

# **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION Stamford, Connecticut September 22, 2009**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education was held on September 22, 2009 at the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Ms. Nabel, President, with the following Board members present: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Absent: Mr. King and Mayor Malloy. Also in attendance: Dr. Starr, Dr. Hamilton, Dr. Bruno, Ms. Gagne, Ms. Karwan, Ms. Arnold, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Thessin, Ms. Bang, Mr. Barbarotta, Mr. DiBlasio, Ms. Schiavino-Narvez, Dr. Rauh, 2 representatives from the SEA, a representative from the EASA, a representative from the Advocate, a representative from News 12, and approximately 35 guests.

Salute to the flag.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Mr. Rubino presented the mission statement of the Board of Education.

## **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Mr. Polo, to accept the Minutes of the Working Board Meeting – August 18, 2009 – pp. 22 - 31.

The minutes were accepted with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Mr. Polo moved, seconded by Ms. Heftman, to accept the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting – August 24, 2009 – pp. 32.

The minutes were accepted with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Polo, to accept the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting – August 25, 2009 – pp. 33 - 43.

The minutes were accepted with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Mr. Rubino moved, seconded by Mr. Polo,  
to accept the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting –  
September 1, 2009 – pp. 44.

The minutes were accepted with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Mr. Polo moved, seconded by Ms. Wade,  
to accept the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting –  
September 8, 2009 – pp. 45 - 57.

The minutes were accepted with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

## **STUDENT & STAFF ACHIEVEMENT**

Students from AITE, Stamford HS, and Westhill HS were honored for receiving perfect 800 scores on the SAT's and SAT Subject Tests.

Ms. Nabel spoke on behalf of the Board and noted that one of the things that the Board has talked about continually over the last few months is that we don't spend enough time celebrating achievement and don't have enough opportunities to praise our students and their teachers who have helped them on the path to these accomplishments. We are very proud of the students and grateful to the teachers and hope that your picture is on the front page of the Advocate.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Starr announced that due to the hard work of Mara Siladi and her team, the Stamford Public Schools has received additional funding for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning grant in the amount of \$2.4M over the next 5 years for Hart, Springdale, and Dolan. The funds are essentially for programs that work with community agencies such as CTE, ROSCCO, Boys and Girls Club, etc. to increase some of the services our students receive.

Dr. Starr reported that late next week the Stamford Public Schools website ([stamfordpublicschools.org](http://stamfordpublicschools.org)) will offer information in the top 10 most spoken languages. The website is being overhauled and we will have the ability to

provide the same information being provided in English will now be translated into the top 10 spoken languages.

Dr. Starr discussed the Race to the Top initiative which is part of the Federal stimulus dollars. The money goes to the State and the State becomes the fiduciary body that applies to the Federal government for this money. This initiative will award innovation and the Federal government is encouraging states to take a look at both structural issues that go on in district, instructional issues, and legislative issues. Mark McQuillen, Commission of Education for Connecticut, has put out a letter that has 12 elements (which 10 out of 12 are things we are doing already) seeking partners to make the application to the Race to the Top fund. We are required to submit a letter saying that the Mayor, Superintendent, and Board President agree to support the Commissioner's application without binding us to any thing that is in that application.

Dr. Starr distributed information on the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results which will be linked to the discussion of School Choice under Policy. AYP is the Federal benchmark under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) which districts are required to make. The NCLB law states that by the 2013-2014 school year 100% of students need to be proficient on State tests. Dr. Starr reviewed the AYP report and noted that the schools must complete School Improvement Plans, a District Improvement Plan must be done, along with School Choice and Supplemental Education Services along with paperwork we must complete for the State and that we have to comply with. 40% of schools in Connecticut are in some way, shape, or form are in need of improvement. There has been almost no conversation about the reauthorization of NCLB and, in fact, there has been a lot of conversation about using State test scores for purposes of increased accountability; i.e. linking it directly to teacher evaluation and teacher pay. His assumption is that if anything it will be reauthorized in ways that will not serve American public education just as the current law does not serve American public education. There is a move towards national standards and at some point there might be a national test, but that won't happen for years.

Dr. Starr reviewed the ARRA Stimulus update and noted that the ARRA funds which, are mainly coming from ECS and Title grants, will be on or very close to budget. He noted that recently the State apportioned an additional \$426,000 of ECS funding. These funds go to the City of Stamford and we are not eligible for the 14% set aside that we are getting through the initial ARRA funding. The initial ARRA funding is coming through ECS and is about \$1.1M which is the 14% of the total ECS package that the City receives. 14% comes directly to us. We do not receive 14% of the additional funding. We will also be receiving some money for bus costs for students being transported to Abbott Tech. We have not yet received checks and we have acted on a few things, but will wait another couple of weeks to act on other things because even though we have verbal assurances from multiple people in the State department, until you have the check we don't like to spend it. Ms. Siladi noted that we are applying for ALTA grant funding along with other grants.

Ms. Thessin gave a presentation on the Professional Learning Plan which showed what the district has been working on with the goal being tying professional learning between PLC's, professional development sessions, as well as outside advantages. Dr. Starr noted that the Stamford Public Schools website now includes the entire Professional Development calendar and all information related to professional development to help teachers and staff. Dr. Starr noted that Ms. Thessin will be leaving us on Friday and thanked her for the outstanding work she has done for the Stamford Public Schools.

Dr. Starr noted that all of the curriculum documents were on a table if anyone would like to review them.

## **BOARD REPORT**

Ms. Nabel noted that most of what she would talk about in the Board report will be discussed under Public Engagement and Policy in terms of where we think we may be moving with Public Engagement and testing out the Equity Statement that we have been developing in our Board Retreats.

She thanked Sarah Arnold and her department and all the elementary art school teachers for another beautiful and wonderful Stamford Public Schools calendar. This is a great way to showcase student art and provide information to parents.

## **TIME FOR THE PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

There were two speakers. One announced the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Day of Night Music scheduled for October 24, 2009 at Boyle Stadium starting at 1:00 pm and the other speaker addressed a redistricting issue.

## **REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS/RESOLUTIONS**

### **LABOR RELATIONS**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak noted that we just finished a Labor Relations Committee meeting this evening prior to this meeting to wrap up some discussion that was initiated two weeks ago at our Committee meeting. Ms. Gagne indicated that there was nothing new to report under Negotiations. We are currently in negotiations with the SEA and we are looking to schedule a meeting with Security Workers who have changed their bargaining agent one more time. There was nothing new to report under Staffing. Three Level III grievances will be heard tomorrow.

Ms. Nabel left the meeting.

**Resolution 09-22-09:141**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of Natalie Elder, to the position of Director of School Improvement and Professional Development effective November 1, 2009.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Absent: Ms. Nabel.

Ms. Nabel returned to the meeting.

**Resolution 09-22-09:142**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education revise the work year of the Assistant Director for Grants Compliance position from 206 to 221 effective September 23, 2009.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, and Ms. Wade. Opposed: Mr. Mathews and Mr. Rubino.

**Resolution 09-22-09:143**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Heftman:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the posting/advertising and, subject to receipt of Federal ARRA funding, filling of 1 CEU Support Personnel, following approval by the City Personnel Commission.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

**Resolution 09-22-09:144**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the posting/advertising and filling of a .5 I.B. Coordinator, effective September 23, 2009.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

**Resolution 09-22-09:145**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the posting/advertising and filling of 1 Madison Square Garden (MSG) Varsity Network Advisor, effective September 23, 2009.

Ms. Nabel moved, seconded by Mr. Polo to amend the resolution as per the back up that the Board received in our Board Package to change the posting/advertising and filling of 3 Varsity Network Advisors – one position for each high school.

The amendment passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

The amended resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

**Resolution 09-22-09:146**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve a 3% salary increase for 2009-2010 for non-bargaining administrative unit members, retroactive to July 1, 2009 with the agreement that, as per concession, the net pay increase shall be donated for the benefit of the Stamford Public Schools.

This resolution was amended in the Labor Relations Committee meeting to add “for the benefit of the Stamford Public Schools.”

Ms. Heftman read the following statement – The budget that the Board adopted in February contained an increase in the salary lines for non-union staff out of which raises would come if the Board of Education granted the raises. At that time the Board had not yet approved raises for the non-union staff for the 2009-2010 budget year. She suggested to the Superintendent during a conversation in his office that if we were hit with a large cut from the Boards of Finance and Representatives he should consider offering to reduce those salary lines. She was very glad when he did. According to the minutes of the May 26, 2009 meeting during the

Superintendent's report "nine non-union central office members agreed to donate their salary increase including Dr. Starr and his cabinet which is equivalent to \$34,000." The minutes further state that "the non-union central staff gave up 2.7% of their salary." We were trying to reallocate a cut of \$7.4M and that \$34,000 helped us reach our goal. The Board was very appreciative of the offer and said so at the time. At this time the 2009-2010 budget does not include an increase on the salary lines for the non-union staff members. She believes the Superintendent misspoke when he categorized the budget reduction as a donation. It was not – it was a deferral and the words and their meanings are quite different. A donation does not contemplate a give back or return at any portion of the donation. That is what she and she believes many other Board members understood in May that the non-union staff was donating the amount that represented their possible raise. As the minutes clearly reflect "the non-union central staff gave us 2.7% of salary." This is why she questioned when this resolution appeared as it was a surprise. If the Board grants a raise this evening it will be returned in installments over this budget year and the amount of the raise will be added to last year's base salary when deliberations begin for the 2010-2011 budget year. That is not a donation of a raise but is a deferral of a raise. They are giving something now and getting it back later as are the UAW and MAA. Only the Educational Assistants who are our lowest paid employees gave a donation. Nevertheless she intends to support this resolution because she believes it is unfair to not give this group, a valued non-union employees, something that all of our other valued union employees have been granted. They should not be denied the raise they thought they were getting because of a language misunderstanding. We should all just understand what it is that we are supporting.

The amended resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, and Ms. Wade. Opposed: Mr. Mathews and Mr. Rubino.

**Resolution 09-22-09:147**

Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak moved, seconded by Ms. Heftman:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent's performance goals for the 2009-2010 school year as per the attached document titled "Superintendent's Performance Goals" for 2009-2010.

Ms. Nabel noted that the Superintendent's Performance Goals were amended per our prior discussion in the Labor Relations Committee last week.

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Rubino to amend the resolution to add that “the Superintendent begin a collaborative process with all of the individual stakeholders to produce a teacher evaluation mechanism that fairly accurately and credibly differentiates teachers based on their effectiveness in promoting student achievement.”

After discussion of the amendment Ms. Heftman and Mr. Rubino withdrew their amendment.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

## **FACILITIES**

Mr. Barbarotta reported that all schools are open and are in great shape. All of our major projects are in the close out phase now and Rogers International playground opened up this week and we are following up on punch list items. The Dolan sprinkler project is complete and at Rippowam we are crushing the concrete for the parking area and we are a little bit behind. The new autistic classrooms are open at Stamford HS and all of our special programs at Yerwood are up and running.

Mr. Barbarotta stated that under the School Building Use Policy and reported that we will be meeting with the PTO. He met with the Recreation Department today and scheduled all of their fall programs and have done the same with Stamford Youth Foundation and all major youth organizations are all scheduled and permitted. Our collections are doing well and Ms. Siladi helped us collect some back money from ROSCCO, we are working with KT Murphy and have an agreement to catch that up by the end of the month, and the Recreation Department is making their payments. The policy that was put in place is working very well. Dr. Starr asked Mr. Barbarotta to review the regulations of this policy.

Mr. Barbarotta informed the Board that we have received the final copy today of the EMG report and we should receive the Executive Report the first week of October which will be instrumental to move forward with our Capital Budget. We do have some money in places such as at Northeast where we have \$1M in that account. Mr. Casolo, Engineering Department, will attend the October 27, 2009 Board meeting to discuss the EMG report and we can then start Capital Budget planning. Mr. Barbarotta noted that there is a Needs Assessment Report and a Space Utilization Report for each school.

## **FISCAL**

Mr. Murphy Mr. Murphy reported under the 2009-2010 budget there were no updates and the quarterly report for the 2009-2010 Operating Budget will be available including the grants and internal service funds

Ms. Wade left the meeting.

### **Resolution 09-22-09:148**

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Polo:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the 2009-10 budget transfers per the document dated August 25, 2009.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, and Mr. Rubino. Absent: Ms. Wade.

Ms. Wade returned to the meeting.

## **CURRICULUM**

Ms. Lorenti encouraged the public to take a look at the curriculum notebooks for the different levels and what is going on in the schools so you can see that the staff has done a wonderful job in putting these notebooks together.

Ms. Lorenti reported that at the Working Committee meeting Dr. Starr presented us with the preliminary enrollment numbers and some of the class sizes were high as we expected. After the October 1, 2009 numbers are in, Dr. Starr will have a full presentation to the Board. Mr. Polo had asked about the magnet schools lottery, the districts, and class sizes. Mr. Polo indicated that this had been clarified in an e-mail.

Ms. Heftman left the meeting.

### **Resolution 09-22-09:149**

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Mr. Mathews:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the School Trip Request to CHINA, March 31-April 16, 2010 by students and chaperones from AITE, SHS and WHS-to visit Jiangdu High School, as part of the district's exchange program.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Absent: Ms. Heftman

Ms. Lorenti reminded all of the Special Board meeting scheduled for September 29, 2009 which will address Special Education.

## **AD HOC PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

Ms. Wade asked to move the school calendar discussion to Policy Committee where there is a resolution on the school calendar.

## **POLICY**

Ms. Nabel asked that by moving to the Policy agenda she would like to pre-empt Dr. Starr's update on School Choice and talk about the work that we have done to get a draft of an Equity Statement and talk about the information that we received in our package regarding Board linkages and hear from other Board members about taking that draft and sharing it with the public over the next couple of months and sharing it with any one or all of the three different kinds of conversational opportunities that were outlined in the linkages.

Ms. Heftman returned to the meeting.

Ms. Nabel indicated discussion would include the draft of the Equity Statement and combine that with discussions that we have had about public engagement and the Board getting away from the 5<sup>th</sup> floor and linking all or a few facets of the community to share that draft and get reaction to it. Also, there will be discussion on the linkages information that was provided in the Board package.

Ms. Wade noted that in some discussions with Ms. Arnold and other Board members, the idea of taking the Equity statement out in advance of a vote and presenting it as a topic specific, she has heard 2 to 3 times to have a presentation in October in a public form, take that information back in-house for additional discussion, modifying the statement per the discussions that we have in the community conversations, taking it back out again and using some other experiences of previous Board's and hold a tentative 3<sup>rd</sup> public meeting if in fact a 3<sup>rd</sup> public meeting is needed to discuss yet for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time. We certainly need 2 opportunities to talk to the public to discuss this statement; 1 for presenting the statement and 2 to represent it with the amendments based on what was heard.

Ms. Nabel thought that the Equity Statement would lend itself pretty naturally to the round table kind of discussion and could not see having a large session with 200 people. If the Board as a whole identified 4 different groups of representatives from different parts of the school community to come and sit down at a table, read the draft, and talk about it in a public setting and repeat this several times with Ms. Wade's committee and Ms. Arnold identifying from the key

communicator's list to pick out 20 people for each group and noticing the meeting would be a way to start. Ms. Heftman suggested that if we had large groups that could break up into different tables and have the Board members facilitate and each table would report to the larger group and then the Board members could share the information. Ms. Wade indicated we could design it around a Community Conversation model which would be a presentation of the information, a panel discussion of 3-4 people representing different constituents, have a Q&A for a few minutes and then break out into groups of 5-8-10 people with facilitated discussion with specific markers along the way. Ms. Wade noted that based on work that she has done in these types of events we would need translators, food, scribes, training, babysitting, and custodial costs.

Ms. Nabel stated that we had talked about doing this in October which is really close and there will be political events in October and suggested that for a large event we need to pick a date. Ms. Wade suggested a date for the second week of November and if not then it would have to be in January. Dr. Starr noted that we listed 6 or 7 questions that we believe the Board needs to consider before deciding on which of the routes to take of the 3 options listed in the next steps of the document provided in the memo from Ms. Arnold and Ms. Schiavino-Narvez and wondered if the Public Engagement Committee or someone else might want to answer some of these questions since you want the size of the event to fit the desired outcome. In order to decide on what the right format is some of these questions need to be answered.

Ms. Wade responded that the big question is that if we do something in the fall, we won't get the results until after the holidays. If we are trying to build a sense of momentum then we should really look at having this discussion after the first of the year. Ms. Nabel suggested keeping it simple and sequential with small conversations first and then bring the information back in January and report back on the results and take it from there. Since we are not clearly going to come to any resolution on how to proceed now, can we ask Board members to run through the questions on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> pages of the Community Linkages memo and send questions and thoughts to Ms. Wade. It was agreed that the Board will forward questions and thoughts to Ms. Wade.

Ms. Heftman asked Dr. Starr if we were to spend this school year in this dialogue with the community regarding the Equity Statement and didn't vote on the Equity Statement until June does that in anyway hamper and hinder the work that he is doing? When does Dr. Starr want this Equity Statement adopted and then we could work backwards to schedule meetings. Dr. Starr responded that not much is going to stop him from moving the agenda that the Board has set. The Equity Statement is a powerful symbolic of the Board's commitment to addressing one of the most significant issues. The Board will be receiving a book on the work in Montgomery County entitled "Leading to Equity" which is coming out. While Montgomery County is much bigger than us in demographics, the situation is almost the same. One of the things that is important to Montgomery County is the unification around the notion of equity. It strengthens, enhances, but is it necessary? No. We are doing the work either way. Would it

be absolute value add to really say to the community this is what the Board believes is equity. It is an extremely powerful statement and would make his job easier in some way, but it just becomes more clear to people of what the Board is about and what we are trying to do and to help people understand it. The Board will have to consider the timing of the Equity Statement adoption and the timing of that in concert with the budget process and the types of messages that can be sent and the type of accountability and questions the Board would be asked if they were to consider an Equity Statement at the same time it is considering budgetary decisions. From a process stand point in a quest of continued clarity of message of purpose of goals sometimes there is some elegance in having bite size chunks around that and imagines having those two processes at once could be difficult. The other issue is don't sacrifice the good for the perfect. This Board has expressed a sincere desire to start moving on community engagement around these important issues in some way, shape, or form. The round table approach, while not perfect, could begin within a couple of weeks which would mean bringing in five or six different groups relatively easily. You may only get 7 or 8 people from each group, but at least you would have started and accomplished something, and it might lead you to say that we need to do a lot more, we need a whole community conversation, but at least you would have accomplished one very reasonable approach. He encouraged the Board to do the round table approach and see if we can execute it in October, and let's be sure about what the follow up is going to be and back map from what the date is that you want to vote on the Equity Statement.

Ms. Wade noted that we would start with round table discussions. Dr. Starr indicated that we need a date and the amount of time so that we know that Board members have committed to 6 hours. The round table concept is a series of small focus groups to get input from a variety of stakeholders.

Dr. Starr reported on School Choice and explained that as part of NCLB we are required to offer School Choice to children who are in a so-called failing school and we have been in a constant, it is also a so-called failing school that receives Title I funds, not all of our schools receive Title I funds so they are actually not subject to NCLB. We must offer School Choice at Davenport, Hart, KT Murphy, Rogers, Springdale, Stark, Stillmeadow, and Toquam. We have been discussion with the State since last year on the way we do business in Stamford and some of the complicating aspects of our current School Choice program and basically we want to keep things as they are. Ms. Siladi has done a yeoman's job of going back and forth in negotiating with the State who is under Federal requirements and can only do so much. Essentially the only school that we can offer choice at is Westover, but we don't want to compromise our programs in anyway or do anything that would be simply silly. We placed 9 students as part of School Choice. This is a great case of an unfunded mandate and the management aspects of this are what are insane about NCLB. No one attends to the fact that the money we spend on managing these processes is significant. We complied with the law, do what we need to do, and does not believe that any of our schools are failing schools. Our schools are in different need of improvement and that every one of our schools needs to improve. While

there would be some very interesting ways of doing School Choice in Stamford that he would love to talk about in the near future, we are complying with the Federal law and also trying to do what makes sense for us and at this time it has only been 9 students who have been placed in different schools. Ms. Siladi described the process of how students are selected.

Dr. Starr reported that the other part of School Choice is SES and noted that he had provided information on SES in the Board package. Due to ARRA funding, we are asking for some waivers so that we can provide some of the professional development opportunities to staff in support of our priority curriculum work.

Mr. Mathews requested the criteria for School Choice and how the 9 were determined. Ms. Siladi responded that we did a priority ranking of students and looked at the families that qualify for free lunch. We then rank order them based on their CMT scores and DRA scores.

**Resolution 09-22-09:150**

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Ms. Wade:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Board of Education, that the 2009-2010 Board Development Goals be approved.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

**Resolution 09-22-09:151**

Mr. Polo moved, seconded by Ms. Wade:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the attached vacation and holiday schedule for the 2010-2011 school year, with the complete calendar to be approved upon finalization of the SEA contract.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, and Ms. Wade. Opposed: Mr. Polo and Mr. Rubino.

## **SPEF/School Readiness Council**

Ms. Lorenti reported that SPEF will be holding their Annual meeting on Thursday, September 24. SPEF is working on a new vision and a new goal to partner with the school district as a whole rather than working individually with corporations and schools. Also you will be receiving information for March 10 and March 27 meetings. Sue Rigano has been hired as the new Executive Director effective October 1, 2009.

## **Stamford Partnership/Stamford Achieves**

Ms. Nabel reported that Stamford Partnership had a meeting at the new Rogers building last Thursday. Dr. Starr gave a presentation on highlighting our progress in terms of CMT scores and other initiatives in the district. The meeting included a tour of the new Rogers building and everyone was impressed.

Under Stamford Achieves, Dr. Starr indicated that he would be having lunch with the head of Stamford Achieves on Wednesday, September 23, 2009.

Ms. Wade moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m. with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Dr. Joshua P. Starr  
Superintendent of Schools  
Executive Office