

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting of June 9, 2009
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Toll Gate High School on Tuesday, June 9, 2009. Chairman Friel called the meeting to order at 6:55 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
Victor Mercurio, Director of Secondary Education
Robert T. Bushell, Director of Elementary Education

MOTION 2009-107: 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 (4-0)

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

Meeting reconvened at 7:25 p.m. - Present in addition to those listed above:

Richard D'Agostino, Director Special Services
David E. Small, Director of Buildings and Grounds

Student comments: Alexia Romano and Lou Hudden 6th grade at Oakland Beach
Wyman Elementary: Chelsea Yang (grade 4), Jacob Yang (grade 6) and Nicola Morales (grade 5)

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION 2009-108: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the Open Minutes for May 12, 2009 and May 26, 2009.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Approval of Minutes of Executive Session:

MOTION 2009-109: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the Executive Minutes for May 12, 2009.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Approval of Transfers:

MOTION 2009-110: 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
Paul Cannistra – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye
Patrick E. Maloney, Jr. - Aye

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Approval of Warrants:

MOTION 2009-111: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Maloney, 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

Professional Personnel Items

Appointments:

MOTION 2009-112: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Maloney, that the appointment of **Matthew Acciaioli**, Health/Physical Education/APE teacher, step 4, be approved, pending vacancy after the job fair; and that the appointment of **Linda DeConti**, Social Worker, Category 1, step 5, be approved, pending vacancy after the job fair.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

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

Retirements/resignations:

MOTION 2009-113: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the following **retirements be accepted: Lee-Ann Hurtubise**, Physical Education teacher at Winman Jr. High School effective the last day of school; **Margaret Watson**, English Department Head at Winman Jr. High School effective June 29, 2009; **Sheila Zompa**, Foreign Language teacher at Winman Jr. High School effective the last day of school; **Sandra Curran** Special Educator at Pilgrim High School effective the last day of school; **Linda Costabile**, English teacher at Pilgrim High School, effective the last day of school; **Margaret Jamison-Feix**, Special Educator at Pilgrim High School effective the last day of school; **Susan Fleisig**, Librarian at Winman Junior High School effective the last day of school; **Deborah Ray**, elementary music teacher at Wickes Elementary School effective the last day of school; **Arlene Nappa**, elementary teacher at Greenwood effective the last day of school; and **the resignation Karen Hearn**, foreign language teacher at Toll Gate effective May 22, 2009.

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 2009-114: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Maloney, that the following coaching appointments be approved: **James Cook**, assistant coach football at Pilgrim for one year only pending official coaching certification; **Madison Greene**, assistant coach girls volleyball at Pilgrim for one year only; **Scott Restow**, assistant coach JV girls volleyball at Toll Gate for one year only; **Holly Lebejko**, assistant coach girls field hockey at Toll Gate pending official coaching certification; **Jallah Leonard**, assistant coach football at Toll Gate pending official coaching certification.

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: Pam Bernardi provided the final update:

Toll Gate High School: 247 students Graduating 220 27 not graduating

14 eligible for summer school; only 3 have not completed their senior project; 17 out of 27 continue on and earn high school diploma; remaining 10 *missing in action* [missing from school for the past 30 days and in some cases 60 days].

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Pilgrim High School: 267 students Graduating 249 18 not graduating
6 eligible for summer school; 3 did not complete their senior project; 9 out of 11 reporting to summer school; 7 returning in the fall

Veterans High School: 249 students Graduating 224 25 not graduating
10 are eligible for summer school; 7 did not complete their senior project; and 4 out of 7 are expected to do so before the end of the summer.

Comparison to 2008:

Toll Gate 247 9 students did not earn diploma

Pilgrim 276 14 did not graduate (5 of 14 returned in fall and 1 earned GED)

Veterans 21 did not graduate

Early submission of proposal figures for 2010: Toll Gate of 266 students, 125 submitted proposals; Pilgrim of 275, 70 have submitted proposal; and at Veterans 70 have submitted proposals.

Graduation by Proficiency 2009/2010 Senior Project Calendar: Dr. Mercurio said that normally this would not come before you but there have been some significant changes. He requested four early release days for seniors, i.e. 11/19/09; 12/16/09; 2/8/10; and 3/8/10. This would allow seniors one-half day in school and then be released to be with their mentors during the course of those afternoons. There is a need for seniors to avail themselves the opportunity to meet with mentors within the confines of the school day. We picked dates we thought would not conflict with testing. Also he was seeking approval of senior exhibition presentation day of May 20, 2010 when middle level administrators would be judging and the seventh and eighth graders would have a one-half day. Discussion followed including the following issues: teachers would know well ahead of time when seniors would be released; students spend 15 hours with their mentors; some kind of verification that they went with their mentor; Chairman Friel commented four days is a lot of time to miss and asked about an excused absence policy for students that need to complete mentor hours during the school days; Mr. Maloney commented there are 70 seniors in jeopardy this year not graduating, and said he was a mentor and he rearranged his schedule. Ms. Netoch had concerns requesting days off as they [seniors] already have a half days for prom day, they are let out early last day of school, and the day after senior presentation most were absent from school. She said we need every minute for basic school work. This part of their project should be their own responsibility, do it during school vacations. She also said that if the proposal is granted, a tracking measure should be in place too make sure students are using the time to meet with their mentors. Ms. Bernardi said adding four more days of tracking would be impossible without the assistance of another GBP coordinator in each building. Ms. McDermott agreed with Ms. Netoch, saying a student working with elementary student should be allowed to do that, but we have a policy on absenteeism. There is a window in the absentee policy that allows absences for academic reasons above and beyond the limited excused absences. Chairman Friel said mentor hours could be completed during the Christmas and April vacations, weekends, evenings and holidays. Mr. Cannistra suggested that we do more research and have this brought to us at another meeting.

MOTION 2009-115: Moved by Mr. Cannistra to table the approval of the 2009/2010 Senior Project Calendar, to a future School Committee meeting date, seconded by Chairman Friel.

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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Superintendent Horoschak asked the Committee to please indicate what issues and questions that you would like to have answered so that we can gather the information and be sure you have that information before we bring it back to you.

**Recommendation for appointment to the
Special Education Advisory Committee**

Dr. D'Agostino recommended the appointment of Mary A. Townsend to the Special Education Advisory Committee. He said she has been a special ed teacher assistant for 27 years.

MOTION 2009-116: Moved by Mr. Maloney, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to approve the appointment of **Mary A. Townsend** to the Special Education Advisory 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 Revised Elementary Social Studies Curriculum: - It was requested that this be tabled until the next meeting of the School Committee.

Bids:

MOTION 2009-117: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the bid for custodial supplies be awarded in the amount of \$68,527.78 to the various vendors as per the bid tabulations.

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

Comments of School Committee Members:

Mr. Cannistra commented on the History Day Project saying there were several first and second place winners who will advance to the national competition at the University of Maryland next week. For the record they are from **Gorton**: 1st place paper: Brian Duranleau; 1st place individual documentary: Maxine Deluise; 1st place group documentary: Katie Gregory, Kristen Gregory; 2nd place group exhibit: Emily Almonte, Nicole Luiz; 2nd place group performance: Courtney Roque, Tauri, Sequeira, Jennifer Salerno
Aldrich: Sarah Ferry & Lauren Picard, Brendan McNamara and Autumn Guillotte; **Warwick Veterans**: Helena Widmann, Rebecca Hurd, Emma Hindinger, Amanda Rapson, Ben Down, Kristen Hyle, Elisha Aldrich, Alisha McKay, Erin Murphy, Rosemary Miele, Jennifer Baker; and **Winman**: Erin Kane, Casey Johnson

Mr. Maloney: The Parents Communication Advisory Committee did meet and will be meeting again at the beginning of August. There will be a new Board and David Testa will be the Chair. Also he noted that we are the only state that does not have financial formula, and by not having one we might not have stimulus money and requested people to contract their senators and congressmen. He said he had received an e-mail from Donna Fennessy, ALAP teacher, that one of her students, Jonathan Provencal, a 5th grader at Holliman School, was a winner in the Cassini Scientist for a Day essay contest. Jonathan will have an opportunity to teleconference with leading scientists on his winning topic, *Saturn's moon called Dione*..

Peter Horoschak: wished all the seniors well in their upcoming commencements.

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Public comment:

Charlene and others from Aldrich came before the committee to comment on the cheerleading program. She said they had missed the deadline for this agenda, but asked that be put on the agenda for August to discuss this program. Donna Fennessy (ALAP Program) spoke about her student, Jonathan Provencal, who was a winner in the Cassini Scientist for a Day essay contest. Jonathan will have an opportunity to teleconference with leading scientists on his winning topic, *Saturn's moon called Dione*. She spoke of other students who had been successful in the ALAP Program. She said she found out that her job has been eliminated, and she hoped that the Committee would reconsider her elementary position and reinstate it. George Landri (Gorton Jr. High) commented on last week's City Council meeting and also about the awards night at Gorton Jr. High.

Mary Rounds Teacher at Toll Gate asked that the Committee reconsider eliminating the Family & Consumer Science Program. She said that some of her top students came out tonight to explain how they feel about the program. [There were 20 students.] The following is a summary of remarks made by the students: student talked about her parents getting a divorce and how she thought about things she had learned in class to help her cope and to even help her mother cope; another student said she knew she would laugh and learn something new; Joe said he is going to RIC in the fall and that the Human Relations course gave him something he would take with him for the rest of his life – lessons to cope are very important; a student said that courses from FCS taught her how to live on her own and said please do not get rid of these classes; Susan said the courses taught her skills she will always remember and that Mrs. Rounds was like a mother to her, that she helped prepare her for college, and asked to please keep the classes; Molly said people need to learn about food and how to sew and how to live on their own; Jennifer, who will be studying Chinese language and literature in the Fall, said she learned to sew, eat healthy and even took Marine Biology, which broadened her horizons and stretched her learning; Tara said because of the fashion and textile classes, she is well rounded and ready to go college; Megan said Human Relations benefited her and she learned to bond with other people and asked that you reconsider canceling FCS; Emma, who will be studying to be a professional photographer, said she wished she had taken Human Relations courses; Samantha said she came out of FCS with a sense of accomplishment and was able to connect with younger children. These programs have helped so many know what they want to do in their life. A student who had graduated last year and is attending URI said that she was book smart but taking FCS classes she learned to sew, and she said that Mrs. Rounds was her mentor and a “go to” person; Jessica said she had taken foods and sewing and the classes were a stress releaser; a Junior at Toll Gate said she had taken sewing and that she had learned so much and would love the opportunity to take more classes; Kathy, a Junior at Toll Gate, said that she had done projects that she can use and getting rid of FCS is wrong and will deprive us of classes that we enjoy.

Superintendent Horoschak commended the students for coming to speak. He said it is very clear what you think is important. Wish all of you the very best in your endeavors with higher education. The School Committee does appreciate hearing from the students. He could not make any commitments one way or another.

Susan Ascoli – Jr. High School Teacher – said that she had read an e-mail that had gone out saying “we need to move forward, it's not so much about money, its progress.” How can elimination of the FCS be considered progress? Amy (a parent) said she had taken FCS classes in high school and it helped her be a better mom. She had another topic to ask about – what is happening with the band program at Toll Gate; what is being offered in the way of band and orchestra? Superintendent Horoschak suggested she speak to Dr. Mercurio after the meeting for an explanation.

Special Meeting dates – none noted

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MOTION 2009-118: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to 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 at 9:25 p.m.

Bethany Furtado, Clerk

Betsey Snipes, Secretary