.1 Grant funded appointments effective immediately:

Accuosti, Joanne (Parent Educator/WFRC) – Interim Parent Liaison (to cover medical leave), effective 04/20/09 to 06/30/09.

11.2 WAMS Summer Arts Program Appointments, 4 hours per day for 10 days, salary per individual's contract:

Celozzi, Aimee – Dance	Vagnini, Marianna – Vocal Music
Haxhi, Rami – Piano	Post, Bruce – Scriptwriting and Technical Theater
Maxen, Heather – Ceramics	Agostine, Nina – Acting and Play Production
Gumbulevich, Jeanette – Printmaking	Harris, Latonia – Paraprofessional
Primus, Margaret – Paraprofessional	

11.3 New hires:

146	Hutchings, Joanne	WAMS	French	2/9/2009
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11.4 Teacher transfers:

Ciuffo, Anthony – from Kingsbury 1 (temp) to Kingsbury 1 (perm), effective 8/25/08.  
Ciuffo, Anthony – from Kingsbury 1 to Kingsbury 5, effective 01/05/09.

11.5 Resignations:

Rai, Himanshu – WHS Math, effective May 18, 2009.

HAYES: Motion is made and seconded. All in favor, opposed. Under New Business, I just wanted to point out while we had the opportunity, I should have done it under President's Comments, we all see the notice we got from Paul Guidone regarding Kidstown. I know for those people who might be watching, they wouldn't see our memo. We do have busing provided for those Kidstown kids once again. I thank Paul Guidone for getting on top of that right away and Jeff Hunter also for working things out to make sure that those children are discharged and picked up in a safe and orderly fashion. Anyone have anything under New Business?

D'ANGELO: It wouldn't be a meeting if I didn't. I just want to make a comment to the Board members, something I've been finding over a last couple of weeks or days. No

one wants to micromanage the school system and no one, I'm sure, wants to tell their principals how to do their job but I'm wondering, having said that, if we need to have some type of thought process or policy or whatever concerning things like field day, eighth grade class trips, or graduation ceremonies. And the reason I say that is what I'm finding going school to school is every principal has a very different outlook on which students should be allowed to attend these events and which students should not be. And although I'm okay with that I'm just wondering in the thinking of fairness, if that's the right thing to do. One principal told me every student attends Field Day. Another principal told me well if they're suspended between May 1 and Field Day they can't go. Or if they were suspended a certain amount of times per year they can't go. And I'm just, I just throw it out for the Board, something to think about, obviously we don't want to micromanage the school district but it's a little disheartening when you find out a student that was suspended six times throughout the year and twice in the month of May is able to go to Field Day, but yet another school a student is suspended once in May and he or she can't go. I don't know, I just throw it out for food for thought, that's all.

HAYES: Anyone else have something under New Business? Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Yes President Hayes. I got this report, but it was a visit to Wendell Cross by Commissioner Stango and Commissioner Sweeney and I think I would be remiss if I didn't compliment them totally on the absolutely fantastic report that they did with regard to looking at the school, the profile, the staff, the exterior and interior condition, the attendance, dress code, PBS, parent involvement, CMT's, principal comments, absolutely phenomenal job, absolutely way, way, more than we would expect. It's almost like you're going in there and looking at the school and coming back to us with a very, very thorough report. These are the very things that as Board members we need to be doing and so does our Central Office staff need to be doing these things. Thank you.

WHITE: I don't know if this is under New Business or not but I, Mrs. Hill made a comment about my smiling when the Rock Cats game was mentioned and I'd like to give an explanation of why that happened. First of all, I didn't know how that was going to work out but I saw the filming of it on Channel 16 and I'll tell you I broke out in laughter and smiles just watching the children and their enjoyment on that, so it happened that the next day was our meeting and she mentioned it and the memory of the kids' enjoyment and seeing all of our kids there and you know what they were acting like kids at a ball game, they were really, really well behaved. And I have to comment in a good way all the staff that brought them, the whole event, whoever put the whole event together.

HAYES: Mr. Gorman.

WHITE: I'm smiling; it made me happy to see something that was such fun bring such happiness to all those kids. That's going to be one of their memories when they grow up. I have to say, anything like that, I probably won't agree with everything but when I see the results, then I think it was wonderful and somebody was smarter than I was.

HAYES: Thanks for the explanation about your smile. I guess under New Business we are, Central Office is formulating some kind of cost attached to request for copies of

DVD's for our meetings, now that you mentioned that I don't think there's anything attached to a cost for some of those other things if somebody wanted to get it, I mean they can record it off of TV if they want to. We are formulating something for requests regarding DVD's because there is a cost associated with that. We'll get that pretty quickly. Anything else under New Business? Under Old Business?

SWEENEY: First of all a request for Mr. Guidone. Can you make sure that you clarify with Attorney Daly that my request was never to deny minutes of a Committee Meeting. I absolutely support the FOI requirement for minutes to be given to anyone who asks for them of a Committee Meeting. My request was for him to look at how he asked us to amend those Committee Meeting minutes because I don't believe under FOI that his changes are required. Please make sure that he understands that request and that was my request. I think the rest of the Board members understood what I was asking for, but please make sure you clarify that. I in no way, shape, or form denied a request for Committee Meeting minutes.

GUIDONE: I'd be happy to.

HAYES: Another happy person.

SWEENEY: I have one more. I did update the Legislative Committee and I would like to update the rest of the Board members on the school nurses bill that we put forth a statement from this Board that we were not in support of those changes. The Health Committee has put forth a favorable report that strikes three of the provisions; those would be the most costly provisions that would have affected us. They have struck the BA degree requirement. They have struck the participation in 15 hours of continuing education. And they have struck the certification by the National Board of Certification for School Nurses. That essentially leaves us with the two requirements that Waterbury pretty much essentially meets anyways. So we're in good shape. I thank this Board for their support for that. I think that was an extremely costly unfunded mandate from the State and also extremely unnecessary. So I thank you all for your support on that.

HAYES: Commissioner Sweeney, thank you for your leadership on that but could you also just mention what you, myself, and Vice President White will be doing on Wednesday.

SWEENEY: We will be meeting with the Urban Coalition which is representation from school boards from New Britain, Windham, New London, and New Haven, and Waterbury, and we will be meeting with Superintendent McQuillan for dinner to explain to him some of the concerns of the urban, in particular I know myself, Mary has commented and Pat has commented, that it's quite heartwarming to sit down and speak with people who are facing the same challenges that we here face. And that Coalition and that strength, they were also on Board, some of them with the school nurses bill, and they also got a hold of their representatives and made their voices heard at the Capitol and I think that coming together was a big push for all of this. I think we're starting to see the results of working together and it's paying off. So that's what we'll be doing Wednesday night is making our case to the Commissioner.

THERIAULT: I have noticed that Commissioner McQuillan is very much available. In fact, I go to several ACES meetings and he's been there several times. Very

approachable and it's nice to see him reaching out and really trying to understand our problem. I spoke to him this time last year regarding the suspension bill and he did tell me that he would look into it and he did. So he's not only accessible, he's a man of his word and it's really nice to see that kind of contact and availability.

STANGO: Just in the realm of update, on two items, normally I would do this by e-mail once upon a time. In regard to this Board's resolution a couple of weeks ago to support the request of CABE to reconsider a presentation for our Truancy Court at the CABE Convention, I received a call from Bob Rader; he's the CABE Executive Director. And very interesting; he told me the reason for the presentation not being accepted was that the committee felt it was too narrow in scope. In other words, it would not appeal to general membership of CABE. In the conversation I told him that some people think that CABE is too suburban centered. And he admitted that he has heard that before and he contends that is because most events are attended by suburban districts. He intends, however, this Fall to target urban districts in the next school year and he invited us to take part in those presentations and programs that he has. And he also said he would be glad to come and speak before this Board in a Workshop if at anytime we wanted him. So that's the update on CABE.

The other one I wanted to update you on was this Board's policy to okay waivers for certain groups. In the past we have granted a waiver to the Waterbury Youth Symphony to use Kennedy every Saturday and then use Rotella for performances. I was in attendance at, this weekend at a Youth Symphony or performance at Rotella and you will be happy to know that the master of ceremonies stood up before the whole group and thanked Waterbury School District and the Board of Education for allowing them use of Kennedy High School and of Rotella School. I'd also like to add that Rotella vestibule where we entered and the auditorium which we sat was great, it looked very good, neat, clean, and everyone there enjoyed the performance. My two updates.

HARVEY: I'm gonna switch gears a little because I need to get this off of my chest and I see Commissioner Laccone moving over a little bit. First President Hayes, and no one else, and I'm sure you don't feel compelled to, the questionnaire I have completed that and this is something that I'm doing and the only reason why I'm mentioning this is because my name did appear in the paper that I had not completed it. And for the public to know, I work for a postage meter company so I really have no need to go to the post office. So that's why there was a delay in completing it. So I'll pass that onto Carrie.

And I just want to say that I was reading the paper Sunday morning, I was in a pretty good mood, getting ready to go to church, and I saw big headlines concerning our Board and emails. And for what it's worth, I would hope that, I know the newspaper is in the business of selling newspapers and they have to focus on the negative. We're coming around to graduation time, we have a lot of students that have overcome obstacles, we have students that are graduating with full scholarships. We have a lot of positive things that are happening to the students and I would hope that the focus would be on the students. Yes we have investigations going on, yes there is an issue with emails, this is how we communicate, so we'll have to develop another way that we do that. But I was just really annoyed with seeing, with the headline, and I'm just really kind of annoyed and no criticism of anyone, any Commissioners here on the Board, I'm

just annoyed with the publicity lately about this Board. So I just hope that the newspaper, we're coming up upon June, got graduation coming, I hope that you will focus your attention on the students and the positive stories regarding the students.

And lastly, Commissioner Hayes, I guess that we have to now utilize our New Business segment of the meeting to bring up any concerns, so let's do that. We, as you pointed out, we communicate, we make sure that the public has the information, we tape the meetings as you mentioned. So let's do that, let's utilize the New Business section of our agenda to bring up concerns much like Commissioner Stango did. Thank you.

HAYES: I do miss some of the emails. I have learned not to check them on Sunday morning. My only comment on that is that, the way I perceived it, and I think when we had a retreat we all agreed, that what we want to do is use that to get information. What we need to refrain is offering our opinions about that information. Once everyone has the information, bring it up at a meeting, under New Business or Old Business, depending on whether it's something new or something that's been happening for awhile, and ask that we get further information on it and then we'll have discussion. I think it's appropriate, in my own opinion, it's appropriate for us to copy the rest of the Board members with questions that get a response from Central Office so we have that information. But we need to refrain from offering our opinions on that information; that's here, where the public has an opportunity and a right to hear what our opinions are on those.

THERIAULT: Just a point of order on that President Hayes, I think there are two schools of thought with regard to that. One is the opinion that you're expressing, there's also another court case that says it's not allowed even for informational purposes. So you can take one court ruling or you can take the second court ruling but the second court ruling that the FOI is going by is the more stringent interpretation. So basically what was said in the past; we can only talk about the weather that's what's gonna happen but quite honestly I don't intend, and I never have intended to deceive the public from information. But those Board members that want to contact other Board members will now do so by phone. I'm sure we're not going to go back to the telegraph or smoke signals but it just seems archaic that we can't use the email system, a system that's a modern communication tool, because it's been declared a violation of FOI rules and regulations. And I will certainly abide by those and only communicate with the Superintendent and other Central Office staff with the exception of an occasional Board member but not with regard to Board of Ed business. So I think that we're stuck in a hard place with regard to this modern convenience. Thank you.

SWEENEY: I just think that the whole thing is unfortunate given the circumstance that it was Commissioner Stango's email to this Board over his concern with CABA's refusal to pick up our presentation that gave me the time to put a resolution together that brought that matter to this Board and gave this Board a chance to use its voice. And unfortunately that will not happen, things will not happen with that speed, with that forethought, because we would not have had that opportunity until Monday and then it would have been another week while we formulated a resolution and had a discussion and then got something off to CABA and by that time the convention would be over and we'd be out anyways. So I think it's unfortunate, I think it's unfortunate.

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: I have to agree with John's interpretation that any kind of bulk email to everyone on this Board that we send is a violation, but there's nothing against us emailing Carrie with information saying "Carrie, can you email this to all the Board on our behalf". And that's where, if it's purely information and not an opinion then we can do it and we aren't violating anything, we're just simply getting the information out there. Now if we would like to establish a Board policy that if we are obtaining information like that via email just to have a copy of that added to our agenda or to our minutes, maybe an addition when we do communications and things like that, approval of email records, if we want to cover ourselves, we can do something of that extent.

HAYES: Honestly my own view on this is, I don't know that anybody really knows because this is so new and honestly with most of us, the email is an opportunity for me to see that we're not all just not thinking about anything between Monday to Monday. If something comes up, we ask about it, we're all informed; we're passionate about what we're trying to do. Like I said, we have to figure out how to do it because we need to have our thoughts out there for the public. I don't know if sending it to Carrie and then having Carrie sending it to all of us isn't just sort of . . . the whole idea of it.

I know one of the things I wanted to mention is that when we have a request for information from a single Board member to Central Office I think, I know I've sent out an email in the past in reference to that, that should be brought up at a regular meeting because we have our Central Office staff that's currently busy doing what they do on a daily basis and if any one of us just decides we want information, we can't necessarily expect them to drop everything. So maybe request for information should come here, too, in front of the full Board and then we can determine to what extent; I mean no one has ever been denied information, but the question is how quickly we can get it out and all that kind of stuff. So that's another thing. Again, I thought we addressed this when we had our retreat and I thought we had sort of come to some understanding whether it was right or not, but I think we all understood that. So maybe if we can again review that. I know we had it passed out a couple of weeks ago prior to the Mayor sending off his edict that was unsolicited, but it's what he did and obviously he has a right to do that. Like I said, I have mixed feelings about the whole thing because I appreciate the fact that we're all thinking about this stuff. I do think that a Blackberry is not a good thing in the hands of some people because sometimes the thought comes to your head and you go right away where some of us may think about it for a day or two before we put that out there, but that's all I have to say on that.

THERIAULT: I disagree. I think Blackberry and computers are a phenomenal tool and I think it's unfortunate that we're faced with this current interpretation that we have regarding the emails but I think . . . if we give it to the Clerk of the Board and have it passed to the other Board members, I think that would equally be a violation because it's not available to the general public unless they solicit it and certainly not available to the media, meaning the press and the newspaper, and so forth, and the television stations.

With regard to reports, as you have so eloquently reminded me President Hayes many, many times; you are the President of the Board, you set the agenda, we're members of the Board, we have no power individually as a Board, but with regard to reports, it has always been the stance of the Board that Board members could request various reports. I certainly understand that our staff may be very busy with other things. In fact, many of

the reports that I have requested I have waited long and diligently for. And you can say what you want about me or disagree, sometimes we do disagree occasionally, I don't think you could ever fault me for the research that I've done with regard to these reports and the fastness that I have had with regard to the diligence that I have had in going through these reports, sometimes as much as 1,600 pages, and analytically reviewing them and coming up with reports that not only have helped this Board, that have helped the school system, Commissioner Stango and I with the Blue Ribbon Commission for example, and that brings me to the next report that I have currently asked for. I think we need that summary report right now so that we can get the summary report this month and then compare it on the last day of school. And also with regard to my previous email which I didn't send to all Board members but I did send to the Clerk, but inasmuch as I can't use the email, I'll use this time to communicate with you. I think it is imperative that at this time that our principals, the Superintendent, and Central Office staff make sure that our students are very familiar with our rules and regulations regarding excused/unexcused absences and tardies – three tardies or early dismissals are equivalent to a day of absence. Anything more than 18 days, on the 19<sup>th</sup> day the student receives no academic credit unless they have an excused absence. Now the excused absences are to be granted, just indulge me for a second, I just have to say this because I don't have a computer at my fingertips, so you'll have to bear with me. So if a student is absent more than 19 days they get no academic credit unless, of course, they can have an appeal and the appeals can be granted. I think it's two in the grammar school, one in the middle school, one in the high school. Correct Commissioner Sweeney?

SWEENEY: Correct.

THERIAULT: Okay. And we need to be very diligent in terms of checking on that status in terms of which students get their appeal and they all seem to get their appeal in the senior year. Those students that have been absent have to come with a doctor's note within the three days of the absence. If they don't come within the three days, they can't show up in June, June 18 if school is over on the 19<sup>th</sup>, and say here's my doctor's note from my doctor, my pediatrician; my mother went down to see them and they're dated all the way back to October. We've already been down this path and that doesn't cut the mustard anymore, okay. So parents should know that if their students have been absent and if they're absent and the parents send in a note, that's not necessarily an excused absence. Excused absences are from doctors notes. The 18 days that they have covers the notes from the parents. So we need to make sure that there are no students that cross the stage at graduation time that have failed more than two subjects or haven't met the academic rigor that Dr. Snead and Dr. Sequeira and others have set up with regard to high school graduation requirements. We need to make sure that parents get an updated report for a warning or a progress report now. It should have already been done, so that no parent, no student, is surprised on the last week of school much less on the last day of graduation, where if somebody comes into line and grabs a student out of the high school graduation line and they already have their cap and gown and they're marching down towards the stage to get their diploma. Oops, you gotta get out of line, we missed you. That did happen, in fact, last year. And that should never happen. For me that is incognizable for that to happen. So if I seem like I'm being hardnosed – absolutely, I'm being hardnosed because I think the students have to learn and they have to learn in this microcosm of education that the world of work and society is a tough place and you have to live by the rules and law and order.

And if that, if that be said we have rules and regulations we have to live by and if you don't do it then you're not gonna pass muster and you're not graduating. And it's the same thing within society. I hear so many people tell me you know it's not important Commissioner Theriault that they attend, if they have a 90 average what difference does it make whether they're attending? Well, it makes a difference to me, because if you're absent from work for six days in a row and you don't have a decent excuse, more than likely, you're gonna be fired. And if you're absent from school more than 19 days, which is more than enough days, then you're not gonna pass muster and you're gonna have to repeat the year all over again. If it's a little tough, it's a little tough. The world's a tough place; it's about time they learn that. Thank you.

HAYES: I'd just like to point out to everyone again that at the end of the year we have been sending out, at least the last two years, notes of commendation to those kids that had good attendance. I don't remember exactly where we cut it off, Will has that number. We sent out somewhere around, about 10% of our kids. The kids who do have the best attendance we do send out something to them. I have had parents remark how they really appreciate that other than just the negative.

A couple of other things for me under Old Business, I don't know whether I missed it, we had a discussion about report cards going out on time or not going out on time. I don't know if I missed an email or whether we got a report on that. There were a number of issues raised.

SWEENEY: There was a report in our packet.

HAYES: Was everyone satisfied with the report? My concern is that we just, we send out a calendar saying the report cards are coming out on a specific date. When they don't come out what do we do about it?

SWEENEY: If we're not gonna require them to be out on that day, then don't put that down as a required day. If you need a week to get them out at all the schools, then make it over the week. Don't do that to parents.

HAYES: I've only got one left but I've gone through four others and when report card day comes I'm waiting for that report card and when it doesn't come home, and the kid might be the best kid ever and says well, we didn't get it today, you wonder whether this was the bad report card that they don't want you to have. So I think it's important for us to get those out in a timely fashion. And if it doesn't happen there should be notice at least going out and the date it was promised letting them know that it will be a delay for a day or two days. I would hope that's one of the resolutions we have as a result of that. I don't want to just know the reasons why, but we should inform the parents that in fact while you may have been expecting a report card on such and such a date, some kind of notification that the report card is coming in a couple of days, or whatever, so you don't go through that whole issue. I know when you're in high school you got to check that mail when the report cards were mailed home, that used to be a big issue, to get to the mail to get those report cards. And when you got two or three kids, boy they could work together.

LACCONE: We got a report; there wasn't a legitimate issue on there that allowed anyone not to get the report cards out on time. It's that simple outside of incompetence

or whatever the issue is. Either they get it out on that day or there better be a damn good reason.

HAYES: Let's put that report on our agenda next week for further discussion. The other thing, when Commissioner D'Angelo and I were visiting a couple of schools today, the issue came out about, well actually we were visiting Gilmartin and its rental space right now and the discussion came up about the pre-k to eight curriculum. Dr. Sequeira, I was just wondering if we could get an update on just what's happening with that because now we're getting, we're sort of getting close and I'm just wondering how that's working out. I know there was some concerns about the assistant principals or vice principal or whatever at the middle school because there's a different, just to deal with that sixth grade to eighth grade middle school component of the k to eight. How are we doing on that? Can you maybe add that to the Workshop for an update as well prior to, maybe not next Workshop, the one after that? I'd like to know who's working on it and, because I think one of the things we have to consider that while we are instituting the pre-k to eight at our new schools, we need to make sure we set out the model and the structure. We may consider turning some of our current schools into that as well as we go forward. Anyone else have anything under Old Business? Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: I'd just like to give a footnote with regard to graduation requirements. There are special ed PPT exemptions that apply to special ed students and the general public should know about that. Some of our special education students do not have to adhere to certain requirements and others do. Not all of them are exempt, but on the other hand a PPT, which is a Pupil Planning and Placement Team, can determine that that child is going to be promoted even if they haven't fulfilled the particular requirements. Just as a footnote.

I think I'd like to go in with regard to your pre-k to eight curriculum suggestion that Commissioner White, or whoever is going to be in charge of the redistricting, certainly get started on it because you know we're probably a year, less than a year away from the completion of Gilmartin, pretty close to that anyways and you know what's gonna happen when Gilmartin opens, everybody's gonna find an address in that neighborhood. And they're going to be showing up there driven by cars and they're gonna say I'm living with this one, I'm living with my grandmother, I'm living with my aunt. I'm not saying everybody's gonna do it but there's a great temptation to do that, to get into this beautiful 32, 34 million dollar school, right?

D'ANGELO: They will now.

THERIAULT: Sure they will. They're not supposed to. We should have a redistricting policy in place and we should be working on it now and the only way you get into that school is if you have a driver's license that says that you have that address on it. Never mind, I've heard it said before that we can't demand they have their, turn their kids over to their grandmother in terms of court custody, and so forth, so I think we have to have a policy with regard to this so that we don't, I don't want to say clog up our schools with all of these kids, but certainly I think the kids that belong in that school should be in there and the kids that don't belong in that school should not. And as I said before when the school was being recommended for that particular area, that school is going from approximately 250 students to 550 students – 300 more students. So where are you going to get the students from - Hopeville? Probably not, Hopeville has their clientele.

So we're going to have to be busing a lot of kids into that school and we're gonna have to determine what district they're gonna come from and I think it would behoove us to look at this because we have Duggan coming online and we have North End coming on line and we need to look at our district in terms, and I'm sure Commissioner White concurs with this because she's spoken to me about it, not on the email but just in passing...

WHITE: If I may interrupt you...

HAYES: I was gonna ask how that Redistricting Committee is going, I hear you're pretty close to...

WHITE: I'm not doing this all by myself John, we have a Committee and it meets and it is open to everyone and I believe you were probably at one of them. We have an excellent group from our IT working there; they're doing a wonderful job putting all different facets on the redistricting. It's nothing that's going to just be pulled out of a hat and it will be brought to the Board ahead of time.

GUIDONE: inaudible.

WHITE: I guess I'm gonna sum it up by saying we have it under control.

HAYES: And I believe the goal of that Committee was to get as many kids that live near the school into the school.

WHITE: That's right.

SWEENEY: And it's working that way.

GUIDONE: inaudible.

SUPERINTENDENT: Commissioner Theriault, you will be pleased to know that all of what you discussed relative to promotion standards and warning, the parents and the appeal process, all of that was the first thing on my agenda last week in my meeting with all of the principals. So I'll continue to drive that point home. Second, Commissioner Harvey, you'll be pleased to know that the newspaper reporter Michael Puffer came to me last week and asked me if I knew about some interesting stories relative to the hurdles that youngsters have to cross and he's going out to, I mentioned Adult Ed is always a good place to find out, but he's also going out to visit the schools. He does want to do what you said, have some interesting stories about the challenges youngsters have overcome to graduate.

### ***ADJOURNMENT***

**Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:52 p.m.**

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