



THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

BOARD MEMBERS: Rosemarie Eller, *President*; Cayne Letizia, *Vice President*;
Sheryl Brady, James Hricay, Rose Lovitch, Charlie Norris, Randy Stein

February 13, 2023

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca congratulated students for their successes over the past month – including those in the “Mamma Mia” production at the High School and on various winter sports teams. He reported that Kindergarten registration is moving along, being transitioned to a more digitized process. He reminded parents to be vigilant. Safety and security is always on our minds and we strive to do everything possible to keep our children safe, including on social media.

On the budget, Dr. Ricca said we are pleased to see the Governor following through on her promise to fully fund Foundation Aid. There will also be an increase in PreKindergarten funding.

Dr. Ricca introduced **Student Liaison Sinclair Harris** who reviewed school activities.

RIDGEWAY UPDATE: Principal Dr. Kimberly Crawford first thanked the Board, Dr. Ricca and the Cabinet for their unwavering support. She noted important guiding principles at Ridgeway: communication, connection, collaboration and commitment, and reviewed some of the activities at the school for teachers and students. She stressed the importance of equitable participation in all activities and noted the change in terminology from “free and reduced price lunches” to “complimentary.” A slide presentation showed photos of the various grades and events, highlighting Career Day, math games, “Beautiful Me” and various other celebrations. She also noted a new effort to access assessments in native languages. Board Members thanked Dr. Crawford for her informative update.

INSTRUCTIONAL BUDGET: Dr. Debbie Hand, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, began this presentation by noting that there will be no additional funding or positions added for next year. Everything to be presented is either a reallocation of funds or moving to next steps in the process. Beginning with PreKindergarten, Dr. Hand moved through the various programs and subject areas. Dr. Ricca added that this is an extraordinarily complex system and Dr. Hand has done a great job crystallizing all the information and where we are headed. Board Members thanked Dr. Hand.

BOARD COMMENTS: Board Member Charlie Norris noted the amazing production of “Mamma Mia” performed at the High School. Vice President Cayne Letizia congratulated the basketball and hockey teams for their successes and also spoke about the Westchester Putnam School Boards Legislative Forum. Board Member Sheryl Brady also spoke about this forum and also the National School Board Association’s Equity Symposium which she attended. Board President Rosemarie Eller praised performances of “Beyond Broadway” at Ridgeway and the Singer/Songwriter’s Club at the High School. She also attended the Youth Bureau Mentor Day, the League of Women Voters series on the roles of elected officials, and the White Plains One meetings held by the City.

PERSONNEL: The Board extended the appointment of **Eileen McGuire** as Interim Assistant Principal of Ridgeway School to June 30th. The appointment of **Gabriel Robles** to the permanent position, made last month, will take effect on July 1st.

Resignations for the purpose of retirement were accepted from five Teaching Assistants, ten Teachers and two Administrators, as follows: Teaching Assistants: **Maxine Gentry**, Ridgeway; **Marcia Mosley**, Middle School-Eastview; **Eleanor Pizzarello**, Ridgeway; **Michael Stevens**, Middle School-Eastview; and **Ana Maria Salazar**, High School. Teachers: **Robert Baddeley**, Guidance, Rochambeau; **Eric Chen**, Science, High School; **Michael Ferder**, Science, High School; **Patricia Hogan**, Special Education, Middle School-Eastview; **Kathy Nissinoff**, Family & Consumer Science, Middle School-Highlands; **Howard Rubenstein**, Physical Education, Mamaroneck Avenue; **Shari Streichler**, Elementary Education, Church Street; **Kathleen Tabb**, Special Education, Middle School-Highlands; **Lorraine Trovato-Cantori**, Art, Rochambeau; and **Pablo Valedon**, Physical Education, Districtwide. Administrators: **Ronald Velez**, Director of Management Information Systems, Districtwide; and **Richard Dillon**, Social Studies Coordinator, Districtwide.

Five Teachers were given Probationary appointments: **Dennis Sheridan**, Special Education at the High School; **Jeannie Oliva-Rivera**, ENL at Ridgeway; **Yokasta Betancourt-Rosa**, Dual Language Kindergarten at Church Street; **Lisa Miller**, Special Education at Post Road; and **Kiara Velasquez**, Bilingual School Psychologist at Post Road.

OTHER ACTION: The Board approved the school calendar for 2023-24 and two field trips for High School students: a three-day trip to Boston for the Symphony Orchestra and Symphonic Band to attend educational clinics and perform in Boston, and a three-day Chicago trip for the Academic Team to compete in the National Academic Competition.

DONATIONS: Dr. Ricca thanked the following for their generous donations:

David Janowitz for an electric guitar, acoustic electric guitar and an amplifier for the Music Program at Mamaroneck Avenue School
Ernestine Glenn for \$6,000 for the E. Glenn Creative Writing Scholarship and the E. Glenn HBCU Scholarships
Cindy Phillips for a Ping Pong table to the Ping Pong Club at the High School
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Fisher for two calculators and assorted supplies at the High School
Kelli Teglas of Kelli Teglas Events for fundraising for a Gaga Ball Pit for Ridgeway School
The High School PTA and Co-President Tracy Viola for a bike rack
Katherine Scorza-Ingram for \$50 for musical productions at the High School
Karen Chu and Fred Kincheloe for 2 violas for the High School music program
Victor Hurlburt (\$250), **Muriel Pagan** (\$150), **Rima Raynes** (\$125), **Richard Brownell** (\$110), **Joanne Dunphy** (\$100), **Mr. & Mrs. Noel Cooperberg** (\$100), **Mr. Mrs. Fred Fox** (\$100), **Mr. & Mrs. John Stankunas** (\$100), **Drs. Stanley & Hillary Kerpel** (\$50), **Nancy Desplantes** (\$50), and **Mr. & Mrs. Wilfred Soltan** (\$18) for donations to the Phillip Barnett Memorial Scholarship Fund
Sundance Kitchen and Cantina, Cravin' Jamaican, Caribbean Thyme, Kennedy Fried Chicken, and Rosie Desir for food donations for the Black Awareness Club Food Celebration at the High School.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

February 27: Special Meeting, Education House, 7 P.M.
Non-Instructional Budget
March 9: Special Meeting, Education House, 5:30 P.M.
Human Resources Committee - Executive Session
March 13: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.