

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting of October 14, 2008
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Toll Gate High School, on Tuesday, October 14, 2008. Chairman Friel called the meeting to order at 6:05 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 2008-192: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, 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), (a)(4), and (a)(9).

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye Bethany Furtado - not present for vote
Paul Cannistra - Aye

Meeting reconvened at 7:10 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

The Chair announced in Executive Session the vote on personnel matters was 5-0 to **deny** Grievance #05-311, 06-304, 06-305 and 06-307 and a vote of 5-0 to table Grievance #06-311.

Student Comments

Thalia Ortiz – Gorton Junior High School
Kelly Benoit – Warwick Veterans
Rachel Ferrara – Warwick Veterans

Approval of Minutes of Public Session

MOTION 2008-193: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the Minutes for the Open Session for September 10, 2008 and September 22, 2008.

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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MOTION 2008-194: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to amend and correct the Minutes of September 15, 2008 – Motion 2008-188 was not moved by Mrs. Andrade, as she was absent from that meeting.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

MOTION 2008-195: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the amended September 15, 2008 Open Minutes.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

MOTION 2008-196: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the Executive Minutes of September 10, 2008 and September 22, 2008.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Transfers:

Question on transfers presented - #09-041B transferred from and to the same account. Transfer #09-046B no indication as to what account transferred from and to.

MOTION 2008-197: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to remove transfer #09-046B.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

MOTION 2008-198: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the **amended** 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

Warrants:

MOTION 2008-199: 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

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Professional personnel items:

Appointments:

MOTION 2008-200: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the following appointments be approved: **Ryan Garno**, Science Teacher, Step 4 (pending receipt of certification from RIDOE); **Arthur Andolfo**, Social Studies Department Chair, Gorton Jr. High; **Mary Keenan**, Math Coach (90 day work year), at a salary of \$350 per day subject to the continuing availability of Article 31 funds at the school level; **Ann Casey**, Math Coach (90 day work year), at a salary of \$350 per day subject to the continuing availability of Article 31 funds at the school level; **Linda Martin** Math Coach (90 day work year), at a salary of \$350 per day subject to the continuing availability of Article 31 funds at the school level; **Carol Marginson**, Transitional Advocate at a salary of \$270 per day, subject to the continuing availability of funds from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grant from RIDOE, and **Betty Marquis**, School Based Program Specialist, Veterans High School.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Leave of Absence:

MOTION 2008-201: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, that the request for parental leave for **Jodi Elak-Spaziano**, Science Teacher at Winman, be approved effective approximately January 11, 2008 and for the remainder of 2008-2009 school year, returning in September of 2009.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Coaching appointments:

MOTION 2008-202: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the appointment of **Michael Daniels**, Head Coach Boys' Cross Country at Pilgrim High School, be approved for one year only; and that the appointment of **Michael Martin**, Assistant Coach Football at Pilgrim High School be approved for one year only.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Unfinished Business:

Pilgrim High School Booster Club Advertising

Chairman Friel said that the Pilgrim School Booster Club was seeking permission to advertise at their home games using 3 x 7 vinyl signs which will be removed after the game. The advertisers are: Shur AZ (maintenance supply), Substance Abuse Task Force, Waldorf's Tuxedo, Space Walk RI, Governor Francis Inn and Picassos Pizza. Ms. Mota-Costa said she can't support advertising in public schools. Ms. Andrade said she has reservations moving forward and didn't have any issue with the vendors, but as part of the minutes she wanted to include "this school year only."

MOTION 2008-203: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the vendor list and advertising will be for one year only.

MOTION PASSES (3-2)

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

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Gorton/Aldrich Field Trip to Quebec City – The trip would be April 13, 2009 to April 16, 2009. Ms. Andrade questioned if the chaperones had background checks. The chaperones are all teachers so they have background checks. The trip is limited to 40 students, allowing one chaperon per ten students. Ms. Andrade also had a concern that there were no male chaperons, but it was noted that the tour guide is male and there would also be a male security guard.

MOTION 2008-204: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, to approve the Gorton/Aldrich Field Trip to Quebec City.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Replacement of Back-up Disaster Recovery System: Mr. Flood recommended the purchase of a replacement backup recovery system in the amount of \$49,990.68 in lieu of the extended service agreement. The new system comes with a 3-year warranty. Dianne Silvia said while when talking with Dell about options for an extended warranty, the initial option was to extend the warranty on the present system for 2 years at a cost of \$43,000, but Dell returned with an offer of a brand new system that would be covered for three years for about \$7,000 more. She said we need to warranty it so we can have technical support. The money for the original option of doing a 2-year extended warranty was included in the budget and through savings in other areas, approximately \$11,000 is available. Ms. Mota-Costa asked why we would need to upgrade the system to such a high level and said technology costs are really expensive and she didn't think we were being fiscally prudent with this. Ms. Silvia said we can't add on any servers to our current system, which means there can be no additional school servers only the ones we have. Ms. Mota-Costa asked about backup methods. Ms. Silvia said financial and budget information of the school department, as well as servers that contain student information, such as grades and transcripts, are backed up daily and sent weekly to an off-site storage area, but the school servers on-site are not backed up as frequently. Information and data are stored on tapes, which are physically removed and sent to an off-site storage area. That process is done weekly with financial and student information, but information on the school servers, such as student work and portfolios and anything on the First Class system are only backed up and sent monthly. She said we have lost data in the current system because there were corrupt files on the system, which meant it sent corrupt information to the tapes. An update of the system would take us forward into more expansive technology. It would expand memory, drive capacity and improve tape quality. Ms. Mota-Costa said she was not convinced we need a new system and more features. We need to look into this further, and I am concerned that we're doing this without a bidding process. Ms. Silvia explained that the bidding process was not approached because Dell came to me with the offer. When the initial deal was made to do business with Dell, a bidding process did not take place then either because Dell was one of the approved vendors listed on the state bid list and we piggy backed on that bid. Ms. Andrade was concerned about leaving the system unprotected, but Ms. Silvia said she was able to get a temporary extended warranty good for one year at a cost of \$1,000. This is a limited warranty, if something happens, they will tell us what the problem is but they won't fix it. Attorney Healey commented that it would cost millions to replace data if any was lost. The Chair asked if we should issue an RFP to replace our backup disaster system and gather bids to see what offers might be made by other vendors. Attorney Healey said it would as long as two to three months for the RFP process to run, and once it is advertised, the vendors are given 20 days to respond. Ms. Mota-Costa asked for documentation stating the difference between the old system and the proposed new system and what exactly the new services would be.

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MOTION 2008-205: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to **table** approval of backup system and issue RFP for same

MOTION PASSES (3-2)

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

Mrs. Andrade requested this be put on the October 22nd special agenda.

Gatekeeper and Administration Consulting Contract – Mr. Flood said as of January 1, 2009, certain IRS regulations go into effect for employers who provide their employees the opportunity to participate in 403(b) plans. These new regulations have dramatically altered the responsibilities and liabilities of employers who offer these types of plans, and the new regulations require specific knowledge and responsibility to implement and administer which is beyond the expertise of our staff. Rhode Island Association of School Business Officials has selected Gatekeeper Administration & Consulting as the preferred provider and has offered school departments an opportunity to contract with Gateway at established group rates. He recommended entering into a contract with Gatekeeper for administration and management of our 403(b) plans.

MOTION 2008-206: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the Gatekeeper and Administration Consulting Contract.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Park School Playground:

MOTION 2008-207: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the Park School Playground.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Special Education Advisory Report - A 3-page report was provided to the Committee by Jessica Schad, Co-Chair. She said that monthly meetings have been well attended and their membership is up. She said she hoped that the School Committee would continue their rotation attending their monthly meetings which are held every second Wednesday of the month.

Federally funded positions: - Dr. D'Agostino told the Committee under the federal grant IDEA, the LEA is responsible for providing special education services to those students who have an IEP that are placed in private/parochial schools within the LEA's district. After reviewing the number of students and their needs, we recommend the hiring of a half-time special educator to provide these services, which will be funded through the grant under the section for private/parochial students.

MOTION 2008-208: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the Federal funded half time special educator position as outlined by Dr. D'Agostino.

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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Policy JFCO

MOTION 2008-209: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, approve Policy JFCO with modifications by Attorney Healey.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

FY08-09 Corrective Action Plan – Superintendent said the plan is on our webpage, and as with any document “plan” it will be changing and adjustments made. We have already approved salary areas, when approved the extension of the WTU contract. In the non-salary items, we indicated caps to spending in the form of 10% to 50% reduction/freezing. He proposed to the School Committee that we be allowed to make changes before you act on the entire document and bring that to you in November. We are here to discuss any aspects which you may have questions on or proposals to take into consideration before we present draft for you to act on. The Chair asked what is the impact with the corrective action in place – how is that affecting the classrooms. The Superintendent said we have we have attempted to find ways of reducing that do not directly affect the classroom. Non-salary items are capped. It will be reviewed whether or not to lift cap. The Chair asked about the \$375,000 gaming revenue, and Mr. Flood said after three months we have received \$134,000. The Chair asked about Medicaid revenues, and Mr. Flood said it was too early in the year - \$112,000 anticipated additional – other revenues fairly predicable. The Superintendent recommended that we put this back on the November meeting with adjustments so we don’t have to come back and make other adjustments.

School Department Audit: The Chair said at the September 22nd special meeting we met with the current providers of the for the City and the School Department, Ms. Boucher and Ms. Langevin from Bacon & Associates. They agreed to expedite audit process and appear before us this evening. The purpose this evening is an informal presentation as to their findings. We will have special meeting October 22nd at 6:00 p.m. for an informational presentation. Ms. Langevin said she had completed the balance sheet which shows a \$2,909,001 deficit total for 6/30/08 and said the year began with a \$672,947 deficit. West Warwick stills owes \$436,000, but they are very slow paying each year. The Chair asked if any receivables were invalid and she answered no. There were two minor adjustments, \$30,000 and \$13,000. Over budgeted were salaries at \$1,085,263, employee benefits \$624,077, purchased services \$237,507, capital outlay \$279,125 and transfer fund \$190,959. Mr. Cannistra asked if they were satisfied that all procedures are in place, and Ms. Langevin said as far as accounting, but there are problems with monitoring. We did a general audit, did not perform an investigation.

Bids:

MOTION 2008-210: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, that the bid for Smartboards be awarded to Shanix as per bid tabulations and RITTI grant to fund eight smartboards.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Information and Proposals

From School Committee Members:

Mr. Cannistra said on October 5th through October 8th, NEASC was present at Pilgrim and he was there for the general presentation and met with the team. He said they did a wonderful job and wanted to thank those directly responsible for the success: Dennis Mullen, Marie Cote, Donald Miller, Coleen Griffith,

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Richard Clark, Michael Lobdell, Linda Noble, Marilyn Massey, Andrea Place, Christopher Pratt, Sharon Rix, Kelly Taft, Donna Tobin, Kerry Walker, Laurie Mockler, Karin Greaves, Michele Landrie, Meredith Bizragne, Nisa San Giovanni, Tim Valk, Chad Tvenstrup, David Fisher, Andrea Atturio, Paula Merdink, Toni Grimley, William McDevitt. He also commented on the Child Development Center, saying it was a super operation and that the teachers are thrilled and the kids seem really happy.

Equal Access Policy – next month – inadvertently left off agenda

Lucille Mota-Costa asked if anyone wanted to sign up for the Parent Committee.

Public comment: Darlene Netoch commented about the skunk that had been locked into the teachers' room. On Friday at 1:00 a.m. the skunk set off the motion detector, and the police arrived. Mr. Chrabaszcz did not know about the skunk until 6:00 a.m. and the skunk stayed in the school until 2:30 p.m. It defecated, urinated and sprayed and she said that the custodial staff should not have to go and clean up that mess – beyond scope of public school custodians. Mr. Fred Burke commented about Gatekeeper and asked about the cost. Mr. Flood said there will be no cost to the employees. Mr. Burke also asked that policies be available on line and posted at every school and requested a copy be sent to the WISE union office. Mr. Patrick Maloney thanked Superintendent Horoschak and Mr. Cannistra for visiting the ALAP open house and said he appreciated the support you have given the program

MOTION 2008-211: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, 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