Synopsis of
Westfield Board of Education Meeting on November 13, 2018
By Superintendent Margaret Dolan

COUNSELING DEPARTMENT REPORT ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)
Maureen Mazzarese, Director of Counseling in the Westfield Public Schools, prepared a report summarizing her department’s role in promoting and expanding Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), one of the district’s goals for 2018-2019. Ms. Mazzarese noted that school counselors have promoted social and emotional learning for many years and will continue to do so. While the school district can’t control many outside influences, Ms. Mazzarese said, “we can consistently monitor the resilience of our students to make sure they feel safe, supported and listened to.” Here are some additional highlights of her comprehensive report:

- At every grade level, counselors are working with students individually, in small groups, in classrooms, on playgrounds, and at parent meetings to address students’ academic, social and emotional success and well-being.
- Every counselor has a Student Growth Objective (SGO) that incorporates ways to implement and measure Social and Emotional Learning.
- Counselors contribute to schoolwide goals around resiliency, school climate, anti-bullying, and character education.
- Counselors continue to work with students on anxiety prevention, anger management skills, coping strategies, decision-making, and building resilience.
- Peer leaders at the intermediate and high school levels are trained by counselors as part of the Character Education program.
- Every interaction with a student is an opportunity to observe and build upon the Social and Emotional Learning competencies. “Words matter. They matter a lot,” Ms. Mazzarese said. “We use language that supports trust, balance, wellness, growth and individualism.”

FACILITIES
The district’s architect George Duthie provided an update on capital projects planned for Summer 2019 including renovation of the intermediate school auditorium lobbies and certain bathrooms at both Edison and Roosevelt Intermediate Schools and Westfield High School. The Summer 2019 projects also include renovation of the television studio at the high school and interior door upgrades at the intermediate and high schools as part of the continuing effort to enhance safety and security. Board President Gretchan Ohlig noted that the costs of these projects will be paid from the district’s capital reserves due to the savings resulting from continued fiscal responsibility.

POLICIES
The Board approved for first reading the following policies:
- 5440 - Honoring Pupil Achievement (Pupils)
- 5751 - Sexual Harassment of Pupils (Pupils)
- 7420 - Hygienic Management (Property)
- Reg. 7420.1 (M) - Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan (Property)
- Reg. 7420.2 (M) - Chemical Hygiene (Property)
- 7513 - Recreational Use of Playgrounds (Property)
- 7650 - School Vehicle Assignment, Use, Tracking, Maintenance and Accounting (Property)
Policies Chair Brendan Galligan discussed updates made to Policy 5440 to address revised criteria used for consideration of any student for membership in the National Honor Society for the classes of 2022 and beyond.

The Board affirmed my decision on two HIB incidents.

FINANCE
The Board accepted with gratitude a gift of $560 from the Franklin School PTO to purchase stand-up desks.

TECHNOLOGY
Technology Chair Peggy Oster noted that the district technology department continues to work on the new district website and appreciates all feedback.

LIAISON REPORTS
Mrs. Oster stated that she attended a November 7 meeting of the Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC) and enjoyed hearing about the educational programs and services that are available through the UCESC to help students achieve their best.

Ms. Ohlig reported on a recent meeting of the Westfield Recreation Commission at which the new ice rink was discussed amid a grand opening that was filled with excitement. Ms. Ohlig said the recreation commission has created a small subcommittee to work with residents in the area. Ms. Ohlig also stated that she will serve on a subcommittee that focuses on the town’s parks as part of Westfield’s Master Plan Steering Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS
Congratulations to the Boys Cross Country Team, NJSIAA Sectional Champions. The boys team also finished 2nd at the NJSIAA Group 4 State Championship and will compete at the Meet of Champions this Saturday, November 17 at Holmdel Park in Holmdel, New Jersey.

Congratulations to the Girls Cross Country team for their 2nd place finish at the NJSIAA Sectional Meet at Greystone Park in Morris Plains on November 3, where senior Sarah Hacker broke the school record for the Greystone Course with a time of 19:03. The Girls Cross Country Team also finished 5th in the NJSIAA Group 4 State Championship and qualified as a wild card for the Meet of Champions. For those wishing to cheer on our runners on Saturday at Holmdel, the Boys Championship Race begins at 11:00 a.m. The Girls Championship Race will start at 11:45 a.m. Good luck to all!

Congratulations to the Westfield High School Girls Field Hockey Team on the program’s 400th win. We salute all of our players and coaches whose records contributed to this amazing achievement, including coaches Caitlin Cheddar (2009-present), Molly Dennis (2007-2008), Margaret McFadden (1983-2006), Lori Besch (1981-1982), Vicki Orr (1980), and Carol Donner (1972-1979).

The Westfield Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Dinner will be held on Monday, November 19, at 6 p.m. at the Shackamaxon Country Club, 100 Tillinghast Turn in Scotch Plains. Among the inductees are 17 coaches and student-athletes whose leadership spans a variety of athletic teams from 1960 through 2014.
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS
We applaud the cast and crew of this year's fall production at Edison Intermediate School. This funny, fast-paced version of “Aladdin” was performed before enthusiastic audiences on November 1-3, 2018. Congratulations to the talented cast and crew and play director Michael Altmann.

BOARD ELECTION
Board Vice President Peggy Oster congratulated Gretchan Ohlig, Tara Oporto and Charles Ostroff who won election to the Board of Education. Ms. Oster also thanked all six candidates, including Dennis Cariello, Simon Cirasa and Robert Garrison for their willingness to serve.

SCHOOLS CLOSED
Westfield Public Schools will be closed on Thursday, November 22 and Friday, November 23 for the Thanksgiving Recess. Additionally, all schools will have early dismissal on Wednesday, November 21.

NEXT BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
The next meeting of the Westfield Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, December 4 at 7:30 p.m. at 302 Elm Street. The complete agenda will be available on Friday, November 30 on the Board section of the district website.

Wishing you a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends,

Margaret Dolan, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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