

Warwick School Committee Minutes  
Meeting of July 8, 2008  
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Winman Junior High School on Tuesday, July 8, 2008. Chairman Friel called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. with the following in attendance:

**COMMITTEE**

Christopher Friel, Chairperson  
Lucille Mota-Costa, Vice Chair  
Bethany Furtado, Clerk  
Joyce L. Andrade  
Paul Cannistra

**ADMINISTRATION**

Peter P. Horoschak, Superintendent  
Victor Mercurio, Director of Secondary Education  
Leonard Flood, Director of Business Affairs  
David E. Small, Director of Buildings and Grounds  
Rosemary Healey, Esq., Director of Compliance & Human Resources

MOTION 2008-132: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, to go into closed session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under General Laws of Rhode Island 42-46-5(a)(1) and (a)(2).

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

Meeting reconvened at 7:20 a.m. with the following in attendance in addition to those above:

Victor Mercurio, Director of Secondary Education  
Robert T. Bushell, Director of Elementary Education  
Richard D'Agostino, Director Special Services

**Approval of Minutes:**

MOTION 2008-133: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve the Open Minutes for June 10, 2008, June 17, 2008 and June 26, 2008.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

MOTION 2008-134: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the Minutes for the Executive Sessions of June 10, 2008 and June 26, 2008.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Approval of Transfers:**

MOTION 2008-135: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the transfers presented to the Committee.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

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**Approval of Warrants:**

MOTION 2008-136: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the warrants presented to the Committee.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Professional appointments:**

MOTION 2008-137: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve the following appointments: **Traci-lyn Smith**, special education teacher, category 1, step 2; **Kristen Saunders**, special education teacher, category 1, step 2; **Holly Scott**, special education teacher, step 2; **Jacqueline Valliere-Soares**, music teacher, step 2, **Casey Kimber**, music teacher, category 1, step 1.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Retirements/resignation**

MOTION 2008-138: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to accept the **retirement of William Lutynski**, physical education teacher at Toll Gate effective June 30, 2008; **retirement of Nancy Norcia**, kindergarten teacher at Hoxie, effective June 27, 2008; **retirement of Allen Tinkham**, supervisor of music, effective June 30, 2008; and the **resignation of Tara Townsend**, special educator, effective August 15, 2008.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Advertising contract (Warwick Vets):** Dr. Mercurio commented this was tabled previously and the Committee asked for further information. This information has been provided. The Chair asked how much money had been collected to date, and Mr. Habershaw responded that Sports Images collects the money, as this is the procedure the company follows. The Chair also asked how much had been collected from advertisers to date, and Mr. Habershaw said he didn't know. The Chair asked if he was correct in thinking that we have collected \$43,000 in advertising and the answer was yes. The Chair asked Mr. Habershaw to look into this and report back.

MOTION 2008-139: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, to table this agenda item [advertising contract.]

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Warwick Veterans Boys' Lacrosse Club** - Dr. Mercurio told the Committee that the Warwick Veterans Boys' Lacrosse Club was seeking entrance into the RI Interscholastic League for participation. Mrs. Hay came before the committee asking permission and consideration. She said that the funding mechanism is in place, the boys pay for their own insurance, and they have parents that are committed. Ms. Furtado commented that the players are fully geared and they have a monetary investment into their own equipment, as most have their own equipment. Ms. Andrade asked if we achieve the interscholastic league status, coaching positions would have to come from within the school because of the contract. One of the assistant coaches commented that we can't get scholarships if we are not part of the interscholastic league.

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MOTION 2008-139: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve Warwick Veterans filing their application to the RI Interscholastic League.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**RI Interscholastic League Restitution Agreement** – Dr. Mercurio provided copies of the *Principal's Pledge of Acceptance of the Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League for 2008-2009*. He said that this is usually signed by the principals, but he was bringing it before the Committee because of a new rule, Article 2, Section 2C, which includes “school boards.” He was seeking approval of this document.

MOTION 2008-141: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, to approve the RI Interscholastic League Restitution Agreement: *Principal's Pledge of Acceptance of the Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League for 2008-2009*.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Principal reassignments:** Superintendent Horoschak stated that due to the appointment of Bill McCaffrey as Director of the Career Center, I would like to place Joe Bleczinski as assistant principal at Veterans, and call back Ken Rassler to the position of assistant principal at Gorton.

MOTION 2008-142: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to accept the superintendent's recommendation for principal reassignments.

**MOTION PASSES (4 ayes 1 nay)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Nay      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Extension of warehouse person:** Superintendent Horoschak requested the job extension of the warehouse person through August 31, 2008 to allow utilization of the large truck to complete the moves necessary due to school consolidation.

MOTION 2008-143: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Bids/Change Orders:** Mr. Flood said there are no bids or change orders, the paperwork in your folder was for information only.

**Information and Proposals:** Mrs. Andrade said that since her time on committee was almost up, she would like to make a proposal next month (August) regarding equal access policy. Mr. Cannistra said in future agendas, he would like to offer the junior and elementary levels to address the School Committee.

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**Public comment:** Darlene Netcoh requested the School Committee members revisit the summer school issue. She said she has been teaching 20 years, and kids come to school to meet the number of days required, but do nothing in school, and then go to summer school and go into the next grade. She said this makes a mockery of our school system. If they are not performing during the school year, they should not be able to go to summer school, and if they have less than 50 or 40 average, they should not be allowed to go to summer school.

Mr. Ginolfi came before the School Committee and read the following letter: Open letter to the School Committee from James Ginolfi, President of the Warwick Teachers' Union: July 8, 2008

*As the newly elected President of the Warwick teachers' Union, I come before you this evening with some ideas and suggestions that are positive, unprecedented, and, hopefully, well received.*

*Now more than ever, our public schools are the foundation of our community. A community's school system is the primary factor influencing a family's decision as to where to live and to raise their children. Therefore, we must use the creativity, energy, and talent of our respective bodies to promote solutions that will result in the best possible educational system for our students and the community.*

*Consequently, we must take advantage of every opportunity to establish collaborative efforts that will lead to school improvement, increased student achievement, and genuine public engagement. Given the chance, the Warwick School Committee, the school administration, parents, other elected officials, and the Warwick Teachers' Union could formulate a true partnership and be united as advocates for quality education, good schools, and student success.*

*I am therefore proposing the following first steps of a new initiative aimed at creating a positive working relationship between the Warwick Public Schools and the Warwick Teachers' Union:*

*Mutual respect – this is probably the most critical issue to be addressed if our relationship is to improve. Teachers expect to be treated as professionals, and the School Committee and administration must be treated in the same manner. That this initiative must serve as the building block for the others to succeed is common sense.*

*Open lines of communication – if any relationship is to thrive, communication is critical. That we communicate with each other on a regular basis to achieve our common goals is absolutely necessary. It is imperative that we communicate with each other in order to find ways to resolve concerns before they become problematic.*

*District level task force – the School Committee, Superintendent, and Warwick Teachers Union need to establish joint committees of teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders to examine policies, procedures, practices and the like in order to make recommendations for improvement. Every member of these joint committees must be held accountable for the timely completion of tasks.*

*School level task force – the Superintendent and the Union President should co-chair this committee of school principals and union representatives whose charge would be to create positive working relationships at the school building level.*

*Community compact – the School Committee Chairperson, superintendent and the Union President should appear regularly before community groups, the General Assembly, Mayor, City Council, and parent/teacher/student organizations to establish and maintain open lines of communication.*

*Although this list is incomplete, and there is much more to consider, it can serve as a starting point for a new relationship.*

*However, tonight I believe my message is clear. In essence, it's time for a new beginning. It's time to focus on our strengths rather than our weaknesses. It's time to build a team of leaders who will, in fact, lead.*

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*I am convinced that we have the talent and capacity to form a true partnership – one that is built on trust, mutual respect and common goals.*

*I hope that these ideas are meaningful to you and that they can be used to foster an exciting and productive relationship for students, parents, teachers, administrators, school committee members, and the entire Warwick community.*

*Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to your response. (Sincerely, James J. Ginolfi, Warwick Teachers' Union)*

Chairman Friel thanked Mr. Ginolfi and said he would be placing on the next agenda approval of the creation of these task forces. Superintendent Horoschak said these were very positive issues, and as long as these task forces focus on the positive and move forward, we will make real progress solving problems before they become big issues. He said he was looking forward to working with you on that.

MOTION 2008-144: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to adjourn.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye	Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye	Bethany Furtado - Aye
Paul Cannistra - Aye	

**Meeting adjourned: 8:05 p.m.**

Bethany Furtado, Clerk

Betsey Snipes, Secretary