

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

October 15, 2018

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Dr. Joseph Ricca** asked for a moment of silence in memory of three retired staff members. **Rosemarie Bellantoni** taught ESOL at Rochambeau School for 30 years -- from 1970 to 2000. **Sally Mallet** was a Clerk Typist at Post Road School from 1973 to 1996. **William Smythe** taught Math at the Highlands School for 36 years, from 1969 to 2005.

SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION: In honor of New York State School Boards Association's School Board Recognition Week, October 22-26, members of the school community praised and thanked the **Board Members** for their leadership and selflessness in community service, with a combined total of 65 years of volunteering. **Suzanne Lasser**, President of the Administrators & Supervisors Association, **Kara Lyons**, President of the White Plains Teachers Association, **Rob Dell'Orletta**, Vice President of the Civil Service Employees Association, and **Michael Villafane**, with **James Dean**, Co-Presidents of PTA Council, expressed their appreciation.

Dr. Ricca, together with community member **Nick Wolff**, presented **Board Clerk Michele Schoenfeld** with an award for her work on the new district video.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Ricca welcomed **Pilar Cerón**, student representative from the High School. He also welcomed Mamaroneck Avenue School staff members present and congratulated them on the school's recent spirit award.

Dr. Ricca mentioned some upcoming and current initiatives, including Stop the Bleed, a training program in conjunction with White Plains Hospital; training in BoardDocs, a paperless program for Board administration; White Plains Basics, a national program for preschool children, and a plan for revision of district policies.

STATE ASSESSMENTS: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction **Dr. Debbie Hand** reported on results recently received from the State. She said that although the State has cautioned not to compare this year's results with last year's because of changes in the tests, our overall proficiency has increased in Grades 3-8. Dr. Hand reviewed the data and discussed challenges and areas for growth. She reminded everyone that tests are just one measurement and do not give a broad picture of total achievement.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING: Assistant Superintendent for Special Education & Pupil Services **Deborah Augarten** talked about the climate and culture of our schools and reviewed current trends and practices. She discussed the need for integrated social emotional learning supports and the five core competencies in this area. The district has a multi-tiered approach and is looking at recent changes in the areas of Guidance, Social Emotional Learning and Health Education.

BOARD MEMBERS: Rosemarie Eller, President; Charlie Norris, Vice President; Sheryl Brady, James Hricay, Cayne Letizia, Rose Lovitch, Randy Stein

AUDITOR'S REPORT: The Board accepted the External Auditor's Report and Management Letter for the 2018 fiscal year. Dr. Ricca read excerpts from the report, which, he said, was a very positive one. "No material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal controls" were cited and there were no current year recommendations. Dr. Ricca thanked **Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich, Assistant Superintendent for Business**, and her staff for their excellent work. **Board Member James Hricay** also thanked the community members of the Audit Committee, **Tim Donahoe** and **Craig Mondschein**.

COALITION RE NEW IRS REGULATIONS: The Board approved a resolution authorizing participation in a coalition of municipalities, school districts and other agencies, being organized by **Assemblywoman Amy Paulin**, to express concerns over proposed regulations issued by the Internal Revenue Service. These deal with reduced federal charitable contribution deductions.

DONATIONS: Dr. Ricca thanked these donors for their generosity:

Joyce Eybers for school supplies for Rochambeau School students

Dr. Mira Schwartz and **Jennifer Cambeiro** for gift cards for Rochambeau School's PBIS initiative

Shelley Chu for a ping pong table for Highlands Middle School

KA Gems, LLC for \$20,000 for the High School

Anthony Russo for a framed portrait of George Washington for George Washington School

UPCOMING MEETINGS: October 22: Community Budget Forum, High School Media Center, 7 P.M.

November 19: Regular Meeting, Education House 7:30 P.M.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld