

WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES ~ REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, March 17, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

Waterbury Arts Magnet School, 16 South Elm Street, Waterbury, Connecticut

PRESENT: President Brown, Commissioners Harvey, Hernandez, Pagano, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and T. Van Stone.

ABSENT: Commissioners Rodriguez and J. Van Stone.

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Kathleen Ouellette, Interim Chief of Staff/Chief Operating Officer Gary Miller, Director of Personnel Robert Brenker, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

1. SILENT PRAYER

President Brown called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with a moment of silence.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

President Brown led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. ROLL CALL

CLERK: Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Hernandez.

HERNANDEZ: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Pagano.

PAGANO: Here.

CLERK: Vice President Rodriguez (absent). Commissioner Stango.

STANGO: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Sweeney.

SWEENEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner J. Van Stone (absent). Commissioner T. Van Stone.

T. VAN STONE: Present.

CLERK: President Brown.

BROWN: Here.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file the following communications:

1. Email communication dated February 23, 2016 from Reginald Beamon in support of the naming of Waterbury Career Academy's Library in honor of Catherine Wyrick and Kennedy High School's football field in honor of Charles Donato.
2. Copy of communication dated February 26, 2016 from Hubie Williamson to State Representative Berger expressing his support in naming Kennedy High School's football field in honor of Charles Donato.
3. Email communication dated March 2, 2016 from The Wilby Sports Alumni Group supporting naming Kennedy High School's football field in honor of Charles Donato.
4. Email communication dated March 2, 2016 from Robert Goodrich regarding Support Raised Bill No. 379.
5. Communication dated March 2, 2016 from Dick Yuskas supporting naming Kennedy High School's football field in honor of Charles Donato.
6. Copy of communication dated March 3, 2016 from Civil Service certifying Lisa Dunn for the position of Senior Human Resources Generalist-Education.
7. Copy of communication dated March 7, 2016 from Robert Goodrich to the state delegation regarding SB379, HB5551, and SB380.
8. Communication dated March 8, 2016 from Alzira Egan, Maloney Magnet School, and submitting letters from various students.
9. Copy of communication dated March 11, 2015 from Civil Service certifying Joan Napp for the position of Administrative Support Specialist I.

BROWN: Discussion? All those in favor, opposed, motion carries.

5. PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:46 p.m.

BROWN: Motion made and seconded. All speakers are encouraged to submit prepared written statements to the Commissioners. Comments shall be limited to a maximum of five minutes. The Chairman will disallow a speaker from continuing to speak if slanderous or defamatory remarks are made. There will be no responses this evening to any questions or concerns raised; they will be referred to the Administration for review and response.

Lisa Lessard had the following comments: When I was here the last time I seemed to get so many point of orders in accordance to what I was saying I thought I would play the tape recording two minutes and 26 seconds that I played for the State Board of Education.

BROWN: That's not going to be allowed, no tapes are being allowed tonight.

LESSARD: Excuse me, but this is not a point of order and this is basically, and you can't tell me like John Theriault said, what's gonna happen because you disagree with what I'm about to do. So here we are.

Ms. Lessard played a tape recording that was inaudible.

BROWN: Lisa, we're not allowing tapes to be played. You're welcome to summarize the tape for us.

LESSARD: I did and you wouldn't let me say it.

BROWN: Please summarize the tape. Lisa, we cannot understand it. So I would appreciate it if you wouldn't play it and just summarize it.

LESSARD: I'll just keep playing it, I have five minutes.

BROWN: Lisa, we cannot hear it.

LESSARD: I have five minutes.

BROWN: I'm sorry, this is not going to be allowed, please.

LESSARD: I have five minutes says the attorney I talked to before I came here.

BROWN: The next person on the list is Danielle Albert. I hope I don't have to call someone to have you removed.

LESSARD: And then you will basically be brought to the State Department of Education for not knowing what slanderous means.

BROWN: Please, Lisa.

LESSARD: Don't worry, it's almost done, this is you. In need of cash, so I'm gonna go there, which is relevant which the tape recording I just played and you said that people didn't hear it well they heard it at the Board of Aldermen so they know what was being played here. That is incorrect, it is wrong, yes indeed a grant and it's not part of ECS, it never will be part of ECS says the State Department of Education so I was told to tell you, Board of Education to watch your emails like Desi . . . did through your emails when it came to the Turnaround and now being a Focus School. Thank you, God bless, that's my five minutes, I checked with an attorney before I came, and what you read before this meeting about slanderous and everything else was the same thing they read in front of the Board of Aldermen and that was taken away by the ACLU which the same

thing will happen a couple weeks here because the same thing is going forward. Thank you and God bless. That statement you read is illegal.

Danielle Albert had the following comments: I was actually deeply disappointed by some of the comments made at last week's Workshop meeting, I feel they could have been taken as slightly offensive to families, school staff, and some of the children in the district. Urban districts which of course Waterbury is one were essentially compared incomparable to Fairfield County towns like Westport and Greenwich. We were told those districts don't deal with the same challenges and issues as an urban district. That is true but that's where the truth stops. It was also stated that Waterbury is dealing with an urban environment that we all know about. Is this statement implying that a different set of expectations and standards should apply for the urban demographic. Our students have the same capacity to learn and ability to become even more successful in some cases than a child who lives in Greenwich. Although the median income in Fairfield County is \$130,000 and Waterbury's is closer to a third of that it doesn't make our children any less capable. Should we throw up our hands and be grateful for the crumbs that we get just because we are an urban district? Quite the contrary. The excuses do need to stop. Our kids should be provided with the most solid educational foundation, one even stronger than that of Redding or Westport. Most of this district needs to once and for all stop making excuses for the horrendous test scores urban district or not. It was also stated that it was equally unfair to compare our scores with the State averages which include far more affluent towns. Why? We are all part of the State of Connecticut and my understanding standardized testing is a system designed to insure that our children are learning based on the curriculum that's being implemented across the board. There are so many variables. Are the municipalities across Connecticut using the same State guidelines? Do we have a district curriculum standard for our teachers to follow that shows what skills our children need to learn? We all know by now the SBAC is failing so where is the accurate comparable data? Wouldn't it be more reasonable to not compare scores because many of the affluent towns have opted out? It was also mentioned that we are doing a good job; of course our teachers are just as good, look at our own Jahana Hayes. Personally I can't speak highly enough of the teaching staff that my daughters have experienced but inasmuch as we are heading in a positive direction Waterbury can't go anywhere but up, we are at the top of the bottom of the failing list and just because we may have been at the bottom this is not enough progress. Should we ask for another task force, study and gather more data on the failing schools, find out the problem and develop initiatives? Maybe, or maybe we should look at the obvious, and it comes down to the almighty dollar, recognize that Fairfield County, the gold coast, is the sixth richest county in the country and that includes those incomparable cities. However Waterbury does have its own treasure chest, even though suburban districts may be a hundred times wealthier, this district has millions of dollars pumped in from Alliance Grant, 21st Century, the Governor's Network Turnaround Funds, you can go on and on. These monies are funding our Blueprint for Change that has been in place for almost four years and yet 14 million dollars of that budget was used to subsidize our budget. Where's the positive change for our kids and the solutions? A nice article, event, or program here and there doesn't fix the problems. I saw eight hardworking, dedicated administrators sitting at a table last week but how is over a half a million dollars in salaries helping to bridge the achievement gap that our Mayor spoke about? I, like many, am tired of hearing about studies, the assessments, the rating systems; I'm tired of it because those are not real solutions to helping our kids. Where is the data that shows progress? Why did Walsh

leave the Turnaround label only to be replaced by Wilby? I previously worked at Greenwich Academy, a very affluent school with no real diversity or urban flair. I want to know why our children who are just as capable are the ones who are going to get passed over on college applications. I want to know why parents have to become detectives and fight so hard when it comes down to fighting for what is right for our children. Why when those who are supposed to be fighting the hardest for our kids are letting the curriculum and testing be dumbed down and they aren't being held accountable for getting proper services for our children in place. Yes, urban districts do pose more challenges but the excuses need to stop and change needs to be made. Find real workable solutions to bridge the achievement gap. Is the real problem here urban in nature or is it accountability and oversight? That may be the difference between us and Greenwich because with the resources and money that this City does have our children do have the capacity to be at the top not at the bottom.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 6:46 p.m.

BROWN: Discussion?

THERIAULT: Yes. If we're gonna disallow any multimedia or tape recordings I think it should be in our preempted statement. We had a gentleman up here not too long ago who spoke for two minutes and he remained silent at the podium for three minutes, that's his right, I respect that right. And I also respect the right of people to use multimedia, granted I couldn't hear it but I don't think that's the issue, the issue was you disallowed it even before you heard it. So I think either we get the Corporation Counsel's opinion on this or we allow people to come in with multimedia or pictures or video or whatever they want to use within their five minutes or go to the podium and stand there for five minutes and be silent as a sign of resignation and determination. That's all I have to say.

BROWN: Commissioner Stango.

STANGO: As far as coming to the podium with a device the trouble is I could not hear it. I don't know if anybody else could, so I would hope that, I don't even know what it was from but I'd like to know if we can get a transcript of that somehow, if it's worthy that we should hear it I think we should have a transcript of it. And the other thing that Commissioner Theriault mentioned was that coming to the podium, having a right not to speak. Coming from myself I think the whole point of coming to the podium is to speak. If you're not gonna come to the podium to speak then don't come to the podium because if we look and we blow that up some more we can get 45 people that come and sign up and choose not to speak. You call their name, they come to the podium and stand there. There's something wrong with that. I think that needs to be defined. That's all. Thank you.

BROWN: Any other comments? Commissioner Harvey.

HARVEY: Just a comment in regards to the statement that's read. I could remember a few years ago that there were issues then so I think we should look at, if we're looking at things, standing at the podium, etc., I think that's a right even though they are standing there that we need to look at that statement as well. Thank you.

BROWN: Commissioner Van Stone.

T. VAN STONE: Thank you Madam President. I think we have to keep in mind that we serve at the behest of the voters who put us here and if someone wants to come to the podium and engage me in a staring contest for five minutes then I will stare back, that's fine by me. I don't think if we're gonna invite public speaking it is just that and whether we review the preannouncement or what have you we've invited the public to speak to us and whether it's a silent speak or a verbal we are here to pay attention to that. Thank you.

BROWN: Commissioner Theriault.

THERIAULT: I'll be quick, as quick as I can be. With the Board of Ed removing their preempted statement because they had two lawsuits, the Board of Aldermen removing their preempted statement and clarifying it because of two lawsuits that came, they dropped their statement it seems to me that what's good for the goose is good for the gander and they're the goose and we're the gander. I had already asked that this statement be reviewed by the Clerk of the Board so maybe this will be a second time at bat on this issue for the Corporation Counsel, hopefully this Board requesting Corporation Counsel look at our statement and seeing whether or not, I don't want to say constitutional but legal in terms of the public's ability to speak and express themselves. Thank you.

BROWN: All in favor, opposed, motion carries.

6. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Ouellette read and distributed the following announcements:

Congratulations to Suzanne Dionne who has been named the Magnet Schools of America Region 1 Teacher of the Year for 2016. She will receive formal recognition at the MSA Annual Conference in Miami, which will be held May 3-7, 2016. Mrs. Dionne was Rotella's Teacher of the Year in 2013. She joins fellow teacher Joan Dooling, who won regional and national MSA awards in 2010 and former principal Gina Calabrese, who won regional and national MSA awards in 2011.

On March 4, Gilmartin Literacy Facilitator, Laura Caruso "L.M. Carr", author of The Giving Trilogy, was showcased on CT Style (channel 8) for her amazing books.

Students in Mrs. Alena Cybart-Persenaire's English and journalism classes at Kennedy High School worked together recently to donate 20 bags of diapers to Carolyn's Place. The students collected spare change and small bills, then pooled their resources to make the purchase.

Members of the Crosby High School LifeSmarts team are trying to raise a little over \$10,000 to fund the team's trip to the National LifeSmarts finals in Denver from April 9 – 12.

Waterbury was represented for the first time in The Kids' Lit Quiz, a major national celebration of books and reading. Teams of four students work together to answer 100 wide ranging book related questions arranged in ten categories. With the assistance of

WAMS librarian Doreen Lopez, two teams from WAMS competed this year on January 27th. This event is supported by the School of Education & Professional Studies and the Department of Literacy.

Waterbury students are invited to tell the organizers of this year's Family and Housing Expo "what makes Waterbury a great place for families to live" in a new set of student contests. A selection of poetry, essay and poster entries will be displayed at the expo, and visitors to the expo will have an opportunity to vote for their favorite displayed entry in a People's Choice Award. The Expo is an annual event here in Waterbury, sponsored by the City of Waterbury, the Education Department, the Greater Waterbury Board of Realtors and Eversource. It will be held this year on Saturday, April 30, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at WAMS.

Schools will be closed next Friday, March 25, for Good Friday. There will be an early dismissal on Wednesday, March 30, for Teacher Collaboration. The end of the third marking period is also March 30. Report cards will be distributed on April 15. An updated school calendar is available on the district website.

7. PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

No comments.

BROWN: Does anybody want to remove anything from the Consent Calendar?

President Brown proceeded to read the Consent Calendar, items 8.1 through 8.18.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

Upon a motion by Commissioner Hernandez and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar, items 8.1 through 8.18, as listed:

- 8.1 *Committee of the Whole:* Request approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) for live-scan submissions to the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).
- 8.2 *Committee of the Whole:* Request approval of a new after-school program for Crosby High School entitled "Voices" (funded by Turnaround Funds).
- 8.3 *Committee of the Whole:* Request approval of a new after-school program for Crosby High School entitled "Boys Council" (funded by Turnaround Funds).
- 8.4 *Committee on Finance:* Request approval of the submission of the Liberty Foundation Early Literacy Grant.
- 8.5 *Committee on School Personnel:* Request approval of salary adjustments for non-union grant funded employees.

- 8.6 *Committee on Legislation:* Request approval of the submission of the Board's position regarding various proposed legislation to the State Delegation.
- 8.7 *Committee on Building:* Request approval of Amendment #1 to the Agreement with Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc. for the Kennedy High School Additions & Alterations Project.
- 8.8 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Stephanie LaBonte, WHS, and 15 chaperones to take 160 students to Lyndhurst, NJ on April 14, 2016 to visit Medieval Times.
- 8.9 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Carmela Gregoire, WHS, and two chaperones to take 30 students to New York, NY on May 20, 2016 to visit the Museum of Modern Art.
- 8.10 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Major Mike Simon, WHS, and one chaperone to take 16 students to Aston, PA from March 18 through 19, 2016 to participate in a physical fitness competition.
- 8.11 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Luanne Rosin-Capolupo, KHS, and four chaperones to take 50 students to Hyde Park, NY on April 1, 2016 to visit the Vanderbilt and Roosevelt Estates.
- 8.12 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Crystal Velez, KHS, and four chaperones to take 50 students to New York, NY on March 23, 2016 to visit Elektra Theatre - That Physics Show.
- 8.13 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Craig Poulter, KHS, and one chaperone to take 20 students to Boston, MA on May 3, 2016 to visit Boston Museum of Science.
- 8.14 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Jeanne Sasso, KHS, and four chaperones to take 50 students to Jackson, NJ on May 12, 2016 to visit Six Flags.
- 8.15 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Dino Pantoni, KHS, and 11 chaperones to take 120 students to Agawam, MA on May 28, 2016 to visit Six Flags.
- 8.16 *Committee on Curriculum:* Request permission be granted to Charlotte Sullivan, CHS, and 14 chaperones to take 150 students to Lyndhurst, NJ on April 1, 2016 to visit Medieval Times.
- 8.17 *Committee on School Facilities & Grounds:* Use of school facilities by school organizations and/or City Departments:

GROUP	FACILITIES AND DATES/TIMES
R. O'Neill	Carrington café: Wed., Mar. 23, 5:30-8:00 pm (Literacy Night) Carrington café: Tues. Apr. 12, 5:30-8:00 pm (Math/Zumba Night) Carrington café: Thurs. May 19, 5:30-8:00 pm (Family Night)

I. Nunes	Career Academy gym: Fri., Apr. 29, 4-8 pm (Self Defense Class)
R. Arroyo	Enlightenment café: Tues., Mar. 29, 5-7 pm (parent workshop)
J. Brady	WAMS gym: Mon., Apr. 11, 3:15-5:30 pm (Faculty Basketball game)
J. Reed	Reed Sch. gym: Tues., Apr. 5, 3-8 pm (Invention Convention)
R. LeFever	Regan café: Thurs., May 5, 6-8 pm (Art Show)
Refuse Dept. Bart Startup	Walsh lower parking lot: Sat., Mar. 12, 9 am – 1 pm (Electronics Pick-Up for Walsh area)
D. Bakewell	Sprague gym: Thurs., May 12, 4:30-7:00 pm (Family Literacy Night) Sprague gym: Tues., May 3, 4:30-7:30 pm (Art Night) Sprague gym: Thurs., Mar. 31, 4:30-6:30 pm (Family Math Night)
N. Vaughan	Kennedy aud.: Tues., May 17, 5-8 pm (Elem. student awards night) Kennedy aud.: Wed., May 18, 5-8 pm (M & H student awards night) Crosby aud. & lobby: Wed., May 25, 3-6 pm (Teacher of the Year awards)
P. McAlinden	Chase gym: Thurs., Apr. 28, 3:10-7:00 pm (Healthy Minds/Healthy Bodies Program)
S. Dionne	Rotella conf. rm.: Thurs., Apr. 7, 4:15-7:00 pm (Ct. Art Teachers Assoc. meeting)
C. Damore	Wilson gym: Wed., Mar. 23, 5-7 pm (Family Math Night)
L. Richard	Career Academy conf. rm.: Sat., Mar. 12, 8 am-1 pm (preparation for state conference)
R. Arroyo	Enlightenment gym: Fri., Apr. 15, 6-10 pm (Spring Dance)
*Human Resources	Kennedy café: Thurs., Mar. 31, 1:30-4:30 pm (Paralegal exam)
*Fire Dept.	Kennedy aud: Mon., Mar. 28, 5-8 pm (Recruit graduation ceremony)

8.18 *Committee on School Facilities & Grounds:* Use of school facilities by outside organizations and/or waiver requests:

GROUP	FACILITIES AND DATES/TIMES
Wtby. Valley Chordsmen	Rotella aud.: Thurs., Nov. 10, 5-10 pm (Rehearsal)
Gabriel Riccio	and Sat., Nov. 12, 5-10 pm (performance)

REQUESTING WAIVERS:

GROUPS NOT SUBJECT TO FEES OR WAIVER DUE TO TIME OF USE OR PREVIOUS WAIVER:

Dept. of Transportation	Crosby aud.: Thurs., May, 5, 5-8 pm (public meeting on I-84 Project)
Christopher Sukowski	
Neighborhood Housing Serv.	Reed field: Fri., Mar. 25, 1:00-3:30 pm
Eden Brown	(Easter Egg Hunt)

BROWN: Discussion? All those in favor, opposed, abstain.

T. VAN STONE: Abstain.

9 . ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT

There were no items removed from the Consent Calendar.

10. SUPERINTENDENT’S NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to receive and place on file items 10.1 through 10.7, Superintendent’s Notification to the Board, as listed:

10.1. Athletic resignations:

- Martinez, Emmanuel - Freshmen Baseball, WHS, effective 02/29/16.
- DeFazio, Martin - JV Baseball, WHS, effective 02/29/16.
- O'Toole, John - JV Softball, WCA, effective 02/18/16.
- Russo, Joe - JV Baseball, WCA, effective 02/18/16.
- Thompson, Roy - Freshmen Baseball, KHS, effective 02/20/16.
- Ursino, Antonio - Assistant Varsity Baseball, WHS, effective 03/01/16.
- Ursino, Antonio - Boys' Varsity Tennis, WHS, effective 03/01/16.
- Ursino, Antonio - Freshman Baseball, WHS, effective 03/01/16.

10.2 Athletic appointments:

- Danaher, Kevin - Golf, KHS, effective 03/03/16.
- O'Toole, John - Varsity Softball, WCA, effective 02/18/16.
- Paradis, Sara - Outdoor Track & Field, WCA, effective 03/03/16.
- Perusse, Joseph - Strength & Conditioning, WHS, effective 12/18/15.
- Russo, Joe - Varsity Baseball, WCA, effective 02/18/16.

10.3 Grant funded appointments effective immediately:

- McCall, Sebastian- Network Specialist, (replacing James Accousti) 10 months p/year, 35 hours p/week @ \$19.00 p/hour, governed by the SEIU agreement.

10.4 Teacher new hires:

Name		Assignment		Step	Effective
Feigenblat	Maryssa	Carrington	Gr. 2	MA+15/1	02/24/16
Rollins	Lauren E.	Chase	Spec. Ed.	BA/2	03/22/16

10.5 Retirements:

- Cremins, Barbara - Maloney Library Media Specialist, effective 06/30/16.
- Cutrali, Lucia - KHS Math, effective 06/30/16.
- Dooling, Joan - Rotella Grade 5, effective 06/30/16.
- Gelband, Genya - Enlightenment/State Street ESL, revised eff. date of 03/21/16.
- Girouard, Kathryn - WHS Special Educ., effective 06/30/16.
- Greggis, Kathleen - NEMS Art, effective 07/01/16.
- Highsmith, Carolyn - KHS Health/PE, effective 07/01/16.
- Labagh, Cheryl - Wilson Reading, effective 06/30/16.
- Langlais, Lorraine - KHS Family & Consumer Science, effective 07/01/16.
- Ludwig, Kenneth - KHS Technology Educ., effective 06/30/16.
- Massimo, Mary Ellen - NEMS Special Educ., effective 06/30/16.
- McBride, Renee - KHS Art, effective 06/30/16.
- Mikolsky, Gail - Duggan Special Educ., effective 05/01/16.
- Mistura, Arthur - Bunker Hill Music, effective 06/30/16.

Molaskey, Catherine - Rotella Physical Education, effective 06/30/16.
Riley, Margaret - Rotella Library Media Specialist, effective 07/01/16.
Rubock, Jeremy - WHS Technology Educ., effective 07/01/16.

10.6 Resignations:

Castro, Elizabeth - Special Education, Chase School, effective 01/21/16.
Mastriani Carito, Jessica - Grade 5, Gilmartin School, effective 03/04/16.

10.7 Leave of absence requests:

Villar, Venny- requesting an unpaid childrearing leave of absence from April 4, 2016 through the end of the 2015/16 school year.

BROWN: Discussion? All those in favor, opposed, abstain. Motion carries. Number 11 – Unfinished Business of Preceding Meeting Only. Number 12 – Other Unfinished, New, and Miscellaneous Business. Commissioner Hernandez.

HERNANDEZ: It's really not any business but I was at one of the grocery stores and came across a couple of Crosby's young men from LifeSmarts and I just went up, you know they were taking donations and I said to them, I said so, tell me about LifeSmart, what is it? And they were very knowledgeable on the program, explained to me from the beginning to the end. I meant to get their names so that I could at least acknowledge them tonight. But very nice gentlemen, very, very respectful. And I just told them, I said well I just want you to know Commissioner Hernandez is very proud of you and they were like, so good luck to those guys I hope they really get the funding that they need.

BROWN: Commissioner Van Stone.

T. VAN STONE: Thank you Madam President. A couple of Saturdays ago unfortunately I was not in town and was not able to go to the robotics competition. We had two teams in that event this year plus the fact that we hosted the event. We should be very proud of these students, we're flowing this down to a couple different types of organizations and a similar organization in the lower grades to do similar events right down to the little kids doing the blocks, whatever they're called these days. But it's a great program, it's First, the name of the program that we held the event for. I felt awful not being at it, I was at it last year as a judge. I'll be at the State event, hopefully something works out that our kids can gain some more points and can do it. Kennedy has been around for a while but Crosby certainly represented themselves very, very well. Again, we should be proud of our kids. It's not a game to compare, as was mentioned. Our kids, my 95 percenters, I talk about them all the time. But I really, I felt bad missing that event, it's a great event. If you ever get to go to a robotics competition it's amazing. Being in the crowd is tremendous, there's more enthusiasm than any other sporting event if you want to compare it to it. It's amazing and at the end of the day everyone is a teammate, after the competition they join in alliances as they call it where they end up having schools join among schools to compete together as the day progresses. It's an amazing event. So sorry I missed it but it's certainly something we should recognize that our students partake in each and every year and multiple times a year. They work probably more hours than our athletes. It's amazing how many hours they put in. And I would also have to say thank you to the volunteers as well that help out with the event, so thank you.

BROWN: You were missed, it was a great event. Commissioner Pagano.

PAGANO: In a similar manner I attended Woodrow Wilson School's Invention Convention yesterday. I had the honor of being a judge and I left there a totally changed person. The second and third graders just blew me away on their creativity, their divergent thinking, and their pretty cool attack on engineering a product that would put me to shame as an electrical engineer to be honest with you. I plan to be at the City-wide competition on I believe April 2 I believe at Reed School and would encourage the rest of my members to join us because I think it is a fun thing to be doing and makes it all worth it including the candy bar. Thank you.

BROWN: I agree totally. I had the opportunity to be a judge that the Chase School one and again, just the creativity and articulation. I asked this one little boy, he made a little doll, his invention was a friend, it was just adorable. He said, I said when do people need a friend, he said well everybody needs a friend. He was just adorable. They had over 60 students, third and fourth graders participating, and this is the first time, and kudos to staff, especially to Mr. Reed for really pushing this. This will be the first time, as Commissioner Pagano said, that we will have a city-wide invention convention so I look forward to it, it's gonna be exciting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to convene into Executive Session at 7:01 p.m. for discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

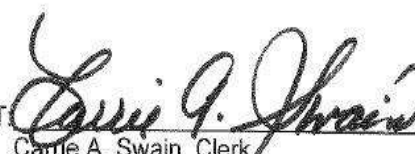
Present: President Brown, Commissioners Harvey, Hernandez, Pagano, Stango, Sweeney, Theriault, and T. Van Stone. Also present were Dr. Ouellette, Gary Miller, and Robert Brenker.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Stango, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 7:07 p.m. with no votes taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sweeney and duly seconded by Commissioner Hernandez, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:07 p.m.

ATTEST


Carrie A. Swain, Clerk
Board of Education