



THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

BOARD MEMBERS: Rosemarie Eller, *President*; Cayne Letizia, *Vice President*; Sheryl Brady, Jessica Buck, Valerie Daniele, Craig Mondschein, Charlie Norris

October 15, 2024

SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION WEEK: Superintendent of Schools **Dr. Joseph Ricca** expressed gratitude to the Board for its leadership and dedication. On behalf of the White Plains Teachers Association and the Civil Service Employees Association, **Teacher Jennifer Stein** also offered thanks to the Board Members for their unwavering commitment and countless hours. **Principal Emerly Martinez**, speaking for the Administrators and Supervisors Association, thanked the Board for direction, support and dependable leadership.

BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS: Board President **Rosemarie Eller** attended football games, PTA Council and is a delegate to the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) Convention. Board Member **Charlie Norris** spoke about a rewarding visit to **Sue Brumer's** Social Studies class at the High School. Board Member **Cayne Letizia** went to the Westchester-Putnam School Boards Dinner which was prepared by Culinary Arts students. He expressed hopes for Culinary Arts in the new building at the High School. Board Member **Sheryl Brady** spoke about the Special Needs Coffee Talk and also attended a NYSSBA Board of Directors meeting.

RECOGNITION OF RETIRED BOARD MEMBERS: Dr. Ricca and Mrs. Eller recognized **James Hricay** and **Rose Lovitch**, Board Members who retired in June, for their service – Mr. Hricay for 15 years and Mrs. Lovitch for 12 years. They both have had an impact on the district, as parents, community members and volunteers. They were presented with inscribed rocking chairs.

PUBLIC HEARING ON DISTRICTWIDE SAFETY PLAN. Security Coordinator **Jeremy Harrison** presented the Districtwide Safety and Emergency Management Plan detailing the changes, which basically provide for a mandatory protocol for a mass drill, even though the District has no intention of using this. He thanked the Districtwide Safety Team for its work. The updated plan was adopted by the Board later in the meeting.

YEAR-END FINANCIAL STATEMENT: **Christopher Angotta**, Partner in the auditing firm of Nawrocki Smith, presented the annual external auditor's annual financial statement, noting this was a timely, accurate closing. The District met all requirements, is within all legal limits and there are no significant deficiencies. He reviewed this with the Auditing Committee and thanked **Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich, Assistant Superintendent for Business**, and her office for their excellent work. The financial statement was accepted by the Board later in the meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Ricca introduced Student Board Member Liaisons **Charis Choi** and **Afrozah Hossain** who provided information on activities in the schools. These ex officio Board Members meet with Dr. Ricca before each meeting to learn a little about being a Board Member.

Dr. Ricca also mentioned Unity Day, an important celebration for all of our students, the showcase of White Plains students at the NYSSBA Convention, and visits by dignitaries to the High School's Educator Pathway Program. He then discussed a subject of much recent conversation: the realigning of the elementary school starting time. Many Church Street School parents are concerned about this change. Dr. Ricca mentioned the potential cost saving in transportation.

PERSONNEL: **Laura Sileo** was appointed Interim House Administrator at the High School. She has been a Social Worker at the school for the last five years.

The Board accepted the resignations for the purpose of retirement of **Melanie Alvarez**, ENL Teacher at Post Road School and **Juanita Banks**, Cook/Manager at Post Road School.

The Board awarded tenure to **May Burnett**, Art teacher, Mamaroneck Avenue School, **Lauren Servelli**, Elementary Education Teacher at Post Road School and **Diana Scrocca**, Teaching Assistant at Post Road School.

Probationary appointments were given to **Stephen Campanella**, Art teacher, Districtwide, and **Melanie Aponte**, ELA teacher.

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

Robert Lent on behalf of the Elks for *A Student's Dictionary & Animal Gazetteer* for all third graders

Michael & Jenna Lebowich for a full sized violin & keyboard

Marcelino & Marina Castro for a violin for George Washington School

Linda Washington for two Violins for George Washington School

Amelia Delfino for a 3D Printer for the STEAM projects at George Washington School

The Ridgeway PTA for 60 pairs of noise-cancelling Headphones for Ridgeway classrooms

OTHER BUSINESS: The Board approved the Special Education District Plan for 2024-2027 and also the Budget Calendar for 2025-2026.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld