

WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION
EDUCATE, CHALLENGE, & INSPIRE

WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION Tuesday, March 11, 2014 @ 7:00 p.m. Regular Board of Education Meeting

MINUTES

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Regular Meeting of March 11, 2014: The Regular meeting of the March 11, 2014 Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Maureen Westbrook, Chair, in the Westbrook High School library.

Members Present: Maureen Westbrook, Marti White, Michele Palumbo, Kim Walker, Jackie Lyman
Pat Labbadia III

Absent: Sally Greaves, Dee Adorno, Lee Bridgewater

Also Present: Superintendent Patricia A. Ciccone; Business Manager Lesley Wysocki;
Administrators: Madeline Illinger

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. BOARD OF EDUCATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

- A. The following students were recognized by the Board for their CT Scholastic Art Awards. WMS eighth grader Olivia Fabrizi won a Silver Key Award for her Mixed Media piece "Spring Blossoms" and Courtney Parrish won a Silver Key Award in the Division I Printmaking category for her t-shirt design entitled "Abstract C". Honorable Mentions went to Kathleen Hayes for her wire sculpture, "Soft Spoken". Middle School Art Teacher, Liz Egan, presented each of the student's art work to the Board.
- B. Math Counts (Middle School): The Superintendent recognized the following students who traveled to the US Coast Guard Academy on February 1st for participation in the Eastern CT Chapter Competition. Scoring in the top 25 percent and advancing to the CT State Competition were Tirzah Blomquist, Olivia Fabrizi, Finn McGannon, and Xander Mitchell.

- IV. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:** Lydia Murphy, Student Representative, invited the Board to attend the musical, *Young Frankenstein*, on March 13, 14 or 15. She reported that sophomores have taken the Science CAPT, Juniors have participated in SAT classes and during February break, Mrs. McManus and Mrs. Finnegan accompanied students to France. High School music students will be travelling to San Francisco from March 20-23. Lydia reported on the success of the girls' and boys' basketball teams.

- V. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Tony Cozza made a suggestion on the presentation of the budget to the town in regard to special education costs impact on the budget.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. **Special Meeting of February 11, 2014:** Moved by Kim Walker and seconded by Marti White to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting minutes of February 11, 2014. **Vote unanimous.**

VII. NEW BUSINESS: No new business

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. Review of Check Listing: Board members reviewed check listings for the month of February in the amount of \$92,901.71 on 2/12/2014 and for \$227,853.48 on 2/27/2014.
- B. Budget Narrative/ Review of Expenditure Report – Mrs. Wysocki provided an overview of the budget as it stands, stating there is still a hold on non-essential purchases, but she is not concerned.
- C. Line Item Transfer(s): The Board reviewed line item transfer items.
- D. Insurance Report: The health report for January showed a deficit of \$61,363.05, but the business manager reported that we are still ahead.
- E. Special Appropriation Update: The Superintendent provided a thorough update on a meeting with the Board of Finance to discuss why there is a need for a special appropriation. She explained that special education costs can be unanticipated and this year (2013-14) there is \$450,000 of unanticipated costs associated with Special Education including transportation, tuition, and services. The Board of Education began talking about this several months ago and the Board of Finance was approached. The Superintendent explained the costs are a result of special education needs which are documented in EIP's, 504 plans, and other health issues. She said that although some children are outplaced, everything possible is done to return them to our district. The Board of Selectman voted to approve the Board of Finance request for the appropriation. The Superintendent said that many school districts are experiencing the same situation with special education costs.
- F. Maureen Westbrook talked about the special appropriation request and said efforts were made to resolve the situation before going to the Town to request a special appropriation. She commented that the Board of Finance was very fair. After having met with Mr. Urban, Mr. Bishop, and Mr. Connelly and talking about use of insurance reserves, we experienced a new special education need. Therefore, the dollar amount may change. Pat Labbadia said it is not fair to have a freeze on this long as we are holding back on things we need to be doing. Also, he suggested the Board should address this in the future to avoid having to worry about personal liability in this kind of situation.
- G. Snow Removal Bids: Lesley Wysocki reported that the bids for snow removal are due on March 24.

IX. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- A. **Enrollment Report**—March, 2014: The Superintendent reported there are 837 students enrolled in our schools on March 3, 2014, compared to 884 enrolled in March, 2013. October 1, 2013 enrollment is 833 students. There are currently 11 out-placed students for a total of 848.
- B. **Smarter Balance Assessment Update:** Superintendent Ciccone commented on the issues reported in the media including “opt out” issues. The superintendent said there is no opt out option and school districts will help parents with concerns about testing. One concern of the school district is whether the State Department of Education will be able to handle all of the incoming data.

C. **Digital Citizenry – Educating on Cyber-Use with Purpose:** The Board was reminded of the upcoming School Climate-related event on March 20 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school library. The topic will be on how to use technology appropriately. The speaker is Professor Curran from St. Joseph's University. Those attending are encouraged to bring their own technology devices.

The Superintendent also mentioned the Forum on March 17 at 6:30 in the high school library. Senator Linares will be discussing the Common Core and he hopes to hear from educators. She mentioned that the Governor has created a Task Force to study Common Core and that Diana Burns has been asked to serve on the Task Force. The Board expressed appreciation to Diana for her participation.

X. **ADMINISTRATORS' COMMENTS:** Madeline Illinger, Special Services Director, reiterated that the Special Education Department does everything they can do to keep students in the district and does do what is in the best interest of the child.

XI. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. **Budget 2014-15:** As a result of the budget workshop last month, the budget was adjusted at the Board's request to include some items that had been cut several times in past years. The Superintendent presented the budget with the changes discussed at the budget workshop and went through a Power Point presentation. The current budget was adjusted to reflect the \$450,000 special appropriation. A slide was added to show class size guidelines and enrollment. After a thorough presentation, the 2014-15 budget is proposed at \$16,892,234 from 2013-14 budget of \$15,865,237 and with the additional appropriation of \$450,000 equals a 3.54% increase. Moved by Pat Labbadia and seconded by Jackie Lyman to approve the 2014-15 budget as proposed by the Superintendent. **Vote unanimous.**

B. **School Climate Policy** – The Superintendent applauded the work of the Policy Committee and appreciated the help of legal counsel including Anne Littlefield (Shipman and Goodwin) and Jessica Savage (School Climate Center), CAFE, and the National School Climate Center and Dr. JoAnn Freiberg in the formulation of the Westbrook School Climate Policy. CAFE assigned a policy number 5131.914. The Committee is anxious to have the policy approved by the Board due to the interest from other districts and will consider a special meeting on March 19 for a second reading and vote to adopt the policy. Marti White, Chair of the Policy Sub Committee, said it was important the entire Board review the final draft before it is adopted. The March 19 meeting is tentatively scheduled for 6:45 p.m. after Building Committee and prior to the Board of Finance Meeting for the appropriation discussion.

C. **2014-15 School Calendar** – Superintendent Ciccone was asked to take another look at the already adopted 2014-15 school calendar to possibly amend it. The amendments are to start teacher professional development on 8/25, 26 and begin the first day for students on 8/27 and to change the July holiday for 12 month employees to 7/2, 3 and begin summer school on 7/6. Because the calendar has already been posted, the Superintendent asked that the Board consider seriously what is being proposed. Should it be re-adopted with changes, a notice would be sent to parents through School Messenger to reflect the adjustments. The Superintendent will communicate again with WEA and the calendar will be put on the April agenda.

XII. **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A. **Policy** - Marti White announced the next policy meeting is scheduled for April 10 at 6:00.
- B. **Communications:** Per Jackie Lyman the Communications Committee talked about the School Climate forum on Digital Citizenry on March 20, the Principals Search, and website option which will probably be EChalk.
- C. **Long Range Planning** –Pat Labbadia reported on the meeting of 1/29 at which Roger LeFleur, CREC representative discussed the Energy Report and Generator Study.
- D. **Insurance** – There was no meeting.
- E. **Negotiations** – The Committee began the process of reviewing administrators agreements. Cecilia will check with Sally Greaves to schedule a Negotiations Meeting before the next Board of Education meeting on April 8.
- F. **PTSO Representatives** – Daisy PTSO will meet on March 25. Jackie Lyman reported on the March 3 middle school PTSO as follows: *Time and Time Again* will be presented on 3/27 and 3/28 at 7:00 p.m. and on 3/29 at 2:00 p.m. Upcoming events will be a Family Game Night, Empty Bowls Project and possibly a Woman's' Health and Fitness program.
 Superintendent Patricia Ciccone shared her concern about the flyer for the Woman's Health and Fitness that she has been asked to approve and her concern for children's participation.
 Jackie Lyman reported that 8th graders have been practicing on Chrome Books, the Boston trip is coming up for 8th graders, and Invention Convention for Grade 6 students.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENT: Lisa Winch thanked everyone who worked on the School Climate Policy and on the well-delivered budget presentation. She also made a suggestion to show on the tuition page of the presentation the average range of tuition costs.

XIV. PERSONNEL:

- A. **Update:** School Principals Search (WHS) (Daisy Ingraham), Superintendent Ciccone said the search is underway and she has scheduled several focus groups to meet with parents, students and staff for input. Schedules will be put on the website with the dates and times.
- B. **Professional Resignation(s)/Retirement:**
 - 1. **Cecilia Cloutier (Daisy Ingraham Teacher):** Mrs. Cloutier submitted her request for retirement effective June 30, 2014. Mrs. Cloutier started as a full time teacher at Daisy Ingraham in 1989 and prior to that was a long term sub in 1987. She began her association with Westbrook as a junior high soccer cheerleading advisor in 1986. **Moved by Pat Labbadia and seconded by Marti White to accept with regret the retirement of Cecilia Cloutier effective June 30, 2014. Vote unanimous.**
- C. **Non-Certified Resignation(s):** The Board was informed of the resignation of Paraprofessional, Kelly Nardi-Colasante effective February 14, 2014.
- D. **The Board was informed of a new hire paraprofessional:** Amy Forbes is hired as a special education paraprofessional at Westbrook Middle School.

XV. ADJOURN: Moved by Pat Labbadia and seconded by Michelle Palumbo to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. **Vote unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Kim Walker, Board Secretary

Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk

