

## AGENDA

### ITEM #1

Page 24  
March 20, 2007  
Page 1

## Hartford Board of Education Minutes Regular Meeting – Tuesday, March 20, 2007 Twain Elementary School – 395 Lyme Street

### I. Opening

#### A. Call to Order – roll call / Moment of Silence

At 6:12 p.m. Chairman Perez called the meeting to order. Nancy Williams, Support Administrator for the Board, administered the roll call and a quorum was present.

<u>Present:</u> Honorable Mayor Eddie A. Perez, Chair Ms. Ada Miranda, First Vice Chair Mr. David MacDonald, Secretary Ms. Andrea Comer Ms. Elizabeth Brad Noel Ms. Sharon Patterson-Stallings Ms. Pamela Richmond Superintendent Steven Adamowski	<u>Absent:</u> Mr. Israel Flores Mr. Luis Rodriquez Davila
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#### B. Report from Student Representatives

- Hartford Public High School

**Nina To** reported that the school will be hosting a visiting NEASC Committee from April 29-May 2 and invited the Board of Education members to the welcoming presentation on April 29. The school community is working tirelessly to ensure that the visit goes well. In fact, the Careers and Entrepreneurship Academy is designing and assembling tote bags for the visiting committee.

The freshman class of the Careers and Entrepreneurship Academy will begin a pilot program of Junior Achievement, and the academy is exploring further partnerships with local businesses to place students in internships.

As for the International Academy, four students of the only Connecticut Chapter of SHPE, a national organization and program for Hispanic Pre-Engineering students, participated in the national conference in Denver, Colorado. Among the many academic honors bestowed on the academy students, one individual has been recognized nationally as being one of the top students in the nation.

Twenty-seven students of the Law and Public Service Academy began paid internships throughout the city this past week, as part of a collaborative effort between City of Hartford Youth Services, Hartford Public's Law and Public Service Academy, The Urban League of Greater Hartford, and Capitol Workforce Partners. Ms. To is an intern in the Mayor's Office. Students in the Honors *You and the Law* class have been introduced to a lawyer-mentor for the duration of the school year. In addition, sophomores in the Mrs. Derench's *Career Exploration's* class will be trained to participate in community service projects in the health field.

The Technology Academy, in partnership with the National Academy Foundation, provides many students with the opportunity to participate in internships and job-shadowing in Hartford businesses, including Aetna.

- Sport and Medical Sciences Academy

**Carlos Perez** reported that the CAPT examinations were completed with close to 99% of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade class being tested. More than 75% of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the Saturday prep academies.

The 2005-2006 SAT rosters indicate that the number of students taking the exam increased from 82 students in 2005 to 125 students in 2006. This was accompanied by higher scores.

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the school will host a scholarship recognition breakfast for the top 100 scholars.

The student recruitment season was successful; orientation for new students will be held on May 19 and 21.

Angel Sierra, a senior, participated in a 6-day conference in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the U.S. Congress. She met with members of the Connecticut legislative delegation and participated in a mock session of Congress.

Two student videos were selected by Fox 61 News and CW20 to be aired on different days. As part of Fox's Student News, the videos deal with athletic playing fields in Hartford and teaching youngsters about financial literacy.

The construction of the new school building continues on schedule and can be viewed, via webcam, at [Diggsbuilds.com](http://Diggsbuilds.com).

- University High School of Science and Engineering

**Katie Quish** and **Alexander Daniels** announced that 37 students of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Odyssey Class will be recognized at this evening's Career Beginnings banquet for honor students.

Carlos Vasquez, ninth-grader, has been awarded this year's Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year Award for the city of Hartford. He is now competing for Connecticut Youth of the Year.

Students participated in a Saturday CAPT Academy to better prepare for the CAPT. Ms. Quish did not have to retake any of the tests because she was a CAPT Scholar last year.

The grade 10 biology classes visited the Connecticut Resource Recovery Center, as part of the interdisciplinary unit on Global Warming.

In an effort to meet the goal of 100% college enrollment, all members of the grade 11 Legacy Class will be attending the College Fair next Thursday. Guidance counselors are meeting individually with students to develop college plans.

The Boys' and Girls' Basketball Teams just finished their first season.

UHS students were Governor Rell's escorts at her budget address to the joint session of the House and Senate.

Mr. Daniels interviewed for the STAG (Successful Training and Achieving Goals) internship at The Hartford Insurance Group, which provides full-time summer employment or part-time school year employment for selected students.

UHS has begun a Big Brothers Big Sisters chapter. Eight students are the "bigs" for a group of "littles" from the University Elementary Magnet School. In addition, UHS is in the process of establishing a chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

UHS was awarded one million dollars in an NSF grant to offer technology training to middle and high school students throughout Hartford. Students will work their way up from training positions to teaching positions over a 3-year period, as part of the "Our IT" program, which began today.

The FIRST Robotics team, The Dragons, entered their first regional competition in New Hampshire and participated in the UTC Hartford Regional. They earned many accolades and are on their way to the National Competition in Georgia in April.

- Weaver High School

**Britney-Ann Chung** and **Oprah Ellis** reported that the Mid-Term exams were held January 16-19. CAPT testing began March 5. The school's Science Fair will be held March 27.

The Black History Month assembly was held on February 28. Fitzgerald Heslop, 2001 Weaver graduate, electrified the audience with his "Let Me Upgrade You" speech.

Twenty-one seniors have been accepted to UConn; while, others have been accepted by other colleges, including: Atlanta Union College, UTICA College, Quinnipiac University, University of Hartford, etc.

MassMutual Achievers attended the University of Hartford for the "Picture Your Future" conference on January 25. On March 3, some of the Achievers began their SAT prep program.

Ten students were selected from the Health Academy to attend the Mini-Medical program at UConn.

The track team broke over 5 records and set about 4 records. They competed in the Nationals in New York March 9-12. The Boys' Basketball Team won the State Championship.

Seniors held a Valentine's Day fundraiser. The junior class will be holding fundraisers, such as the Def Poetry competition.

The student representatives were nominated for the Immigration Day Award.

C. Report from the Chair

- Recognition of Hartford PTO Presidents

Ms. Patterson-Stallings announced the names of the newly elected PTO Presidents. Chairman Perez, Dr. Adamowski and Mr. Saylor, President of the PTO Presidents' Council, handed citations to the presidents as their names were called.

- Framework for Parental Empowerment in Hartford Public Schools

Superintendent Adamowski thanked all of the parents for coming to the Board meeting and for dedicating the time to their local PTO. Superintendent Adamowski explained the new model for parental involvement, which is in the shape of a pyramid. The first layer is Responsibility – parent/student contracts; the second layer is Involvement – parent representation on school councils; and, the top layer is Choice – parent choice of schools.

A parent ombudsman will help parents maneuver through issues that can not be successfully resolved at the school level.

Ms. Patterson-Stallings and Chairman Perez thanked the parents for the commitment to the children of Hartford. Chairman Perez proceeded to induct the new PTO officers by reading the oath of office with the new members.

D. Report from the Superintendent

- Commendation Waver High Indoor Track Team

Superintendent Adamowski welcomed the members of the track team and their coach to the podium. Chairman Perez read the commendation of the Weaver High Indoor Track Team, which won the Hartford Public Invitational and the New Haven Invitational Championships, the City Series Championship, the Class M State Championship and the State Open Championship. In addition, the team members set records in many of their races.

Superintendent Adamowski also congratulated the HMMS Marching Band, the Marching Phoenix, which marched Philadelphia St. Patrick's Day Parade and won the Best Grade School Band Award.

Lastly, Superintendent Adamowski acknowledged the Board members for their devotion to improving the educational opportunities of all Hartford students. As part of Board Member Appreciation Month, the Superintendent gave each member a memento to thank them for their service.

- Revised School Calendar for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009

Ms. Miranda, Vice Chair, explained the changes made to the calendars since the first reading. The changes include: starting school in the last week of August and scheduling a Spring Break in April for 2007-2008 and a Spring Break in March for 2008-2009; increasing instructional time by 2.5 days by repurposing five of nine half-days currently utilized for professional development; and, extending the school year (20 half-days of reading instruction) in June/July for students who are not reading at grade level at the end of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

#### E. Public Comment Portion

**Milly Arciniegas**, Parent and Member of the PTO Council, addressed the Board regarding bullying and disruptive behavior of students in the schools. She suggested that changes be made to strengthen the code of discipline. More needs to be done to better protect the victims of bullies. Outside agencies should be brought in to help with disruptive children. Social skills should be part of the curriculum, so children will learn proper behavior.

**Maria Gomez**, Parent and PTO President, addressed the Board regarding the dismissal of students during the last snow storm. Many parents were upset that the notification for early dismissal was late, compared to other school districts. Improved communication between central office and the schools is required to better handle situations such as this.

Superintendent Adamowski explained that it is his responsibility to make the decision as to whether schools should be closed or not. The district can not follow the practice of canceling/closing school(s) when bad weather has yet to occur. The concern for child care is always taken into account when deciding if schools should remain open. In addition, at this time of year, CMT testing is taken into consideration. Superintendent Adamowski also stated that any parent can take his/her child home at any time.

Ms. Gomez asked Superintendent Adamowski to please send a letter to schools notifying them that parents are able to pick-up students at their discretion.

Lastly, she asked that students be sent home for Spring Recess without vacation packets.

**Gwen Douglas**, Paraprofessional at Twain, addressed the Board regarding after-school programs. She explained the program she is involved with, Sankofa Kumba. She suggested that more certified teachers sign-up for the program and that more parental involvement is needed. She expressed the need for arts to remain in the schools, so children can grow and flourish.

**Nicole Morolasiewicz**, School Resource Officer at Quirk Middle School, addressed the Board regarding the importance of the Student and Family Assistance Center program. It provides a safe environment to resolve issues.

**Hiram Otero**, Hartford Police Officer, addressed the Board regarding Quirk's Student and Family Assistance Center and asked that funding be continued for this program.

**McAutha Jackson**, Sankofa Kumba, addressed the Board regarding the need for after-school programs, such as Sankofa. With music and poetry, students can constructively express themselves. In addition, it instills the use of structured and grammatically correct language.

**Sam Saylor**, President, PTO Presidents' Council, thanked Superintendent Adamowski for his response to parent requests and for keeping parents in the process on issues. He also thanked Superintendent Adamowski for the efforts of those employees in the administration who work with parents on matters pertaining to their children.

In addition, Mr. Saylor asked that Superintendent Adamowski err on the side of caution when there is the possibility of dangerous weather.

Lastly, he asked that an SPO be placed in a vehicle, so he/she can drive to each school and give support to the individual SPOs assigned to the schools.

**Councilwoman rJo Winch and Azaria McCalop**, Twain student, addressed the Board to announce that Ms. McCalop is participating in Operation Husky, which collects donated items for children of service men and women. Twain is a drop-off location, and donations would be greatly appreciated.

**Cathy Carpino**, President, Hartford Federation of Teachers, addressed the Board regarding the proposed school calendars. She asked that February vacation be restored, as 108 other districts have this vacation, and that the Spring Recess remain in April.

Ms. Carpino raised concern with the late notification of the early dismissal during the last snowstorm. She asked that the safety of the staff be taken into consideration when deciding to close schools.

Lastly, the union is to be notified of proposed plans to redesign schools. The input and support of the union is critical to the success of the district.

**Donna Marie Campbell**, HPS employee, congratulated the Weaver Track and Basketball Teams. She stated that it has been difficult to maneuver through the hiring process at the Hartford Public Schools. She has been successful in many other towns with their hiring procedures, but she is unable to attain an interview for a full-time certified teaching position. The process is broken and needs to be fixed.

**David Ianno**, HPHS Parent, reported to the Board that the proper tools and infrastructure are required to meet the standards set by the administration. Accountability can not be expected if the materials are not provided.

**Theresa Lindsay**, Parent and Twain PTO member, reported to the Board that she is in support of the Sankofa Kumba extended-day program.

**Brittany Helledon**, Resident and Assistant Principal at M.D. Fox Elementary, reported to the Board that special education and ESL students are making academic growth. She asked that the steady improvement of these students be taken into account before massive changes are made to the schools. Furthermore, as the former summer school coordinator, she suggests a safe program be the top priority.

**Michael Downs**, President of the Hartford Federation of Substitute Teachers, reported to the Board that the HFST would like to assist substitute teachers in becoming full-time certified teachers; however, the Human Resources Department is moving at a very slow pace. In addition, the union has a new contract.

**Nyasha Smith**, President of the HPHS PTO, reported to the Board that she is disappointed by the pace of the school's construction. She suggests that parents be kept involved and informed of the status as it moves forward.

**J. Stan McCauley** welcomed Superintendent Adamowski to Hartford and suggested that he stand strong.

**Larry Deutsch**, PTO President of BHS, suggested to the Board that instead of paying \$90,000 to a facilitator of strategic partnerships that the money be given to students, teachers and parents. There would be greater impact and more support generated.

## II. Consent Items

1. Approval of Minutes of the Hartford Board of Education Regular Meeting of February 6, 2007 (Supt. et al) (Pages 9-18 )
2. Approval of Minutes of the Hartford Board of Education Workshop Planning Meeting of March 6, 2007 (Supt. et al) (Pages 19-23)
3. Acceptance of Funds from The Prudential Foundation and the Capitol Region Education Council – \$50,000 (Supt. et al)

The Prudential Foundation, in collaboration with the Capitol Region Education Council, has granted the Hartford Public Schools \$50,000 in support of the continuation of the College Support

Specialists' positions for the 2007-08 school year. The College Support Specialists provide college planning and support functions to students.

**Consent Items #1-3- Ms. Miranda moved, Ms. Richmond seconded, and the items were approved unanimously by voice vote.**

### III. Action Items

4. Contract Approval: Alternative Opportunities, LLC. - \$152,000 (Supt. et al)

Alternative Opportunities, LLC. will provide a minimum of 20 special needs high school students with an alternative highly structured setting that will address academic and therapeutic needs. In addition, there will be a vocational component that will prepare students for post secondary transition.

**Items #4 – Mr. MacDonald moved, Ms. Richmond seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

Item # 4 – Ms. Comer asked that data and measures of outcome be compiled, so the program can be evaluated to determine success. Ms. Noel asked about the contract's timeline, April 6 – May 4, 2007. Dr. Dallemand responded that these dates reflect the payment schedule. Superintendent Adamowski stated that the current system doesn't allow for students to remain; many who are expelled from school become dropouts. This program will be evaluated at its conclusion, which is the end of the school year. Ms. Richmond asked if there is a component dealing with the GED program. Dr. Dallemand responded that the program is for students through age 21. Ms. Noel is concerned by the short time of the program's implementation.

5. Second Reading / Adoption – Series 0000 - Policy #0100 Vision, Mission, Strategy (Supt., The Board)

That the Hartford Board of Education accepts the second reading and adopts Policy Number 0100 to revise the policy to clearly define and measure the Mission, Vision and Strategy that the Hartford Public Schools will employ as it begins to implement a new theory of action.

**Items #5 - Ms. Comer moved, Ms. Noel seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

6. Second Reading / Adoption -Series 5000 – Students – Amendment of Board Policy #5116 (School Choice & Integration and Facilities Taskforce Committees)

That the Hartford Board of Education accepts the second reading and adopts the amendment to Policy Number 5116 to provide a system where all schools are schools of choice.

**Items #6 - Mr. MacDonald moved, Ms. Richmond seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

7. Second Reading / Adoption – Series 3000 – Business and Non-Instructional Operations – Regulation #3230(b) and Policy # 3310(Supt., The Board )

The Board of Education approves the second reading and adopts the amendment to Regulation #3230(b) and Policy #3310 to increase the amounts required for board approvals of gifts, donations and contracts/consultant agreements.

**Items #7 - Ms. Miranda moved, Ms. Noel seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

8. Second Reading / Adoption - Proposed School Calendar for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 (Supt. et al)

That the Board of Education accepts the second reading and adopts the proposed 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 School Year Calendars.

**Items #8 - Ms. Miranda moved, Ms. Noel seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

Item # 8 – Ms. Noel is pleased with the outcome of the school calendars. The changes are needed because the district is in need of improvement.

9. Recommendation: Phase 2 - Central Office Organizational Structure (Supt. et al)

That the Hartford Board of Education approves the Superintendent's recommendation to align mid-management positions to district mission, vision and strategy.

**Items #9 - Ms. Richmond moved, Mr. MacDonald seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

10. Resolution: Center for Reform of School System's Reform Governance in Action (Supt. et al, The Board)

That the Hartford Board of Education commit to participate in the Reform Governance in Action, an intensive two-year training and consulting program designed to accelerate student achievement in urban school districts by strengthening reform leadership.

**Items #10 - Ms. Miranda moved, Ms. Richmond seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

Item # 10 – Superintendent Adamowski briefly explained the program. Mr. MacDonald asked how the program is to be funded. Superintendent Adamowski responded that the Eli Broad Foundation will fully fund the district's participation in the program if selected.

**IV. Receive and File**

11. Receive and File: Parent and Community Engagement Task Force Report (Parent and Community Engagement Task Force)

That the Hartford Board of Education receives and files the Task Force's report and that the Superintendent reviews the recommendations and provides feedback to the Board within 30 days.

**Items #11 - Ms. Richmond moved, Mr. MacDonald seconded, and the item was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

Item # 11 – Chairman Perez thanked Ms. Patterson-Stallings for her work on this task force. Chairman Perez asked Superintendent Adamowski to please provide feedback on the task force's recommendations.

**V. Adjournment**

**At 8:36 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.**