

MINUTES

The form and content of these minutes conform to commonly accepted standards and shall become the official record of the meeting after review and approval by the School Committee. By definition, minutes are not a verbatim record for the proceedings.

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members Present: Teri Maia-Cicero, Chairperson; Mark Rafanelli, Vice-Chairperson; Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Theresa Donovan, Paul McFadden (arrived 6:07 p.m.), Claudine Pande, Lee Kissinger (arrived 6:06 p.m.). Others Present: James Erinakes, II, Superintendent of Schools; Robert Ross, Director of Administration; Student Member Hannah Morgan

ORDER –Chair Cicero called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Zuercher read the District Mission Statement.

Open Forum – None

RECOGNITIONS/ACHIEVEMENTS – National Merit Scholarship Program

Recipients – Superintendent Erinakes introduced Principal Butler to speak to the recognition of a group of recently honored high school students.

Butler first announced that the boys’ varsity soccer, girls’ varsity soccer, and girls’ varsity volleyball teams all won their respective state championship titles. The school plans to recognize the teams on November 19.

Next, he explained the steps involved in the National Merit Scholarship Competition.

Member Kissinger arrived at this time, (6:06 p.m.).

Butler reported that each year approximately 1.5 million students take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQ) exam. Out of every student taking the exam, four EWG High School students gained *Commended Student* status, based of his/her performance on a national index score of 200 or above, which means they scored in the top five percent.

Member McFadden arrived at this time, (6:07 p.m.).

Butler recognized and congratulated Johann Kulsic, Nathan Stomberg, Ashley Peltier, and Cory Brackenbury and acknowledged all the hard work and dedication it takes to reach such an amazing accomplishment.

Superintendent Erinakes and Chair Cicero offered congratulations and presented each student with a School Committee Recognition Award and gift card.

FFA National Award Recognition – Principal Butler reported that this past year high school student Cara Woloohojian participated in the State FFA Competition and placed first. Her award was in the job interview skills category. Cara then went on to represent RI at the National FFA Competition held in Indiana. That event involved an all-day comprehensive process with participants from all 50 states competing. Cara placed second at Nationals and received a Silver Medal! Butler congratulated Cara and expressed how proud he was of her accomplishments.

Superintendent Erinakes and Chair Cicero congratulated Cara and presented her with a School Committee Recognition Award and gift card.

PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – Student Member Hannah Morgan reported it was a fantastic weekend with the senior high boys' varsity soccer, girls' varsity soccer, and girls' varsity volleyball teams all winning their respective state championship titles. At the end of October, the National Art Honor Society (NAHS) group held its annual Spooktacular event, which was a success. According to art teacher Elizabeth Lind, the EWG NAHS is one of the biggest chapters in the United States. The art show and choral concert will take place tomorrow evening. On Friday, parent-teacher conferences will take place. The Donkey Basketball game will take place on Monday. Students and teachers are excited and looking forward to the event.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Erinakes gave an overview of the Consent Agenda. He pointed out that a new revised copy of the regular meeting minutes of October 23 was provided.

Kissinger made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Seconded by Zuercher. The motion passed (7-0).

Member Rafanelli requested that an electronic copy of the revised minutes be emailed to members who receive their packets electronically.

The following items were approved:

- A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting Minutes of October 23, 2012;
Executive Session Minutes of October 23, 2012**
- B. Personnel Items**
 - 1. Appointments**
 - 2. Leaves of Absence**
 - 3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with
Regret)**

a. Letter of Resignation from Steven Hoard resigning his position as Head Softball Coach at the Senior High School, effective October 6, 2012

4. Grievances
5. Non-Renewals
6. Recalls
7. Sabbaticals

C. Bills – In the amount of \$368,052.75

D. Home School Approval

1. New Family – Grade 7

End Consent Agenda

Correspondence – (1) 8/28/12 – 10/31/12 Discipline Reports; (2) October 14, 2012 Exeter Fire Marshal Susan Hawksley Letter to RIDE regarding Wawaloam School; (3) October 26, 2012 Memo from the Superintendent to the School Committee with attachments, regarding Budget Timeline Notice; (4) Moody's Investors EWGRSD Service Rating Update; (5) October 24, 2012 Letter to EWG Families from the Superintendent regarding Revisions to this year's School Calendar; (6) EWGRSD 2012 – 2013 School Calendar – Revised: 11/13/12; (7) October 1, 2012 Student Enrollment Information

Members did not express any comments regarding Correspondence.

2014 BUDGET INFORMATION – Mr. Ross referenced the budget information provided to members and explained the budget building process is transitioning to Zero Line-Item Budgeting to address new Article 12 and Standardized Budget Projection legislation and economic conditions. He offered a brief outline of how the budget building process would be different from previous years and the reasons for moving to Zero Line-Item Budgeting.

McFadden reverted to Correspondence (7) *October 1, 2012 Student Enrollment Information* and said that he was taken aback by the total enrollment figure of 1,788 that means the count dropped by almost 60 students since last year. Mr. Ross said that has been the District's average participant figure for several years.

In response to Rafanelli's inquiry, Ross said the finance team does have all the resources needed to transition.

MONTHLY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT(S) – Policy Subcommittee – No report
IT Subcommittee – No report
Public Relations Subcommittee – No report

MONTHLY STATUS REPORTS – Superintendent - There were no comments or questions from members regarding Monthly Status Reports.

Business

Special Education

Maintenance

Technology

NEW BUSINESS – Sr. High Ski Trip Proposal – Request for Approval –

Teacher/Ski Club Advisor Christopher Massed gave details concerning the Mt. Snow, VT ski trip proposal. He said the trip arrangement/itinerary is standard to that of the last couple of years.

Zuercher moved to approve [the Senior High Ski Club Mt. Snow Trip Proposal under the condition that the specific number of attendees and complete list of chaperones are received by the superintendent's office two-weeks prior to the scheduled trip]; Seconded by Rafanelli. Motion passed (7-0).

Unified Basketball – Request for Approval – Superintendent Erinakes introduced Director of Special Education Carmella Farrar to provide information about an exciting opportunity for the District.

Farrar offered that two senior high school students would lead the presentation for tonight. Kathleen Rafanelli and Jacelyn Harrington thanked the committee and proposed as their senior project to begin EWG's first Unified Sports Basketball Team. Students with intellectual disabilities are aligned with partners as they compete in games with other students of the same level from all over the state. The RI Interscholastic League (RIIL) along with RI Special Olympics supports the program. The program is 100% funded by Special Olympics. Each athlete and partner pays for student insurance. Kathleen and Jacelyn requested the committee support their endeavor.

In response to Member Pande's questions, Superintendent Erinakes said there is a coach who must meet the same standards set by the RIIL. The coach is paid a standard stipend funded through a grant at no cost to the district.

Donovan moved to accept; seconded by Pande. Motion passed (7-0).

Charter Review Committee – Member Kissinger recommended that the School Committee reestablish the Charter Review Subcommittee to discuss concepts concerning the funding formula. McFadden suggested that other aspects of the Charter need review also such as Student Enrollment and proposed not to limit the discussion. Kissinger recalled the makeup of the original group that served on the subcommittee to be one Town Council member from each town, One School Committee Member from each town, and one Community Member from each town. Members voiced support and

agreed that to begin the process a letter would be sent from the Superintendent's office requesting two representatives from each town to serve on the subcommittee. Kissinger volunteered to serve representing the School Committee for West Greenwich and Rafanelli volunteered to serve representing Exeter.

McFadden moved to adopt Rafanelli and Kissinger as respective Exeter and West Greenwich representatives from the School Committee; Seconded by Zuercher. Motion passed (7-0).

Technology Assessment – Request for Approval/Presentation – In follow up to the previous two School Committee meetings, Superintendent Erinakes presented information to support the request to have a comprehensive technology assessment done by the vendor (CDW-G) awarded the RIDE bid for supporting Districts with implementation of a one to one technology initiative. This type of assessment would provide the District with information regarding infrastructure, wireless capacity, hardware needs to address PARCC assessment requirements, and staff readiness concerns. It would also meet the committee's desire to have a 5-year technology plan developed. As requested by the School Committee at the last meeting, all members of the administrative team were present to answer questions and/or speak in support of the request.

Erinakes gave a PowerPoint Presentation that included PARCC sample questions that measured student content knowledge and the ability to use technology in answering the questions. He said there are concerns that students may know how to answer a question but may get hung-up on the technology piece. Erinakes said he emailed copies of the RIDE approved 133-page bid to School Committee members. RIDE gave Districts the best price possible. This request is for a one-time expense of \$23,605 to come from the Reserve Fund account.

A lengthy in-depth discussion ensued and members communicated a number of questions and concerns with various aspects of the CDW-G One-to-One Change Management & Implementation Planning draft engagement outline.

In response to McFadden's inquiry, Ross said this one-time purchase is an item that would typically come out of the General Fund and would not impact other priority items funded through the Capital Reserve Fund. He projected a June 30, 2012 General Fund balance of \$500,000 after using general funds to mitigate the projected two-million dollar deficit.

In response to Kissinger's question, Ross verified qualified professionals at an hourly rate of \$155 would do the assessment.

Pande said there seems to be several focus groups and a lot of time spent on this. We all know focus groups take a lot of time; everyone has opinions and it could go in many different directions. She asked how these would be kept on target. Erinakes responded the groups would be kept 'focused' on the topics by the vendor and part of the vendor's job is to keep these groups moving and on target.

Pande said there does not seem to be much time spent on site. Is the time indicated enough time to get everything assessed – technology, infrastructure, etc. Erinakes responded they would have two full days on site, there would be some additional time spent on site, and it should be enough to do the full assessment we need in district.

Pande asked if this contract would give us what we need for district wide technology, infrastructure assessment, etc., as the RIDE mission is really to prepare the districts for PARCC. Erinakes said yes, we will be getting a full overview of all our technology needs, infrastructure and it will give us what we need for the District Strategic Plan.

Zuercher left the meeting at this time, (7:04 p.m.).

Kissinger and McFadden raised concerns about the hours needed to perform assessments outlined in the proposal. McFadden voiced concerns about a ground up study that would cover goals that should already be coming from RIDE. He said it might not be what we would want in a couple of years from now. How do we know we are hitting the mark?

Zuercher returned to the meeting at this time, (7:08 p.m.).

Kissinger concurred especially because RIDE dictates and does not provide the specifications.

Erinakes said RIDE provided hardware specifications that would be compatible. We need to compare it with where we are and map it to where we need to be. We need to add into it the structure and curriculum. A lot is missing to be ready.

Technology Director David Wright provided examples of students who were given laptops that did not know what "click" meant. He said a lot of technology was there but instruction was not there.

Kissinger said his fear is that CDW-G has a vested interest to find needs. He questioned if there is any way that CDW-G would do the work in portions or stages to provide a sample of their work.

Zuercher said we have to get ready for PARCC mandate. We have to do this.

McFadden said this plan does not merge into this year's budget cycle. Rafanelli asked how flexible CDW-G would be. Ross said that he could ask them to modify the timeline. Expecting this assessment would be used in the budget presentation rationale for MSP and SOW, he reviewed Phase III, noting it called for focus groups, which is appealing to determine what the community wants for technology. Ross noted one neighboring district is going to, "bring your own device" (BYOD) and they are going with CDW-G. Another district is going to all Apple. The focus groups tell you what your constituents will support.

McFadden raised concern there seems to be a cloud trying to form technology on consensus. He suggested consulting with technology experts to say this is the budget. He would rather see \$23,000 spent differently. It seems sole sourced and he is having difficulty with that.

Ross said at the conclusion of the 2013 budget process, there were zero dollars budgeted for new technology. The District continues to struggle with technology. Rafanelli has continuously asked for a five-year plan. RIDE went out to bid and it was accepted by the Department of Administration of the State of RI. I am not trying to diminish the cost but in a couple of weeks, administrators will be trying to explain budget requests to meet upcoming technology requirements.

Rafanelli said he does not disagree that this needs to get done. His concern is the three-month period. It can become inefficient when a project is spread out this long. He is interested to know if all the work could be done on site. That would allow us to control cost in the way we want it to go. He said he would be in favor of it.

McFadden said three months is excessive. Ross asked if there is a threshold, the School Committee finds more practical for the Scope of Work. Kissinger proposed that what CDW-G is proposing should take less than three weeks. Donovan wondered if the District could piggyback with another district with travel expenses and accelerate the timeline. Kissinger said he is interested in learning if the superintendent has done an assessment on the faculty already, and do we need to pay for that piece. He said that based upon what Erinakes previously presented, we should be able to internally assess where we are and need to be. Estimated costs seem to have that included and we may only need certain pieces of it.

McFadden left the meeting at this time, (7:35 p.m.).

Erinakes said he wanted to make sure the assessment provides the District with the full scope. Kissinger asked who would oversee this. Erinakes said that he, Mr. Ross, and Mr. Wright would. Kissinger asked if there is any chance to get the work done on site. Erinakes said the question could be asked. CDW-G's work would probably align with

other districts. The timeframe could be looked at. He agreed that more flexibility would be better.

Cicero said her concern is it seems there is a lot of roundtable and focus groups. She wondered how much hands-on or discussion would take place. Ross said at the end of this, if it is determined it would take $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million dollars to get this done, it would require the support of the community. Kissinger asked if the District would get a detailed assessment of its infrastructure and if the assessment would show where we need to go. He expressed his view that this is a conflict of interest to have the company doing the assessment also doing the work. He asked for the Superintendent's professional opinion if he thought the assessment would be unbiased. Erinakes said based on talking with the representatives of the company, he felt comfortable with what they would provide.

McFadden returned to the meeting at this time, (7:40 p.m.).

Kissinger moved to approve the \$23,605, not to exceed \$23,605, expenditure from the Capital Reserve Fund, contingent upon that we are ok, (and I want Bob to double check), and move forward; seconded by Pande.

McFadden said that for \$23,000 he would be looking for something substantive. It is not in the deliverables. Kissinger explained that when McFadden stepped out of the meeting it was agreed to condense the timeframe and have more of the work done on site. Cicero questioned if there is a contract that would be signed and could pieces be added to the contract to make us feel more comfortable.

Erinakes said he believed that what McFadden is asking for is already done. He does not know what the District needs for wiring and infrastructure. The District does not need prices on the computers themselves. We have that information. The District needs infrastructure and wireless information. CDW-G will provide a plan on where to start based on the District's readiness and budget.

McFadden concluded then that it would identify the brand of technology and the scale. He asked if the District could enrich the contract to reflect that requirement. Wright said he did not think it would be a problem to modify the contract and meet McFadden's needs. McFadden said he wants to see a substantive report to get EWG to the next step beyond consensus building. Kissinger said the committee would be relying on Administration and their expertise to get what the committee expects. Erinakes said, "We are all on the same page. What you expect, is what I believe is absolutely necessary." He added, "We will talk tomorrow to get more flexibility with the timeframe."

Zuercher questioned if there are any districts further ahead in the process. Erinakes said he did not know and could ask. Zuercher said she would appreciate that and would like to hear where exactly they are in the timeframe.

Cicero called for a vote.
Motion passed (7-0).

Administration Plan – Educator Evaluation Support – Superintendent Erinakes offered specifics surrounding a new administrative restructuring plan to support the new RI Educator Evaluation System (EES). The District received RTTT (Race to the Top) grant money to support implementation of various reform initiatives and to pay for services of an Intermediary Service Provider. The administrative team decided it would be more effective to have someone internally support the new EES. The original plan would be changed now to free up building Principal Melissa Marino two days per week so she can conduct evaluation observations with other building principals. The restricted RTTT funds would be used for her replacement at a price that is \$150 less per day than before. The team discussed also, how the restructuring plan would protect the District in the event of issues raised by a teacher with his/her rating.

Pande said her biggest concern was that there would be clear communication to parents, students and staff about the change to Marino's time out of the building. Marino said she plans to sit down to carve out all those issues. Erinakes said an overlap time would be in place initially and transition needs have been discussed.

Zuercher moved to approve.

In response to Kissinger's inquiry, Marino said she is excited about the plan and sees it as a great opportunity. Kissinger said he agreed that Principal Marino is the right choice.

Kissinger seconded the motion.

Chair Cicero requested a restating of the motion.

Zuercher moved to approve the administrative restructuring plan as described by the Superintendent; seconded by Kissinger. Motion passed (7-0).

Recommendation for Deep Tine – Playing Field – Mr. Ross referenced the price quotes received from McGeough's Turf Management and Brian Walters of Fair Play Turf Services and requested that the committee approve the least cost provider quote from Fair Play of no more than \$3,000 to deep tine aerate and fertilize the football/soccer track infield.

Members asked questions and a lengthy discussion ensued regarding if Fair Play's Scope of Work would address recurring drainage issues since it does not include top dressing with drainage sand as was recommended in McGeough's quote. Ross said Fair Play performs turf management for EWG Sports 4 Kids and he is relying on Walters' expert opinion that drainage sand is not necessary and would in fact make conditions worse.

Zuercher moved to approve the bid made by Brian Walters, based on his expertise, for \$3,000; seconded by McFadden.

Pande and Kissinger proposed as a precautionary measure to request that in the event drainage sand turns out to be necessary, Walters be accountable to redo the deep tine aerate process without charge to the District. The District would pay for the sand, however.

Rafanelli and McFadden suggested authorizing spending \$3,000 with the option to spend up to \$5,000 in all if the sand is needed so not to jeopardize the state of the field.

Zuercher amended the motion. Zuercher moved to accept the bid [made by Brian Walters, based on his expertise] for \$3,000 with the addition of \$2,000 if need be for the sand if his original quote does not pan out; seconded by Rafanelli. Motion passed (7-0).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – High School Emergency Generator Discussion – Mr. Ross advised that the electrical engineer report has been postponed to the November 27 meeting.

Recycling Discussion – Approve Recycling Dumpsters for Wawaloam and Metcalf Schools – Member Kissinger advised that new information has revealed that the Towns' RIRRC (RI Resource Recovery Corporation) recycling profit sharing program funds could not be used to pay for recycling dumpsters. Kissinger and Zuercher said they supported the request to approve the cost to rent two recycling dumpsters for Metcalf and Wawaloam.

Zuercher moved to approve; seconded by Rafanelli.

In response to Donovan's inquiry, Ross said he would continue to pursue the reimbursement appeal based on the premise that EWG is a regional district and it makes sense that the Towns and District should get credit for filling dumpsters with recyclables. Additionally, Ross said he would contact the service provider to negotiate to the current rate the District pays to haul regular waste of \$60. That would bring the rate down to \$1,440 per year.

Zuercher amended the motion to include, not to exceed \$1440; seconded by Rafanelli.

Donovan commented that she realized this expenditure is not for a large sum of money; however, multiple small disbursements for items that are not delivery of education to student costs are accumulating.

Motion passed (7-0).

Policies Review/Adoption – 1401: School Committee’s Public Interactions - Amendment – Member McFadden asked if this policy came before the policy subcommittee because he was absent from the last subcommittee meeting. Cicero told him that she sent out an email notifying subcommittee members of the meeting and did not hear back from him. McFadden offered that she could call him if he does not respond to her email. Cicero apologized.

Zuercher moved to approve Policy 1401; seconded by Pande.

Cicero advised there would be two steps involved with adopting this policy.

Pande reported that the subcommittee made all the changes requested by the School Committee and that McFadden’s request to remove the comment regarding, *School Committee members are not employed*, was satisfied.

Zuercher left the meeting at this time, (8:40 p.m.).

Cicero and McFadden discussed and pondered the purpose of the commitment to proper decorum section of the policy.

Zuercher returned to the meeting at this time, (8:48 p.m.).

McFadden disputed Cicero’s statement that the policy is about accountability and respectfulness so inappropriate behaviors stop. He said it is difficult to express one’s opinion when someone interrupts. The policy does not fully delineate what is disrespectful behavior. Pande contested that the subcommittee added the specifics that were brought at the last meeting regarding what delineates disrespectful behavior. Cicero concurred and said McFadden had expressed these thoughts previously. The subcommittee received instructions and implemented them into the policy. The policy is now back for final discussion and vote. She asked if any other members wished to share comments.

Cicero called the vote. She explained there would be a two-step vote. First, the entire School Committee would vote on the motion on the floor made by Zuercher and seconded by Pande to adopt policy 1401. Second, by roll call, members would state individually, “*I understand and commit to proper decorum per policy 1401*”.

Motion passed (6-1). McFadden - No

Roll Call Vote:

Teri Cicero stated into record,

"I understand and commit to proper decorum as per policy 1401."

Mark Rafanelli stated into record,

"I understand and commit to proper decorum as per policy 1401."

Valerie Zuercher stated into record,

"I understand and commit to proper decorum as per policy 1401."

Lee Kissinger stated into record,

"I understand and commit to proper decorum as per policy 1401."

Paul McFadden did not make a statement.

Theresa Donovan stated into record,

"I understand and commit to proper decorum as per policy 1401."

Claudine Pande stated into record,

"I understand and commit to proper decorum as per policy 1401."

Capital Project Update – Mr. Ross reported the ADA access to the IT Center, which involves a concrete walkway, parking area, and two-way traffic roadway project is underway. A change order is coming for added costs as a stump was found buried in the middle of the proposed parking lot. Kissinger pointed out that it is against the law to bury stumps and questioned whether the District had recourse from when the Administration Building was built. He expressed his opinion that the former contractor could be held liable for burying the stump. Ross said he could pull the specs to see if in that bid contract the District authorized the stump to be buried.

Reports/Comments – Member Donovan offered congratulations to Rafanelli, Zuercher, and Kissinger on being reelected. She said she is happy the committee is still intact and thanked them for serving again.

Important Dates and Meetings -Wednesday, November 14, 2012 - Building Committee Meeting; Tuesday, November 27, 2012 - School Committee Meeting; Wednesday, November 28, 2012 - Building Committee Meeting; Tuesday, December 11, 2012 - School Committee Meeting; Wednesday, December 12, 2012 - Negotiations; Monday, December 17, 2012 - Negotiations

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Rafanelli moved to go into Executive Session at 8:56 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5(a)(9) – CBA – Grievance(s); 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – (C94/Teachers’ Association) – Negotiation Discussion and/or Pending Litigation; and 42-46-5(a)(2) – Litigation Update/Discussion: RIDE Litigation regarding Transportation to non-public/non-profit schools; seconded by Zuercher; and voted as follows:

Teri Maia-Cicero	Yes
Mark Rafanelli	Yes
Valerie Zuercher	Yes
Lee Kissinger	Yes
Claudine Pande	Yes
Theresa Donovan	Yes
Paul McFadden	Yes

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 8:56 p.m.

Motion to reconvene to Open Session made by Zuercher; seconded by Rafanelli. Motion passed (7-0).

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 9:45 p.m.

There were no votes taken during Executive Session.

Adjournment – Motion made by Zuercher to adjourn; seconded by Rafanelli. Motion passed (7-0) in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

**ROBIN CERIO
CLERK**