

Warwick School Committee Minutes  
Meeting of March 10, 2009  
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Toll Gate High School on Tuesday, March 10, 2009. Chairman Friel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following in attendance:

COMMITTEE

Christopher Friel, Chairperson  
Lucille Mota-Costa, Vice Chair  
Bethany Furtado, Clerk  
Paul Cannistra  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr.

ADMINISTRATION

Peter P. Horoschak, Superintendent  
Rosemary Healey, Esq., Director of Compliance & Human Resources  
Leonard Flood, Director of Business Affairs

MOTION 2009-46: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, 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)(9).

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

Meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m. with the following present in addition to those listed above:

Richard D'Agostino, Director Special Services  
Robert T. Bushell, Director of Elementary Education  
David E. Small, Director of Buildings and Grounds

Chairman Friel announced that in Executive Session there was a vote of 5-0 to deny Grievance #07-320 and #07-322; and the vote on a matter held previously was 5-0 to deny Grievance #07-316.

**Student comments:**

**Randall Holden Elementary:** Katelyn Vieira (Grade 6) and Madison Almonte (Grade 6);  
**Sherman Elementary:** Jessen Murphy, Davin Lourenco, Dera Silvestre and Gillian Tiley (all from Grade 6) and **John Greene Elementary:** Ciara Toole and Joshua Greenwood (both from Grade 6)

**Approval of Minutes:**

MOTION 2009-47: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the Minutes for the Open Session dated February 3, 2009 and February 26, 2009.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

MOTION 2009-48: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the Minutes for the Executive Session dated February 3, 2009 and February 26, 2009.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

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**Approval of Transfers:**

MOTION 2009-49: 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  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

**Approval of Warrants:**

MOTION 2009-50: 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  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

**Coaching Appointments:**

MOTION 2009-51: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the appointment of **John Frenze**, Assistant coach Girls' Outdoor Track at Pilgrim (one year only); **Catherine Smith**, Assistant Coach Boys' Volleyball at Veterans (one year only); **Kenneth Rix**, Assistant Coach Boys' Lacrosse at Veterans; **James Reynolds** Assistant Coach Boys' Basketball at Toll Gate (one year only); **Nicole Delvecchio**, Assistant Coach Girls' Basketball at Toll Gate (one year only) and **Norman Bouthillier**, Head Coach Boys' Outdoor Track at Toll Gate.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

**New Business –**

**Graduation by Proficiency Update**

Chip McGair, GBP coordinator at Vets, updated the Committee on the progress students have made. There are three categories: proficient, approaching proficient and not proficient. At Pilgrim: 144 proficient, 118 approaching proficient and 30 not proficient; Tollgate 156 proficient, 80 approaching proficient and 20 not proficient; Vets 152 proficient, 85 approaching proficient and 15 not proficient. Resources have been offered, including English teachers spending the first semester teaching the senior project, there is department night throughout the year, and there is tutoring in some cases. The next deadline approaching is March 17<sup>th</sup>. They are still looking for judges for May 21<sup>st</sup>, and Marilyn Massey, Denise Bilodeau or Mr. McGair can be contacted. Mr. Maloney commented on those who were approaching proficient and the dire need of getting work done or they will not graduate and those 65 students who will not graduate for not doing the work.

**Approval of 2009-2010 School Calendar:** Superintendent Horoschak presented the 2009-2010 School Calendar for approval.

MOTION 2009-52: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the 2009-2010 School Calendar.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

**Report on Consolidation Advisory Committee** –Superintendent Horoschak said the first meeting will be on March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium of Gorton Jr. High School. The Committee will include Superintendent Horoschak, Robert Bushell, Dr. Richard D'Agostino, and two elementary principals, two parents. Two members from WTU as well as WISE have been invited, but both Unions declined. Acting

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as resources to the Committee will be Mark Carruolo, Leonard Flood, and Paul Janssen. The committee will be provided with data prepared to demonstrate the various combinations of consolidation of the six elementary schools. This information will be available on our website. The second meeting will be on April 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 p.m. at Gorton, and the Committee will be able to narrow down the six schools being looked at for consolidation to two or three. The six schools are Lippitt, Sherman, John Greene, Warwick Neck, Oakland Beach and Park. A recommendation will be presented at the May regular School Committee meeting. Mr. Maloney requested a member of the Parents Communication Advisory Committee be considered as a resource to the School Consolidation Committee. Superintendent Horoschak said the Parent Communication Advisory could designate a person, and suggested that Chairman Friel ask the two School Committee members to make the selection. This would not be an additional member, simply a resource.

**Performance Contracting Resolution: -**

WHEREAS, current fiscal conditions, including budget constraints, require responsible budgeting decisions to be made by the School Committee, the City Council, the Mayor and all government officials in order to protect the taxpayers of the City of Warwick; and

WHEREAS, rising energy costs and inefficient heating systems contribute to significant budgetary constraints; and

WHEREAS, performance contracting offers an opportunity to the School Committee to replace aging heating systems and other energy related systems with more efficient systems, reduce energy consumption, obtain a specified minimum level of energy savings and furnish specified ongoing maintenance of the systems in school facilities; and

WHEREAS, the School Committee has designated Trane, a division of American Standard, to be its vendor for purposes of energy performance contracting; and

WHEREAS, the School Committee is now attempting to make a decision as to whether to contract with Trane to conduct a Detailed Study of its facilities designed to measure the scope of services; and

WHEREAS, the Detailed Study Phase requires the School Committee to compensate Trane if the School Committee does not proceed with the scope of services as recommended by Trane and agreed to by the School Committee; and

WHEREAS, proceeding with the scope of services would require the City to commit to permitting the School Committee access to municipal funding vehicles such as general obligation bonds or lease-purchase money to fund the recommended work; and

WHEREAS, the debt service for this project would also be paid for by the School Committee through energy savings.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the School Committee hereby respectfully requests the Mayor and Council take all actions necessary to approve the granting of access to the School Committee to suitable and sufficient municipal funding vehicles such as general obligations bonds and lease purchase dollars such that it can pursue the scope of services recommended by Trane; and

The Superintendent is hereby directed to forward a copy of this Resolution to the Mayor and to members of the City Council.

This Resolution shall take effect upon passage.

MOTION 2009-53: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the Resolution.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

**Student Athlete Code of Conduct:** Ms. Furtado said that the City has its own code of conduct for all sports, but we thought it prudent to develop a code of conduct for our students that participate in the interscholastic league that represents Warwick. Mr. Donald Miller, Vice Principal at Pilgrim commented on the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes that was presented. He read the following introductory paragraph: *A firm and fair enforcement of a Code of Conduct for Student Athletes (the "Code") is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound athletic program. Athletes are expected to abide by this code, which will earn them the honor and respect that*

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*participation and competition in the interscholastic athletic program affords. Conduct which results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. This Code applies to all athletes including players, managers, trainers, cheerleaders and all other students representing a team from the Pilgrim, Toll Gate and Warwick Veterans High Schools.* He said that this policy deals with everything from sportsmanship and drugs to alcohol and school attendance. It applies to all athletes, including players, managers, trainers, cheerleaders and all other students representing a team. He spoke of offenses and the consequences, which included drugs, alcohol, smoking, attendance and even cyber images. Every student must sign the code prior to participation. It was suggested to amend Section F to say “attendance at school at the start of school each day,” because there is no longer a “first period.”

MOTION 2009-54: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to amend the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes at Section F. “Attendance” to say “attendance at school at the start of school each day.”

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

MOTION 2009-55: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Maloney, to approve the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes as amended.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

**2008 NECAP Test Scores** – presentation by Dr. Siesel - Reading Grades 3-8 – percentage of students proficient in grades 3-8 has consistently risen over four years. We continue to score above state average. We have had a one year gain of +2 and a four-year gain of +8. Math Grades 3-8 – percentage of students proficient in math improved over four years; we continue to score above state average; one year gain of +3 and four-year gain of +5. Scale Scores define where we fall on the proficiency spectrum. In 2007 the district failed to make AYP in subgroup of students with IEP. Now we have enough data to follow groups of students over period of years. When the data consistently improves we should look at patterns across grade levels; patterns across schools and patterns across subgroups. When data does not follow the pattern we would look at programs and changes in leadership (both teachers and principals). As a district, we have shown improvements in the percent of students demonstrating proficiency in both reading and math over the past four years. Every grade level has shown improvement in the percentage of students proficient in reading over the past four years. Grades 6 through 8 are struggling the most in math. Grade 11 showed gains in both reading and math; but we remain below the state average. Math continues to be the biggest challenge. The individual schools will disaggregate own data and the district will target schools and grade levels identified as needing improvement. District strategic plan will be updated using this data. Content supervisors will further break down data to look at skills and concepts using item analysis data. Warwick has made substantial changes to curriculum and methods of teaching over the past four years. Teachers have made significant progress in understanding and applying changes in the classroom. We need to celebrate our successes and continue to focus on improving teaching and learning.

Mr. Andolfo commented that we do not have final Gorton scores. The state did not release those scores yet. There was investigation of possible mistakes made in the implementation of the test. Has any member of the School Committee inquired what the present status is? Superintendent Horoschak said there was a meeting with the deputy commission in terms of corrective action into the future. The next

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step will be a decision as to when those scores will be released. State did not find any malicious intent but there were errors made.

### **Bid and Change Orders**

MOTION 2009-56: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the bid for high security classroom locks be awarded to Horner Commercial Sales in the amount of \$24,975 as per bid tabulation.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

**Special Education Staffing Policy (second reading)** – Dr. D’Agostino said that the draft policy is on the website, and he asked that the second reading be approved.

MOTION 2009-57: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the second reading of Special Education Staffing (Policy #GCAA).

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

### **Information and Proposals**

#### **School Committee Members:**

Ms. Mota-Costa – commented on the article in the *Beacon* regarding the Parents Communication Advisory Committee (PCAC). Mr. Maloney thanked Dawn Parent who took it upon herself to contact Alan Feinstein who provided new sweatshirts for children who were part of the school consolidation.

**Public comment:** A member of the public asked that Family & Consumer Science not be cut. She said the students do many worthwhile projects for the community. Claire Madison, a school lunch person, said she would like to be able to go to work and not worry about losing our jobs, and was there anything that you can do for us? Deb Sherman asked if the taxpayers will know ahead what surplus money will be spent on. Chairman Friel said we are not anticipating any surplus money this year. Tom MacMahon said the first step for any job proposal is to contain heat or air conditioning, and it should be taken into consideration to keep buildings contained not just the efficiency of the systems. Mr. Andolfo asked that the Consumer Arts and Science program be maintained, so we don’t have students falling through the cracks. Mr. Andolfo and Michael Pierce both commented on the handling of the matter at Gorton where students were given repeated opportunities to complete portions of state tests in violation of the rules. Mr. Andolfo said he believed the whole testing process was tainted. He also commented on the NECAP presentation, saying those figures were absent the Gorton test scores. Superintendent Horoschak said the administration has cooperated with the Department of Education’s investigation, and we have conducted our own fact-finding that was shared with the department. A final decision is being awaited.

MOTION 2009-58: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, adjourn.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

### **Meeting adjourned: 9:15 p.m.**

Bethany Furtado, Clerk  
Betsey Snipes, Secretary