



# 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

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January 12, 2026

**MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Superintendent of Schools **Dr. Joseph Ricca** asked for a moment of silence in memory of **Barbara Forsythe**, Elementary Teacher at Battle Hill, Church Street, Mamaroneck Avenue and George Washington Schools from 1966 until she retired in 1998. He also noted the recent passing of the husband of the Yonkers School Board President **Dr. Rosalba Delvecchio**.

**BOARD COMMENT:** Board Members spoke about events they attended in the last few weeks, including basketball games, winter concerts, the PTA Craft Fair, and the Mayoral inauguration which was held at the High School. **Board Member Sheryl Brady** mentioned activities of the Westchester-Putnam and National School Boards Association in which she participated.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Ricca called upon **Student Liaison Charis Choi** who presented her report on activities throughout the schools in the District..

Dr. Ricca mentioned that next year's calendar is in the process of being reviewed and will be unusual in that schools will open before Labor Day. It will be brought to the Board in February for approval. He also mentioned discussions with the College Board regarding pathways to graduation and also with Section 1 about separating private, independent and parochial school-Championship athletic competitions.

**LONG RANGE PLAN:** Dr. Ricca and **Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich** presented the 2025-26 to 2029-30 Strategic Long Range/Budget Plan, thanking everyone who participated in its development. Dr. Ricca said budget season takes place all year, with the same cycle of planning, beginning in the summer with the Strategic Plan review. Then we set goals and objectives and everything in the long-range plan informs the budget. Drs. Ricca and Vaccaro-Teich reviewed revenues and expenditures which would lead to a tax levy increase of 1.54% for next year. There will be Federal reductions and we will have to be conservative and will continue to seek efficiencies to close gaps.

Presentations will follow on the instructional and non-instructional budgets, leading to a public vote on May 19<sup>th</sup>. The District is in a strong position and Dr. Ricca said he is very proud of our fiscal health. He thanked the community for being so supportive.

**Board Member Craig Mondschein** commented that our philosophy of dealing with issues up front and looking at them long-term allow us to plan for the future which is very commendable.

**PERSONNEL:** The Board accepted the retirement of **Scott R. Pepper, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources**, effective February 28<sup>th</sup>. The Board expressed appreciation to Mr. Pepper for his work and wished him the best in retirement.

The Board also accepted the resignations for the purpose of retirement of **Marcia Baker Eddie**, Teaching Assistant at George Washington School, and **Susan Epstein**, Math Teacher at the High School.

**James Mazzarano, Jr.** was given a probationary appointment to teach Math at the High School.

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

Four grants totaling \$5,100 from the **Friends of White Plains Public Schools:**

\$1,500 for WPHS AVID Senior class trip to a Broadway show

\$1,275 for trip by 40 Rochambeau students to Puzzle Parlor

\$1,200 for WPHS Science Research equipment for a Clinostat

\$1,125 for Post Road Animal Adaptions program for 4th graders

Two grants from the **WPHS PTA Grants Committee:**

\$500 for 52 students taking AP Government and Politics to visit the Kennedy Institute in Boston to participate in a voting rights legislation simulation

\$2,950 for the S.E.E.D. (Seeking Education Equity and Diversity) "Eliminating Racism" Overnight trip to be held at the Taconic Outdoor Education Center

**The Middle School PTA** board for \$3,682.81 for 8th grade T-shirts for Highlands trips

**The Business Council of Westchester**, with **Verizon's** support, for \$2,500 for an Incubator Initiative at the High School

The following donations for the Phillip Barnett Memorial Scholarship:

**Mr. & Mrs. Rashpal Singh** for \$25

**Mr. Gerald Kramer** for \$100

**Mr. Fred Fox** for \$100

**Mr. & Mrs. John Stankunas** for \$100

**Dr. H.L. Shahabian** for \$250

**Mr. Robert Schneider** for \$500

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Curriculum Committee discussed proposed new High School courses for next year. In addition to the Long-Range Plan, the Finance Committee discussed proposed changes to the Payroll Department structure. Special Education talked about next steps in the audit and **Board Member Valerie Daniele** noted that our staff is using State guidance to integrate best practices.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld