



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

March 9, 2026

BOARD COMMENT: Board Members spoke about events they attended in the last few weeks, including the PTA Council Meeting on AI and the Centennial Celebration at City Hall. **Board President Rosemarie Eller** was invited to participate in a Black History Month panel and **Board Member Sheryl Brady** attended various Westchester-Putnam and New York State School Board meetings. Board Members also reported on the meetings of the Finance, Curriculum and Special Education Committees.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Ricca mentioned upcoming activities and also spoke about the meeting on AI and the fact that the District is looking into greater use in the future. He expressed regrets that the Student Liaisons to the Board could not be present but have forwarded their reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **Student Charlotte Balsome** requested that the District add a Junior ROTC Program. Dr. Ricca replied that this is a program that is being explored for the future.

SUPERINTENDENT'S 2026-27 PRELIMINARY BUDGET: Dr. Ricca, accompanied by **Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich**, Assistant Superintendent for Business, presented a budget of \$284,932,300, with a tax levy percentage increase of 1.60% over last year. Dr. Ricca stressed the importance of planning in the process of preserving sound fiscal health while maintaining all programs for students. He and Dr. Vaccaro-Teich reviewed major sources of revenues and the tax levy cap. Once again, they worked very hard on cost savings to reduce the burden on the taxpayers. He also thanked the Governor and State Legislators for their assistance and increase in State Aid.

Dr. Ricca thanked the Business Office and all of the staff who contributed to this proposed Budget. He also expressed appreciation to the Finance & Audit Committee which reviewed the budget very carefully. Dr. Ricca noted that also on the agenda are the Non-Instructional Budget and a Capital Projects Update and said that these are on the website. He and Dr. Vaccaro-Teich are available to answer any questions on them as well as the Budget.

PERSONNEL: **Joseph Spero** was appointed as Interim Principal at Highlands Middle School, effective March 24-June 30, 2026.

The Board accepted the resignations for the purpose of retirement of **Valerie Riddick**, Senior Clerk, Church Street School, **Sonia Gomez**, Teaching Assistant, Mamaroneck Avenue School;, , **Constance Brannan**, Teaching Assistant, George Washington School, **Laura Crowley**, Special Education Teacher, High School, **Ronda Saylor**, Elementary Education Teacher, Church Street School, and **Michael Sullivan**, School Psychologist, Rochambeau School,

Two Teaching Assistants were appointed to tenure: **Christine Goin** at Middle School-Highlands, and **Megan Smith**, at Post Road School.

Darah Madori was given a Probationary appointment as a Special Education Teacher at the High School.

Dr. David Jacob, Director of Mathematics, Science, Engineering and Career and Technical Education 7-12, Districtwide, has resigned effective June 1, 2026.

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

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

\$2,200 for One Book, One School at Ridgeway

\$1,500 for a Post Road 4th grade outdoor education trip to Camp Herrlich

\$1,000 for a Post Road 3rd trip to the Bronx Z

\$500 for a Post Road Kindergarten trip to Yorktown Stage

Ms. Rima Raynes (\$180), **Mr. Jack Ciaramella** (\$100), and **Dr. Stanley Kerpel** (\$50) for the Philip Barnett Memorial Scholarship:

Ms. Andrea Stern for \$100 for the Dorothy Ann Peters Memorial Scholarship

The Middle School PTA Board for \$13,164 for Westchester Knicks tickets for the entire Highlands community.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld