



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

January 13, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS: Board Members reported on recent events they attended, including the State Education Department Town Hall, dedication of the High School basketball court in honor of the late **Sue Adams** and **Spencer Mayfield**, High School Craft Fair, Ridgeway Concert, the High School Winter Play and various Westchester-Putnam School Board and Southern Westchester BOCES workshops and meetings.

SCHOLAR-ATHLETES: The Board recognized 167 Scholar-Athletes from 10 Fall Varsity Teams. **Athletic Director Matt Cameron** and **Assistant Director Mike Chappas** introduced coaches from the Cheerleading Team, Football, Girls' Simming & Diving, Field Hockey, Tennis, Boys' and Girls' Cross Country, Volleyball and Boys' and Girls' Soccer. Mr. Chappas noted that nine of the ten teams achieved team Scholar-Athlete status. **Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca** and **Board President Rosemarie Eller** congratulated athletes and their families.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Ricca introduced **Student Board Member Liaison Charis Choi** who provided information on activities in the schools.

Dr. Ricca made several announcements: He will be participating in a panel discussion for the Business Council of Westchester tomorrow on housing development and the impact on public schools..

Congratulations to **Leroy Dixon, Principal of Eastview Middle School**, for being honored by the Westchester Alliance of Black Educators..

White Plains High School Teacher Marlena Simmons, will participate in a Board of Regents work session, discussing our Education Pathways Program.

The District will participate in a Martin Luther King celebration next Wednesday.

We are collaborating with the Youth Bureau in several areas, involving before- and afterschool programs and youth employment.

UPDATED LONG-RANGE PLAN, 2024-2029: Dr. Ricca, assisted by **Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich**, presented the Long-Range Plan for 2024-25 to 2028-29. He explained that the cycle of planning includes the Strategic Plan and a review of everyone's goals and objectives. Planning is important in order to insure effectiveness and efficiency in the management of the District. He reviewed the Curriculum and Instruction and Operations Department components of the Long-Range Plan.

Dr. Vaccaro-Teich discussed the economic outlook and the revenue and expenditure assumptions. The financial forecast for next year shows a recommended tax levy increase of 1.68% and a budget gap of \$7.5 million which will have to be closed. Budget development is underway, leading to a public vote in May.

PERSONNEL: **Joseph Spero** was appointed Interim Assistant Principal at White Plains High School through the balance of this school year. He comes to the District from administrative positions in the Lakeland Central School District, including seven years as Principal of Walter Panas High School.

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

White Plains PTA Council for \$500 for the Internet Awareness Presentation at Highlands.

The Middle School PTA for \$500 for the Chiku Awali African Dance Group to perform at Eastview

Rebecca Hommez for a digital color printer

John Caparella for an Infinity Starter Kid for the High School Swim Team

The Friends of White Plains Public Schools for the following grants:

\$3,400 for One Book, One School at Ridgeway School

\$3,000 for the Nature's Classroom trip for 5th graders at Post Road

\$2,150 for testing equipment for the Science Research classes at the High School

\$1,125 for the Animal Adaptations Program for 4th graders at Post Road School

\$1,000 for the Avalon Duo string musicians visit to mentor students at WPHS

\$1,500 for the Paper Bag Players for 1st and 2nd graders at Church Street School

The High School PTA for the following grants:

\$2,000 for tournament fees and supplies for the High School and Rochambeau Robotics Teams

\$400 for the collaborative project between SAIL students and 9th grade English students

OTHER ACTION: The Board approved the Corrective Action Plan to the Internal Auditors 2024-25 Annual Risk Assessment Update Report. The Audit Committee met with auditors **Cullen & Danowski** and amended and accepted this report and recommended it to the Board.

Three overnight field trips were approved by the Board: The Varsity Baseball Team will travel to Florida for four days in April, The High School S.E.E.D. Club will visit the Taconic Outdoor Center in Cold Spring, NY, for three days in April, and the Symphonic Band & Symphony Orchestra will go to the University of Delaware in Philadelphia, PA, for two days in April.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld