

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting of August 12, 2008
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Toll Gate High School, on Tuesday, August 12, 2008. Chairman Friel called the meeting to order at 5:45 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
Leonard Flood, Director of Business Affairs
Rosemary Healey, Esq., Director of Compliance & Human Resources

MOTION 2008-145: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, 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),(a)(2) and (a)(4).

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Meeting reconvened at 7:05 p.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 2008-146: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, to approve the Open Minutes for July 8, 2008.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

MOTION 2008-147: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the Minutes for the Executive Sessions of July 8, 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 2008-148: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, 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

Warwick School Committee Minutes
August 12, 2008
Open Session

Approval of Warrants:

MOTION 2008-149: 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 Personnel items: - Chairman Friel called for a motion on the following appointments: **Lori Lang**, Kindergarten Teacher, Category 1, Step 7; **Geraldine Lewis**, Kindergarten Teacher, Category 1, Step 1; **Sarai Pryor**, Foreign Language Teacher, Step 1, (pending receipt of National and State BCI); **Tracy Morgan**, Special Educator, Step 2; **Kristen Saunders**, Special Educator, Step 2, be changed from Category 1 to permanent pending the recall of elementary principal; and **Stephen Saunders**, Elementary Art Teacher, Step 10.

[Explanation for recommended appointments: Hoxsie kindergarten (38 students) – replace Ms. Norcia who retired and the elementary K-6 staff was reduced by 15 positions; Wickes kindergarten (44 students) former kindergarten teacher took 1st grade opening leaving vacancy and the K-6 staff was reduced by 15 positions; Holliman/Holden/Francis art vacancy (25 periods) one art position cut and Ms. Root took position at Vets leaving vacancy that is accountable for 25 classes. Ms. Pryor (foreign language) will replace teacher who resigned. The special education appointments: Ms. Morgan recommended for appointment to new autistic class at Oakland Beach (budgeted position); Ms. Saunders recommending changing from category 1 to permanent as Ms. Feeney is being recalled as an elementary principal (budgeted position).

MOTION 2008-150: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve said appointments: **Lori Lang**, Kindergarten Teacher, Category 1, Step 7; **Geraldine Lewis**, Kindergarten Teacher, Category 1, Step 1; **Sarai Pryor**, Foreign Language Teacher, Step 1, (pending receipt of National and State BCI); **Tracy Morgan**, Special Educator, Step 2; **Kristen Saunders**, Special Educator, Step 2, be changed from Category 1 to permanent pending the recall of elementary principal; and **Stephen Saunders**, Elementary Art Teacher, Step 10.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Retirements/Resignations:

MOTION 2008-151: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to accept the retirement of **Walter Morgan**, Elementary Teacher, Greene effective July 18, 2008; **retirements of Judith Nelson**, Special Educator, Oakland Beach, effective August 8, 2008; **Marie Clark**, Science Teacher, Veterans, effective July 1, 2008; **Phyllis Roach**, Department Head Guidance, Winman effective July 1, 2008; **Ronald Areglado** Principal, Greene, effective July 30, 2008; and the **resignations of: Maureen Areglado**, Principal, Holden, effective July 30, 2008; **Lynn Correia**, English Teacher, Toll Gate effective July 23, 2008; **Emma Catanzaro**, Foreign Language Teacher, Winman, effective July 30, 2008; **Jean Stebbins**, school base program specialist, Veterans, effective August 1, 2008; and **Pamela L. Burns**, hearing impaired teacher, effective August 7, 2008.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Warwick School Committee Minutes
August 12, 2008
Open Session

Leave of Absence:

MOTION 2008-152: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the request for a sabbatical leave by **Gary McCoombs**, physical education teacher at Toll Gate, be approved effective for the 2008-2009 school year.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Classified personnel items:

Resignation:

MOTION 2008-153: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the **resignation** of Susan Birch-Patota, Special Services Office Manager, be accepted effective July 25, 2008.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Coaching appointment:

MOTION 2008-154: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the appointment of **Amanda Rinn**, Head Coach, Girls JV Soccer at Toll Gate, be approved.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

E-Mentoring: presentation by Madeline Perreault and Pamela Leonhardt - E-mentoring extends the reach of mentoring that will require new and innovative solutions, and helps young people understand the online culture and high-tech communications. It offers an option for adults who want to participate in mentoring but are unable to leave work. E-mentoring improves academic achievement, encourages career exploration, develops a nurturing relationship with an adult and assists with their senior project. Students use their Warwick School email address to communicate with their mentor on a weekly basis during the school year. Mentors are screened and trained by RI Mentoring and undergo a BCI check. The online communication is filtered through the RI Mentoring Partnership server and the Warwick School's email account. No action is required by the School Committee this evening; the presentation was presented for informational purposes.

SmartBus Live System - Superintendent Horoschak announced we have the President of SmartBus [Al Cardi] and the Director of Marketing present this evening. We are not asking for any action, as this would require a resolution first by the School Committee then the City Council because there would be splitting up of funds that are derived from fines when people are brought to court for illegally passing school buses. This has been discussed with the Mayor and Chief of Police and they are interested. Mr. Cardi presented a power point presentation. He said the technology will increase safety of children riding buses and revenue to the school department, all at no cost to you. There is an external detection system that uses a live digital feed to monitor all bus stops. This component sends a feed to a central monitoring office, where people watch the monitors "live." The monitor screen for the bus lights up and any cars passing while it is fully stopped are tagged by the person watching the monitor by pressing a button to time and date stamp when violation occurred. Another employee verifies the violation, and the information is sent to local law enforcement who will issue a ticket. Our company surveyed 175 bus

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting of August 12, 2008
Open Session

drivers from Providence, North Providence and Cranston to determine how often violators pass buses when they are stopped. The average was 3.54 violations per day per bus. In 2007, only 130 tickets were issued so violations are not being reported or tickets are not being issued. The camera system will keep track of violators and relieve pressure on the part of the bus driver. There is an option to install cameras in the interior of the bus to keep track of behavior problems, but this is up to the school district and these are not monitored. Eight external cameras on the bus are positioned so that up to six lanes of traffic can be viewed on the left side of the bus. The cameras pick up the bumpers and license plates and no driver or children are recorded. If this system was installed on First Student, and there is a change to another bus company, Mr. Cardi said his company would bear the cost of removing the system, but we would ask the district to put something in their contract saying that any new vendors would have to agree to use the technology on their busses if they were selected, and we would ask that the bid have to include this technology). Not all buses would be given external cameras, as SmartBus would do surveys to identify the trouble spots and routes that see more frequent violations. The fees collected would be distributed 75% to the vendor, 12.5% to the State and 12.5% to the municipality. When asked who would be responsible for vandalism, he answered the bus company has insurance and that should cover any damaged, but in the event it doesn't, we would take care of it. Buses would have signage that it has video surveillance.

Chartwells Food Service Contract FY2008-2009 - Mr. Flood: recommended extending the contract with Chartwells, saying there is one more additional year on the contract. However, changes in USDA regulations will require us to seek bids for the 2009-2010 school year. Chartwells operating deficit in 2006-2007 was \$58,587. The projected operating deficit for 2007-08 is \$203,638 due to a drop in revenue of \$51,731 and increase in total expenses of \$93,320. The proposed budget is predicated on revenue increases from reimbursements for free and reduced lunch of 10 cents and reduced breakfast of 5 cent. It is recommended that fully paid breakfasts and lunches be increased by 25 cents and that reduced breakfasts be increased from 25 cents to 30 cents which is the maximum allowed under the program. There will be savings in Chartwells' labor and fringe benefit costs of \$103,012 as a result of the WPS closings (\$31,736), eliminating high school snack rooms and change to vending machines (\$48,483) and reduced labor costs at Oakland Beach (\$22,793). Based on these changes, the projected deficit for next year is \$79,780. The contract provides that if the program doesn't break even, they will forgo the management fee of \$32,000, resulting in a new projected deficit of \$47,780. There is \$50,000 budgeted in the general fund for transfer to cover deficits, as well as other operating costs as armored car service, equipment repair and replacement, commodities and other expenses. In 2008 these expenses totaled \$54,147. Estimating a similar level of expenses for 2009, and combining that with the net projected Chartwells' deficit of \$46,780, less the amount budgeted, would result in school lunch fund being over budget \$50,927 in 2009. Mr. Flood reported that Mr. Armenti and he have agreed to continue to work on identifying cost saving measures to bring this expense without the budget without adversely impacting the food service program. After discussion covering food costs, the deficit, reducing labor and review of staffing needs, menu options, increase in milk prices, Universal breakfast program, working with Chartwells to find ways to eliminate deficit, the savings with a new vendor for armored car service, it was agreed to table until the August 21st meeting and continue negotiations.

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting of August 12, 2008
Open Session

MOTION 2008-155: Moved by Chairman Friel, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to table until August 21st and continue negotiations.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

First Student School Bus Contract – FY2008-2009

Tabled to August 21st meeting

District Level Task Force

Chairman Friel asked for approval of the following Resolution, which will be prepared in a formalized document and forwarded to WTU President:

RESOLUTION OF THE WARWICK SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, The Warwick School Committee believes it to be in the best interest of the Warwick Public School System that collaborative efforts take place with the Warwick Teacher's Union that will lead to school improvement, increased student achievement and genuine public engagement;

WHEREAS, The Warwick School Committee feels that in order for such collaborative efforts to succeed, open lines of communication must exist between the Warwick School Committee, Warwick Public School Administration, and the Warwick Teacher's Union;

WHEREAS, The Warwick School Committee is desirous of a positive working relationship between the Warwick Public Schools and the Warwick Teacher's Union;

WHEREAS, On July 8, 2008, Warwick Teacher's Union President, James J. Ginolfi, appeared before the Warwick School Committee and proposed the creation of a District Level Task Force;

WHEREAS, The Warwick School Committee supports the creation of a District Level Task Force with the goal of fostering better communication between the Warwick School Committee, Warwick Public Schools Administration and the Warwick Teacher's Union;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Warwick School Committee hereby approves the creation of a District Level Task Force with the purpose and goals as enumerated above. Said Task Force shall consist of the Superintendent of Warwick Public Schools, President of the Warwick Teacher's Union, Director of Elementary Education, Warwick Teacher's Union Elementary Vice-President, Director of Secondary Education, and the Warwick Teacher's Union Secondary Vice-President. Said District Level Task Force shall meet on a regular basis, and shall, if the need arises, add additional members to the Task Force or subdivide into smaller units. At the request of the members of the District Level Task Force, up to two members of the Warwick School Committee may be present at the District Level Task Force meeting.

MOTION 2008-156: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the Resolution..

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Equal Access Policy

September 10, 2008

Mrs. Andrade requested that this be put on the September 10th agenda, as there were some court case and other information that she has not had an opportunity to discuss with legal counsel.

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting of August 12, 2008
Open Session

Principal Transfers, recalls and reassignments (Holden & John Greene) – The Superintendent stated that since the retirement and resignation of the Areglados, two elementary schools are not covered. Having closed 3 elementary schools and with 2 principals reassigned to other jobs, I am in a position to recall them. He recommended that Kenneth Rassler be transferred from Assistant Principal of Gorton Jr. High to the principalship of Holden School and that Marilyn Feeney be called back from layoff and appointed to the principalship of John Greene School.

MOTION 2008-157: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, that Kenneth Rassler be transferred from Assistant Principal of Gorton Jr. High to the principalship of Holden School

MOTION PASSES (4 ayes 1 nay)

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

MOTION 2008-158: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, that Marilyn Feeney be called back from layoff and appointed to the principalship of John Greene School.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Bids/change orders:

MOTION 2008-159: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, that the bid for Career Center furniture, in the amount of \$6,500, be awarded to Virco as per bid tabulation.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

MOTION 2008-160: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the bid for an emergency electric generator at Veterans High School, in the amount of \$14,400, be awarded to The Lighthouse Group, LLC as per bid tabulation.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Information and proposals:

Ms. Andrade commented that the *Resolution* proposed tonight is very important and asked that the Committee consider a Resolution regarding the WISE Union. The Chair responded that he would prepare one for the September 10th agenda.

Superintendent stated that in the middle of July it came to our attention that the 07/08 budget had been overspent. This has been widely covered in the press, and is a matter of great concern to the School Committee and to the citizens of our community. It is our responsibility to determine exactly how this occurred and to be able to give assurances that it will not repeat itself. Things that are being done to determine reasons for the FYE 2008 budget deficit: (1) all documentation used to prepare the FYE 2008 budget is being review for accuracy to determine if errors occurred at that time, especially in the area of salary and benefit projections; (2) staffing changes anticipated in FYE 2008 budget are being reviewed to

Warwick School Committee Minutes
 Meeting of August 12, 2008
 Open Session

compare anticipated savings and costs with actual savings and costs; (3) major line item accounts that were over budget are being reviewed to determine the exact reason for exceeding budget and when such overages first became apparent. Things that are being done to AVOID this in the future: (1) changes were already made in the way salaries and fringe benefit costs were estimated for the FYE 2009 budget; (2) all salary and fringe benefit costs for each employee will be encumbered against the budget for 2009. This will staff to easily determine if budgets for these expenses are over or under budget. These expenditures account for 88% of total WPS expenditures; (3) purchase orders will be required before committing to the expenditures of funds by any department and (4) purchase order will also allow for expenses to be encumbered against budget line items accounts for more reliable tracking of liabilities the WPS is committed. This is especially important in the high cost areas of special education tuition, transportation and utility costs.

Public:

Tracey McDermott asked if programs would be cut, would we know before the first day of school. She also suggested that the new budget start with a zero base, department by department, school by school. Every department should start with nothing and then has to justify every penny. We should utilize a zero-based budget, as well as to separate out each line item in the budget instead of lumping things together in the general fund. Mr. Daniels commented that he was mystified by the \$2 million deficit in salary costs. When consolidation committee was looking at closing schools, the salaries were looked at and the committee had the figures; why was this not discovered? No disrespect to Mr. Flood, when a new business director comes into a school department and realizes there is a budget deficit, the new business person automatically should have done an audit on the whole department. I adamantly ask you to seek a forensic audit of the entire school department. We need outside intervention on this with the city and state. Mr. Hobson said that he had sent a certified letter to Toll Gate regarding grade changes going on, and had called the Superintendent's office and also wrote to the Mayor. He said he had no response and he said there was a criminal investigation going on. The Superintendent said that the matter had been looked into, and there was no evidence any grade changes were made. The fact you were not contacted by me personally is that I understood you had conversation with others in the school and I believe you were responded to. Mr. Maloney noted that the website stated that all grades were starting on the same day. He also asked about the assistant principal move.

Meetings schedule: August 21st and September 10th, (Wednesday) as Tuesday is election day

MOTION 2008-161: 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: 9:45 p.m.

Bethany Furtado, Clerk

Betsey Snipes, Secretary