

WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Monday, September 22, 2008 at 5:30 p.m.

(For the September 29, 2008 Board Meeting - MINUTES ATTACHED)

COMMITTEE MEETING

The Board of Education Committee meetings were held on Monday, September 22, 2008 at Wallace Middle School, 3465 East Main Street, Waterbury, Connecticut, starting at 5:48 p.m.

PRESENT: President Hayes, Commissioners D'Angelo (left at 6:47), Flaherty-Merritt, Harvey, Laccone, Pinto, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and White.

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Snead, Assistant Superintendents Cullinan and Sequeira, Chief Operating Officer Paul Guidone (left at 6:47), Director of Personnel Ron Frost, School Business Administrator Paul Mazzaccaro, Attorney Maurice Mosley, and School Inspector Herbert Greengas.

Reports were submitted to the various committees of the Board and discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee meetings adjourned into Executive Session at 9:02 p.m. to discuss the evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools. Present were President Hayes, Commissioners Flaherty-Merritt, Harvey, Laccone, Pinto, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and White, and Superintendent Snead.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie A. Swain, Clerk
Board of Education

WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES ~ REGULAR MEETING

Monday, September 29, 2008 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 Superintendent Cullinan, Chief Operating Officer Paul Guidone, Director of Personnel Ron Frost, School Business Administrator Paul Mazzaccaro, and Attorney Maurice Mosley.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

President Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. with a moment of silence and a prayer and Superintendent Snead led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

CLERK: Commissioner D'Angelo.

D'ANGELO: Present.

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. We're all present.

COMMUNICATIONS:

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

1. Copy of communication dated September 13, 2008 from the American Atheists Inc. regarding purchase of books for private schools.
2. Communication received September 15, 2008 from SAW regarding ethical standards of Commissioners.
3. Copy of communication dated September 19, 2008 from Civil Service certifying Jason Porrini for the position of HVAC Technician.
4. Copy of communication dated September 22, 2008 from CABE regarding the district's Policy Manual.
5. Communication received September 24, 2008 from Terrell Antrum regarding high school football.
6. Copy of communications dated September 24, 2008 from Civil Service certifying Paulo Tavares for the position of Maintainer I and Christopher Markiewicz for the position of Mason.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Pinto, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 2, 2008.

HAYES: Motion made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Hearing none - all in favor, opposed, minutes have been approved. Now we have a CAPT recognition. I know we have a couple of our principals here. We do have some awards as well.

The following students received a recognition letter from Commissioner of Education McQuillan and a Certificate of Excellence from the Board of Education for performing on the advanced level of the Connecticut Academic Performance Test:

Mollie Corcoran	Kennedy High School
Michael DaSilva	Kennedy High School
Rachel Dziezynski	Waterbury Arts Magnet School
Simone Matusevice	Waterbury Arts Magnet School
Melissa Monteroso	Waterbury Arts Magnet School
Norbert Szmyt	Crosby High School
Jessica Mahoney	Wilby High School

PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD:

Upon a motion by Commissioner Stango and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:49 p.m.

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

Mike DaRocha, 14 Lounsbury Avenue, had the following comments: I'm here again, same issue I've been here all the time – concept of a school within a school. We have kids, just like these kids that got up today and I've got to applaud you people for that, that's excellent. You need to follow through and put it in the middle schools also. Because there's kids in the middle school, they're doing the same thing and nobody's giving them any recognition. I went to a Curriculum board meeting, I asked Commissioner Hayes and it was stated at the last meeting and he was going to ask the Board to consider revising the original proposal to start the concept of a school within a school in September. Disappointed, insulted by the people that were there. Never even came up, never even considered. Chain of command here is school administrator's answer to the Board, the Board answers to the taxpayers. You need to get that straight. These kids need help; you people aren't doing your jobs. To go there and just blatantly ignore the pleas of the people that are out here asking you to reconsider what you were going to do, that's insulting. You people should be ashamed of yourselves. I want to make one more comment, okay, school books, never meant to make that an issue but it was great because it brought up the problem that's going on here. The arrogance of the Board towards its citizens, the arrogance of school administrators towards the Board, your complacency, I can't believe that you people can sit there and throw 200 million plus dollars into a black hole every year and sit back and say oh, wow, great. Nothing is happening here, you people aren't doing what you were hired to do. I'm here tonight to ask you again to consider it. I will be there election night too to tell you "no, you're done". I'm just tired of it, I'm disgusted with it, I'm disgusted with what I'm seeing here. Another thing I want to address and then I'm done, the \$40,000 going to private schools, no way. What you people should be doing is giving these poor people a voucher to help them pay their tuition. Thank you very much.

Lisa Lessard, 598 Sylvan Avenue, had the following comments: I'm here cordially tonight just to invite you to, I know that you have a Workshop on this date, but October 6, 2008 we're making an historical moment here in Waterbury. I know I sent you all literature on. Legislation, ethics committee from Hartford, is coming down, one attorney and five commissioners in accordance to and I will quote them "the code of ethics here in Waterbury with all municipalities or a lack of. So I know you have a Workshop that starts, usually the Board of Aldermen start at seven, we have it running between six and seven before Board of Aldermen. Everybody is welcome, everybody needs to come down, they said you can give a verbal statement as well as written testimony if you'd like. You all know me I already have my three minutes speech and all my copies to go with everybody. It's just we want the public's business to go forth and to keep on going, I know you've all been watching aldermen chambers meetings and how they seem to be

running not too well at the present point because of some of the municipalities and how they act towards each other and we're not just seeing democrats, republicans, or independents, we're saying together as a whole. We want the public business to go forth as it should. And as well as, this is very heart aching for me, I have tears coming down my face as I'm gonna speak about this, but I'm just here to inform so you know, I know you guys were all at school on Friday and probably didn't see the breaking news on Channel 30, Channel 60, Channel 3, Channel 4 and Channel 8 and my mother who lives in Leominster, Massachusetts, it went national and I hope you take notice of this. The American School for the Deaf in West Hartford where my daughter used to attend and still has many friends there, we have a lot of students that go to the American School for the Deaf, still from the City that are residential students, this is the ad that was in the newspaper and on the internet, Julie Denno, basically was just arrested for sexual assault on a 15 year old in the dormitory and the terrible part about this is the teacher is not denying, the teacher said yes, she had an affair with this student for three months. This is just unbelievable. I'm in shock. My daughter went there for seven years. I just want everybody here to know especially the Superintendent of Special Needs who probably already knows. We have many students in this City that still go there talking about safety and health of our students, there's a teacher that's been arrested, she's on \$75,000 bond waiting arraignment in Bristol courts for such sexual assault on a minor. This is not okay, something needs to be done, our children need to be looked at. I'm a special education advocate; my phone has been ringing off the hook since Friday with students that still go there that my daughter is friends with. Thank you and God bless.

Ralph Belvedere, Jr., 24 Dalton Avenue, had the following comments: I am a lifelong Waterbury resident of almost 50 years and Mr. Chairman, Honorable Board members; I'm here this evening to speak on behalf of 11.1, which is the Waterbury textbook loan on your agenda this evening. I'm very familiar between myself and my family with Waterbury education. I attended Hendrickson School; I attended St. Margaret McTernan School which is now Chase Collegiate. My wife attended Kingsbury School and Sacred Heart High School. My daughter is an eighth grade student at St. Mary's School and my son is a graduate of St. Mary's School and this past spring from the Kennedy SOAR Program. Waterbury is a wonderful place, I am very proud to say I am a resident of Waterbury. The people of Waterbury are wonderful people. The children of Waterbury are very special. It is very important that all of the children of the City of Waterbury benefit to every extent that they may whether they're in the public school, the parochial school, or the private school. There are teachers in all of these venues that truly care about their children that they teach. There are children in all of these venues that have a desire and a willingness to learn. I really feel from the bottom of my heart that no one should be left out in no way, shape or form and I encourage you this evening to pass this to benefit all of the children of the City of Waterbury. Thank you.

Patricia Daniels, 78 Northwood Drive, had the following comments: I'm here tonight to ask for your support for the textbook program for private Catholic Schools in the City of Waterbury, my son Chris attends Blessed Sacrament along with Zachary who is a student council vice president, and his sister Haley. They all attend Blessed Sacrament and hopefully I'll have a daughter next year who will be attending the kindergarten program there. My family is not Roman Catholic but I do send my son to a Catholic school as I want not only a great education but also the structure, discipline,

and the faith base that I believe children need. I'm a lifetime Waterbury resident and a taxpayer in this City. I see this program as a smart financial move for this City; we need to secure the future of our private schools for without them we'd have a greater burden on the City. If you consider the cost of the space, the teachers, and all of the other related expenses for 3,341 students it would cost the City millions more each year to provide the educational resources to our kids in the Catholic and private schools. Currently the cost for attending a private or Catholic school in this City is paid for by a child's family, however I would like to just say that the gentleman who spoke before if you would consider vouchers we would greatly appreciate vouchers. I'm sure you're aware that the financial demands for everyone has increased dramatically especially in this past year. As a parent I have to tell you that it's really a struggle for me to pay tuition and our schools serve primarily lower to middle income families such as mine, not the wealthy as some may think. By implementing the textbook loan program it will obviously reduce the costs for the books in these schools and therefore benefit the students and the families. We have witnessed two Catholic grammar schools in the City close in recent years. We don't want to see any more of our Catholic schools close due to financial limitations. We are an alternative to the public school system but we are still City residents and City taxpayers. I thank you for your time and I urge you to support the creation of this textbook program. Thank you.

David Roy, 145 Morton Road, had the following comments: As a parent of two children who've benefited from both public and parochial education in the City of Waterbury I'd like to thank the Mayor Jarjura and the Board of Aldermen for asking the City officials to subsidize the cost of books for City children attending private schools. Those who are against this proposal do not realize that the existence of these private schools in Waterbury relieves the financial burden of the Waterbury School System for educating every child in this City. Those of us who choose to send our children to private or parochial schools pay the same amount of taxes we would pay if our children were attending public schools. We contribute overall to the Waterbury School System through these taxes although we are paying for our children to attend school elsewhere. Imagine how overcrowded and overtaxed our school system would be if there no private schools and every child in Waterbury attended public school. I believe that the funds needed to provide and education for these additional children would be far above the \$40,000 that is being requested for books. Not every child attending private school comes from a wealthy family. Most students are from working class families who are struggling to make ends meet like everyone else. For one reason or another these families have decided to send their children to private school and make whatever financial sacrifice that requires. In most cases our parochial schools are struggling to maintain older buildings that require repairs and improvements in order to continue to provide effective education. Parents of the students often volunteer their own time and services to make these repairs and keep the schools functioning. So this contribution of \$40,000 from the City to purchase books for these schools would be greatly appreciated. It's a positive action that will improve the quality of education in this City and how can anyone argue with that. Thank you.

Kathy Craig, 290 Newridge Avenue: To go back to reiterate Mr. DaRocha's statement I was also here a few weeks ago and spoke about the missing books. The next few days with the articles in the Republic-American, they found the books. Ironically after Mr. DaRocha spoke about his daughter, she received all of her books by the end of that week. Some brand new, some fairly new, but she has all of them. So my second

question to everyone here tonight – do I and every other parent have to single our children out to get the books they deserve? I'm not saying I'm not in favor of the private schools getting support, I think every child deserves. If we have to go to vouchers versus books, every child needs the books to learn. That is the future of our City and the future of the United States. Please someone find the books for our kids. Thank you.

Fitz Powell, 39 Walnut Street, had the following comments: I have thought of an idea for the kids, students in the school today. As a parent I have a child attending Crosby High School, the idea is how to get the youths who are musically inclined interested in recordings to get involved in an after-school recording program. This program would be only for our students who are in good academic standards and who are looking to pursue a career in music recordings and performance. Our youths are more interested in the music they hear and the radio in our society today. And they seem to be drawn to the music more than their lessons. I believe this program, the students who are not doing well will put forth more effort in their studies, they really want the opportunity to participate in this program they'll show more interest in order to get into the program of doing recordings and stuff like that because there's not much stuff for the youths to do after school they're more like on the streets doing . . . stuff. So to implement this program the Board of Education would have to approve a place within the school premises and seek assistance from neighboring recreation centers. If the school Board cannot afford instruments, equipments, then we would probably seek sponsorship from leading music equipment retailers and I personally will give my assistance to the program because I'm into music so I would assist in order to get it started if there is someone who can look into this.

Edward Chamberlain, Teacher, Crosby High School, had the following comments: I'm just here to say thank you. This past year you made a decision to provide us with after school buses a couple of days a week and I want to tell you it's a success. As some of you may remember I came here last year leading the Crosby Robotics team. I'm happy to say through your efforts we had four students graduate and we have doubled the size of the remaining team because the kids can get home. So to the Board, thank you, you did something good, the buses are being populated and it's greatly appreciated by those of us who have after school activities.

Athena Wagner, 41 Kenneth Circle, had the following comments: I've been a resident of Waterbury all my life. I was fortunate enough to attend St. Mary's Grammar School, Notre Dame Academy High School for girls. My children have been brought up through the public and parochial school system in Waterbury – my oldest being 27, next one 23, and my son just graduated at 18. I have a problem with the book situation. I don't know, I'm not familiar with all of the details, I happened to catch it on Channel 16 one night and the only thing I have to say about that is yes, every one of our children in this City deserves a quality education but we don't have that. Between the parochial schools and the public schools and the private schools the playing field is not level. When people pay, they get what they pay for. Public school is not up to standard and I have a problem loaning books to anyone else when we have students for years and years and years, it's not a new problem, this did not just come up today, that do not have their books for their classes and work that they need to get done. Until you insure that every single public school student has their books that they need and are required for their studies I ask you not to loan books to anyone else unless the public school

students have everything that they're supposed to be provided for provided to them. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 7:11 p.m.

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

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: The Project Opening Doors Kick-off occurred this morning at Wilby High School. The announcement this morning of this Advance Placement program was attended by many dignitaries, such as representatives from Exxon Mobil, the National Math Science Initiative, and CBIA, along with several state legislators, (Joan Hartley, Larry Butler, Selim Noujaim, Jeffrey Berger), the Mayor, several commissioners, both assistant superintendents, many students who will be participating in the program as well as parents and staff. This was a wonderful event to announce an outstanding opportunity for students.

As many of you are aware, negotiations with SAW have begun. Hopefully in this time of economic downturn, we can reach an agreement that benefits our students.

The WTA's annual New Teacher Dinner will be held at the Connecticut Grand Hotel tomorrow at 5:30.

SAW's annual social will be held from 3 to 6 pm at Vasi's Restaurant on Thursday, Oct. 2.

North End Middle School is hosting an appreciation breakfast for its bus drivers tomorrow morning at 7:45.

Woodrow Wilson School is hosting a workshop on homework for parents tomorrow from 11:30 to 1 in the Parents Room.

There will be a Title I Parents Workshop on CMT's Wednesday evening from 6:30 to 8:30 at Maloney School.

There is going to be a voter registration at our high schools on Thursday. This will be a one day only event. It will be non-partisan and it will be conducted outside of classrooms, for example in the school media center, or cafeteria. Students who are age 18 and eligible to vote may stop by and register. This event has been arranged by our Social Studies Supervisor Joseph Nole. It has occurred almost every year since I've been here. I always cooperate with this request as long as it is done on a non-partisan basis. Unfortunately, this year a newspaper article came out about the event before I had the opportunity to notify you. I was planning to make that announcement this evening as the event is taking place later this week. But nevertheless, it's something we normally do and I'm the one who gave permission for the go ahead in it.

This is not in my Superintendent's Report but I just want to assure the folks that are still here that we do have books for all of our students, for all of our students. There may not be books that are being sent home as of yet, I have to check into that and find out

why not. I'll check into that situation that was mentioned tonight. But there are books for every student in our school system.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: I would also like to add that the ROTC, the Marine ROTC at Wilby was also there to meet and greet us and sort of host us at that event this morning and the Culinary Arts students and teacher was there to provide the culinary art that we were able to partake in. It was a wonderful event and it's also something that is hopefully going to be replicated in our other schools. We were one of only nine high schools in the State of Connecticut and one of only nine states that I think was selected to get this so it was a highly competitive opportunity that the Wilby Principal, who has left, but after talking to most of the people she was the driving force behind it but obviously she couldn't do it without the teachers and staff that are there and those students. There was a big group of students there and I think it was Dr. Snead that made mention of it, it's almost like the way things should be, if you look at those kids from all different backgrounds, racial, ethnic, probably economic backgrounds, and to see them all coming together. Some of them were in the ROTC, others were part of the Culinary Arts Department, it was really one of those times it makes you happy to go to the event. It was also a great honor to hand out those rewards for the CAPT and I think it is something, actually Mr. DaRocha stole my idea cause I had told him I wanted to do this for the CMT's. I think we ought to do that, find out our top students of the CMT's at fourth, sixth and eighth grade, recognize them. If the State doesn't we should do it locally. We'll have to develop some criteria. I'm sure we can do that through Dr. Sequeira's office and Mrs. Cullinan and Dr. Snead.

And finally, Dr. Snead I was going to ask, I was little disconcerted about the two responses we got from Dr. Sequeira that I read through the newspaper and your comments and some of the teacher's comments. I'd like to get to the bottom of this; I'd like to know if we have a policy, if we don't have a policy if we should have a policy, but when we have the books why aren't they all provided for the students? I think it was horrible, as one of the parents said tonight, we had one person get up and talk about not having enough books and their kids all of a sudden got a lot of books. This is ridiculous; it makes us all look bad. I know Mr. DaRocha said something about us not doing our job, we're doing what we can, the Mayor provided us with the money through the budget for these books, we want to make sure that they're being used. If they're not being used then tell us why. It's as simple as that and I don't know how else to say it but I'd like to have you and Dr. Sequeira on the same page because I was really confused about the different responses. So at our Workshop I'd like to have a report from you and Dr. Sequeira basically telling us the same thing and understanding what that means so we have a better understanding of it. I know my daughter at Kennedy, stepdaughter, she hasn't gotten all her books either, she's got less books than covers that I bought and I only bought three. So as far as I know she's only gotten two books. And if the issue is they're assessing, that's way too long to be assessing, we should know what these kids have, the abilities they have, the results of their test scores, we shouldn't be spending three or four weeks reassessing prior to testing. That's all I have to say on that.

And once again the CMT stuff, if we can get that, I'd like to have those handed out, pretty soon, prior to the kids taking the test again, to provide some kind of incentive for the students, to let them know that we do care what they do and we want to

acknowledge those who do the best. Next on our Agenda we go to our Consent Calendar.

SWEENEY: Request to remove Item 9.1 please.

HAYES: We have to get some kind of flow here, we have it on the Agenda, should I ask who wants the items removed before I read them all? So at this point Commissioner Sweeney asks to remove Item 9.1.

THERIAULT: I request that Items 9.4, 5, and 6 be removed.

President Hayes proceeded to read the consent items.

9. CONSENT CALENDAR

Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to approve Consent Calendar Items 9.2, 9.3, and 9.7 through 9.13, as listed:

- 9.2 *Committee on Grants:* With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the 2008-2010 Consolidated Application for Federal Grants.
- 9.3 *Committee on Grants:* With the approval of the Committee on Grants, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval for Rotella Magnet School to apply for Technology Professional Development Services through Regional Education Service Centers (RESC) as funded through the Connecticut State Department of Education Enhancing Education Through Technology Grant.
- 9.7 *Committee on Curriculum:* With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the new curriculum for the courses of "Foundations of Music and Music Theory I & II".
- 9.8 *Committee on Curriculum:* With the approval of the Committee on Curriculum, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of the restructuring of high school level math courses with the inclusion of the new courses "The Study of Linear and Quadratic Functions and Functions Beyond the Quadratic".
- 9.9 *Committee on Transportation:* With the approval of the Committee on Transportation, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of Amendment Number One to the Busing for Special Transports Contract with All-Star Transportation, LLC.
- 9.10 *Committee on Schoolhouses:* With the approval of the Committee on Schoolhouses, the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of a contract with J & J Paving, LLC, to provide parking lot paving at Walsh Elementary School.
- 9.11 *Committee on School Activities:* Use of school facilities by school organizations and/or City departments.

- 9.12 *Committee on School Activities:* Use of school facilities by outside organizations/waiver requests.
- 9.13 *Committee on School Activities:* With the approval of the Committee on School Activities, the Superintendent of Schools recommends permission be granted to M. Thompson, MMS, and 22 chaperones to take 174 students to New York, NY on November 19, 2008 to attend a showing of The Little Mermaid.

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

10. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT

- 9.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner White and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted by roll call vote, *yet to motion failed*, to approve for Waterbury Public Schools to participate in the evaluation of the Waterbury Police Activity League (PAL) as requested by the Connecticut Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity. Said evaluation shall be conducted by Central Connecticut State University's Institute for the Study of Crime and Justice.**

HAYES: Motion is made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: I had asked to have this removed because I still tonight cannot see how they can possibly address the scope of what they are looking for from the district without a large input of time and resources from our staff. And I think it's a noble idea, I think it's information that PAL can certainly use, however I am concerned that the scope that they have put out there is overly broad and if they would bring it back and narrow it down I might be more comfortable with it. But I am concerned with the scope.

HAYES: Anyone else? Commissioner Stango.

STANGO: I'm not quite sold on the importance or the need of this evaluation right now. I'm just not ready yet. I'm a little bit tired of organizations wanting to delve in Waterbury's kids' files, wanting to interview them, wanting to ask them questions, wanting to put Waterbury on another actuarial table. I remind you of Commissioner Theriault a couple of weeks ago when he said you know what, he's tired of all these new positions and from now on he's gonna vote against them. And I have to appreciate that, cause I'm kind of tired of surveys, I'm kind of tired of different organizations wanting to interview students, we don't know what the questions are, we don't know how they're going to be chosen, we don't know if they need to opt in or opt out. I'm tired of people delving into the files of police records; it's just a lot to it. If we had to evaluate PAL I can tell you right now from my experience it's a great organization, they're doing a great job. Many Waterbury teachers are involved in the PAL program, many of them work in it, and mostly all of them have contributed money to it. If we want to find out if they're doing a good job at PAL let's ask some of those teachers. If we want to find out, want to evaluate PAL further, let's ask some of the police officers who also have volunteered their time, I'm sure they're gonna tell you it's a great program. It's just become so tiresome that everybody else wants to let's study Waterbury, let's see what

they're doing, lets question the kids. It probably philosophically speaking is a good standard to find out and evaluate PAL but I; right now I'm just not ready for it. So maybe in the future I'm going to vote against all surveys like Commissioner Theriault is voting against all hirees. Thank you very much.

HAYES: Any further discussion? Hearing none I think we need a roll call vote on this please.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Yeas: Commissioners Flaherty-Merritt, Laccone, Pinto, White,
and President Hayes - 5

Nays: Commissioners D'Angelo, Harvey, Stango, Sweeney, and Theriault – 5

MOTION FAILS 5 TO 5

HAYES: This was on the Consent Calendar for a reason and I don't know what happened.

9.4 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to approve a new position of "Childcare Worker" for the Wilson Family Resource Center.

HAYES: Motion is made and seconded. Any discussion?

THERIAULT: The reason that I requested that this particular item be deleted from the Consent Calendar is because I have a problem with all new positions. I had requested at the Workshop that this particular item be explained and the reason I have a problem with new jobs being created, as I said last week, look at the stock market but if you looked at it today you'd be trembling, the lowest point in the history of the stock exchange. I have a problem with new jobs being created and we're left with the responsibility of hanging onto those jobs. But in this particular case I was told that these positions are only being created for the duration of the grant which is three years but actually the positions themselves are so so very important in terms of reading and tutoring and helping our pre-k students, as I said at our Workshop, bending the twig rather than bending the tree or the branch. And I understand that these three positions in a sense aren't new positions but have been created six months ago when we approved the grant. So reluctantly I'm going to vote for these new positions because it's really a misnomer because they're really not new positions, the positions have already been created six months ago. But I look very askance at any new positions that are coming down the line and all of us Board members should, askance means to look at it very trepidatiously President Hayes cause you know that's one of my favorite, I thought I'd throw a new one at you tonight. I think it's so very important and Commissioner Stango is absolutely right, these new jobs that come down the pike, if they're actually new positions and these two positions are misnomers because they've been already created by a grant that we've already approved so it's water under the bridge and over the dam. So I'm gonna vote for them because as I said, they're so so very important but any new positions that are created they must be gone when the grant is gone, we can't then go down the line and say you know these positions are very important, we must continue them keeping in mind that each of these teachers that we're hiring, we are hiring them between forty and fifty thousand dollars with benefits and I don't know

quite how many positions in the five years have been created on the Board but I would say many, many, many positions have been created and I for one, with the exception of these three, will not be voting on any more whether they've been approved by a grant or not until the smoke clears on this economic condition and we are going to be suffering the pangs and arrows of the dilemma with regard to the budget in the State. It's only a matter of time before we're in the same situation that Hartford, New Haven, and all these other large cities are in. So that's why I wanted them deleted so we could vote on them individually, I happen to be in favor of them but only reluctantly. Thank you.

HAYES: Any further discussion? Hearing none – all in favor, opposed.

9.5 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner D'Angelo, it was voted unanimously to approve the job specifications for and two (2) new positions of "Pre-K Literacy Coach" for the Early Reading First Program Grant.

HAYES: Motion is made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Hearing none – all in favor, opposed, motion passed unanimously.

9.6 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner D'Angelo, it was voted unanimously to approve the job specifications for and two (2) new positions of "Bilingual Pre-K Literacy Coach" for the Early Reading First Program Grant.

HAYES: Motion is made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none – all in favor, opposed, motion passed unanimously.

11. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Item #11.1

WHITE: Ladies and gentlemen, with the approval of the Committee of the Whole the Superintendent of Schools recommends approval that the Superintendent of Schools, or his designee, be authorized to loan free textbooks to pupils attending nonpublic schools per CGS 10-228a, **SO MOVED.**

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: **Second.**

HAYES: Motion is made and seconded as read. Is there any discussion?

WHITE: I'd like to make a motion to amend that that for fiscal year 2008-2009 a pilot program to loan textbooks to non-public schools, as authorized under CGS 10-228a, be implemented and that the Superintendent, or his designee, be authorized to develop and implement procedures consistent with the statute and within the \$40,000 appropriation made by the Board of Aldermen for this purpose, and that quarterly reports be provided to the Board of Education, **SO MOVED.**

D'ANGELO: **Second.**

HAYES: Is there any discussion on the amendment?

STANGO: Rarely has a topic come before us that has generated as much public interest as this textbook loan program for private schools. Since this program has come before the Board I have been to a number of functions – both social and public, I've been to a political event, christening, picnic, funeral, testimonial, these people I see all the time, never before have they asked me about a vote this Board was taking or how I was coming down on the issue. But now that's all they want to talk about. I told them over and over I would gather the information and I would listen to the facts before I made a decision. Some information came before this Board last week; it came in the form of a presentation by the Mayor. Mayor Jarjura gave the history of being approached to set up a procedure to implement the statute regarding textbook loans to private schools. He explained the City had a budget surplus so he would be granting the request. Money would come from the General Fund and not from the Education budget. He said the program was for this year and may not be available next year and if it was the procedure would still be the same, it would still come from the General Fund. More information came from Commissioner Theriault, he gave input. He said the program was very altruistic. However, concern must be made to abide by the separation of church and state he said. He said this could be a dangerous precedent. I gave his comments some thought, he is absolutely correct. However, in my opinion I do not believe that this program rises to the level of compromising the issue of separation of church and state. I remember that there are precedents already in place here – the district provides busing, the district already provides special education services, a psychologist, a speech pathologist, the district oversees funds in various titles through the Educational Grants Office, certainly the worth of these services is well over \$40,000 and they have been in place a long time. Then I listened as Commissioner Sweeney shed some light on the subject. Commissioner Sweeney possesses a clarity of thought. She can see procedural issues and unintended consequences even before the author of the law can. She is a purest when it comes to how a law reads. Her points were that the procedure was backwards. Requests must be made and decisions to grant the request before appropriations are given. She wants the statute followed to the letter of the law and I totally agree with her. That's the way it should be. However, I feel sometimes the letter of the law gets in the way of the intent of the law. The intent of the law is clear, loan books to the City of Waterbury students in private schools within district when they are requested properly. We get muddled when we try to implement a procedure. We try to interpret the law and make definitions of terms. Part of this resolution reads "to develop and implement a procedure consistent with the statute". If this passes I would stress that we take time to define that phrase – consistent with the statute. Then I listen to Mr. Guidone explain the proposed process. He is an expediter and he's trying to put all books out in the most efficient and painless way. Again following the intent of the law. So all of this information I tried to assemble, I tried to evaluate it and I tried to come to a decision. There is not a clear cut answer but I will vote my conscious; . . . on the interpretation of the facts I learned at the Workshop and other investigations. Another interesting piece of information, as Mr. President Hayes mentioned earlier, the letter from the American Atheists; we received this letter, a very blunt letter, giving us warning to stay out of this program. It's a strong letter and ironically it has put the fear of God in me. I would have to make that consideration if they are against it then it gives me cause to favor it. To me at the end of the day when all is said and done and all votes are taken if this program puts the book in the hands of

a Waterbury youngster then that's got to be a good thing. Thank you for my extended time.

SWEENEY: I know we spoke about this at the Workshop and the idea of amending this and I got to tell you the amendment doesn't speak to anything that I asked for last week. The process is still backwards, \$40,000 is still in there that is not our money that is the City's side of the budget and we should not even be discussing it. So in terms of the amendment, I'm not in favor of the amendment. Thank you.

THERIAULT: I hope you're going to let me speak as long as Commissioner Stango, I know you like him better than me. That being said, I know you'll be fair. I've spoken about this several times. I am a practicing Catholic, I did go to parochial schools, I did pay tuition, I did pay for my books. I had a great education and the parochial school system and the non-public schools provide a tremendous benefit to us, you can't argue with that. If we have the extra money and we're gonna continue to have the extra money, thousands, hundreds of thousands, if not maybe even millions, to provide additional costs for other areas, so be it. I do think it rises to the level of separation of church and state because I think we're opening a Pandora's Box here. A sort of Methuselah of many headed snakes. It's a pitfall and we have something we need to watch out for because once we crack this door of giving money to non-public institutions they're going to be knocking each and every year and saying it's my entitlement, it was given to me last year and I want more this year and lets expand the program. On any given day I'd say yea, I want a Board member representing all the people in the City of Waterbury, not just a few in the non-public, many, many thousands in the non-public actually and they do a tremendous job of educating the kids. But this program does not address something that's very near and dear to my heart and that is the situation with regard to poverty. If this program were putting a book in the hands of a student that were poverty ridden, I'd say okay. But it seems to me even the middle class is poverty ridden now because they're struggling so hard to pay their tuition and their books and everything else. It's not that I'm not sympathetic to their plight, I am sympathetic to their plight; however that is the choice the individuals made when they chose to remove their students from the public schools and put them in the non-public and parochial. They made that choice of double taxation, paying for their education twice – once in the public school where they're not getting it and again in the parochial system or the non-public school where they're getting it. Think of where this money could go. Sacred Heart, great school; Holy Cross, great school; Chase Collegiate, great school. And there are some kids at Chase Collegiate that are very poor that could use these books. I'm opposed to it because I think it is going to create such a precedent that we will be looking back on this decision and saying what did we do? Half of the Board of Aldermen that I spoke to they don't even realize how they voted for this, they're still trying to figure out how'd they get it passed us. I talked to several, at least five, and they said I don't remember passing this, they're going to have to check with their Clerk. So I mean obviously it wasn't put out in a form like this that's totally transparent, it was put out in the guise of some other thing and they thought they were doing the right thing and, or maybe they actually all knew about it. But that's not what I'm hearing because I received at least three or four phone calls from different people saying I don't ever remember voting on it. So, I'm not gonna take any more time because I think I took about three minutes about the same time that Commissioner Stango took. So thank you very much for indulging me Mr. President.

D'ANGELO: I think I'm probably looking at it a little too simplistically but mayors, governors, presidents, at the end of the fiscal year get a ton of requests from community people, from community organizations to do things with a little bit of money they may have or in some cases may not even have and most of these requests they say no. But they choose a few where they have an opportunity to do some good for members of the community and we're being asked by the Mayor to help him, to use us as a conduit, to help him do something that he wants to do that he thinks will help the members of the community and I don't see any reason why we should stand in the way. It's, obviously it's all our money because we're all taxpayers but it's not coming out of our budget, it's coming out of the General Fund budget, it's something that him and the Aldermen decided that they wanted to do and I think we should go along with this and I'll be voting yes.

HARVEY: I will be brief Commissioner Theriault. I really want to support this but I am still unclear as most of the parents that came here this evening as well as the ones that I have seen and spoken to over the past couple of weeks regarding our textbooks and we need to clear the air regarding our textbooks. I'm not pointing a finger at anyone but we need to clear the air regarding our students and the textbooks. So I would like to support it but I'd like some reassurance that our students will be taken care of first.

HAYES: Commissioner Harvey, I think we got that assurance from Dr. Snead. I think the issue of whether we have books for our kids is not an issue, it's how we decided to either distribute them or not distribute them, that's why I've asked Dr. Snead to respond to that because we've got a different, we just got conflicting reports. So I'd hate to have you vote on this based on the fact that you believe we don't have enough books, that's all.

SWEENEY: Point of order, that's not what's on the table, a motion to add an amendment.

HAYES: I was still speaking to the amendment but she asked me, or she wanted to have it cleared up, whether we have enough books.

SWEENEY: I just wanted to make sure everybody was aware that we're voting to add an amendment at this point, we're not voting on the amendment itself.

HARVEY: We're in discussion right now.

HAYES: The discussion right now is on the amendment.

SWEENEY: To add the amendment. We haven't added the amendment yet.

HARVEY: And I think I started with I would like to support this but I also said that I would like for our issues to be cleared. So I think it's appropriate.

THERIAULT: I'm gonna raise a point of order. Through you President Hayes, shouldn't we have voted on the original motion before we vote on the amendment?

SWEENEY: No.

HAYES: My understanding is we vote on the amendment as it's read, discuss it as it's read, and vote it up or down. We don't have to vote to add an amendment. We're amending the motion that's on there. So this discussion is appropriate to the language on the amendment.

THERIAULT: I think Steve Laccone should be our next parliamentarian because of his experience with the Oversight Board.

HARVEY: I'd like to call the question.

HAYES: Is there anyone else who hasn't spoken that would like to speak. So now the motion is to move the question. All in favor, opposed. Now again, we're voting on the amendment as written. If it passes it will then become a part of the full motion. Roll call please.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO AMEND THE MOTION:

Yeas: Commissioners D'Angelo, Flaherty-Merritt, Harvey, Laccone, Pinto,
Stango, White, and President Hayes - 8

Nays: Commissioners Sweeney and Theriault - 2

MOTION TO AMEND PASSES 8 TO 2

HAYES: Is there any further discussion?

SWEENEY: Obviously I'll be voting no. I come from a family of seven and my father worked two jobs so that four of those seven could attend parochial school and pay tuition and at a time when we were fighting for busing for parochial school children, my father's stance was take care of your own and be careful when you take state money. So while we walked up hill six feet in the snow to get to the school my father said no buses. So I have qualms about that in and of itself but my no really addresses the fact that I truly believe that we are not, we are not addressing the Statute which says that the Board should come up with the process, the requests should come in, the Board should pass on those requests or the designee if that's what you want to do, should pass on those requests and then you look for a way to fund those requests. Be aware that this law has been on the books since 1975, I know no requests have come across since I have been on the Board for the last three years and the requests are now coming in based on the changes back in January that say instead of lending a book that is already in our repertory, that we already buy as a district, we will now go to our book vendor and anything on that list a private school can pick from. We now have to make a separate purchase in order to comply with this request. In the past they would have requested a book that is already on a list that we used, that is used within the district that we would have in our stores, we would lend them, that book will come back. In this case we will now be buying books that we as a district ourselves will likely not ever use. They will simply be a lending library. Understand that and think about where those costs in the future could go and use your own conscience. My conscience tells me that I need to say no. Thank you.

THERIAULT: I liked your comment Commissioner Stango about the atheists; they seem to always get involved in something they don't have any business getting involved in. That being said they'll probably send me a letter about making that remark, maybe

they'll chastise me in some way. My last comment is going to be this and I'll bring you back to the parable of the catechism you know when the shepherd was minding the sheep. Beware of a wolf in sheep's clothing, beware of the ultraistic cause, beware of what's buried in all of this and when you vote for it you do own it. It may not be in our budget this year but you can bet your booties it will be in your budget next year. It will be in this budget next year, the year after, and the year after that. And I have a feeling that as we go forward with our schools and managing our school system with the fuel cost that we have and the energy cost that we have that are just going to translate into increases in the cost of books and increase in the cost of salaries and increase in everything else, if we own it, another favorite expression, caveat emptor, we must beware of the consequences of our actions. You want to do it, fine. I'll vote my conscience and every other Board member should vote there's and I know which way I'll be voting. Thank you.

HAYES: Anyone else? Roll call please.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON AMENDED MOTION:

Yeas: Commissioners D'Angelo, Harvey, Laccone, Pinto, Stango, White, and President Hayes – 7

Nays: Commissioners Sweeney and Theriault – 2

Abstention: Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt - 1

AMENDED MOTION PASSES 7/2/1.

HAYES: Motion passes.

12. COMMITTEE ON GRIEVANCES

12.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Stango and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve that WTA Grievances 07-08-37, 39 and 40 be denied. The assignments for the 2008 Summer School Program were made in accordance with Articles 13 and 3B. The application to request a summer school program posted position will be revised to allow the applicant to identify in ranking order their preference for grade level positions that are available. All qualified applicant requests will be given equal consideration in accordance with the WTA collective bargaining agreement.

HAYES: Motion is made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt.

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: I just question why this is being denied as we do have an option here, we've come to kind of an agreement about what should go on in terms with this grievance, and the people involved will be given equal consideration which is part of what they were looking for in the grievance. So I'm just curious to know why we're saying it's denied when in fact part of our statement is saying that we've accepted part of the agreement.

STANGO: As far as I understand it the grievance is denied because the contract was followed at that particular point in time. And then in discussion on the grievance within

Committee it was decided that we would revise the application process to make it clearer for the applicants to apply and know what they were applying for and what position they would be applying for. That's my understanding of it.

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: It regards the fact that it's being denied, although I agree it needs to be revised and that we do need to allow those applicants to have equal consideration, I don't like the fact that the grievances are being denied, that we do see there is some fault in the issue so I will be voting no.

HARVEY: I have to agree with that summation, I don't agree that it should be denied; I thought that there were some, on both parts, there were some revisions that needed to be made. So I can't really vote for this either, I didn't have a chance to really discuss it with you, but I can't vote for it to be denied.

LACCONE: Charles, would it be, I attended that just informally and I didn't participate within the meeting but wouldn't it be a better resolution, I thought basically both parties came to a resolution and I thought these grievances were going to be withdrawn prior to us having to vote on them. I think both parties agreed what the outcome should be and in that instance usually you just withdraw the grievance and they both go on their way.

STANGO: They were not withdrawn; if they were withdrawn it would have been fine with me too.

LACCONE: I'm not blaming you at all; I just thought that was what the process was. I don't disagree that by law they should be denied I guess because technically from a legal standpoint they didn't have any basis.

HARVEY: I recommend that we send this back to Committee because I am part of the Committee but I really didn't know that we were going to deny this and I . . . with Commissioner Laccone. That's my recommendation.

HAYES: The only question I would have is what about time frames?

HARVEY: Can I make a motion?

CLERK: It doesn't matter whether you make a motion or not, by their contract you have to vote on it within so many days of hearing it.

HAYES: I'm not sure what that is, is Mr. Frost here?

CLERK: Actually, I think it's beyond it at this point.

FROST: inaudible.

D'ANGELO: I was informally there as Steve was. You know these grievances, I've heard them, I think the grievants are not happy with the process that went forward and I think Central Office's position is that in the future there's things that could be done and will be done to insure that this doesn't happen again. But whether we approve, what's the word, whether we deny or approve the grievance, I don't think it's going to change anything, there's no retribution that we can give that's going to change anything either

way. So I think what they're looking for is to fix it so it doesn't happen again and that's what this motion does. I could be wrong but that's my opinion.

HAYES: Anyone else?

HAYES: I thought the retribution, I'm just using your word, the relief, that the applicants, as stated here, would be given consideration in accordance with the WTA . . . so that's what the agreement was. So because of that, I don't see where we can, I don't know if denial is the word.

STANGO: Again, as I understand it, putting that in writing the applicant would be given preferential treatment, we cannot say that. If the applicant who was denied the summer school program before follows this new procedure where they fit and where they know exactly where they're applying for, more than likely they would be given that position.

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: I'd like to clarify the issue as well. Part of, one of the other issues with this is that there were actually a group of teachers who were even denied positions in summer school simply by the grade taught so the whole process itself was flawed and the fact that it was flawed even though it might not be that administration sees it as a flaw, I see it in a flawed way and that we need to accept that. You know, it's not that we're giving back any money if we sustain this grievance, all we're doing is simply saying the exact same thing, yea, we acknowledge it was a mistake and we're not acknowledging that it was a mistake.

SWEENEY: . . . two different things, if we're simply admitting we have a flawed process and the grievance stays on the table then we have no choice but to deny the grievance because we did not violate – two different things. Admitting the process that we already have in place is flawed but if we followed that process, flawed though it was, we didn't violate that process, then the grievance is not upheld.

FLAHERTY-MERRITT: By excluding . . .

LACCONE: The language within the WTA agreement is broad enough that the criteria for which they used hold us to the legal standards. I think we all agree that it needs to be revised, in this motion they're going to revise it, but technically from a legal standpoint they did not violate the contractual obligation pursuant to their agreement. So in those instances ultimately you have to deny the grievance.

HAYES: Anyone else? Hearing none, we'll do a roll call please.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Yeas: Commissioners D'Angelo, Harvey, Laccone, Pinto, Stango,
Sweeney, and White – 7

Nays: Commissioners Flaherty-Merritt, Theriault, and President Hayes – 3

MOTION PASSES

13. COMMITTEE ON GRANTS

- 13.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to approve for Waterbury Arts Magnet School to apply for the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism “Arts Presentation” Grant.**

CLERK: This was added since the Workshop.

HARVEY: Do you want clarification on this? Are we all set?

HAYES: Motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Is anyone unclear? All in favor, opposed, it's unanimous.

14. SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner D'Angelo and duly seconded by Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file items 14.1 through 14.8, Superintendent's Notification to the Board:

14.1 Athletic appointments effective immediately:

Angeletti, Mark – Assistant Football Coach, WHS.
Arciero, Robert – Interim Assistant Football Coach, CHS.
George, Annemarie – Assistant Varsity Girls Volleyball Coach, KHS.
Nicholas, Stephanie – JV Volleyball Coach, CHS.

14.2 Grant funded appointments effective immediately:

Bozzuto, Denise – Instructional Tutor, MMS, maximum of 19.5 hours per week/10 months per year, non-union position, \$30.00 per hour without benefits.
Grubbs, Nadine – Secretary I, ECEP, 35 hours per week/12 months per year, \$11.09 per hour.
O'Donnell, Lillian - Instructional Tutor, MMS, maximum of 19.5 hours per week/10 months per year, non-union position, \$30.00 per hour without benefits.
Rosado, Melinda – Recruitment and Student Placement Coordinator, ECEP, 35 hours per week/12 months per year, non-union position, \$27,500 annual salary with benefits governed by SEIU.
Velez, Maria – Parent Liaison/Educator, Chase Family Resource Center, 35 hours per week/10 months per year, non-union position, \$15.00 per hour with benefits governed by SEIU.

14.3 NEMS STEM After School Program appointments, 10 hours per week at appropriate union rate:

Acting Administrator

Michael LoRusso

Data Clerk

Roberta Santamaria,

Teachers

Grace Halloran
Miriam Wilson
Jennifer McAloon

Paraprofessionals

Leslie DePaulo
Carole Maloney
Robin Andrikis

Yvonne de la Vega
David Habersang
Kevin Danaher-sub
MaryLou Addona-sub

Nydia Solla
Arlene Santamaria - sub
Kendra George - sub

14.4 **Assignments:**

Yost, Amy – SVP, Chase School.

14.5 **Appointments effective immediately:**

D'Angelo, Joann – Fine Arts Chairperson, WAMS.
Sylvester, David – Middle School Athletic Director.

14.6 **Teacher new hires:**

	Name	Assignment	Grade/Subject	Degree	Step	Start Date
91	Roden, Jaime	WSMS	Math - 8	BA	3	8/25/2008
92	Cremens, Lauren	NEMS	Guidance	MA	1	8/26/2008
93	Rusnov, Mary Ellen	WMS	Science - 8	MA	1	8/25/2008
94	Phoenix, Kristin	Bucks Hill	Psychologist	6+15	4	9/9/2008
95	Collins, Barry	Chase	Library/Media	6th	1	9/10/2008
96	Dabbo, Fran	CHS	Tech Ed	BS+60	5	9/11/2008
97	Wilson, Janet	CHS	Fam/Consum/Sci	MA	11	9/11/2008
98	Hasty, Jessica	City-wide	Vision	MA	3	8/28/2008

14.7 **Resignations:**

Cervellino, Carol – Walsh School (new hire), effective 8/28/08.
DeRosa, Jenna – School Psychologist, State Street School, effective 8/25/08.

14.8 **Adult Education appointments effective 9/30/08.**

Omar Andujar, Substitute, HS Credit Diploma Program, as needed at \$24 per hour.

HAYES: I just have one question. With the Middle School Athletic Director, I have no question about the appointment, I was just wondering, I know he was the girls' softball coach. Is he going to be allowed to do both? Carrie thinks there's a resignation following. He did a great job as the Crosby softball coach against all odds. Motion has been made and seconded to receive and place on file Superintendent's Notification to the Board – all in favor, opposed, unanimous. Nothing under New Business?

THERIAULT: As you know President Hayes I have been very diligent in following the test scores and watching them methodically with Dr. Sequeira and Tara Battistoni. Also it has been my arduous task of also following the absenteeism and Commissioner Stango and myself, through your graces, were appointed co-chair of a Blue Ribbon Commission through the mayor to examine truancy, absenteeism, and actually in the past three years, through our Central Office and I'll give you credit Dr. Snead, we have actually increased our attendance by 28%, significant. With that being said, I went further and looked at the graduation rates and I am still not very happy with graduation rates when we start off with 500 students in a particular class and we graduate about 250 of those, I don't know where they all go but some of them legitimately go to Adult Ed and the Service but many, many, many I suspect are dropping out. With that being

said I went further to look at the graduation list and I examined the graduation list to see if any student was absent 19 days or more because that would be the point of demarcation that we would draw a line in the sand and say you get no credit and you cannot graduate and that's assuming that these students did not have a previous appeal in their first, second, or third year. Without mentioning any names of students and without mentioning any particular schools, I found . . . at one particular school where there were more than a share of students on the graduation list that had 19 days or more absent. I researched it further and was told that these particular students had an appeal. So given that knowledge I went back over the previous three years to find out that some of these students in the previous three years had also accumulated 19 days or more in the previous years. So that would mean that they would have to get two appeals. So I think there's enough question mark here that we need to look at our students very carefully and I'm gonna request through Dr. Snead and your kind graces President Hayes that I be allowed to get some more information with Will Zhuta and to look at these students that graduated last year and look at their previous record and especially to look at the students this year to make sure that the guidance counselors, the vice principals, and the administrators are duly cognizant of the fact that they can't receive an appeal in their senior year if they received an appeal in the previous year. Now these standards were set by the Board at the elementary – two, the middle school is one and one at the high school. Now we know that the students have to bring in their note for being absent within three days, that we can no longer go to the doctor in June and come up with 25 absences going all the way back to September and October. But I'm a bit concerned here about this because we need to make sure that our rules and regulations are followed meticulously to the letter of the law. Now I can understand when a student is absent 19 days, I can understand a wink and a nod, but doesn't that sometime be, but sometimes it ends up 24 days and we say well, he's a good kid, so we give it to him. But the bad kid we don't. So I think we need to look at this, we need to examine this, our administrators and our guidance people and our teachers do an absolutely phenomenal job, I'm not trying to fault them in any way but it just seems to me that we need to have a standard and this standard must be fair for our elementary students, our middle school students, and our high school students. If anyone got any unfair advantage by getting another appeal in their senior year, it's not right, it shouldn't happen twice. So through your good graces President Hayes I'm gonna work with Dr. Snead and Will Zhuta and I'd like to research this a little bit more. I have approximately 10 students that I've looked at and I'm not really happy with some of the information that has been gathered so far. Thank you very much.

HAYES: Just for me I'd like to thank Commissioner Theriault, I know this is something that you really put your heart and soul into, it's important for us, we've spent a lot of time and effort to put these rules in place and the most important thing for these kids to learn is that they need to follow the rules, no exceptions made for anyone at any particular school, the same criteria, we worked long and hard on that. Now I'm looking forward to the results of your work with Dr. Snead and ultimately in fact this hasn't been followed then we'll have to take appropriate action against whoever didn't follow the policy. But I do again appreciate all the work you've done on it.

THERIAULT: Thank you President Hayes, I appreciate that compliment.

HAYES: So there's no more New Business? Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: I just wanted to make sure that we clarify because there is a differentiation here and there is the ability each year for a student to come forward and say I have 22 days out and I can justify an actual illness for three of those days and now has 19 days. An appeal, that one appeal that they get one time in their four high school years allows them to have more than 19 days absent, unexcused, and still pass. They pass with more than 19 days. The difference is that they make a justification and take days that are recorded as excused, justify them and they are moved, I'm sorry, days that are unexcused, justify them and move them to excused. An appeal only comes into play when they have unexcused days that exceed 19 and they cannot justify them as excused, they move forward with more than 19 unexcused days. So although a student has 25 excused days they are excused, we do not count those, it is more than 19 days unexcused. Once you move them to the excused column they don't count for withholding credit, they do not.

THERIAULT: Commissioner Sweeney, you're absolutely right, the administrators do have a bit of a latitude, but the latitude is supposed to be within the three particular days, it's not supposed to be 30 days later that they come up with a note and then they can change it, our rules say three days, it doesn't say 20 days or 30 days or 60 days. Using the criteria and the example that you just gave a student could come in in June with 99 notes, not go through an appeal, and have those days changed as they were in the past. But we decided that's not what we're going to do any longer. And I can understand that some of those days going from the unexcused column could then be changed to the excused column but that would show up in their record all the way back to their freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior year. In fact, there really shouldn't be anyone with 19 days or more even on the graduation list or on the list submitted downtown as the class of the graduates because all of those days should be changed prior to last day of school and all of their unexcused absences or unexcused tardies should then be changed to excused tardies or excused absences keeping in mind that every unexcused tardy or any unexcused early dismissal, three of those change into an absence. So looking back on the records if this was done kosher then our records would indicate that no student received an appeal or anything else prior to those particular years. But maybe they're diligently keeping track of that but I suspect in some cases not, but I don't know for sure.

SWEENEY: Just to clarify and Commissioner Theriault is correct on one point, the hearing which is where you would move your unexcused column, those hearings should come at four absences in a month or 10 absences in a year. And you're absolutely correct; if they're coming a week before graduation then something's wrong, absolutely.

HAYES: All right, we got that all cleared up, is there anything else under New Business?

WHITE: In our communications packet we received a letter that was sent to you and Dr. Snead from CABA Policy Service and I would make a motion, should I make a motion under New Business? I'd like to make a motion to have Dr. Snead contact...

SWEENEY: Just ask him to contact them; I don't think we need a motion.

WHITE: That's all I have to do, I don't have to make a motion, I think that it would be a valuable thing because it's something to jumpstart the policy program and we would

make sure we get it done. We have set a lot of policies but we haven't done them one section at a time. So Dr. Snead, could you do that, thank you.

HAYES: Anything else under New Business? How about under Old Business?

D'ANGELO: Just one, I guess more to Dr. Snead. You know I don't mind sitting here and getting lambasted by the public, it's a little disheartening that we can't respond because in a lot of cases the information that they have is not correct, but in some cases unfortunately it is. I don't understand this textbooks thing, I really don't. I don't understand how hard it is for someone to send an e-mail to every principal in the district tomorrow morning and ask "does every student in your building have the required textbooks that he or she needs on a daily basis?". If the answer is yes please let us know and if the answer is no please let us know what schools because you know I understand your position, I understand Dr. Sequeira's position and everyone else's but we still have parents coming to us telling us their students don't have textbooks. Now they might be making this up or they might be getting bad information from the children, that's possible, but I would like a definitive answer from Central Office by the end of the day tomorrow if possible telling us that yes in fact all students in the Waterbury School System have the textbooks that they need on a daily basis, if you could, please.

HAYES: I had asked for a report at the Workshop for discussion on this so we get instead of yes they all have the books or they don't have all the books, I want an explanation as to why the Assistant Superintendent said they should all have the books and the Superintendent says they haven't gotten the books yet but we have books up the gazoo. That's the problem that I'm hearing when I'm out there because people keep telling me that this kid or the grandkid doesn't have their books. To me if they don't have the books and there's a good reason for it we should be telling them what the good reason is. Instead we're saying no, you should all have the books but yet we hear they don't have all the books. I'd like a report from you Dr. Snead and Dr. Sequeira as to what our policy is and if in fact all the books are out and what are we going to do when we're told that everybody has their books but yet people come here and tell us we don't, what are we going to do to investigate that? I think we have to go beyond, my initial response is why not just e-mail everybody and if everybody says yes they've got them, fine, . . . unfortunately that's all we can do. But you know like I said it's something that, we've had a good start to the year, everything's going so well and now we got this coming up as a result of some other discussion, but we need to have a response as to what that is, what a parent could expect their child to bring home every day at every grade level at every school. I think the question has been answered as to do we have the textbooks; the answer has been pretty much yes. The question is why weren't they handed out. So when the answer is yes and they weren't handed out we got to find out why. And if they don't get handed out that means we didn't have the books then we got another issue. But I even read a remark from, I trust Mr. Puffer, one of the teachers said well we don't even teach from the textbook. I mean if that attitude is out there, we're providing textbooks but there are some . . . teachers deciding not to use the book, we've got to find out what it is, that's all. They may think they have a better way but if we're buying books for them and they're not using them it's a waste of money. So I think we should have this as a discussion at the Workshop with Dr. Snead telling us just how he wants it to be done, how it should be done, and what checks are going to be in place to make sure that it's done. Anyone else under Old Business?

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Flaherty-Merritt and duly seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:27 p.m. into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion concerning collective bargaining.

ATTEST: _____
Carrie A. Swain, Clerk
Board of Education