

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting March 18, 2015 - Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Toll Gate High School on Wednesday, March 18, 2015. Ms. Ahearn called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m. with the following in attendance:

COMMITTEE

Jennifer Ahearn, Chair
Eugene A. Nadeau, Vice Chair
M. Terri Medeiros, Clerk
Bethany A. Furtado
Karen Bachus [present at 6:10 p.m.]

ADMINISTRATION

Richard D'Agostino, Superintendent
Dennis Mullen, Director of Secondary Education
Lynn Dambruch, Director of Elementary Education
Anthony Ferrucci, Chief Budget Officer
Jennifer Connolly, Director of Special Education
Rosemary Healey, Esq., Director of Compliance & Human Resources

The Chair announced that the individual involved in an executive session hearing this evening has been notified of his right to have the hearing held in open session. He was asked to notify us of that open meeting request in advance of tonight's hearing. He did not so notify us and we will therefore be proceeding in executive session.

With regard to the "superintendent interviews" item on the agenda, the candidates that will be discussed in this evening's meeting have been notified of their rights to have discussions regarding their credentials held in open session. While some have indicated that they would like to have their credentials discussed in open session, we do not have a consensus of all candidates. We will therefore proceed to discuss all candidates in executive session.

MOTION 2015-49: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Medeiros, 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)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye Karen Bachus – not present for vote
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye

Open Meeting reconvened at 7:10 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem - [It was noted that the National Anthem was a recording made by band members of Pilgrim High School.]

Administrators also present in addition to those listed above: Dr. Anne Siesel, Sara Monaco, Ryan Mullen, David LaPlante, Kathleen Desrosiers

Chair announced - There was a vote to uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent of 4 in favor 1 opposed taken in Executive Session.

Tabled: approval of hiring negotiation counsel

MOTION 2015-50: Moved by Ms. Ahearn, seconded by Ms. Bachus, to table until the next meeting the approval of hiring Andrew Henneous negotiation counsel.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau – Aye Karen Bachus – Aye
Jennifer Ahearn – Aye

Warwick School Committee Minutes - Open Session March 18, 2015

Tabled: approval of WISE contract

MOTION 2015-51: Moved by Ms. Bachus, and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, to table approval of the WISE contract.

MOTION PASSES (3 ayes 2 nays)

Bethany A. Furtado – Nay M. Terri Medeiros – Nay
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Vote to seal minutes of Executive Session

MOTION 2015-52: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Bachus, to seal the Minutes of the Executive Session for March 18, 2015.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – Aye
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Student comments:

Greenwood Elementary School: Emily Foss and Jessica Joubert (grade 6)

Oakland Beach Elementary School – Chantel Van Heyning and Maya Dowaliby (grade 6)

Approval of Minutes of Public Session

MOTION 2015-53: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the Minutes of the Open Session for February 3, 2015, February 4, 2015, February 10, 2015, February 11, 2015, February 18, 2015 and February 25, 2015.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Vote of Minutes for the Executive Session

MOTION 2015-54: Moved by Ms. Bachus, and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, to approve/accept the Minutes of the Executive Session for February 3, 2015, February 4, 2015, February 10, 2015, February 11, 2015, February 18, 2015 and February 25, 2015.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Approval of Transfers:

MOTION 2015-55: Moved by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the transfers presented to the Committee.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Approval of Warrants:

MOTION 2015-56: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the warrants presented to the Committee.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Professional Personnel Items - Retirements/Resignations

MOTION 2015-57: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Ahearn, that the **retirement of Jane Buerman**, special class pre-school teacher, Drum Rock Early Childhood Center be accepted effective the last day of school; and that the **retirement of Alfred Crudale**, department head foreign language at Veterans High School be accepted effective at the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Warwick School Committee Minutes - Open Session March 18, 2015

Classified Personnel Items: Appointments:

MOTION 2015-58: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, that the appointment of **Melissa Robinson**, teacher assistant special services be approved effective upon School Committee approval.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Retirements/Resignations:

MOTION 2015-59: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, that the **resignation of Martha Foley**, teacher assistant at Greenwood Elementary School be accepted effective February 16, 2015.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Coaching Appointments:

MOTION 2015-60: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, that the appointment of Alexander Gregson, head coach boys lacrosse at Warwick Veterans High School be approved for one year only.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

SMMA Update – Edward Frenette gave an update reporting that we are in the information gathering stage. There are three stages: gathering the information, analyzing the information, and developing alternative master plans to be decided upon. There are three parts to each stage, including demographics analysis, regarding how many students are affected and where are they located; facilities analysis of all the buildings; and educational planning to determine the curriculum and how the physical facilities will help deliver that curriculum, as well as providing alternatives and improvements. We are at the beginning of the information acquisition and data collection phase now. He said that they were touring all the schools and will be meeting with the Superintendent next Wednesday to tour the elementary schools, and will do the secondary schools on Thursday. Then there will be a meeting with educational leadership for discussions. He said there would be about a month left to produce a recommendation once all the data collection is complete. Ms. Ahearn commented there have been many previous discussions regarding consolidation and how the district should move forward and there is a lot of information that will get to you. Mr. Frenette said we will take our experience and add it to yours which may uncover things you haven't seen. A separate team will be looking at buildings and determining facility conditions. He said he was worried when the snowstorms kept popping up but is hoping they're done now. We need to see the roofs of the buildings to do assessments. Mr. Frenette said there's not a lot of product at the moment; however the firm has produced a lot of organizational documents to get everyone on the same page, including a glossary of vocabulary terms. Mr. Nadeau asked about the level of cooperation from school staff and Mr. Frenette said the cooperation has been excellent.

GBP Update – Mr. Mullen reported we are following 660 seniors – There are 239 students at Pilgrim and 232 have completed papers their research papers; there are 218 students at Tollgate and 207 have completed their research papers; and there are 203 at Veterans and 196 have completed their papers. Presentation day will be May 14th.

Warwick School Committee Minutes - Open Session March 18, 2015

Approval of Washington, DC trip (Winman, Aldrich and Gorton Junior High Schools) – April 29th to May 2nd Aldrich (73 students); May 7 to May 9th Winman (45 students); and May 21st to May 23rd Gorton (45 students).

MOTION 2015-61: Moved by Ms. Bachus, and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, to approve the Washington DC trip for Winman, Aldrich and Gorton Junior High Schools).

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Approval of Pilgrim HS trip to Ohio for Music Showcase Festival – May 7th to 10th, 2015

MOTION 2015-62: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the Pilgrim High School trip to Ohio for the Music Showcase Festival.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Approval of Pilgrim HS Cheerleaders trip to Massachusetts for Regional Competition (March 20, 2015).

MOTION 2015-63: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the Pilgrim High School Cheerleaders' trip to Massachusetts for Regional Competition.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Discussion of 2015-2016 School Year Calendar – presentation of draft 2015-2016 calendar for discussion. The possibility of eliminating February break had been reviewed. Four other districts have already adopted the elimination. The Chair commented on the vacation survey which had been posted on our website. There were approximately 2,500 responses: 66.6% parents, 19.8% teachers, 5.3% students, 5% other employees and 1.3% non-parents. The responses favored 3-1 in the elimination of winter break. Dr. D'Agostino said we were looking into the possibility of eliminating February vacation and moving April vacation into March, but this could pose problems because it is in the middle of administering the PARCC testing and would cause havoc with April testing. Ms. Furtado commented that none of the larger districts have changed and until and unless all 37 get on same page it is inequitable to put staff in position of having kids in other districts with different vacation schedules. It should be kicked up to RIDE to tell us what they want – to get us all on the same page. Ms. Ahearn said in her opinion she had a hard time leaving it where it is, when the majority wanted it moved.

Approval of Warwick Special Education Advisory Committee Members

MOTION 2015-64: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve **Michael Matteson and Sandra Parrillo** as Special Education Advisory Committee members.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Approval of Resolution – Full Day Kindergarten – The Chair said we were able to implement full-day kindergarten programs in nine of our elementary schools last year at no cost to the district due to declining enrollment. The resolution presented was created regarding full-day kindergarten funding for all students. There are two bills in the legislature pushing for it right now that would increase full-day kindergarten funding by permitting districts that converted to full-day kindergartens to receive full-time credit (1.0) for students in all-day kindergarten. Currently kindergarten students only count as a .5 regardless of whether kindergartens are run on a full-time or half-day basis. Mr. Ferrucci commented that

Warwick School Committee Minutes - Open Session March 18, 2015

if the General Assembly approves the pending legislation, Warwick would receive \$896,000 next year for full-day kindergarten. That would provide us with enough resources to anticipate additional staff. Should the pending legislation not be approved Warwick would only receive \$296,000 next year, and that would leave us \$600,000 short in September to do full-day kindergarten throughout the district. Ms. Healey said Governor Raimondo is looking to mandate universal full-day kindergarten across districts as of September 2016.

MOTION 2015-65: Moved by Ms. Bachus, and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, approval of the full day kindergarten resolution presented.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

WHEREAS: The Warwick School Committee believes that quality full-day kindergarten programs are a sound educational investment that Rhode Island can make, providing demonstrated, significant, long-term savings on the cost of special education and grade retention; and

WHEREAS: Current state law provides for a funding formula for education; and

WHEREAS: School districts and cities and towns have not been given adequate increases in state aid due to the phase- in of the funding formula, making it extremely challenging for districts to find monies to hire the added kindergarten teachers; and

WHEREAS: The Warwick Public Schools is making full-day kindergarten programming a district priority by appropriating funding and reallocating human capital resources where feasible, even when faced with declining enrollment, which impacts district funding formula reimbursement rates to Warwick; and

WHEREAS: Warwick is optimistically projecting delivery of a full-day kindergarten program to all kindergarten students in Warwick by Fiscal Year 2020, however could deliver this kindergarten education to all district students for Fiscal Year 2016 with passage of kindergarten funding legislation; and

WHEREAS: Given the reality of the current revenue available to school districts, it will be difficult for Warwick to maintain the progress it has made and/or continue to expand its all-day kindergarten program throughout the entire City without new, additional revenue; and

WHEREAS: Foundation level school support as outlined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-7-22 and § 16-7.2-7 currently counts kindergarten students as .5 regardless of whether kindergartens are run on a full time or half day basis; and

WHEREAS: There is legislation pending in both the Senate and in House of Representatives of the Rhode Island General Assembly that would amend both § 16-7-22 and § 16-7.2-7 to permit districts who converted to full day kindergartens to receive full time credit (1.0) for students in all-day kindergartens (H-5275 and S-0144); and

WHEREAS: The Warwick School Committee feels that expansion of all of its kindergartens to full-day programs is imperative for the benefit of all of its students and promotes equity and access to all regions of the City of Warwick; and

WHEREAS: The Warwick School Committee feels that all Warwick students deserve the benefit of a rigorous kindergarten program that a full-day program would provide; and

WHEREAS: Adoption of H-5275 and S-0144 would increase revenue to the Warwick Public Schools such that it would be able to expand its all-day kindergarten program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Warwick School Committee respectfully requests the Rhode Island General Assembly adopt the changes proposed in H-5275 and S-0144; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Mayor and City Council of the City of Warwick, every other Rhode Island Municipality, School Committee, State Senator, State Representative and the Governor.

WHERETO: The following bear witness on the 18th day of March, 2015:

[SIGNED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS; Jennifer Ahearn, M. Terri Medeiros, Eugene A. Nadeau, Bethany A. Furtado, Karen Bachus]

Approval of contract award for Whalley Computer-Chromebooks for Aldrich, Gorton and Winman Junior High Schools

MOTION 2015-66: Moved by Ms. Ahearn, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the contract award for Whalley Computer-Chromebooks for Aldrich, Gorton and Winman Junior High Schools (\$34,403.)

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Approval of contract award for Follet Guided Reading Materials

MOTION 2015-67: Moved by Ms. Ahearn, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the contract award for Follet Guided Reading Materials (\$11,634).

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Warwick School Committee Minutes - Open Session March 18, 2015

Approval of contract award for Del-Backup File Server

MOTION 2015-68: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the contract award for Del-Backup File Server (\$13,471).

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Policy BDC – revise – Ms. Ahearn had a concern about not starting our open sessions at 7:00 p.m. as posted on the Open Agenda and having people waiting for us as we complete our executive session. She wanted to incorporate a new policy that takes into account the 7:00 p.m. start time. It was discussed that if it is apparent that the executive session has a lot of material to be covered, we could post a different opening time for Open Session.

MOTION 2015-69: Moved by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Ms. Ahearn, to approve first reading of policy.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

MOTION 2015-70: Moved by Ms. Ahearn, seconded by Ms. Bachus, to eliminate BDC executive policy.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Approval of FY 2015 Revised Budget Adoption

Mr. Ferrucci presented the revised budget – the following is a summary: On December 9, 2014 a Projected Year End report was presented that indicated a potential deficit of <\$546,607>. Also reported was the budget had contingencies of \$820,000, which may be available to cover the potential deficit. A Plan was offered to monitor the adopted revised budget of 9/15/14, provide updates during the months of January and February and present a recommended Revised Budget at the March 2015 meeting. Three reports were presented in support of the Revised Budget.

- Summary Report showing results of Final Audit of FY2014 – At the 11/18/14 meeting, the school committee was provided a report that stated the FY2014 surplus of \$3,944,128 was being audited at that time. With the audit’s conclusion on March 12, 2015, we have confirmed a surplus of \$3,973,931. The variance of \$29,802 is addressed in this summary report.
- FY 2015 Projected Year End Report with our recommended revised budget: This report using the FY2014 audit data and analyzing actual expenses, encumbrances, remaining budgets and the recent actions prompting budget considerations (FRP consultant contract) reflects for FY2015 a projected surplus of \$57,751.
- Summary report showing variance of 3/18/15 recommended revised budget versus the Projected Year End report that was presented on December 9th. This summary presents a line item analysis of how the projected deficit of <\$546,608> was managed, leading us to a projected surplus of \$57,751.

Recommended Revised Budget totals \$163,185,410 in revenue and \$163,127,659 in expenses with an anticipated surplus of \$57,751.

MOTION 2015-71: Moved by Ms. Ahearn, seconded by Ms. Furtado, approval of the Revised Budget.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Warwick School Committee Minutes - Open Session March 18, 2015

Bids and Change Orders

MOTION 2015-72: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Nadeau, that the bid for Phase IV Fire Code Construction Projects in the amount Of \$403,690 be awarded to various vendors as per the bid tabulation.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Information and Proposals:

Ms. Ahearn commented on the superintendent survey saying that there were 879 responses which included parents, students, teachers, principals, support staff, government officials, business leaders. They will be reviewed by the Committee. The Superintendent thanked Mr. LaPlante with respect to the snow removal challenge. Mr. LaPlante remarked that many roofs took a beating (Robertson School for one); parking lots have potholes and craters, ice melt was purchased and the trucks took a beating.

Public Comment

Nathan Cordell presented a petition signed by 300 students challenging PARCC testing. He said the test is flawed and not in the best interest of students. Also there are not enough computers and some are outdated and crashed. Darlene Netcoh said the way the PARCC questions are set up are technically difficult; she also commented on scheduling issues and kids are being over tested. Darilyn Gorton said other districts are calling the day before rather than the day of for substitutes and we should look into this type of calling system. She said she was not comfortable with PARCC and the directions given to her, including the 120-page manual and videos. She computed that in the eighth grade there are 40 test days out of 180 days.

MOTION 2015-73: Moved by Ms. Bachus, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Aye M. Terri Medeiros – [not present]
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Meeting adjourned: 10:00 p.m.