



THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

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

October 7, 2019

SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION: In celebration of the New York State School Board Recognition Week, October 21-25, **Superintendent Dr. Joseph Ricca** expressed gratitude to all the Board Members for their many, many hours of service to the community. Their presence at activities is greatly appreciated. Similar messages were expressed by **Kristine McMath** on behalf of the White Plains Teachers Association and **James Dean** and **Gina Norfleet**, for PTA Council.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Ricca welcomed Post Road School parents and staff and mentioned a host of events and activities in past weeks. These included Principal and Teacher Appreciation celebrations, an award from Lion Electric for the electric bus, Take Your Child to School, Wear Pink, Homecoming, the Climate Walkout, and others. Coming up are the White Plains Basics kickoff on November 4th and the formation of the District Equity Committee. Student liaisons **Esteban Barrero** and **Lauren Elmer** gave their report on recent and upcoming events at the High School. They noted the popular "Trunk or Treat" for Halloween.

SUPERINTENDENT'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2019-2020: Dr. Ricca presented the goals and objectives for the year which cover the areas of student achievement, physical plant maintenance and planning, personnel management, information management and communication. He thanked the Board for a great goal-setting process and said "this is really a collective effort and reflects the mission and vision of the District."

STATE ASSESSMENT REPORT: **Dr. Debbie Hand** presented the New York State Assessment Data for 2018-19. She reminded everyone that this is only one measurement of academic performance and that a singular moment in time does not characterize a child's abilities. Test refusal (or "opting out") creates a challenge when tracking data. Dr. Hand also noted that a lot of effort goes into the analysis of the data and the determination of where more targeted instruction, and possibly curriculum changes, are needed.

Some of the findings in the data:

- Results for Grades 3-5 ELA were very similar to 2018.
- ELA results show a decrease for Grades 6-7 but a steady increase for Grade 8.
- Steady gains in Math are being made in Grades 4, 6 and 8.
- A strong cohort Math performance for Grades 4-6 and 6-8 was shown.
- Grade 8 students scoring at or above 65 was 99% in Algebra and 100% in Geometry.

SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM REVIEW: **Richard Dillon, Coordinator of Social Studies K-12**, began with a review of the process used in this study, which addressed the frameworks, practices and standards of the subject. The Committee was comprised of teachers, administrators and parents. They began working January last year and looked at all facets of the subject – the focus in each grade level, key ideas and conceptual understandings, alignments, and “how we are preparing our students to be civically engaged.” Districtwide recommendations include vertical and horizontal articulation, curriculum planning, vertical coherence and professional development.

Board Member Dr. Cayne Letizia said this work is very impressive and that the Board has requested such reports, which began last year with Dual Language. Board Members thanked Dr. Ricca and Dr. Hand and noted the importance of this work. **Board Member James Hricay** said this is about growth -- “We want to make sure we do the best we can with our resources.”

AUDITOR’S REPORT: **David Tellier** of Nawrocki Smith, Certified Public Accountants, presented the External Auditor’s Annual Financial Statement for the year ended June 30, 2019. He praised **Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich** and the District’s Business Office for their work and said this was an excellent year. There is no financial stress, no deficiencies or material weaknesses, and all financial statements are in order. He cautioned that “each year is a challenge,” with the tax cap and other factors affecting the fiscal status of the District. **Board President Rosemarie Eller** thanked the Audit/Finance Committee for its contribution, and particularly the community members of the Committee.

DONATIONS: Dr. Ricca thanked the following donors for their generosity:

The Ridgeway Parent Wellness Committee for \$30,000 for the Ridgeway Playground
The Masinter Family Foundation for \$2,905 for transportation for the Masinter College Incentive and Scholarship Program at the High School

Ms. Joyce Eybers for school supplies for Rochambeau School

Ms. Donna Centone, Ms. Sandra Serrano, Ms. Angie Garcia and Dr. Mira Schwartz for contributions to the Rochambeau PBIS School Store

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

October 21: Community Input – Long Range Plan/Budget, WPHS, 7 P.M.

October 30: Special Meeting, Education House, 6:30 P.M.

Human Resources Committee of the Whole, Education House, 6:30 P.M.

November 4: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld