



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

June 9, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS: Board Members commented on some of the many activities they attended this month, including the High School Awards Night, at which \$314,000 in scholarships were distributed, the Memorial Day Parade, the Senior Athletic Awards Night, Rochambeau and Highlands Art Shows, the PTA Free Book Celebration at Eastview and the Westchester-Putnam School Boards Annual Meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DISTRICTWIDE SAFETY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN: **Jeremy Harrison**, the District's liaison with Altaris, said the District remains ahead of the curve related to State law requirements and school safety security. He thanked the Districtwide Safety Team and everyone for their support as the District incorporates new regulations and Safety Plan requirements issued by the State Education Department.

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Ricca thanked the Committee, which oversees this ongoing work, for its constant efforts to improve the Plan. He also thanked the White Plains Police and the Department of Public Safety for their collaborative partnership. The Plan 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 reported on activity in the schools. He mentioned that Board Members received Certificates of Recognition from the Westchester-Putnam School Boards Association. He recognized our elected officials for their support of our Educator Pathway Program for students interested in the education profession. He congratulated **Kara Lyons** on being recognized by the New York State Senate through the Educators Inspiring a Generation 2025 Award.

Dr. Ricca also thanked the community for its support of the budget. **Board President Rosemarie Eller** thanked the District Clerk **Michelle Melendez** and others for their work on the election.

Dr. Ricca shared that the District will be revising its cell phone policy to conform with the State's recent "bell to bell" ban on cell phones. He also noted the new agreement with the City to allow Stop Arm eCameras to be installed on all school buses. He noted the upcoming transition from K12 Alerts to Parent Square for community-wide communication.

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING AND 25-YEAR STAFF MEMBERS: **Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Scott Pepper** introduced this celebration of retirees, thanking them for their service through a time that has spanned great changes in education. Dr. Ricca expressed his gratitude to them. Retirees are: **Kelly Agar, Joe Allen, Melanie Alvarez, Geri Alvarez, Theodora Argyros, Tineria Augborn, Juanita Banks, Gloria Barrera, Joan Behrends, Patricia Benavidez, Shari S. Bierly, Akmeed Boouraca, Marcella Briggs, La-Sheila Brown, Deborah Brunetto, Kirsten Calkins, Michele Charriez, Paula Christensen, Betsy Cicchetti, Kathleen Contrata, Franklin Cromer II, Wilbert Dixon, James Dowd, Regina Dunn, Maureen Fargo, Vasendha Gangadharan Hrazanek, Adele Herzenberg, Donna Hodges, Joan Holt, Gweneth W. Kaebnick, Lisymol Kalathara, Ann**

Dean of Students. Also, the Interim Assistant Principal appointment of **Joseph Spero** was extended from 7/1/25 to 10/31/25.

Resignations for the purpose of retirement were accepted from **Lisy Kalathara**, Account Clerk, Education House, and **Susan Repetti**, Registered Professional School Nurse, High School.

Probationary appointments were given to seven new teachers: **Pedro Rodriguez**, Secondary Instruction Coach, District-wide; **Matthew Carnaghi**, Special Education Teacher, Mamaroneck Avenue School; **Rachel Pearl**, Kindergarten Teacher, Church Street School; **Matthew Giliatta**, Physical Education Teacher, TBD/District-wide; **Yanarisi Marmolejos**, ENL Teacher, Post Road; **Samantha Berube**, Elementary Education Teacher, Mamaroneck Avenue School; and **Tina Wu**, Elementary Education Teacher, George Washington School.

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

Oakland Trading Corp for \$5,000 for the Rafaello Pantanelli Scholarship.

Mr. & Mrs. Mark Varian for \$3,000 for the Rita Varian Art Scholarship

Ms. Andrea Robinson for \$2,000 for the Dorothy Ann Peters Memorial Scholarship

Friends of White Plains Baseball for \$2,000 for the Varsity dugouts at WPHS

White Plains Middle School PTA for \$1,366.67 for an activity for all rising 8th graders

Dr. Terri Thomas Klemm for \$1,000 for the Dorothy H. Thomas Memorial Scholarship

NYSIR (NYSchools Insurance Reciprocal) for \$1,000 for the Caring Corner Food Pantry at Ridgeway School

Ms. Victoria Hochman Shelby for \$700 for the Richard Liebson Journalism Scholarship

Ms. Diane Maudsley for \$600 for the Frederick J. Maudsley GRIT Scholarship

Mr. Jack Massaro for \$500 for the Louis and Rose Massaro Scholarship

Mr. Jacob Gelles for \$500 for the Mary Jane Bayuk Love of Nursing Scholarship

The Poetry Foundation for \$500 for White Plains High School

Mr. Jeff Zucker for \$250 for the Morton Zucker Memorial Scholarship

The White Plains Beautification Foundation for \$200 for the Post Road Courtyard

Ms. Helene Rothstein (\$36), **Ms. Marcia Caradarello** (\$100), and **Ms. Marie Gross** (\$100) for the Lois Van Epps Scholarship:

Ms. Ethel Mintz (\$25), **Dr Marietta Saraivia Shore** (\$100), **Ms. Arlene Dahn** (\$100), **Ms. Helen Michaelson** (\$100), **Ms. Susan Sekuler** (\$100), **Mr. Richard Cole** (\$200), and **Ms. Joyce Axelrod** (\$500) for the Ed Furtick Class of 1957 Scholarship

The WPHS PTA Grants Committee for \$3,500 towards food and accommodations for the SEED program's recent trip

The NY Rangers LLC for hockey equipment

Mr. Gonzalez & Mrs. Pelaez for a painting of George Washington for George Washington School

The High School Music Department Booster Association Inc. Executive Board for three grants totaling \$4,276.30 for the 2025 White Plains High School Symphonic Band and Symphonic Orchestra trip to Philadelphia:

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld