

WATERBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES ~ SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, July 17, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

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

PRESENT: President Stango, Commissioners Brown, Harvey, Hernandez, McEntee, Rodriguez (6:10), and T. Van Stone.

ABSENT: Commissioner Awwad, Sweeney, and J. Van Stone.

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent Kathleen Ouellette, Chief Academic Officer Anne Marie Cullinan, Chief Operating Officer & Chief of Staff Paul Guidone, and Education Liaison Mary Ann Marold.

SILENT PRAYER

President Stango called the special meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Dr. Ouellette led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

CLERK: Commissioner Awwad (absent). Commissioner Brown.

BROWN: Here.

CLERK: Vice President Harvey.

HARVEY: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Hernandez.

HERNANDEZ: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner McEntee.

McENTEE: Here.

CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez (arrived at 6:10 p.m.). Commissioner Sweeney (absent). Commissioner J. Van Stone (absent). Commissioner T. Van Stone.

T. VAN STONE: Present.

CLERK: President Stango.

STANGO: Here. For the record Commissioner Awwad, Sweeney, and Van Stone send their regrets. They could not attend due to a previous commitment.

PUBLIC ADDRESSES THE BOARD

Upon a motion by Commissioner Brown and duly seconded by Commissioner McEntee, it was voted unanimously to suspend the regular order of business to allow the public to address the Board at 6:03 p.m.

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. All in favor, opposed, we will hear then from Mrs. Lessard. All speakers are encouraged to submit prepared written statements to the Commissioners. Comments shall be limited to a maximum of five minutes. 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, 905 Pearl Lake Road, had the following comments: One point four – Reading/Language Arts 7-12 Supervisor’s appointment, I’m so glad the supervisor is coming in for Reading/Language. I just wanted to mention when my daughter was at Waterbury Arts Magnet School being deaf and hard of hearing they had Reading 180, I’d just like the supervisor to know that’s being appointed that if you have a deaf and hard of hearing student you please do not require them to put earphones on their ears so they can be instructed on what’s going on within the computer. My daughter herself at a PPT, Parent and Placement Team meeting said to all PPT members that she could not hear from the computer most of the time. At the time she had two hearing aids, now she has a hearing aid and a Cochlear implant but she could not hear from the computer most of the time to get anything – directions, what to do, how to do it or when to do I and I had to make a US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights complaint which we indeed won. So the supervisor being appointed if they could know deaf and hard of hearing, earphones on your ears to hear anything is not accurate, it’s not correct, and there’s other things you could possibly do to make that work like how the ASL interpreter possibly with a hearing aid wear the earphones and then have them sign to the child that’s sitting next to them in American Sign Language or sign English whichever their IEP presently states. So I just wanted to say thank God there’s a supervisor being appointed and I wish them the best of luck. Thank you.

STANGO: Is there anyone else wishing to address the Board on the Special Agenda items?

Upon a motion by Commissioner Brown and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 6:06 p.m.

STANGO: Motion made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none - all in favor, opposed, motion passes unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion by Commissioner Brown and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to convene into Executive Session at 6:07 p.m. for discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. All in favor, opposed, motion carries.

Present: President Stango, Commissioners Brown, Harvey, Hernandez, McEntee, Rodriguez (6:10), and T. Van Stone. Also present were Superintendent Ouellette, Mrs. Cullinan, and Mr. Guidone.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Brown and duly seconded by Commissioner Harvey, it was voted unanimously to return to the regular order of business at 6:27 p.m. with no votes taken.

1. COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL PERSONNEL

1.1 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Brown, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Darlene M. Cofrancesco as Principal, Tinker School, effective immediately.

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT: It gives me great pleasure to recommend to the Board of Education tonight the approval of Darlene Cofrancesco, a Supervising Vice Principal at Tinker Elementary School, as the new Principal at Tinker Elementary School. Darlene has the following credentials: Bachelors of Psychology, Masters at the University of Bridgeport, another Masters at the University of Bridgeport in Remedial Reading and English/Language Arts, and a Masters also in Educational Leadership from the University of Bridgeport. She holds a 92 license as well as Remedial Reading and Language Arts K-12 Certification and a 102 Endorsement which is a tremendous asset as a principal in an elementary school and she also has the Teacher Elementary Certification. She is currently the Supervising Vice Principal; she has been Summer School District Coordinator, Acting Vice Principal at Driggs, Teaching Vice Principal at Bucks Hill Elementary, Summer School Principal and on and on and on. She has leadership experience as a PBIS Team Member and Coach, Data Team Member, School Improvement Team Member, PLC Facilitator/Team Member, Co-teaching Facilitator, Title IX Coordinator, 504 Coordinator, Safe School Climate Coordinator. She's been a Reading Specialist at Bucks Hill, Chase School, Grade Three Teacher at Chase, modeled reading strategies for classroom teachers, has conducted districtwide and school-based professional development, and was a Rotella teacher of grade five from 2000 through 2008. This is a very competitive pool of 27 applicants and Darlene had ranked first in all three phases of the process. So it gives me great pleasure this evening to recognize Mrs. Darlene Cofrancesco for the position of Tinker Elementary School Principal.

STANGO: Thank you Superintendent. Any further discussion? Seeing none – roll call vote please.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON ITEM #1.1:

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, Harvey, Hernandez, McEntee, Rodriguez, T. Van Stone, and President Stango – 7.

(applause)

COFRANCESCO: I'd like to thank Dr. Ouellette, Mrs. Cullinan, President Stango, Vice President Harvey, and all the members of the Board of Education for appointing me the position of Principal of Tinker School. I am honored and humbled. I look forward to the opportunity to move Tinker School forward academically and continue upon our collaboration with our home and school connection. Thank you again.

(applause)

1.2 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Brown, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Jennifer A. Rosser as Principal, Wilson School, effective immediately.

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT: Thank you Mr. President. I am very pleased to recommend to the Board of Education the approval of Jennifer Rosser for the position of Wilson Elementary School Principal. Jennifer's roots began in Waterbury. Actually she attended Driggs Elementary School and she had her first career at AETNA Insurance in Hartford. She later relocated to North Carolina to attend St. Andrews Presbyterian College and the University of North Carolina and pursued a teaching career in the Lee County School District. She began as a middle school Math and Science teacher and went on to become an Administrator at the STEM Middle School and later as Assistant Principal for East Lee Middle School. In July 2010 she became Acting Principal and Assistant Principal at the Deep River School in Lee County. Mrs. Rosser's resume is very, very extensive and she has accomplished much over the last 12 years. She's most recently named Assistant Principal of the year in 2014 for that County. She has a Master's Degree in School Administration from the University of North Carolina, a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. She's currently enrolled in a Doctoral Program at the Southern Connecticut State University in Connecticut here and is due to complete that program in 2016. She possesses a Principal and a K-6 Elementary Certification in the State of North Carolina. There were 39 applicants for this position, very competitive, she ranked highest in all phases and to Ms. Rosser's credit, she is currently taking a low-achieving school and turned it around to a top in the Lee County District through its efforts of strategic planning, of data analysis, collaborative Common Core lesson planning, professional staff development, and a positive school climate focused on a common vision to move students forward. She's also a MClass Trainer for her district. So we're very pleased to have her return to Waterbury where she still has connections and I know she'll be a tremendous asset to our district. Thank you Mr. President.

STANGO: Further discussion? Roll call vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE ON ITEM #1.2:

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, Harvey, Hernandez, McEntee, Rodriguez,
T. Van Stone, and President Stango - 7

(applause)

SUPERINTENDENT: Unfortunately Mrs. Rosser, hopefully you'll be able to view this tape for the applause for you this evening, she is still in North Carolina assuming the role as Summer School Principal and so hopefully she'll return to us within the next week or so.

1.3 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Tom Van Stone, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Rohinie Criscione as House Principal, West Side Middle School, effective immediately.

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Discussion? Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT: Thank you Mr. President. It gives me great pleasure to recommend to the Board of Education the approval of Rohinie Criscione, currently a grade six English/Language Arts Teacher and Teaching Vice Principal at West Side Middle School with 12 years' experience in the Waterbury School District as the new House Principal at West Side Middle School. Rohinie has the following credentials – Bachelors in History, Masters in Elementary Education, a 6th Year in Administration at the University of Bridgeport. She currently has a 092 License and a Teachers Certificate with a 005 Endorsement. Rohinie has worked on the School Leadership Team with a shared vision and common goals towards improving the school climate and student achievement. She is a strong advocate of goal setting and performance metrics followed by data collection, analysis, and trending. She is a team player and never accepts mediocracy. She prides herself on raising the bar and testing her limits to pursue performance excellence at all times. She was an elementary school teacher at Chase Elementary and currently is at West Side Middle School as I previously stated. There were 70 applicants and Rohinie ranked first in all three phases of the interview process and is an outstanding candidate who demonstrates the quality of excellence we are pursuing for our administrative vacancies.

STANGO: Thank you. Further discussion? Roll call vote.

ROLL CALL ON ITEM #1.3:

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, Harvey, Hernandez, McEntee, Rodriguez, T. Van Stone, and President Stango - 7

CRISCIONE: Good evening everyone – members of the Board and members of the audience. Members of the Board I would like to thank you for approving my appointment as Red House Principal at West Side Middle School. I would also like to thank all those members of the three interviewing panels for their vote of confidence in my ability to take on a leadership role in our school community. As a product of the Waterbury Public School System it is with great pride and appreciation that I accept the appointment as Red House Principal at West Side Middle School. At West Side we are a community of educators who are committed to student achievements and school improvement and as a result I am looking forward to working side by side with Mrs. Burns, Mrs. Kostka, Mrs. Henson, staff members, the student body to ensure that we are progressive in our work and our dedication towards student success and school improvement.

Last but not least I would like to thank my family for their love and support. Thank you guys.

(applause)

1.4 Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, it was voted, by roll call vote, to approve the appointment of Steven A. Strand as Supervisor of Reading/Language Arts 7 – 12, effective immediately.

STANGO: Motion has been made and seconded. Discussion? Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT: I am very pleased to recommend to the Board of Education the approval of Steven Strand for the position of Reading/Language Arts Supervisor for grades 6 through 12. Mr. Strand has quite the impressive resume, over 19 years of experience in the field of education. His career began in the mid 90's, sorry about that Steve, as an English Teacher at West Haven High School. He moved onto other districts and in 2002 was hired as the Reading/Language Arts Consultant with the State of Connecticut. He was then hired in the New Britain School District as Principal/Master Scheduler and PD Coordinator for grades 6 through 12 in 2007 and in 2011 was promoted to Director of District Improvement/Curriculum & Instruction, grade 6 through 12. Mr. Strand is most recently affiliated with East Haddam Public School District as Curriculum Director Grades K through 12 and High School Vice Principal at Nathan Hale-Ray. Mr. Strand is currently in a Doctoral Program at Southern Connecticut State University with hopes to complete the program in 2017. He has a 6th Year Certificate, a Master's Degree, and a Bachelor's also in English at the University of Connecticut. In his certification he certainly has the 092 Endorsement as well as Language Arts Consultant, 102 Remedial Reading, Remedial Language Arts 1 through 12, and an 015 Secondary English. So he has quite a variety of certifications. In his letter of reference his colleagues indicate he is relentless in his pursuit of excellence for all children. His focus on improving student, teacher, and administrative performance is both strength and a passion. His strengths also include excellent oral and written communication skills and a superior ability to analyze various types of data from a variety of sources. Steve is a leader, and his success as a leader is enhanced by extensive knowledge of how to help others improve their skills. Steve prides himself as an instructional leader with focus on curriculum design and implementation, professional learning and coaching, school improvement and scheduling, budgeting, student success planning, team instruction, teacher program evaluation. I'm pleased tonight to recommend Steven Strand for the position of Secondary Language Arts.

STANGO: Thank you Superintendent. Any other further discussion? Roll call vote please.

ROLL CALL ON ITEM #1.4:

Yeas: Commissioners Brown, Harvey, Hernandez, McEntee, Rodriguez, T. Van Stone, and President Stango - 7

(applause)

STRAND: Thank you Dr. Ouellette for your kind and certainly most generous words. Thank you also to the Board for your confidence in this appointment. It is truly a great privilege to serve as an educator and certainly no better place to serve than Waterbury. This community has much to be proud of in its students and in its schools. I look forward to joining a tremendous team. I look forward to collaborating. I look forward to the boundless possibilities for our shared future together. Thank you.

(applause)

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Harvey and duly seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:45 p.m.

ATTEST: 
Carrie A. Swain, Clerk
Board of Education