



THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

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

March 11, 2024

BOARD COMMENT: **Board Members** reported on recent events they attended. These included the City's St. Patrick's Day Parade and the Friends of White Plains Public Schools lunch afterward, Science Department and Eastview meetings on curriculum, and Westchester-Putnam and New York State School Boards Meetings on State Aid, advocating for the return of Foundation Aid. Representative Shelley Mayer has been outspoken on this and parents were urged to contact their legislators to add their voices in support.

Board President Rosemarie Eller mentioned the new District brochure which is on the website and was written by **Michele Schoenfeld**. Hard copies are available by calling 914-422-2060.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: **Superintendent Dr. Joseph Ricca** welcomed Post Road staff members to the meeting. He noted the 4th anniversary of COVID-19, whose challenges we continue to work through.

Dr. Ricca also mentioned the item on the agenda which moves the polling place for Battle Hill area voters to Rochambeau School in the May 21st Budget Vote and Election. The Battle Hill Community Room is no longer available to the District for this purpose.

Dr. Ricca introduced Student Liaison **Frida Loehr** who reported on activities in the schools.

2024-2025 BUDGET: Dr. Ricca presented the 2024-2025 Superintendent's Preliminary Budget of \$265,900,000, a tax levy percentage increase of 1.06% over last year. He thanked the Finance-Audit Committee along with all the staff who participated in preparing the budget. All of the background material leading to the budget figures is available on the website.

The budget aims to provide for the needs of our children, which are always changing. It also makes sure the District remains in good fiscal health. Unfortunately we are looking at a reduction in State Aid. We continue to look for efficiencies and cuts in costs at the same time that we maintain the goals of continuous improvement and academic achievement. Together with **Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich** Dr. Ricca reviewed major sources of revenue and areas of expense and details on the instructional program expansion and supports.

The budget will be adopted by the Board on April 8th and voted on by the public on May 21st. Also on the ballot will be a proposition, on tonight's agenda, to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund of \$50 million to provide for improvements to District buildings.

Board Member Jim Hricay commented that a 1.06% increase is very responsible and said we have to continue to build programs that are attractive to all. **Board Member Sheryl Brady** added that the Board is very appreciate of the public support of the budget.

The public is welcome to reach out to the administration with questions or comments.

BOCES PRESENTATION: District Superintendent **Dr. Harold Coles** and several of his administrative staff described the services of BOCES, of which the District is a member. They reviewed the role of BOCES and various programs including Career Services, Special and Adult Education, Interscholastic Athletics, Security, and Technology Support, among others.

Dr. Coles invited the Board to the BOCES Annual Meeting in April and also to stop in and visit any of the programs.

ADMINISTRATORS: The contract of **Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich** was extended for a five year term, ending December 31, 2028. Dr. Vaccaro-Teich serves as Assistant Superintendent for Business.

Sarah Tucker was appointed to the position of Coordinator of Literacy & Social Studies Pre-K-6. She replaces Jennifer Hammond-King and has a Bachelor's Degree from Middlebury College and Masters' Degrees from George Mason, Long Island and Harvard Universities.

PERSONNEL: The Board accepted the resignation for the purpose of retirement of **Franco Lombardo**, Custodial Worker at the High School.

DONATIONS: : Dr. Ricca thanked the following donors for their generous gifts:

White Plains Beautification Foundation for a \$200 donation to the Mamaroneck Avenue School Kindergarten Garden Project.

The Friends of White Plains Public Schools. for two grants as follows:

\$1,500 for a trip for all 4th graders at Post Road to Boundless Adventures.

\$3,000 to Post Road for a school-wide Animal Adventures assembly as part of the One Book, One School Program.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld