



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Minutes –Board of Education Meeting – November 25, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mr. D. Goldson, President. The meeting was held at King/Robinson Magnet School Auditorium, 150 Fournier St., New Haven, Connecticut.

Present: Mr. D. Goldson, President; Ms. Y. Rivera, Vice-President; Dr. T. Jackson-McArthur, Secretary; Mr. M. Wilcox, Dr. E. Joyner, Mayor T. Harp, Ms. L. Arouna

Absent: Mr. N. Rivera

Ms. Arouna led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Goldson announced that translation services were available for those who need them.

755-19
Approve Minutes of
October 28, 2019
With Correction

On the motion by Dr. Jackson-McArthur, seconded by Mr. Conaway, it was voted to approve the Minutes of October 28, 2019. Mr. Goldson pointed out one correction on page 7 under Approval of Personnel Report, it should note that the motion failed.

Public Participation Dr. Jackson-McArthur reminded all participants of the 3-minute rule for speaking.

Ms. Toni Criscuolo, ESUMS teacher, commented that she has been working with her student government for almost a year fighting what they call, the chocolate milk wars, because they are very interested in having chocolate milk served in the high schools for breakfast and lunch. They also wonder if it takes so long for this issue to be addressed, how long it would take for something serious; she continued to explain; Ms. Krystal Augustine, parent, spoke about Civil Rights Statute 504 and commented that it is not optional for a school district not to be in compliance with any provision of this Statute; Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities and it also ensures that a child with a disability has equal access to an education; she continued to explain the provisions in Statute 504; Ms. Augustine advised the Board of Ed that she has filed an internal complaint and she explained in detail; Ms. JoAnne Wilcox, former parent, addressed the issues about lead and the laws around lead and she expressed her concerns; she also told members of the Board to pay attention to the Board of Alders concerning this issue; Ms. Hazel Pappas, retired matron, Title I representative, wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a safe one; Ms. Florence Caldwell, retired matron, Title I Advocate, thanked Mr. Wilcox for attending the Districtwide Title I Parent Advisory Council Monthly Meeting and Family Fun Night; it was a wonderful activity of engaging families on how to better connect with their children; she also thanked Danny Diaz and Gemma Joseph-Lumpkin for attending; she applauded the group of young students who went out to support the Wilbur Cross student who was detained by ICE; she wished everyone a joyous and blessed Thanksgiving.



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For the record, Mr. Goldson mentioned that Mayor Harp texted him that she will be a little late this evening.

Student Reports

Ms. Arouna reported that student's from the Citywide Student Cabinet had their first meeting last Tuesday. It was hosted by High School in the Community and led by students in that school and Dr. Tracey and Mr. Goldson attended. During the meeting students spent time analyzing survey responses from the 2017-18 school year with a focus on respect from students to students and they had a very low response on the surveys with 20% of the 2,000 surveyed saying that students don't show respect for other students. They brainstormed these ideas and students from the Cabinet see a need for an increase in class discussions to create safer spaces in classrooms and address issues impacting our students as well as more student-led activities.

She and Nico brought some issues to the Student Cabinet for feedback such as climate change that is impacting our generation and something that we see a great need for and the students responded positively to do something to slow down this climate crisis i.e., recycling, composting, etc. She continued to explain.

Ms. Arouna remarked they then had a voting issue. Most of the students were interested in being registered to vote at their schools. Two groups have offered to assist in this, the Black Law Student Association and the Latino Law Student Association from Yale. They are already involved in our schools and teach classes on constitutional law so this would just be furthering their resources at our schools. Ms. Arouna commented they then discussed HB7082 African/American and Latino Studies and students responded very favorably to having this bill implemented, which would teach African/American and Latino Studies as a course available to students. The students showed a great interest in being involved with this bill.

Mr. Goldson asked Ms. Arouna if the letter has been written about the young man who is being detained by ICE. Ms. Arouna commented that she hasn't been approached about that. Mr. Goldson said that they will draft a letter for submission.

Mr. Goldson remarked that he would like her and Mr. Rivera to chair a student committee on recycling.

President's Report
Ethics Committee

Mr. Goldson remarked that he has three people who are interested in serving on the Ethics Committee and he will get their resumes to Board members to review so that we can ask for approval at our next Board meeting.

Dr. Joyner pointed out that there are three major entities that have some oversight authority on ethics as it relates to school boards; he named each one and their functions.



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Youth Council Follow-Up

Mr. Goldson remarked that Ms. Arouna summed it up well. Those young people were very informed and very engaged in the discussion; it was a well-rounded discussion with many of the 50-60 students participating. He thanked Ms. Ross-Lee and Dr. Whyte as well as Ms. Strand, of HSC, for coordinating that and for giving students the space to be able to work on these issues.

Mr. Goldson called on Mr. Wilcox to explain an email he forwarded today. Mr. Wilcox explained that it was an email sent from one of our library branch managers who is part of a census committee for the City of New Haven where they are bringing together groups of people and they are interested in including some representation from the Board of Ed and the district. Since this is going to drive federal funding for the next ten years, having a complete and accurate count of New Haven residents is key to the process. He continued to explain. If you have any questions, Isaiah Woods is one of the people from the City to contact and there is a meeting tomorrow at the main branch downtown. Mr. Wilcox commented that he is going to the meeting to see what is going on. Mr. Goldson said if any other Board member is interested please let them know.

Mr. Goldson asked if King/Robinson’s facilities staff could put some signage up so people would not trip on the steps in the auditorium.

Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Tracey welcomed everyone and wished them a Happy Thanksgiving. Dr. Tracey commented that she has three things that she will be discussing tonight one is the approval of the Superintendent’s Personnel Report, budget updates, and school presentations.

Mr. Goldson asked for a motion to approve the personnel report with one amendment. Mr. Javier Rodriguez appears on page 1 under resignation and again on page 3 under termination. We are removing him from the termination section and he will remain in the resignation section on page 1.

**756-19
Approval of
Personnel Report**

On the motion by Dr. Joyner, seconded by Mr. Wilcox, it was unanimously voted to approve the Personnel Report as amended by Mr. Goldson.

Budget Update

Dr. Tracey introduced Mr. Phillip Penn, CFO, and Ms. Juanita Mazyck to present.

Mr. Penn commented that the estimated deficit for the end of October is \$8.4 million in General Funds and that’s down from \$9.7 million at the end of September. He explained this was driven by some changes in our support staffing; he explained further. He commented that we continue to make refinements as we go forward. The biggest changes



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were made in out-of-district spending and tuition. Mr. Penn continued to explain each slide in detail.

Mr. Penn commented that he met with his team and he is going to make some changes in the way we report, meaning better clarity. He went through each page of the packet and explained. He mentioned that in general funds they have more work to do because \$8.4 is a big number and we have to look at personnel costs and grant funding. He explained this in detail.

Ms. Rivera commented that for her, the biggest thing is the other contractual services. She wanted to know if we are going to be able to break that out in more detail. Mr. Penn commented that it would be possible to break it down.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked for clarification, tuition includes TAG tuition and she wanted to know if that is money we spend to send students out of the district. Mr. Penn remarked, that is correct. Dr. Jackson-McArthur wanted to know if they could break that down for the next meeting so that they know exactly where the tuition is going and Mr. Penn said yes.

Mr. Conaway wanted to know if that tuition includes special education and regular education students and Mr. Penn remarked it is primarily special education students.

Mr. Goldson wanted to know if there is any way we can get a budget document that has both the general funds and special funds items on the same page in the same format showing what the special funds are being spent on. Mr. Penn commented that they could do that.

This discussion continued at length with Board members presenting their questions and concerns, which were addressed by Mr. Penn. To see the full presentation, please go to www.nhps.net.

Mayor Harp commented that after the budget is done people come out to advocate for it but the revenue doesn't come from here. Most of the revenue comes from a state grant that is based on a formula. This formula doesn't do well for cities like New Haven she explained in detail. If you really care about this issue and want your voice heard, you have to go to the Board of Alders and the General Assembly. She would like to see the people that are here advocating taking a trip to Hartford and making a case at the local level.

Dr. Tracey thanked Mr. Penn, Juanita Mazyck and Linda Hannans for their report.

Acknowledgement

Dr. Tracey acknowledged Ms. Jessica Haxhi who was recently nominated by her colleagues in the National World Language field, as president-elect of the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages.



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Ms. Haxhi remarked she is honored by this nomination. The conference was held this weekend in Washington, DC and two years from now her conference will be in San Diego where she will have to make a speech in front of 8,000 people. It is really exciting and it is going to bring a lot of great press to New Haven. She is already making great contacts and learning so much about things she can apply here and she is so happy to bring New Haven to the national conversation and the national conversation to us. She thanked them for their support, as always.

School Presentations

Dr. Tracey introduced Mr. David Diah and commented that he is newly married and she acknowledged his wife who was present. She called on Ms. Keisha Hannans.

Ms. Keisha Hannans, assistant superintendent, commented that tonight we have two presentations one is by Wexler Grant Community School, a Commissioner's Network School, a Focus 5 Turnaround School, and a high needs school and so much more. Principal Diah will tell about the great things that are going on at that school.

Dr. Paul Whyte, assistant superintendent, remarked that he is the proud supervisor of Riverside Education Academy, which is our alternative education program and also a high needs school. He stated, as Ms. Hannans said, there is so much more to both these schools than what we have pointed out. Dr. Whyte introduced Principal Derek Stephenson of Riverside Academy.

Wexler Grant Community School

Principal Diah took this opportunity to thank Dr. Tracey and the Assistant Superintendents Dr. Paul Whyte and Ms. Keisha Hannans.

Principal Diah gave the background history of Wexler Grant and he pointed out some of the challenges Wexler Grant faced and some they still face. When he was appointed to Wexler Grant he wanted to make sure that every student had access to their education and every student was educated to go to the next level, which was high school. We started working with talent management and we organized 50% of the staff to be sure that everyone was there for the students, we created a plan based on the urgent low performance needs of students, an extended day to organize teachers to be able to deal with the trauma the kids face, and we looked into wrap-around services for kids. He continued to explain the interventions they implemented to help provide a better education for the kids.

Principal Diah commented that as a result they celebrated an increase in math of 7% from last year and he is celebrating that because every victory is a victory. In ELA they had a 3.2% increase in students meeting and exceeding standards and a reduction in out of



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school suspension numbers and teacher retentions are up to 93%. These are some of things that we are celebrating.

Dr. Joyner commented that he spent some time with Mr. Diah at the school and the social studies teacher, Mr. Schneider. Dr. Joyner asked Mr. Diah to let Mr. Schneider know that he gave him a shout out at the Board meeting. Mr. Diah was very impressive and Dr. Joyner commended him on the great job he is doing.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur mentioned that this school has been through a lot of challenges and she is happy to hear of the progress they have started to make and she commended him for that. She has seen a lot of children from Wexler and it used to be where parents wanted to get their kids out of that school, but no so much anymore. She commended him for that.

Mr. Conaway, Mayor Harp, Ms. Arouna and Mr. Goldson all expressed their thanks for the great job he is doing at Wexler-Grant.

Riverside Education Academy

Principal Derek Stephenson addressed the Board. He remarked that the students at Riverside are challenging and oppositional. They are also very energetic and exciting young people in spite of the hopelessness they have felt for years and we, at Riverside, are working diligently to make them hopeful. They have grown up very differently dealing with trauma and what they are looking for is consistency. The cultural climate of our building is ongoing and the entrance evokes positive energy. They installed a Koi Pond in the lobby of the building, which the students have grown to appreciate. The entire effect creates warmth for our students when they walk into the building. He explained this in detail.

Principal Stephenson went on to talk about the social and emotional support they have for their students such as the Yale Consultation Intern Program with clinical and focus groups as well as social workers and psychologists. The opportunities we have at Riverside for our students include the Carolyn Foundation. This grant money has afforded our students to work with our community partners, which are all learning experiences and invaluable; he explained in detail.

Mr. Stephenson talked about measuring the successes they have had. He talked about their attendance and noted that the success of our students coming to school once a week or two or three times a week signifies a success; they are coming. He explained some of the reasons why some students find it difficult to attend every day.

In closing, Mr. Stephenson remarked that one of their major emphases is to accept responsibility for personal decisions and actions. They really drive home staff relationships with students and students taking ownership for poor decisions they have made.



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Mr. Conaway commended Mr. Stephenson and his staff on the great job they are doing because he knows Riverside is a difficult community to work out of. Mr. Conaway encouraged him to take advantage of small victories because they lead to big victories.

Dr. Joyner, Mr. Wilcox, Ms. Rivera, Dr. Jackson-McArthur, Mayor Harp and Mr. Goldson participated in this discussion.

Dr. Tracey thanked Ms. Hannans, Dr. Whyte and the principals that presented. She hopes you can feel the passion that these men emanated. They believe in our kids and they rise to the occasion. She remarked that the work that these men are doing is God's work and they are doing it on behalf of our students. In closing, Dr. Tracey noted that all children need three things: passion, compassion and love, and if we can give them these three ingredients starting from the home, our children would be better children. They are not bad, they are just misguided.

Mr. Goldson thanked Dr. Tracey for answering questions they sent to her this afternoon. He forgot to include schools without permanent principals and one of the teachers brought up a problem with Science Kits at the last meeting. He would appreciate if she would let them know about that.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur wanted to know about the vacancies, classrooms being led by assistants who are not certified teachers and parents are concerned about this. She also mentioned that kids are being put on buses and when they get to their stop no one is there. Dr. Tracey commented often times they have emergencies especially when there is snow and another challenge is not having the right phone numbers for the parents. She continued to explain.

Dr. Joyner added his thoughts and this conversation continued.

Finance & Operations Committee Report

Ms. Rivera reported that this committee met on November 18th. There was a discussion around the Finance and Operation Memo Revision, which was enhanced by Mr. Wilcox. The memo is in the Board packets for review and if there are any questions or comments, they would like to discuss that now. We do not need Board approval so we don't have to vote on the memo before we start using it; we just wanted you to know that this is the plan to move forward.

Ms. Rivera remarked they also discussed the Financial Report and Budget Mitigation meetings. Ms. Rivera noted the For Your Information Only items for the record, and presented for approval eight abstracts, two agreements because one was tabled in committee, two contracts and one change order.



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On the motion by Ms. Rivera, seconded by Mr. Wilcox, it was unanimously voted to approve the following FINANCE AND OPERATIONS RELATED ITEMS:

ABSTRACTS

- 757-19 ***New Haven Lexinome Project***, in the amount of \$527,611.25 for 2019 –2020
- 758-19 ***Alliance Grant***, in the amount of \$15,301,995 for 2019-2020
- 759-19 ***Priority Schools Grant***, in the amount of \$4,471,266.00 for 2019-2020
- 760-19 ***Title III – English Language Enhancement Elementary & Secondary Education Act Grant***, in the amount of \$482,385 for 2019-2020
- 761-19 ***Title IIA Grant***, in the amount of \$1,006,233 for 2019-2020
- 762-19 ***Title I, Part A, Grant***, in the amount of \$10,266,663 for 2019-2020
- 763-19 ***Title IVA – Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant***, in the amount of \$750,081 for 2019-2020
- 764-19 ***School Improvement Grant – Hillhouse***, in the amount of \$505,655 for 2019-20

AGREEMENTS

- 765-19 An agreement by and between the New Haven Board of Education and Area Cooperative Educational Services, (ACES), to provide Alternative Route to Certification for Teachers of English Learners, (ACRTELL), from November 26, 2019 to June 30, 2020, in an amount not to \$75,000.00
- 766-19 An agreement by and between the New Haven Board of Education and Justice Education Center, to provide a program of study for a career in the construction industry, for students at Hillhouse High School, from November 25, 2019 to June 20, 2020, in an amount not to exceed \$60,000

CONTRACTS

- 767-19 An award of Contract #21665 to Boisvert Plumbing, LLC, 1165 Main Street, Suite 300, East Hartford, CT for the removal and replacement of boilers at Truman School, in an amount not to exceed \$225,142.



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768-19
Boisvert Plumbing
Celentano School An award of Contract #21665 to Boisvert Plumbing, LLC, 1165 Main Street, Suite 300, East Hartford, CT for the removal and replacement of boilers at Celentano School, in an amount not to exceed \$232,328.

CHANGE ORDER

769-19
Change Order #1,
Sports Construction
Supplies Change Order #1 to Contract #21568-2-2 for On-Call Gym Equipment Repairs to Sports Construction Supplies, LLC, 61 East Street, Plainville, CT for bleacher repair at Cross High School; basketball backboard motor replacement at Career; and gym curtain repair and basketball hoops replacement at Riverside Academy.

Original Amount of Contract: \$ 25,000
Change Order #1: \$ 75,000
Total Amount of Contract Incl. Change Order: \$100,000

Mr. Goldson asked Ms. Rivera if they know when they are going to have an additional report from the Mitigation Committee and Dr. Jill Kelly responded the 2nd meeting in December of the Finance & Operations Committee.

Governance Committee Report

Dr. Jackson-McArthur reported that they had a discussion about the Code of Conduct and she requested time to present at a future Board meeting. Mr. Goldson wanted to know where we are with Procurement, and Dr. Jackson-McArthur answered probably at our next meeting.

Teaching & Learning Committee Report

Mayor Harp reported this committee met on November 20th and are presenting for your consideration a number of field trips from the Sound School and one is to the national ocean bowl in Durham, New Hampshire and the other is to go to the Dive Program in Homestead, FL to pursue diving, and the other is the Boat Competition at Lake Champlain in Burlington, VT.

770-19
Approval of Sound
School Field Trips

On the motion by Mayor Harp, seconded by Mr. Wilcox, it was unanimously voted to approve the field trips for Sound school presented by Mayor Harp as approved by the T&L Committee.

Mayor Harp reported that they discussed 9th grade tuition and they had a presentation on Caliber-based learning and they did an in-depth review of the different types of assessments that are used by the district that are required by the state and they also had a review of the Curriculum Audit. The committee recommends to the Board of Education for



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final approval for New Haven Public Schools to release and post online the full document of the Curriculum Audit.

771-19
Release and
Curriculum Audit

On the motion by Mayor Harp, seconded by Mr. Wilcox, it was unanimously voted to release and post the Curriculum Audit on the NHPS website.

Food Service Task Force Committee Report

Mr. Wilcox invited Ms. Gail Sharry, Director of Food Services and an ESUMS student to present. At this time he announced the dates of the next meeting for this committee, Wednesday, Dec. 11th, 5pm, at 54 Meadow St., in the second floor Board Room. Their last meeting was a great meeting related to allergies working with some district folks and the food service folks. He explained further.

Mr. Goldson referred everyone to the memo that Ms. Sharry sent to Dr. Tracey, subject Milk Pilot, provided for this presentation.

Ms. Sharry pointed out that ESUMS student government asked her to come to speak last year and Ms. Sharry gave background on this project. Chocolate milk has been missing for over ten years, long before she got here, and it is something that all the schools have asked for. They talked about piloting at the high schools from January until June to see if the consumption rate goes up. Only at the high schools, and only at lunch time. They believe doing this will result in less waste.

Mr. Spencer Green, member of the ESUMS Student Government, commented that when he met with Ms. Sharry last year, she asked him to survey students across the district to see if chocolate milk should be put back into schools. He sent out a survey and received 206 responses; 88.3% of the students would like to see chocolate milk put back into schools and 93.3% agree that flavored milk would increase the dairy consumption. Flavored milk was originally banned at the national level but since has been revised and low-fat free milk is allowed back in schools. He is here to request that the district set the standards.

Mr. Wilcox commented that they did have a good conversation about this and he explained the reasons they are suggesting that flavored milk be reinstated into schools.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur and Dr. Joyner gave their reasons as to why they oppose this plan. Ms. Arouna commented that she doesn't see many students drink milk and if students will drink chocolate milk that's better than nothing. Ms. Rivera agreed with Dr. Jackson-McArthur. Dr. Jackson-McArthur asked if we offer bottled water and Ms. Sharry said yes but students have to pay for it. A discussion ensued in which Mayor Harp and Mr. Conaway participated. Dr. Tracey also gave her input in this matter and remarked that she



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has seven kids and they have never had milk so we should guide our students around that. The discussion continued at length.

772-19
Approval of
Chocolate Milk Pilot

On the motion by Mr. Wilcox, seconded by Mr. Conaway, it was voted by roll call with Ms. Rivera, Dr. Jackson-McArthur and Dr. Joyner voting nay to approve the Chocolate Milk Pilot for high school students, two days a week at lunchtime from January to the end of the year.

Dr. Jackson-McArthur told the ESUMS student, Spencer Green, that it was a wonderful survey.

School Construction & Stewardship Committee Report

Mayor Harp commented that she was unable to attend this meeting. She alluded to Dr. Tracey. Dr. Tracey reported that she has been in communication with the school’s principal, Sue DeNicola, and she discovered that they have to move into the school by January 2nd. The furniture won’t be in until late December, which means teachers will have to come to the school on their vacation break to set-up the furniture. Mayor Harp proposed that the principal and staff be paid for coming in to set-up furniture while on vacation.

773-19
Compensate Staff and
Principal of Obama
School for Setting Up
Classrooms while on Vacation

On the motion by Mayor Harp, seconded by Dr. Joyner, it was unanimously voted to pay the principal and staff for two days while setting up their classes at the Obama School while they are on vacation.

Head Start Committee Report

Mr. Wilcox noted that their next meeting is scheduled for December 10th at Meadow Street. In the packets was the final version of the organizational chart.

Adjournment

On the motion by Mr. Goldson, seconded by Mr. Conaway, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginger McHugh

Recording Secretary

“A video of this meeting is available on the NHPS website, NHPS.net, Public Meetings”