

**WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**EDUCATE, CHALLENGE, & INSPIRE**

---

**WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Tuesday, June 9, 2020**  
**Regular Board of Education Meeting**  
**Google Meet**

**MINUTES**

BOE Members Present: Lee Bridgewater, Sally Greaves, Zachary Hayden, Mary Ella Luft, Michelle Palumbo, Don Perreault, Christine Kuehlewind, Mike Esposito, Kim Walker

Also Present: Superintendent Patricia A. Ciccone; Business Manager, Lesley Wysocki, Administrators Tara Winch, Ruth Rose, Taylor Wrye, Madeline Illinger, Technology Director, Ben Russell, Atty. Anne Littlefield, Catlin Eichler, Eric Gerhardt, Sue Hourihan, Faculty, Staff, Community members

**Minutes –June 9, 2020**

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – The Regular Meeting of June 9, 2020 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Lee Bridgewater, Chair.
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- III. BOARD OF EDUCATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**
- A. BOE Senior Student Representative – Ian Whitehouse: Principal Tara Winch shared with the Board the many attributes of Ian Whitehouse and the Board was appreciative of his service as BOE Student Representative.
  - B. CIAC Scholar Athlete Awards: WHS students, Sarah Davey, Ian Whitehouse: Principal Winch spoke of the criteria for the Scholar Athlete Awards, given deservedly so to Sarah Davey and Ian Whitehouse
  - C. CAS Art Awards – WHS students Elnora Amenta, Madeline Shaw: The Board recognized Elnora Amenta and Madeline Shaw for their excellence in visual and performing arts.
  - D. Elementary Technology Award (Coding) – Cole Magin was recognized for the Elementary Technology Award. Principal Rose reported that Cole is a first grader who performs computational skills at a 4th grade level.
  - E. Elementary Art Show at CCSU: Cosimo Falcone, Evie Poi, Hazel Saunders, Nia Sharma, Ryan Vincent, Cybele Matyas: Principal Rose acknowledged these students for their artistic abilities.
  - E. Halo Nominations: Tara Winch proudly announced that WHS received 23 Halo awards for students involved in *It's a Wonderful Life – A Radio Play* and *The Little Mermaid*.

F. Retiree Recognition

1. Madeline Illinger, Special Education & Student Services Director: Superintendent Ciccone honored Madeline Illinger for her service to WPS as the Special Services Director. Although she is retiring, Mrs. Illinger will become the Interim during the Director search process.
2. Superintendent Patricia A. Ciccone: Lee Bridgewater, Chair expressed appreciation to Superintendent Ciccone for her leadership of the District, wishing her well in her retirement.

**IV. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT:** Ian Whitehouse reported on graduation activities amid the pandemic and expressed appreciation to the community for their support of the graduates. Ian also thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as the student representative.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Sheridan Bauman spoke as to the importance of the Superintendent Search and her hope that a survey will be sent out to the community for their input. She commended teachers and administrators on the distance learning and encouraged the Board to get to know the coaches, as they play an important role in the lives of students.

Paula Fitzgerald expressed appreciation for having the opportunity to “coach” athletes for the last couple of weeks. She also commented on a remark made at last month’s Board meeting referencing coaches, and stated that coaches provide an invaluable serve to our students.

Janet Dickey spoke in support of coaches and the role they play in students’ lives.

**VI. ADMINISTRATOR(S) COMMENTS**

A. Graduation update – T. Winch provided details as to the plans for graduation and the recent photo shoot component of the virtual live stream graduation ceremony.

**VII. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

- A. Enrollment: Supt. Ciccone reported June 1st enrollment of 673 students, Pre-K through 12, including six out placed students.
- B. PK-12 Art & PK-12 Music Curriculum Presentations – C. Eichler, S. Hourihan, E. Gerhardt gave a presentation to the Board on the PK-12 Art Curriculum and PK-12 Music Curriculum. Art and music teachers worked together to write the curriculum to meet the Core standards. The Board was appreciative of the work the teachers put into the curriculum and for the thorough presentation provided. MOTION: by D. Perreault and seconded by S. Greaves to approve the PK Art Curriculum & PK Music Curriculum as written. VOTE: Ayes: Z. Hayden, M. Palumbo, M. Luft, S. Greaves, K. Walker, D. Perreault, C. Kuehlewind, L. Bridgewater Abstained: M. Esposito
- C. Summer School/ESY & Summer Meals Program Updates: In order to provide in person summer school, Superintendent Ciccone provided details of what would be needed to follow the mandates for PPE supplies, social distancing, etc. At this time, it appears that summer school will be done virtually for five weeks beginning July 6<sup>th</sup>. Madeline Illinger will oversee the summer school program, with C. Eichler coordinating..

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

## IX. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes:

1. Regular Meeting – May 12, 2020 - **The Superintendent recommended Board approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of May 12, 2020. MOTION by D. Perreault and seconded by Z. Hayden to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 12, 2020. Vote unanimous.**
2. Special BOE Meeting – May 20, 2020 – **The Superintendent recommended Board approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of May 20, 2020. MOTION by S. Greaves and seconded by M. Luft to approve the minutes of the Special BOE meeting of May 20, 2020. Vote unanimous**
3. Special BOE Meeting – May 28, 2020 – **The Superintendent recommended Board approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting of May 28, 2020. MOTION by D. Perreault and seconded by M. Palumbo to approve the minutes of the Special BOE Meeting of May 28<sup>th</sup> with the addition of the word “permanent” in Section V. per a request from K. Walker. Vote unanimous.**

## X. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. Review of Check Listing: Board members reviewed check listings for May 14, 2020 in the amount of \$162,137.52 and for May 28, 2020 in the amount of \$91,161.25.
- B. Budget Narrative/Review of Expenditure Report – L. Wysocki provided a review of the Budget as it stands. She asked for direction from the Board as to end of year purchases before closing the books on June 30<sup>th</sup>. D. Perreault expressed concern about the impact of COVID on the budget and potential additional expenses in the fall.
- C. Line Item Transfer: None
- D. Insurance Report: L. Wysocki provided a current Insurance Report.

## XI. NEW BUSINESS:

### A. IDEA Grant – M. Illinger

Annually, the Board approves acceptance of the federal IDEA grants. M. Illinger reported the figures designated to assist with the excess costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities. The grant will provide staff with professional development, and instructional resources for special education students. The amount of the IDEA Special Education Assistance (611 Funds) is \$138,706.00. IDEA Preschool Education (619 Funds) is \$6,619. **The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve the acceptance of the IDEA grant funds totaling \$145,325. MOTION by Z. Hayden and seconded by J. Luft to approve the IDEA grant as submitted. Vote unanimous.**

**MOTION by Z. Hayden and seconded by M. Palumbo to add an agenda item for the BOE to discuss an issue raised earlier in public session regarding concern and support for coaches. Vote unanimous.**

Each Board member was given the opportunity to speak and the Board was in total agreement that coaches are a valuable asset in the lives of students. Comments from board members used to describe coaches included labor of love, mentors, professional, valuable, stellar and creative. Superintendent Ciccone made it clear that the Board was not being admonished and explained that the letters referred to a comment made at the

prior board meeting, which was a poor choice of words used to compare coaches associated with WEA and those not part of the bargaining unit.

Ms. Wysocki commented that it was a poor choice of words used to distinguish between two groups and did not mean it in the way it was perceived.

### **B. Discussion of appointment of an Interim Superintendent**

MOTION by S. Greaves and seconded by M. Palumbo to move into Executive Session at 9:35 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the appointment of an Interim Superintendent. Attorney Anne Littlefield was invited. Vote unanimous

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Discussion of matters that would result in the disclosure of exempt matters.

Moved by Z. Hayden and seconded by M. Luft to move back into Regular Session at 10:30 p.m. Vote unanimous.

**C.** Possible action regarding appointment of an Interim Superintendent: MOTION by S. Greaves and seconded by M. Luft to appoint Dr. Patricia Charles as the Interim Superintendent and to draft a contract for the term of July 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. Vote unanimous.

Dr. Charles commented that she is “delighted to be back in the District.”

**D.** Discussion concerning anticipated resignation of Board Chair from Office of Board Chair: Lee Bridgewater, Chair, prepared a letter of resignation for the Board from her position as Chair, effective June 30, 2020. Lee stated personal reasons for her resignation as Chair, but added that she will remain on as a board member. She was commended for her professionalism and dedication as Chairperson.

**E.** Discussion and possible action concerning by-laws applicable to election of Board Officers: Attorney Littlefield brought to the Board’s attention that there are conflicting by-laws that have to do with replacing a board officer. Her suggestion was for the Policy Subcommittee to meet to discuss the by-laws and then to schedule a special meeting prior to June 30 to act on the by-laws and to vote to appoint a new chairperson. K. Walker commented that there is a Policy Subcommittee on the calendar for June 18<sup>th</sup>. It was requested that Cecilia survey board members for their availability for a special meeting prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **XII. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A.** Policy– K. Walker reported Policy Committee has not met.

**B.** Long Range Planning – M. Palumbo reported LRP has not met.

- C. Insurance - L. Bridgewater reported Insurance Committee has not met.
- D. Negotiations - S. Greaves reported having received notice to begin Negotiations.
- E. Town Energy Ad Hoc Committee – L. Wysocki reported there are still street light issues.
- F. PTSO Representatives – No meetings
- G. Superintendent Search Update: The Chair reported having received correspondence of a sample survey, organization of focus groups and plans for a July or early August posting.

**XIII. PERSONNEL**

**A. Professional Appointment(s)**

1. Interim Middle School Principal search update: Superintendent Ciccone advised the Board of having received a number of applicants interested in both the interim and permanent middle school principal positions, and a solid six to speak with before recommendations. There was discussion about board members taking part in the interviews. C. Kuehlewind, K. Walker and S. Greaves volunteered to take part in the screenings of the candidates.

**B. Non-Certified Resignation(s):** The Board was made aware of the following non-certified resignations.

1. Maria Lugo – Paraprofessional at Daisy Ingraham School submitted a letter of resignation effective June 11, 2020.
2. Kristin Barone – Special Services Secretary submitted a letter of resignation.

**XIV. ADJOURN:** MOTION by M. Palumbo and seconded by M, Esposito to adjourn at 11:12 p.m.  
Vote unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Walker, Board Secretary

Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk

BOE Approved: 7-14-2020