



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY  
AMERICAS  
MID-ATLANTIC DISTRICT  
WEST POINT SCHOOLS  
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY  
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996-1196

November 7, 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of West Point School Board Meeting, November 7, 2018.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting of the West Point School Board was called to order by Mrs. Evangelista on Wednesday, November 7 at 4:30 PM in the West Point MS Media Center.

2. **Members Present were:**

Heather Evangelista, President  
Liam Collins, Board Member  
Kirk Ingold, Board Member  
Dr. Donato Cuadrado, Superintendent

Tim Viles, Vice President  
Jennifer Black, Board Member  
Helen Balilo, Community Superintendent

**Others Present:**

Denise DeMarco, WPES Principal  
Miles Shea, WPMS Principal  
Lauren Lebednik, PTO  
Angie Lamonski, ISS  
Gala Edgar, Union representative  
Geoff Bull  
Alisha Keehn  
Linda Parrette  
Sue Kerns

Aristian Torregano, WPES AP  
COL Marson  
Terry DeLay, Administrative Officer  
Tim Pillsworth, USACE  
Fabrizio Gastello, SRO  
Kristen Mitchell  
Sandra Maj  
Tom Cowan  
Lucinda Uhorchak

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Mr. Collins made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Ingold seconded the motion. By unanimous vote the agenda was approved.

4. **APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES:** The minutes from the October 2018 meeting were reviewed. Mr. Viles motioned to approve the past minutes. Mr. Ingold seconded the motion. By unanimous vote the minutes were approved.

5. **MILCON Report:** given by Mr. Pillsworth gave a hand out to the group.

- Boilers are in and working
- WPES – the building will be weather tight by the end of December
- All construction will stop for the holidays
- No projection for where the project will be when the holidays start.
- Framing downstairs is all complete
- Old Building teardown: estimate to tear down depends on the time of the year. Where the old building is now will become the parking lot
- Pathway-Contractor will maintain pathway form the front of school. The path may have to be closed and re-opened in certain spots while it is figured out.

6. **School Updates/Presentations:** None

7. **INDIVIDUALS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE SCHOOL BOARD**

Mr. Bull requested to address the board with concerns about the PTO. Mr. Bull is a parent with children in both schools. His concern is with the recent policies and procedures of the PTO. The issues with the PTO is the timing and the location of the meetings. There are lots of members but times and locations have precluded others from attending the meetings. Other issues were the late evening meetings, meetings taking place in private residences and the Zulu Bar. He stated that general membership is pretty large but a very small number of people appear to be making the decisions. He said his wife has tried to address his concerns with the PTO but to no avail and asked

if the Board Meeting is the correct avenue? Mrs. Balilo stated that the PTO is a private organization that is approved by the Commander of the Post. She asked Mr. Bull to go to the PTO first. Mrs. Lebenik spoke for the PTO stating she is will be bringing forward information for the PTO that will address some of the stated concerns. It was suggested by a gentleman from the audience to go through the Garrison office if there were still concerns after hearing the PTO report and speaking with the PTO Board.

Ms. Uhochak and Ms. Ellowitz from second grade reported the following:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is going well
- There is synergy in the room and flexibility having a partner in the room
- New Reading series allows the two teachers to work together and look at the varying levels of the students. This makes the students feel comfortable when they see others in the room at their spot in reading.

8. **BOARD PRESIDENT COMMENTS:** Thanks a Latte: Mrs. Evangelista gave certificates to the following:

- Parent group
- Student group
- Mrs. Harvey
- Officer G per the students

9. **REPORTS**

a. **PTO Report:** given by Mrs. Lebednik

- General Membership meeting – December 6<sup>th</sup> at Balfour Beaty Center at 1900. Every other meeting is at 1200 which allows the teachers to attend the meeting.
- Read-athon – raised \$23,500
- Book Fair raised \$12,000.
- Yearbook Club – 329 students voted on the yearbook cover.
- Greg Tang Math – Math night was great

Mrs. Evangelista asked if the PTO report was a courtesy. Mrs. Balilo confirmed yes that since this is an open forum and is another way for the PTO to report what they are doing for the school. She stated that the School Board writes the agenda and if the board prefers to remove the report they can. Mrs. Balilo stated that the PTO provides tremendous support to the school. Mrs. Evangelista stated that she doesn't want the PTO Report removed from the agenda.

Mrs. Evangelista inquired about voting and by-laws and if the PTO needed a quorum.

Mrs. Lebednik explained that at the end of the SY, the PTO sets a budget and it is sent to the whole general membership. Typically supported and items requested are on the budget. Anything over \$1000 requested after the budget is approved, goes out to the general membership for approval.

b. **SLO Report:** No report as Michi Carl was not in attendance

10. **CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

- **Lunch** – Numerous positive responses for flex lunch at the Middle School and for grades 3 & 4 with changes for the elementary school. Mr. Viles asked the question: Do you see it as a positive, the changes that have been made at the MS? Mrs. DeMarco stated that they are working on strategic seating for peanut allergy students to be at their grade level tables. There will still need some adjustments for those that are severely allergic. Mr. Shea stated that 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> can eat together and enjoying it. Still some students eat faster and slower. The flex lunch has been successful. Mr. Viles asked what happens on rainy days? Mr. Shea stated that the 7<sup>th</sup> grade starts in the lunch room with 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the Information Center. Mr. Collins stated that having that arrangement still isn't flexible. Mr. Viles asked if there was any type of control on students who are not eating. Mr. Shea stated that if a child is not eating, the school knows about it. The Counselor notifies the parents. Mr. Reeves asked about flex seating. Mrs. DeMarco stated that Mrs. Reeve's has

joined a group at the ES titled Comfortable Cafeteria. Starting next week, an ES group with Mrs. Reeves will start the lessons that go along with the program.

- **Teacher Support Plan** – Mrs. Balilo stated that on October 17<sup>th</sup>, she sent a very detailed message to the board. Receipt was acknowledged by the Board.
- **Monday Assignments** – Mrs. Evangelista stated that weekends in the fall are very busy. Assignments due on Mondays are a struggle for families. Mrs. DeMarco stated that teachers she spoke to reported they mainly do assignments Monday-Friday and not on the weekends. Mr. Shea reported that it is left to the teachers to use professional judgement and follow DoDEA Homework Guidelines. He stated that he hasn't received any concerns from parents. Mrs. Black stated that 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA has had a couple of assignments due this year on Monday's. Mr. Shea stated that he would send an email out to the staff asking them to be cognizant of homework, amount of homework and the weekends.
- **Communication** – Mrs. Evangelista asked the board if anyone is having issues getting emails/communications from the schools. No one responded.
- **Number of students in grade level classrooms** – Mr. Viles stated that it seems like courses such as band and video productions seems to be driving the class sizes. To him it seems backwards and that core classes should be balanced not the extra-curricular classes driving the schedules.

Mr. Shea stated that he sent guidance to the board and the class sizes are within DoDEA Regulations. Mr. Viles asked at what point are we taking a slot and putting a teacher in a core subject? Mrs. Balilo stated that the point was well taken and that DoDEA strives to provide a balanced education. She stated that Principals will be getting together with Dr. Cuadrado and Dr. Minor the first week of December.

Dr. Cuadrado stated that some of these positions are fenced in. You just can't take a position and move it over to a core subject. The 1:16 ration includes all staffing. This includes the Information Specialist, Counselor, etc. In most classrooms you see more than one adult in the classroom. It was stated by Mr. Viles and Mr. Collins that there were not additional teachers in some classrooms. Mrs. Balilo stated that when she and Dr. Cuadrado conducted observations, they saw more than one adult in several classrooms during the classroom visits in the past two days. She stated that the data would be compiled on how many classroom have 27 students in the room and how many adults are in that room. Mrs. Black stated that parents are concerned that there weren't enough desks or materials and wanted to know if this has been addressed. Mr. Shea stated that it was in one classroom. The teacher brought in more chairs to set around a group of desks. The textbook issues was that there wasn't a second set of complimentary texts to hand out.

- **Winter/Spring Concerts**- Mr. Collins asked if the concerts were meant for the students or the parents. He stated that 4<sup>th</sup> grade students were turned away at the Veteran's Day assembly. He was not able to attend due to work obligations. Mr. Ingold stated that in the past the concerts were done twice. Mr. Shea stated that he would talk to the teachers to see how it has been done historically in the past. Mrs. DeMarco provided an update to the elementary school concert schedule. Winter program will be a daytime concert, Thursday January 31<sup>st</sup>. The Spring Concert will be an evening concert. She stated that winter concerts pose a safety problem due to darkness. Mr. Collins stated again that for parents working, a daytime concert doesn't work and to say darkness and safety are the issues is not acceptable. Mrs. DeMarco stated that teachers are required to attend three evening events. The three evening events have been mapped out for the year. Mr. Collins questioned the three evening events and asked if it is consistent with other schools. Mrs. Evangelista wants to ask parents what they would prefer. Evening concerts or evening appointments for parent/teacher conferences. Ms. Uhorchak wanted clarification and stated that Commanders in the past would allow duty members time off to attend conferences. Was that not happening anymore? Mrs. Evangelista stated that professors cannot abandon their classrooms.

#### **11. NEW BUSINESS:**

- Conferences during the day rather than evenings

- Calendar – evening event and timing

12. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:** Mrs. Balilo asked that the next board meeting be adjusted/rescheduled as administrators will be in Georgia. She suggested that the next board meeting be on Wednesday, December 12, 2018.

The next meeting of the West Point School Board will be held on December 12, 2018 at 4:30 PM at West Point Middle School in the Information Center.

13. **ADJOURN MEETING:** Mr. Ingold motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Viles seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:10 PM.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Helen Balilo  
Community Superintendent

  
Heather Evangelista  
President, West Point School Board