

WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 @ 7:00 pm.

Regular Board of Education Meeting

MINUTES

Present: Lee Bridgewater, Sally Greaves, Kim Walker, Jackie Lyman, Michelle Palumbo, Don Perreault, Mary Ella Luft, Zachary Hayden

Members absent: Dee Adorno

Also Present: Superintendent Patricia A. Ciccone; Administrators Tara Winch, Ruth Rose, Taylor Wrye; Lesley Wysocki, Business Manager; Ben Russell, Technology Specialist

I. **CALL TO ORDER** – The regular meeting of May 8, 2018 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Lee Bridgewater, Chair.

II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

III. **BOARD OF EDUCATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

A. **WMS CAS Scholar/Leader Awards:** Julia Farnoli and Samuel Freeman were recognized for having received the Middle School CAS Scholar Leaders Awards. Mr. Wrye, WMS Principal, spoke about the accomplishments of these deserving students, and the Board presented them with Certificates of Excellence.

B. **Teacher/Staff Appreciation:** Lee Bridgewater, Chair, acknowledged the faculty and staff of each of the schools and asked the administrators to convey the Board's appreciation to them.

IV. **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT** - Katelyn Wallace provided an update on the spring sports accomplishments, the WHS Bowl having won the Athena Plaque, the upcoming 24 hour Play Festival on June 2 at 7:00 p.m., the WHS Music Concert on Wednesday (5/9); the May 1<sup>st</sup> Decision Day event, the Prom at Waters Edge on May 12, and a successful Awareness Day.

V. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

On behalf of the WEA, Eve Barakos provided an educational perspective on the 2018-19 calendar; stating that teachers have to adjust their assessments of students accordingly if a large number of students are away.

Dave Caslin commented that families have limited time together and some have made plans according to the previous calendar vote. He suggested a good number of people would be affected if the February vacation days were changed at this point in time.

**VI. ADMINISTRATOR(S) COMMENTS**

1. WHS Trip to France – The Superintendent requested the item be tabled until the June meeting.
2. Unified Sports Awards – T. Cosgriff, Athletic Director, spoke about students, Jason Cordon and Stephen Farrell. These students were recognized for their excellent service to the team and the Unified Sports mission, and were presented the CIAC Mike Savage Teammate Award.

- VII. NEW BUSINESS: Healthy Food Certification** – Superintendent Ciccone asked the Board for their approval to abide by the Federal Nutrition Guidelines, as has been done in the past and which allows the district to receive lunch reimbursements. Moved by S. Greaves and seconded by M. Palumbo to approve the Superintendent's recommendation that the Board of Education certify that all foods sold to Westbrook students will meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and that the Board will exclude from certification those food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards, provided that (1) such food is sold in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) such sale is at the location of the event, and (3) such food is not sold from a vending machine or school store, and that the BOE continue to accept additional federal reimbursements. Vote unanimous to approve.

**VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

- A. Enrollment: Superintendent Ciccone reported May enrollment figures of 733 students, (Pre-K through 12), plus 6 out placed for a total of 739 students.
- B. Budget: Public Hearing/Q & A: Superintendent Ciccone said the budget presentation was given on April 26 at the Public Hearing.. The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for May 15<sup>th</sup> in the high school auditorium at 7:00 pm, at which time there will be a vote to approve the budget.
- C. SBAC Testing – Superintendent Ciccone reported that the SBAC testing is underway. In the past 3-4 years, it has become a comfortable process for students and teachers.
- D. Light on Westbrook Fundraiser: Superintendent Ciccone was pleased to accept a \$2,500 check from Oxford Academy's Light on Westbrook event, which will be used for the Summer Feeding program. Many of our students and staff submitted art work and a pleasant evening was had by all who attended.
- E. Graduation Preparation: Plans are in process for graduation evening on June 26th at 5:00. Superintendent Ciccone asked board members to contact her or email Cecilia if they plan to attend or to participate in the graduation ceremony.

**IX. OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. 2018-19 District Calendar:

Moved by M. Palumbo and seconded by Z. Hayden to rescind the December vote on the 2018-19 district calendar for further discussion.

There was a lengthy discussion on whether or not to eliminate or modify the February break in the 2018-19 district calendar. L. Bridgewater, Chair, stated that as a board member she has the best interest of the students in mind. Teachers are concerned with the disruption in teaching after having just had holiday break. She commented that she realized some people have already made vacation plans and that is an operational issue to be handled as all staff absences are handled.. K. Walker did not agree with changing the decision in May, since so many months have passed since the decision to include to include February week long break was approved.. M. Palumbo commented that having had so many snow days and realizing how that impacts the calendar is why it has become a point of discussion at this time; but she said that "our (the Board's) job is to make sure students are being educated as best they can be." J. Lyman preferred addressing the issue for the 2019-20 calendar. Superintendent

Ciccone commented that the number of parents with objections and requests for reconsideration may be responding to more childcare issues than vacation concerns. The staff have commented there is too much disruption in teaching with so many days off in winter months. She conveyed the results of a survey of schools in CT that still have a full February weeklong break, numbering 9, but commented that Westbrook has not been concerned about unifying calendars as a deciding factor.

R. Rose, Daisy Principal, commented on a poll of her staff, including paras, custodians and secretaries. Overall, the consensus was for continuity of instruction. Mrs. Rose indicated she had talked with staff and parents about the BOE meeting. T. Wrye, WMS Principal, reiterated that his opinion is to do what is best for students to keep consistency, and that students learn better with less disruption, effectively saying learning is more focused in February than in late June. T. Winch, WHS Principal, agreed that focus should be on instruction; that the second semester begins in January and two weeks later the February break disrupts instruction. D. Perreault stated his concern that the Board agreed to a calendar in December and should be held accountable to that, and he commented that parents did not have notice. Z. Hayden commented that in doing what is best for students, why wait another year to make an adjustment. S. Greaves said that in light of the administrator's comments the duty as a board member is to do what is best for the children. M. Palumbo commented that in preparing the calendar the Board should be creative in addressing snow days as they occur during the school year.

The Chair asked for a motion to reconsider the 2018-19 calendar's February break. Moved by S. Greaves and seconded by Z. Hayden. A roll call vote was taken: Aye(s): S. Greaves, L. Bridgewater, M. Palumbo, Z. Hayden (Nays): D. Perreault, J. Lyman, K. Walker, M. Luft, . Vote: 4-4 ; Motion failed.

The consensus was to keep the calendar as it stands for 2018-19 and to direct the Superintendent to place a statement on the calendar regarding "cancellations." Should the number exceed 5 days, M. Palumbo suggested taking away days from either February or April, or both, if necessary. It was also requested to note on the calendar that 2018-19 is the last year for a full February break.

Moved by M. Palumbo and seconded by S. Greaves to adjust the February break for the 2019-20 calendar to be a long weekend consisting of Presidents' Day and one extra day. Vote unanimous.

## **X. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **A. Approval of Minutes:**

1. Regular Meeting – April 10, 2018 – Moved by J. Lyman and seconded by M. Palumbo to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2018 BOE meeting. Vote unanimous..

## **XI. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

- A. Review of Check Listing: Board members reviewed check listings for April 5, 2018 in the amount of \$115,125.88 and for April 19, 2018 in the amount of \$106,550.00.
- B. Budget Narrative/Review of Expenditure Report. – L. Wysocki reviewed the expenditure report and asked the Board to consider end of the year budget decisions for the June meeting.
- C. Line Item Transfer - None
- D. Insurance Report – A current insurance report was provided.

## **XII. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A.** LEARN report – No report
- B.** Policy– K. Walker was elected Chair – The committee met to discuss a policy about Animals in the Classrooms.
- C.** Long Range Planning – No report
- D.** Insurance – A meeting will be scheduled for June or July.
- E.** Negotiations - S. Greaves reported that AFT Negotiations are in progress.
- F.** Town Energy Ad Hoc Committee- L. Wysocki reported that there has not been any movement on the micro grids or solar energy. Streetlight information will be on the Westbrook website.
- G.** PTSO Representatives –No reports

## **XIII. PERSONNEL**

### **A. Certified Resignation(s)**

1. Lesley Harrington submitted her resignation effective at the end of the school year. Superintendent Ciccone said that Lesley has been with the district for the past 32 years, teaching third and fourth graders for 25 years and the last seven in the position of Math Specialist/Interventionist. Superintendent Patricia A. Ciccone recommended the BOE accept with deep regret the resignation of Lesley Harrington effective June 27, 2018. Moved by J. Lyman and seconded by M. Palumbo. Vote unanimous.

### **B. Non-Certified Resignation(s):** For the Board's information the following personnel changes were made:

1. Shari Halvorsen – Mrs. Halverson, WMS secretary for 22 years submitted her letter of resignation effective April 20, 2018.
2. Daniel Jennings – WHS Paraprofessional resigned effective April 13, 2018.

### **C. Non-certified New Hires**

1. Amie Lauria – PT Paraprofessional – Daisy Ingraham
2. John "Jack" Benson – FT Paraprofessional – Daisy Ingraham
3. Alesia Bauer – WMS Secretary

Moved by M. Palumbo and seconded by S. Greaves to move to Executive Session for discussion of an expulsion matter. Vote unanimous.

## **XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Moved by K. Walker and seconded by Z. Hayden for the BOE to accept the "AGREEMENT REGARDING JOINT STILPULATION AND RECOMMENDATION" of the Superintendent and the parents in a student expulsion matter for student number, 8873019064, and direct the Superintendent of Schools to issue a written hearing decision to the parent of the student reflecting the terms of the AGREEMENT REGARDING JOINT STILPULATION AND RECOMMENDATION. Vote unanimous.

Moved by M. Palumbo and seconded by M. Luft to move back into Regular Session at 8:59. Vote unanimous.

## **XV. ADJOURN:** Moved by M. Palumbo and seconded by M. Luft to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. Vote unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Walker, Board Secretary

Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk