

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of South Huntington Union Free School District was held on Tuesday, May 20, 2014, in the Performing Arts Center of Walt Whitman High School, 301 West Hills Road, Huntington Station, New York.

**Present:**        **Board Members:**

President  
Vice President

Mr. Kaden  
Mr. Ciappetta  
Mrs. Brieff  
Mrs. Carey  
Mrs. DeGaetano  
Mrs. LaCara  
Mr. Nitkewicz

**Staff:**

Superintendent of Schools  
Deputy Superintendent  
Asst. Supt. for Personnel & District Services  
Interim Business Administrator  
Supervisor of Assessment and Technology  
Deputy District Clerk

Dr. Bennardo  
Ms. Harris  
Dr. Centamore  
Mr. Light  
Dr. Bloom  
Mrs. McLean

**Absent:**        District Clerk

Mrs. Hammond

**Call to Order:**        Mr. Kaden opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Walt Whitman High School Award Presentation:**        Dr. Bennardo called Mr. Gene Gross to the podium and explained to the audience that at the last Board meeting, each bargaining unit was presented with a certificate that expressed appreciation for their part in the high school being named one of the top high schools by U.S. News and World Report. Mr. Gross was not present at that meeting, and this evening he accepted the certificate on behalf of the Security Unit/UPSEU, Local 424.

**Student Leadership Awards:**        Dr. Bennardo thanked audience members who came to this special Board presentation whereby recognition was provided to the student leaders of the district. He further explained that through their service to the district, our school community reaps enormous benefits. He also expressed appreciation to the parents for raising such fine leaders in their homes, and introduced Mr. Toto, principal of Silas Wood Sixth Grade Center.

Mr. Toto praised the student officers of Silas Wood, and shared the various activities that took place this past school year. Mr. Toto was especially proud and praised the student officers and brought special attention to the manner in which they ran the recent fifth-grade orientation night. Mr. Toto then identified each student officer and presented each with a certificate.

Mr. Smith, principal of Stimson Middle School, provided the presentation of the seventh- and eighth-grade student officers. Mr. Smith

**Student Leadership Awards:  
(Continued)**

shared that the students worked extremely hard this past year from planning special activities that ranged from spirit week to holiday drives to the recent breast cancer awareness fundraiser whereby the students provided him with his newly styled, close-cropped haircut. Each student officer received individual recognition.

Ms. Acker, principal of Walt Whitman High School, presided over the high school's leadership awards. Ms. Acker shared that the Whitman spirit was maintained with the hard work and dedication of the student officers, assistants and student advisors. She introduced Mr. Goldman, the freshman class advisor, who spoke of the fine attributes of this particular group of class officers and assistants. Each student officer and assistant came forward to be recognized.

Ms. Acker introduced Ms. Papianou, the sophomore class advisor, who shared that the tenth-grade officers and assistants did a fabulous job this past year; each student officer and assistant came forward to be recognized.

Ms. Acker introduced Mr. Donlon, the junior class advisor who also articulated the fine work of this group of officers and assistants that made this year such a success. Each student officer and assistant came forward to be recognized.

Ms. Acker introduced Ms. Zamow, the senior class advisor. Ms. Zamow praised the seniors and shared that this particular group worked tirelessly on fundraisers, Senior Follies, the talent show and blood drives, where over 200 pints of blood were collected at each drive. The group worked together extremely well, and the activities were extremely successful thanks to the hard work and dedication of the students' efforts. Each student officer and assistant came forward to be recognized.

Ms. Acker introduced Ms. Leogrande, the GSO advisor. Ms. Leogrande spoke highly of the GSO officers and their assistants, and each student officer and assistant came forward to be recognized.

**2014 Principal's List:**

Ms. Acker expressed her sincere pleasure in recognizing and honoring this outstanding group of students. She further stated that the students on the Principal's List must attain a 95% or better average. She spoke of their dedication and commitment to excellence and that it was her privilege to share and celebrate this evening with them. Ms. Acker emphasized the significance of being identified on the Principal's List. Each student was called to the podium to be recognized, as Ms. Acker spoke of their individual high school achievements and accomplishments, concluding each presentation with the student's college choice for the fall.

**Salutatorian-  
Valedictorian  
Recognition:**

Ms. Acker proudly announced the Walt Whitman High School Class of 2014 Salutatorian, Taylor Christine Parrish. Taylor has been accepted to attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the fall.

Ms. Acker continued and proudly announced the Walt Whitman High School Class of 2014 Valedictorian, Thomas John Hustedt. Thomas has been accepted to attend Clemson University in the fall.

The audience provided both Thomas and Taylor a resounding applause.

Ms. Acker then unveiled the 2014 Principal's List plaque, to which the audience applauded, and announced that the plaque will be proudly hung in the south cafeteria, a long-standing, respected tradition. Credit was provided to the high school's PTA for the funding of the plaque.

**Recess:**

Mr. Kaden called for a short recess.

**Tenure  
Recognition:**

Dr. Centamore shared that the granting of tenure is not the "finish line;" but that professional growth was continually fostered during successful administrative and teaching careers. Dr. Centamore announced the names of the administrators and teachers as follows:

Dr. Jared Bloom, Supervisor of Technology & Assessment;

Matthew Pahl, Assistant Supervisor of Special Education;

Colleen Grady, Assistant Principal, WWHS;

Thomas DeNicola, Administrative Dean, WWHS;

Alexis Colapinto, Math Teacher, WWHS;

Danielle Rodrigues, Biology Teacher, WWHS;

Tatiana Jordan, ESL Teacher, WWHS;

Diane Langhorst-Zamow, Home & Careers, Stimson Middle School;

Jennifer Kinsella, Math Teacher, Stimson Middle School,

Shaka Williams, Social Worker, Silas Wood Sixth-Grade Center;

Johanna Torres, Social Worker, Countrywood Primary Center;

Allison Clancy, Reading Teacher, Countrywood Primary Center;

Andrea Lopez, ESL Teacher, Oakwood Primary Center;

Robert Dwyer, Special Education Teacher, Maplewood Intermediate School

**Retiree  
Recognition:**

Dr. Centamore then stated that the next group of important honorees, the retirees, had over 450 years of collective work experience. He thanked the retirees for their years of service, and for all of the lives they have touched during their careers. The following employees approached the podium upon their name being called, and each received a personalized certificate of appreciation for their service presented by Mr. Kaden and Dr. Bennardo:

Tiina Berman, English Chairperson, WWHS;

Nancy Nelson, Special Education Chairperson, WWHS;

Vicki Dollin, Art Teacher, WWHS\*;

Maureen Damm, Math Teacher, WWHS;

Anna Velez, Guidance Counselor, WWHS;

Bridget Berbrick, Special Education Teacher, Stimson Middle School;

Virginia D'Arcy, Special Education Teacher, Stimson Middle School;

**Retiree Recognition: (Continued)** Michael DiRenzo, Special Education Teacher, Silas Wood School; Barbara Wolanow, Speech Therapist, Maplewood Intermediate School; Linda Cepelak, Elementary Teacher, Oakwood Primary Center\*; Gayle Dugan, Special Education Teacher, Oakwood Primary Center\*; Valerie Malley, Paraprofessional, WWHS\*; Dorothy Young, Clerical Staff, WWHS\*; Beruhi Bogosyan, Paraprofessional, Maplewood Intermediate School\*; Lorraine Longo, Paraprofessional, Maplewood Intermediate School\*; Patricia Cavuoto, Clerical Staff, Oakwood Primary Center\*; Ella Bruns, Head Cook, Silas Wood School; Eileen Oelcher, Bus Driver, Transportation; Mary McElearney, Bus Driver, Transportation; James DeAngelo, Bus Driver, Transportation; and Walter Connolly, Bus Driver, Transportation\*.  
\*Not in Attendance.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the revised agenda be adopted.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Motion on Minutes** Motion by Mrs. Brieff, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District approve the following items:

**Minutes:** Minutes of Board meeting held on April 24, 2014.

**SHTA Mini-Grants:** Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District hereby approves the total expenditure of \$8,521.40 for SHTA mini-grants to be awarded as follows: Thomas Keogh, \$2,579; Jaime Rogers, \$2,414.90; Jennifer Rovira, \$1,420; Kristina Ford, \$1,420; and Nicole O'Shea-Holohan, \$687.50.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**WWHS Alumni Football Scholarship:** Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District hereby approves the WWHS Alumni Football Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 to Terhon Legros.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Field Trip Request:** Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District hereby approves the Boys JV and Varsity Wrestling teams to attend the Penn State University Grade 7-12 Wrestling Camp, July 10-13, 2014.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Conference  
N-SSBA Annual  
Dinner:**

Motion by Mrs. Brieff, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District hereby approves the Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Meeting on May 29, 2014, at the Woodbury Country Club for Mr. Kaden, Mrs. Brieff, Dr. Bennardo, Dr. Centamore and Dr. Bloom.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Recommendations  
for Placement by  
CSE/CPSE:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed minutes of the Committee on Special Education dated March 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 31, April 9, 11, 16, 21, 24, 28, May 5 and 8, 2014; and the Committee on Preschool Special Education dated April 28, 29 and May 9, 2014, is satisfied that the procedures of Chapter 853 of the Education Law were followed and accepts the recommendations for placement set forth, copies made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1201-1213.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**New Textbooks  
Discussion:**

Mr. Kaden provided the history of the Board's review of textbooks; years ago several Board members expressed hesitation with the approval of textbook purchases without ever having seen the actual textbook they were being asked to approve. Dr. Bennardo shared that documentation existed in the Instruction and Curriculum Office that addressed the purchase of seven textbooks, one for each Board member, whenever a textbook was being considered for purchase. Dr. Bennardo explained that he wished to have this matter discussed as the purchase of textbooks was costly. Mr. Kaden stated that it was never the intention to have textbooks ordered simply for the Board's review, but rather have the final selection of the textbook available to be reviewed. He recalls having reviewed textbooks accordingly. Dr. Bennardo expressed concern for the written documentation citing the District's practice. Discussion ensued regarding this matter; Mr. Nitkewicz expressed his concern as to whether the Board was comfortable with finalizing the selection of the textbook or was it not more prudent to rely on the textbook committee's and administrative recommendation for the purchase. Again discussion ensued; Mr. Ciappetta did not recall reviewing a textbook for at least four or five years. Mr. Nitkewicz suggested the direction of changing this documented practice. Consensus was reached by all Board members to have one copy of the final textbook selection available during an executive session whereby it could be reviewed, similar to the manner in which personnel files are available for tenure review.

**Request to Remain  
in South  
Huntington Schools**

Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District hereby approves the request for the student to remain in the Oakwood Primary School for the duration of the 2013/2014 school year, a copy of the request made part of these legal minutes, p. 1214.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Personnel:**

Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed the recommendations of the Chief School Administrator, is satisfied that the provisions of Section 3012 of Education Law were followed, and thereby accepts those recommendations as set forth in schedules made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1215-1218, and authorizes implementation thereof:

Schedule 8 - Re-Employment to Positions (Instructional)

Schedule 9 - Coaching/Extracurricular Appointments (Instructional)

Schedule 16 - Terminations (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 22 - Substitute Employee Appointments (Inst./Non-Instructional)

Motion carried unanimously.

**Information and Reports:**Information and Reports

1. Congratulatory letter to Whitman's Students of the Month for April from Dr. Bennardo
2. Congratulatory letter to students who participated in the 2014 Le Grand Concours competition from Dr. Bennardo
3. Congratulatory letter to students who excelled in the 2014 National Italian Language Exam from Dr. Bennardo
4. Congratulatory letter to students who were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society from Dr. Bennardo
5. Congratulatory letter to members of the Walt Whitman Wind Ensemble on receiving the NYSSMA Gold Medal with Distinction from Dr. Bennardo
6. Congratulatory letter to students inducted into the National Honor Society from Dr. Bennardo
7. Congratulatory letter to Athletes of the Month for April from Dr. Bennardo
8. Memo to Dr. Bennardo from Ms. Harris re School Grade Enrollment Report for the First Attendance Period April 1, 2014, through April 30, 2014
9. Personnel Postings (2)
10. Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting, SHTA, 5-12-14
11. News articles: *The Long-Islander*, 5-8-14 and 5-15-14
12. Letter to Parents from Mr. Toto re Silas Wood Student Vote on May 20 providing questions for ballot voting

In envelopes:

1. Audit Committee Agenda, 5-21-14

**Comments from Board Members and Staff**

Mr. Ciappetta wished to remind everyone of the Art and Sole Walk/Race taking place on Saturday, May 31, 2014, that is being sponsored by the South Huntington Educational Foundation and the District.

