

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2008

WESTERN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

400 PHENIX AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:00 P.M.

PUBLIC SESSION: 7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

The regular monthly meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at Western Hills Middle School in the auditorium with the following members present: Mr. Archetto, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lombardi, Mr. Stycos, Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway, and Mr. Traficante. Mrs. Greifer was absent due to illness. (She did attend Executive Session.)

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. It was moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Lombardi and unanimously carried that the members adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws PL 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel, PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation (possible litigation – Caruolo Action), and PL 42-46-5(8)(b) Privacy of a Student and Their Record.

Chairman Traficante reconvened public session at 7:50 p.m.

The roll was called and the Pledge of Allegiance conducted.

I. Executive Session Minutes Sealed – February 11, 2008

Moved by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Ms. Iannazzi and unanimously carried that the February 11, 2008 Executive Session minutes remain confidential.

Chairman Traficante reported out that the School Committee upheld the decision of the Superintendent to deny a request for a waiver of the student attendance policy.

II. Minutes of Previous Meetings Approved – January 3, 2008; January 17, 2008; January 22, 2008; and January 30, 2008

Moved by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Mr. Archetto and unanimously carried that the minutes of the January 3, 2008, January 17, 2008, January 22, 2008, and January 30, 2008 meetings be approved.

III. Public Acknowledgements / Communications

There were none.

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IV. Chairperson Communications

There were none.

V. Superintendent Communications

There were none.

VI. School Committee Member Communications

Mr. Stycos indicated that he serves on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. He wished to report on some items that were brought up at their last meeting. The City is in the process of renovating the Cranston Stadium baseball field. It is a \$41,000 item, and that has to do with the warning track. Phase two of that project, which is the infield, has not gone out to bid yet. That is a \$60,000 expense. They also plan to renovate the track at Cranston West making it a regulation track by extending it toward Metropolitan Avenue. In the past, they couldn't hold a track meet there because it is the wrong shape. That is a \$225,000 expenditure. There has been some contact with the City for the construction of an indoor facility at the Briggs Farm complex. They are talking about a three acre ice rink, indoor soccer and lacrosse at Briggs Farm which would be a \$4 million project. The company's name is Pennsylvania Sports and Entertainment. This is in a discussion phase.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway referred to the city track that is used by athletes on both sides of the City and asked if it had gone out to bid

yet. Mr. Stycos responded that he didn't think so. She asked Mr. Stycos to keep the committee informed on this project. Mr. Nero clarified that he heard today that it is going out to bid for a June construction.

Mr. Lombardi stated that recently he read with some disdain an article in the paper about this entire process that is called budget balancing and Caruolo action with regard to all these financial issues that come before the committee. An elected official used the word irresponsible on the committee's part, and he took issue with that. This body works very hard. They may not agree all the time on all of the issues, but they work very hard at the numbers. The Caruolo action is indicative of the dire situation they are in this year with \$3.8 million as they undertake the task. That number is a real number as everyone on the committee knows. The artificial dates that are set by law create when and where they have to ask for that money. So, there was nothing irresponsible on their part in asking for that money when they asked. As they go forward, he hoped the general public realizes that the situation is even more dire as they approach the 2008-2009 budget as they saw from the Superintendent's presentation. He takes issue with people using their words loosely about the tasks undertaken by this body.

Mr. Traficante elaborated on Mr. Lombardi's comments. He asked the public to keep in mind how the committee reached that particular number and why they are in that

particular position. The Superintendent proposed a budget of \$131 million for the current year. Because of state law, the committee had to reach the 5% cap which was reduced to \$129 million. That is the budget that the committee adopted and sent to the City Council and to the Mayor. The Mayor proposed a budget of \$125 million, a \$4 million difference. The City Council gave the school department \$900,000 more than the Mayor. In addition to that, the Council gave the district \$466,000 for textbooks out of the sale of the Cranston Police Station. That did not happen; therefore, the committee had to absorb that additional \$466,000. So, in actuality, all they received from the City Council was the additional \$900,000. The gap there was \$3.1 million. Then the State stepped in and reduced the proposed state aid of \$1.1 million. There is the \$4 million problem. That is how it existed; the committee did not create it; it was created by the City Council by not appropriating any money after raising taxes almost \$7 million during the current year; and the school department got basically nothing. That is why they are in the position today.

Mr. Lombardi added that the school department is now facing that if the committee gets everything they ask for they are still facing an \$8 million short fall. While they undertake this task to try to balance this budget or present a budget that the committee presents to the City Council for 2008-2009, he assured the public, and he didn't mean to

speak for his colleagues, on behalf of all his colleagues he didn't think that any of them would happily make the presentations or the cuts that they were going to propose to be made to this; but the fact of the matter is that they need to make up \$8 million next year if they get everything they ask for this year. The task is not an easy one and certainly not one they embrace.

Mr. Traficante told the public to keep in mind that the most that they can get from the City this year is 5% which is approximately \$4.2 million or \$4.3 million. The Superintendent proposed a budget, and rightfully so, of \$12 million to move this school department forward. They cannot send a budget over to the City Council of more than 5% which means that the proposed budget by the Superintendent is 9% over that cap which equates to \$8 million. That is if they get the \$4.2 or \$4.3 million from the City Council for next year's budget. Whatever they don't get from them is added to the \$8 million. The committee has an awesome task before them of reducing this proposed budget for the next year. There is also a budget crisis in the current year that the committee is dealing with the Mayor and the City Council, and hopefully they will be successful; they don't know at this point in time.

VII. Public Hearing

a. Students (Agenda/Non-agenda Items)

b. Members of the Public (Agenda Matters Only)

There were no students who wished to speak on agenda or non-agenda items.

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Janice Ruggieri, 45 Overhill Drive – She told the committee that she went through the entire budget this weekend, and she had some questions and comments. She recently heard that the students from Johnston who attend the Career and Technical Center in Cranston will be moving to the Lincoln Vocational School. She asked if this would have any impact on the budget. In response, Mr. Scherza said that if in fact it happens it would have an effect on the budget because it will reduce the district's revenues. Right now they have been planning, as they have for years, on getting a certain number of students from Johnston to attend the Career and Technical School. If they stop coming here, it means the revenue also doesn't come. It would be a negative impact on the district. However, he clarified that there is no plan for the students from Johnston to go to Davies which is in Lincoln. That is a bill that was submitted and pending in the Legislature. It is the same bill that has been there the last four years as well.

Mrs. Ruggieri asked if the committee knew when it would find out about the sewerage tax that was waived last year. Mr. Scherza responded that they were hoping that they would have been notified

by now, but they will remind the City administration again.

Mrs. Ruggieri stated that she understood that there are multiple problems with the budget. She would like a breakdown with regard to those that are state related such as the artificial dates for the budget; the private school textbooks where the district pays for them versus the schools paying for them themselves; versus city problems which would not be funding the schools; the money lost from not selling the police station. She would bug all of her state representatives to find out what can be done at that level. Mr. Scherza responded that he could pull some of the general pieces, but it would be difficult to get a breakdown. She asked the committee to look at some positions from the top down. She referred to the Energy Czar and noted that there is a salary account of \$74,000 when it is something that a foreman or senior custodian could write down at each school if the lists included shutting down or shutting off certain things. Mr. Scherza stated that it is understood if that is the perception that it could be handled at that level. The energy person is highly trained, and it is by contract with a company; and the company has assured the district by contract that they would save X number of dollars over time. The salary comes from the cost avoidance in the monies saved to that point. That has to be earned, and part of the salary is incentive laden.

In the contract with this outside company, the school department over a number of years will receive several hundred dollars of benefits to that in cost avoidance.

Mrs. Ruggieri noted that Bain and Western Hills had really large increases in their electric bills for next year. Considering that they are getting rid of the portables at Western Hills that cost \$10,000 per portable for utilities, she asked why there would be a \$27,000 increase in the electric bills.

Mrs. Ruggieri referred to page 192 of the proposed budget and noted that there was a \$4.8 million for admin medical insurance and asked for an explanation. Mr. Balducci

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explained that this since the school district is self-insured he has to budget for health and dental for all employees. They assumed an 11% increase in health costs for next year and a 7% increase in dental costs for next year. That is one of the accounts that the School Committee was forced to cut this year to bring the district in line with the cap as Mr. Traficante mentioned earlier. That line item in the budget was shorted by approximately \$1.1 million. Going from a budget to budget standpoint, already this year's numbers are lower by \$1.1 million. If he adds \$1.1 million back to this year's budget and then does a comparison, it is not \$4.8 million but rather \$3.7 million, and that is based on the assumptions. He is hoping that the assumptions will be much lower when they receive the actual rate increases by the carriers. Mr. Scherza commented that the public will see this throughout the budget in a number of areas on the fixed

costs items where they were under budgeted last year because they had to cut and just projecting forward as to what the real costs would be based on the use of kilowatt hours, gallons, etc., they will see an increase over last year because the last few budgets were under funded. He is trying to give a more accurate picture and at the same time level funding on the same amount of usage.

Mrs. Ruggieri referred to the health insurance and indicated that at the last meeting there was a question about United Health Care costing a lot less. She asked if there has been any clarification on that issue. Mr. Lombardi responded that it is his understanding that there is a 50% reduction by going to United Health next year according to Mr. Balducci. That is an item for negotiations for all the contracts when they come up for discussion. He further commented that he had asked about the inconsistency in the electricity bills at the middle schools and Cranston East and Cranston West. Mr. Balducci wrote a memo explaining it, and he was sure that she could get a copy of it. He is projecting only based on 06-07 actual dollars. Those numbers will be tweaked in accordance with the energy conservation program.

Mr. Stycos commented that the 50% difference was between the administrative charge for the state contract and the administrative charge that the district pays for Blue Cross. The committee doesn't know for sure whether or not they can get that state contract price. Mr. Balducci said that United Health came right out of the gate when

they settled with the State in making that offer to all municipalities and school districts. Three years ago when the first contract was settled with the state, they did offer it with some modifications comparing the district's current plan, the specifics of this plan versus the state's. For the most part, it was going to be about the \$23 to \$28 per head admin charge. Mr. Stycos asked if this offer holds good, and Mr. Balducci said that administration met with the representative from United Health approximately two weeks ago, and the offer still stands.

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VIII. Consent Calendar / Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consists of the following: Resolution No.'s 08-2-1, 08-2-2 with addendum, 08-2-3, 08-2-4 with addendum, 08-2-5, 08-2-6 with addendum, 08-2-7, 08-2-8 with addendum, 08-2-9 with addendum, 08-2-10, 08-2-11, 08-2-12, 08-2-14, and 08-2-16.

ADMINISTRATION

PERSONNEL

NO. 08-2-1 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed for the remainder of the 2007-2008 school year:

Billiegene Lavallo, salary to be at the second step plus MAT of the prevailing salary schedule

Education – Salem State University, BS; Southern New Hampshire University, MS

Experience – Pawtucket School Department

Certification – Secondary Business

Assignment – Cranston High School West, Business, 1.0 FTE

Effective Date of Employment – February 5, 2008

Authorization – Replacement

Fiscal Note: 12611012 512100

NO. 08-2-2 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

Robert Rakovic General Subject Matter, K-12

Liliana Chece Special Education, Elementary/Middle School

Crystal Moynihan Special Education, Middle/Secondary

Leann Nelson Elementary

Hilary Greaves Elementary

NO. 08-2-3 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified staff member be granted a leave of absence without compensation as provided in Article XIX, Section B of the Master Agreement between the Cranston School Committee and the Cranston Teachers' Alliance:

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Mary-Ellen Russell, Teacher

Elementary

Effective Dates: September 2008 to September 2009

NO. 08-2-4 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the retirement of the following certified personnel be accepted:

Carol Bicknell, Teacher

Bain Middle School

Effective Date: June 30, 2008

Glen Dewell, Teacher

Bain Middle School

Effective Date: June 30, 2008

NO. 08-2-5 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the

Superintendent, the resignation of the following certified personnel be accepted:

Craig Schmidt, Teacher

Park View Middle School

Effective Date: June 30, 2008

NO. 08-2-6 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following individuals be reappointed as athletic coaches:

Cranston High School East

Robert Bouchard Head Boys' Outdoor Track

Michael Rachiele Head Girls' Fastpitch Softball

Robert LaBanca Head Girls' Outdoor Track

Scott Maynard Assistant Girls' Lacrosse

Howard Chun Head Girls Lacrosse

Cranston High School West

Rob Malo Head Baseball

Corey Capirchio Assistant Baseball

Jeff Smith Head Girls' Fastpitch

Dave Kenneally Assistant Girls' Fastpitch

James Lucas Assistant Boys' Tennis

Dave Barr Head Boys' Outdoor Track

Shelia Lagasse Head Girls' Outdoor Track

Park View Middle School

Victor Caldarone Head Baseball

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Western Hills Middle School

Dina Cesana Head Coed Outdoor Track

Joseph Splendorio Head Baseball

NO. 08-2-7 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignation of the following coaches be accepted:

Kelly Starliper Morris, Head Girls' Field Hockey

Cranston High School East

Effective Date: January 14, 2008

Peter Zanfagna, Head Junior Varsity Baseball

Cranston High School East

Effective Date: January 28, 2008

Michele Giardina, Head Coach Coed Track

Bain Middle School

Effective Date: January 29, 2008

NO. 08-2-8 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified employees be appointed:

Michelle Coutu, Teacher Assistant

Glen Hills School

Effective Date of Employment: January 28, 2008

Authorization: Replacement

Fiscal Note: 12832032 519500

Brittany Sandbergen, After School Instructor

Gladstone School/Bain Middle School

Effective Date of Employment: January 7, 2008

Authorization: Replacement

Fiscal Note: 51719111 511360

Brian New, After School Instructor

Bain Middle School

Effective Date of Employment: January 9, 2008

Authorization: Replacement

Fiscal Note: 53115111 511360

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Rachel Bousquet, Teacher Assistant

Park View Middle School

Effective Date of Employment: February 11, 2008

Authorization: New

Fiscal Note: 12332032 519500

Kimberly Branch, Bus Monitor

Transportation

Effective Date of Employment: February 11, 2008

Authorization: Replacement

Fiscal Note: 14347518 518600

NO. 08-2-9 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

SECRETARY

Denise Fonseca

BUS DRIVER

Amanda Caruso

CUSTODIAN

Rick Breedon

NO. 08-2-10 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignation of the following non-certified personnel be accepted:

**Gia Garzone, Teacher Assistant
Horton School**

NO. 08-2-11 - Whereas, there may be more qualified individuals who will apply for current positions, and

Whereas, certain positions became available after the teacher selection of July 25, 2007, and more senior teachers may elect to occupy these positions under Article XVI of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and

Whereas, funding for certain positions is not assured for the 2008-2009 school year, and as a result, more senior teachers could elect to take a current position, and

Whereas, positions occupied by retirees must be posted each year, and

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Whereas, there may be changes in student distribution, and as a result, more senior teachers may take a current position, and

Whereas, positions must now be made available for more senior

teachers who are scheduled to return from leave, and

Whereas, because of these concerns, and in accordance with Title 16 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, the Superintendent has recommended that the employment of certain teachers be terminated at the end of the 2007-2008 school year, and

Whereas, the Superintendent has sent prior notice to said teachers informing them of the specific reasons for their termination, and

Whereas, the Committee has provided said teachers with the opportunity to be heard in Executive Session regarding their termination,

Be it RESOLVED that said teachers be terminated at the close of the school year under provisions of Title 16 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode island, and

Be it further RESOLVED that the Superintendent notify those teachers of the Committee's action to terminate their employment.

GRANTS

NO. 08-2-12 - RESOLVED, that the Cranston Public Schools submit the following grants:

Donors Choose

Increasing Reading through Sports, Books and Internet \$ 402.00

Magazines

Horton Program

Donors Choose Continued

RTI for Everyone \$ 548.00

Horton Program

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts

Artist in Residence Performance Enriched Projects \$6,000.00

Horton Program

Rhode Island Positive Educational Partnership (RIPEP)

Connecting Families Part I \$5,000.00

Kid Venture, Gladstone Elementary School

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Summer Bridge \$5,000.00

Kid Venture, Gladstone Elementary School

BUSINESS

NO. 08-2-14 - RESOLVED, that the following purchases through Grants be approved:

**Ice Machine for the Cranston Area Career & Technical Center
Culinary**

Program in the amount of \$3,320 (Perkins Grant funding).

Number of bids issued 10

Number of bids received 3

POLICY AND PROGRAM

No. 08-2-16 - RESOLVED, that Policy No. 4213, Non-Certified Supervisory and Confidential Employee Policy, as amended be approved for second and final reading.

Moved by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Ms. Iannazzi and unanimously carried that these resolutions be adopted.

Mr. Scherza commented that under the consent agenda, there are two retirements. He would be remiss if he did not acknowledge these people because between the two individuals they have devoted sixty years to the children of Cranston Public Schools. Mr. Glenn Dewell who since receiving his degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Engineering in 1972, has been with the Cranston Public Schools at Bain Middle School since 1974. The other individual who has been a long-time teacher at Bain Middle School is Ms. Carol Bicknell who spent the last twenty-seven in a Family and Consumer

Science position serving the students of Cranston. The district just doesn't lose that kind of experience and that kind of talent without saying that they will be missed.

Mr. Traficante asked that Resolution No. 08-2-15 be taken first.

IX. Action Calendar / Action Agenda

NO. 08-2-15 - RESOLVED, that Policy No. 5113, Student Attendance for Middle and High School, and accompanying regulations be amended for first reading.

Moved by Mr. Lombardi and seconded by Ms. Iannazzi that this Resolution be adopted.

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Ms. Iannazzi stated that she had voted against the high school policy for reasons that she stated at the time. There was a note of caution expressed to her by the Truancy Team about the ten point reduction. Since then she has had an opportunity along with Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway to visit the Truancy Court on numerous occasions to see the frustration of both the assistant principals dealing with Truancy Court and the Magistrate dealing with Truancy Court come to

a boil over the ten point reduction. She doesn't think the ten point reduction is working as far as students involved in the Truancy Court. She doesn't see the feasibility of extending it to middle school. She doesn't understand how the district can hold 12 and 13 year old accountable for getting themselves to school on time every day. That is the job of their parent; they are still children, and once again she urged her colleagues to vote against this policy.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway commented that she shares Ms. Iannazzi's concern about extending this policy to the middle school level students. She did support the policy for the high school level, and she had stated her reasons at the time. For the middle school, it is not wise. She believes the same way that Ms. Iannazzi does that at this age this type of penalty for a child would not be effective for several reasons. First of all, a student cannot get himself or herself to school on his or her own. At that age to expect a pre-teen or a teen to have to basically become an adult for some purposes is off base. It would be punitive and it wouldn't address the real reasons why middle schoolers miss a lot of school. There could be a number of things going on in the child's life. She and Ms. Iannazzi had the opportunity to speak with the administrative team as well as some of the other people who counsel the students at that age, and typically what they have seen, at least from their visits, is that the middle school moves pretty quickly to address what is causing troublesome absences. They try to address the problems, and often there are other things going on in the child's life. They are not skipping out to

have a cup of coffee which is what is seen a lot at the high school level, or someone is a good student and doesn't want to go to school for a couple of days; and their grades really won't suffer. There are a lot of things that can go on at the higher levels, and the more mature children are accountable, and it is acceptable to have a stronger penalty. She will not support this policy in this form. It won't be helpful, and it will hurt the students.

Mr. Lombardi remarked that he also supported this policy with respect to the high schools. The rationale for applying this kind of a policy for high school students does not fit in the middle school setting. He will be voting against it as well.

Mr. Archetto stated that when this first came before the committee, he spoke against the ten point reduction in a student's grade point average. He will vote against this policy to extend it to the middle school. It is unfair for twelve and thirteen year old children to be restricted by these rules and penalties.

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Ms. Iannazzi asked Mr. Nero if a committee could be formed to study this policy. She has asked Ms. Striano, and she is interested. She has spoken with Ms. Wagner as well. The committee should get

some of the high school assistant principals involved in the process as well.

Mr. Lombardi remarked that with regard to the exams in this policy, it states that if a student is absent and administration has not been contacted in advance, the student would not be given a make-up exam and would receive a grade of zero. He could think of some extenuating circumstances in that regard where a student is on his way to school and gets into a car accident and no one has contacted the administration at the school. The exam policy should be re-visited as well.

Mr. Traficante suggested that rather than deny the policy tonight, he would move to table it for further study.

Moved by Ms. Iannazzi, seconded by Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway and unanimously carried that this Resolution be tabled for further discussion.

NO. 08-2-13 - RESOLVED, that the 2008-2009 Operating Budget, as recommended by the Superintendent, be approved.

Moved by Ms. Iannazzi and seconded by Mr. Lombardi that this Resolution be adopted.

Ms. Iannazzi referred to page 181 of the proposed budget. She moved

to amend the elimination of the Career and Technical Center mechanical tech position in the amount of \$22,445.

Mr. Lombardi explained that this represents a position placed in the budget in error since the Automotive Program was eliminated by the committee.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Traficante turned the Chair over to Ms. Iannazzi.

Mr. Stycos referred to page 143 of the proposed budget and explained that this is the Asset Protection Account.

Mr. Stycos moved to reduce this account from \$410,775 to \$50,000 for a savings of \$360,775. He explained that as the committee saw in the backup information this is mostly money for cafeteria tables and the paving of parking areas. He felt that the district could do without those things in the coming year. He is leaving \$50,000 in there because something might come up. It may be in the future that the committee will want to go back as they get further down the line to cut that \$50,000 also.

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Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway seconded the motion.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Traficante moved to reduce the proposed salary line item to include a reduction in certified and non-certified pension, Workers Compensation, and payroll taxes in the amount of \$2,395,037.

Mr. Lombardi seconded the motion.

Mr. Traficante indicated to Mr. Balducci that the committee was requesting a breakdown. He asked for the approximate estimate of what the pension decreases, Workers Compensation, and payroll taxes would be. Mr. Balducci stated that he would furnish this information in Friday's update.

Mr. Stycos referred to page 190 of the proposed budget and noted the amount of \$1.2 million, and the proposed amendment is in the amount of \$2.3 million. Mr. Balducci responded that he would address the difference in the amounts. This number reflects all the associated costs with the projected raise. This amount includes all bargaining units from administrators to custodial bargaining units.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Ms. Iannazzi returned the Chair to Mr. Traficante.

Ms. Iannazzi referred to page 194 of the proposed budget and moved to eliminate the salary for a special education director at a salary of \$95,498.50 and a benefit package of \$24,150 which was the benefit analysis given to the committee last year. The total savings would be \$119,648.50.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway seconded the motion.

Ms. Iannazzi clarified that this amendment is for one special education director position.

Mr. Stycos stated that this line item includes three directors and two assistant directors. He asked Ms. Iannazzi if her proposal was that it would have to be a director or the administration could pick whether it was a director or an assistant director. Ms. Iannazzi responded that her proposal is for one position adding up to that amount of money.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

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Ms. Iannazzi commented that there has been a lot of talk throughout this entire budget process about how the city and schools can

consolidate the services that they provide together.

In order to expedite that process, she was proposing the elimination of a position in the Personnel Office. She referred to page 197, the Director of Human Resources, at a salary of \$74,137 and the corresponding benefit package.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway seconded the motion.

Mr. Archetto asked for the total of the associated benefits for this position, and Mr. Balducci responded that he would have to calculate the benefits.

This Amendment was adopted with Mr. Archetto, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Stycos, and Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway in favor. Mr. Lombardi and Mr. Traficante were opposed.

Mr. Stycos moved to eliminate in the budget the three middle school assistant principals from the three accounts in the three middle schools. This is as a result of moving the 6th grade back to the elementary schools. He made it clear that this would not specify a specific person or three specific people but rather that those three positions would be de-funded in the budget, and the administration would have to make the choice of the people involved.

Ms. Iannazzi seconded the motion.

Mr. Lombardi indicated to Mr. Stycos that this is to mirror what the committee has done in moving the 6th graders back to the elementary schools, and Mr. Stycos said this was correct. According to Mr. Nero's figures, it is \$363,000 in savings. Mr. Balducci added that the administration is coming up with the overall savings on the restructuring of the middle school which again a piece of that calculation is what he discussed. He wasn't sure if the committee wanted to identify that savings now or wait for the overall picture on the restructuring of the middle school. Mr. Traficante stated that he didn't see a problem. Even though the committee makes the cut this evening, when Mr. Nero gives his report on the middle school situation, he can mention the fact that that cut was previously made and the savings were incurred.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Stycos referred to page 161 of the proposed budget, new computers. He indicated that this is another item where he wants to reduce it. He is not wedded to the amount. He was open to an amendment.

Mr. Stycos moved to cut this amount to \$100,000, saving \$116,100, with the thought in mind that the committee may have to go back and cut it some more in the future. Mr. Scherza asked Mr. Stycos if he was referring to the technical equipment, and Mr. Stycos said that he was. Mr. Laliberte asked if it was part of the State Aid Tech Set Aside.

He explained that this money is received from the State, and the State tells the district how to spend it. Mr. Scherza responded that it is Technology Set Aside under Article 31 or Article 18, and it is provided by the State. Mr. Stycos asked if it was state money, and Mr. Scherza responded that it is a categorical piece just as Literacy Set Aside is, Technology, Professional Development set asides that are earmarked by the State. The school district does not have leeway to spend them in any other areas operationally. Mr. Stycos asked how the district could anticipate a \$26,000 increase given that the Governor is saying he is going to level fund the district. Mr. Balducci referred Mr. Stycos to the revenue page of the budget. Under the set aside identified for technology, it is \$245,122. Mr. Stycos asked why the item in the budget is only \$216,000, and Mr. Balducci responded that this is one of the areas where the set aside is spent. It could be some peripherals attached to those state aid dollars as well. As the Superintendent mentioned, this is the bulk of the set aside dollars where it is spent.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway asked if this was state money or federal money coming through the state. Mr. Scherza explained that this is state money coming to the district. The reason it is not the full

amount is because it also provides some professional development in the technological area as well as some other small peripheral pieces that go along with the computers. It is 100% aid.

Mr. Stycos withdrew his motion. Ms. Iannazzi withdrew her second.

Mr. Lombardi stated that in the School Committee's packet they received a priority list for textbooks in response to one of Mr. Stycos's questions. He asked Mr. Laliberte to elaborate to attach an absolutely necessary label to any of those textbooks labeled 1 through 8.

Mr. Laliberte explained that with regard to the grade 6-8 science textbooks the district begins science assessments this year, and they did need new science textbooks. They were planning on replacing grades 6 through 8. Now that the 6th grade is going back, they need at least to begin in 6th grade and build up into 7th and 8th grades. He would recommend highly because of the new science assessment that the district first purchase at least grade 6. The Read 180 is more or less a matter of equity. The district has provided Cranston East, Bain, and Park View with the Read 180 series for the students who are reading three or more years below grade level. They also have students at Western Hills and West who are reading three years below grade level, and they want to provide them with the same level of instruction. The Reading Street materials are additional materials that the district may have to purchase for the students at the

elementary level. He had put aside \$10,000; it is not a lot, but it does provide the

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district with extra textbooks they may need for students at that level. With regard to the geometry textbooks, one of the things they did this year at the high school is they started using the same textbook in the modified geometry class, and they found the students have risen to the occasion, and they are actually doing as well as the students in the general geometry class. He would like to purchase the books needed and replace the modified geometry text. The social studies books and the English trade books are texts that probably, if they had to, could wait another year to get them. The committee should know that the social studies text he is talking about would be replacements they may need, and the English trade books are to keep the students in up-to-date literature. Although they have been trying to replace the music textbooks for five years, he did put that lower on the priority list. However, he would have to place it first on the priority list if they were to use that money for the grade 6 Reading Street materials. It happens that it comes out to approximately the same. It was \$156,000 for music texts, and it will cost \$154,000 approximately for grade 6 reading books. Mr. Nero added that this was part of the proposal that they would be using Reading Street in 6th grade with the reconfiguration at \$154,000. Mr. Laliberte went on to explain that the last one low on the list but still important because it keeps kids

making a connection to their real world is social studies magazine subscriptions. It is something they could use, but if they have to go without it for one year they could; they could use the newspaper. Mr. Lombardi commented to Mr. Laliberte that he would be cutting \$19,000 out of a \$544,000 line item.

Mr. Stycos asked Mr. Laliberte to repeat his rationale for the music textbooks. Mr. Laliberte stated that they could put that off for another year, but they also have as part of moving the 6th grade back, they have to purchase a reading series for the 6th grade. In order to do that, it balances out the music text. He would put off the music text for another year in order to purchase the reading textbook for grade 6 which is not on this list. Mr. Lombardi said that he thought he just heard Mr. Nero say that the \$156,000 was part of the plan to bring the 6th graders back to elementary school. Mr. Laliberte responded that it was. The textbook list was generated prior to the vote to keeping the 6th grade at elementary. It was not part of this original textbook plan.

Mr. Traficante turned the Chair over to Ms. Iannazzi.

Mr. Traficante stated to Mr. Laliberte that he was in unfamiliar territory and to correct him if he was wrong. They had a discussion regarding these programs as well, and they are three excellent programs dealing with the special needs population; that is, the Sanders Program, the Horton Program, and the Special Services Center

Program which is the Pre-School Integrated Program. Mr. Traficante indicated that Mr. Laliberte told him that at present there are twenty students at the Sanders Program, and he informed Mr. Traficante that this population can be increased by an additional student. Mr. Laliberte responded that they have nineteen, and the most they can take is twenty; so they can increase it by one student. Mr. Traficante stated that each time they take a

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student back, that is a cost avoidance for the school department, so they can increase it by one student. He asked what the savings or the cost avoidance would be if they did that, and Mr. Laliberte said it would be approximately \$50,000. Mr. Traficante commented that the Horton Program is another great program, and there are presently eleven students there. He indicated that Mr. Laliberte informed him that this program could be increased to sixteen without adding additional staff by bringing some of the students back from out-of-district placement. He asked what this would save the school department in cost avoidance, and Mr. Laliberte responded that for every student brought back it would be approximately \$59,000. Mr. Traficante commented that this is approximately \$300,000. Mr. Traficante stated at the Special Services Center, they have the Early Childhood Integrated Program. He further said that Mr. Laliberte informed him that they have ten special needs students there, and they can increase that population to twenty. There are also eighteen

general education students in that program, and that could be increased to forty. That is an additional twenty-two students. He asked what the cost avoidance would be if they reached max in that particular area. Mr. Laliberte responded that to place the students with IEP's would cost the district approximately \$280,000, and the district would generate this. The general education parents pay to send their students to this program. They pay \$75.00 a week which totals \$2,850.00 per child or \$114,000 per year generated.

Mr. Traficante stated that in terms of the Sanders Program, they could possibly save approximately \$50,000; in the Horton Program they could save approximately \$300,000; and in the special needs category of the Integrated Program they could save approximately \$280,000; and in the general education \$114,000. Mr. Traficante said that he would not make a motion this evening until he understood it a little better. He requested further information from Mr. Balducci as to what the cost avoidance would be and what they could generate to reduce the line item as well.

Mr. Stycos asked why this was done this year, and he suspected the answer might be that students they want to bring back don't match the program they have. In addition to the numbers, he is looking for some kind of realistic estimate of whether or not these children exist to bring back. Mr. Laliberte responded that they can't generate them if they don't exist. They do have other programs for example at Stone Hills School where there is an integrated setting. As far as reaching

out, the district needs to reach out to the community earlier in order to advertise. In fact, the advertisement should be going out shortly to advertise the program on the east side. They advertised on the west side for Stone Hill School; they need to advertise on the east side so that they can draw more general education parents to pay and fill the forty positions that are available. Mr. Traficante asked that the district put on a PR push for these programs because they are excellent programs, and parents really get their money's worth. There is savings here of approximately three quarters of a million dollars. It is very important especially at this time and place. Mr. Laliberte commented that something they have not done is they have not gone to other communities, but they have come to Cranston. For
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example, Warwick came to Cranston with a student and they want to pay to have a student go to Horton. They are able to do those kinds of things, and they have done it in the past at Sanders where they took a student from Pawtucket, and the district can take students where they don't have a program. Many times it may be for a portion of the year because a district doesn't have a program to suit the student. The district can do that, but it hasn't been done as a real outreach to other communities. Mr. Traficante asked Mr. Laliberte to put his best foot forward regarding this issue; it is very critical.

Mr. Lombardi commented that one of the things he learned through

this Caruolo process is that certain items are rather obvious in being cut when going to a Caruolo action. Although he regrets doing it because it is important to the youngsters, the committee was told several times that middle school sports has been deemed to be an extension of community recreation and not an integral part of education. If one were to go hypothetically to a Caruolo action with middle school sports in place, that would be one of the things they would immediately cut. Unlike high school sports, middle school sports has been deemed rather unimportant. Nonetheless, according to a memo, it is a savings of approximately \$119,210.

Mr. Traficante turned the Chair over to Ms. Iannazzi.

Mr. Lombardi moved to eliminate middle school sports.

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway asked for clarification. She asked if they were discussing only Western Hills because she understands that Park View and Bain have a somewhat different setup for their sports programs. She asked if they do more intramural. Mr. Scherza responded that when the committee had omitted middle school sports the year before last, all the schools ran an intramural program.

Right now all three schools have middle school interscholastic sports. Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway asked if Bain, Park View, and Western Hills all run similarly structured programs as are called classic middle

school sports, and Mr. Scherza responded that they do. Mr. Lombardi said that all three schools make up the \$119,000.

Mr. Stycos stated that he didn't think he could support this at this time. He may be convinced when the committee gets closer to the \$8 million. He felt that it is a very important program for kids. He would vote no at this time but not because at some point when they get closer to the \$8 million. Mr. Lombardi added that his motion is from a Caruolo conservation standpoint; it is not something he really wants but something the Caruolo experts are telling the committee is unimportant.

This Amendment failed with Mr. Archetto, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Stycos, and Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway opposed; Mr. Lombardi and Mr. Traficante were in favor.

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Mr. Stycos stated that the committee received a breakdown of the health insurance costs, and he believed that what was done was the consultant estimated an 11% increase as an initial estimate. He believed the consultant said to go with 11% for now. He asked when the committee should expect the consultant to come in with a firmer number. Mr. Balducci responded that he is hoping to hear it from the carriers around the beginning of March which is the time frame when they have been told the actual rate increases will come out for next

year. Part of the role of the consultant is to review the data presented by the carriers to make sure that their calculations appear correct. Mr. Stycos commented that the district used its claim experience so far this year, and if the claims experience is steady throughout the year based on a number of months this year, this will be the claims for this year and then 11% was added to that number. Then there was an increase of \$200,000 in the estimate of the incurred but not reported of \$200,000. Mr. Balducci sent the committee a memo on Friday about this, and the IBNR amount two years ago and last year, and one year it was over by \$262,000 and then last year it was over by \$324,000 but in the projection Mr. Balducci estimated to add \$200,000 to the IBNR figure. He doesn't understand why if they under spent that amount for two years in a row why would they add \$200,000 to it. Mr. Balducci responded that there are two figures on the memo. One is the IBNR liability as calculated by the carriers, and the other one is the reserve amount of money that he is supposed to keep aside to fund those IBNR claims. Right now there is more in reserve than actually needed as of the end of last year by about \$300,000 so it is cumulative to the good by approximately \$300,000. The amount of money that was budgeted in this year's budget, as part of the review by the consultants, they see that he is ahead by approximately \$300,000. So, in their analysis, they are saying that he doesn't need the \$200,000 this year. They are talking about last year, and he doesn't know what will happen at the end of this year. He won't know that until this summer. He is about \$200,000 short in available monies this year. Mr. Stycos commented that Mr. Balducci started

the year last year \$300,000 ahead, and Mr. Balducci commented that he won't know where he is going to end up at the end of this year. If it goes up \$250,000, he is still okay, but now he is projecting where he is going to be one year from now which he won't know until the summer of 2009. That is his concern. Right now he may spend some of that \$300,000 at the end of this year, and he is putting some money aside anticipating that he is going to need some of that next year. Mr. Stycos stated that it didn't increase from 2005 to 2006, and Mr. Balducci is now projecting an increase of \$1/2 million. Mr. Balducci said that \$300,000 of this he doesn't need because they have the funds available. He is more concerned with a year from now and where he will be one year from now. The consultant will be attending one of the School Committee meetings, and that is a question that can be posed to him. That is part of his role to assist the committee and administration. He believed the consultant will meet with the committee on March 12th. He can e-mail the consultant tomorrow to make this a part of his presentation. Mr. Stycos asked how March 12th fits in with passing a budget on February 25th. He asked what the projection is for the health care to go up this year. Mr. Balducci responded that he believed it was going up 2% to 3% from last year to this

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year. Mr. Stycos stated that he didn't know where the \$200,000 comes from other than being a number out of the air. He asked why

given that it actually decreased a few thousand dollars from 2005-2006 to 2006-2007 if they increased it 2% and then 11% wouldn't they be more than safe. Mr. Balducci responded that he was not the health consultant. Mr. Stycos asked if the \$200,000 comes from the consultant, and Mr. Balducci responded that it was based on activity going back three years ago on where it jumped from four years ago to three years ago approximately. Mr. Stycos asked Mr. Balducci if he was doing a worse case scenario, and he said that he was. Mr. Balducci stated that he doesn't like surprises, and he didn't want to be in a position in the summer of 2009 to realize that he doesn't have sufficient dollars in the budget and that he will be hit with an approximate \$200,000 adjustment when he is anticipating breaking even or a small surplus, and then he is telling the committee that all of a sudden they are \$300,000 in the hole because of this situation. The district has to have sufficient dollars to accommodate those claims that are out there for the future.

Mr. Stycos stated that he wouldn't be making a motion on this, but he may at the next meeting.

Mr. Stycos stated that the next item that is added to the estimate is twenty additional family policies because that is the twenty retirees. He asked about the number of people who die during the year, and, therefore, are done with the health insurance or the number of people who switch over to Medicare. It seemed to him that the twenty figure is too high and should be a lower or net figure. He can't believe that

everyone has a family policy. There are three factors: What is the track record with the type of policy retirees purchase? Mr. Balducci responded that for the most part they purchase two individual plans. Mr. Votto added that the retiree gets an individual plan by the system, and they purchase an individual plan for their spouse. They pay for that plan out of their pocket. Mr. Stycos asked if the twenty payments for the spouses have been added to the revenue line. In response, Mr. Balducci said no; it is used as an offset. He would have to look at the calculation for the teacher retirements to see if it is built into that in savings. Mr. Stycos said that in the information Mr. Balducci sent to the committee the estimate for the teacher retirements was strictly salaries. Mr. Stycos asked if they should be able to half that number because they will be paying only for the individual coverage, and Mr. Balducci responded that they could. Mr. Stycos said the number is \$358,000, and the committee could reduce that number by \$179,000.

Mr. Archetto left the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Mr. Stycos moved to reduce the line item on page 192 at the top of the page, the top item, by \$179,000.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway seconded the motion.

This Resolution was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Stycos referred again to the health insurance and asked what the district's experience is on the number of people who go on to Medicare each year so that would be the number of retirees who drop off. His goal would be to come up with a realistic estimate of the number of people who will go on Medicare and then reduce that twenty to a number and the consequent savings there.

Ms. Iannazzi referred to page 191 and indicated that there is \$924,070 in new personnel.

Ms. Iannazzi moved to eliminate both of those line items. She stated that she realized that the committee received a memo explaining the reasons for hiring new personnel and that most of them had the word "mandate" next to them. But, it is her assessment that it is time for the administration to make up those positions within the existing budget without hiring new personnel. She proposed cutting the budget by \$924,070 which for the night would bring the savings up to \$4.4 million.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway seconded the motion.

Mr. Stycos stated that he is sympathetic to this because it is something new that we can do without. He asked the administration for their reaction to this amendment. Mr. Nero responded that in his

memo he stated that administration received a number of requests for personnel what may have been three times what they have now. In each and every case, he can look out to Mrs. Guttin in terms of the 1.5 positions they have that are needed. They need every one that is in there. There is no fluff in there; it is legitimate as to what they need. He asked if they can find other ways to do this, and in some cases they can squeeze by, but he tries to look at this in terms of mandates, contract regulations, etc. As they sat down as the executive team, they settled on the bare necessities needed.

Mr. Traficante commented that what Ms. Iannazzi was proposing that if some of these positions have to be retained the administration would have to find the monies somewhere else in the budget process.

Mr. Nero commented that when they were going through the 6th grade issue he had explained that the numbers were clear cut but no one knows what will happen as they go into a school year. As they know, there are situations where a student moves into a district or requires specific needs such as an IEP or there is a cluster of students where English is their second language, one doesn't know what will happen. No matter what the committee settles on, there will be needs mandated by the state or federal laws that will have to be taken care of. The folder he received from the principals for requests was very thick, and the administration reduced it to the bare necessities in every single position he placed in that memo.

Mr. Lombardi stated that this is exactly the kind of issue that makes this whole process an absurdity by trying to predict into the future. The committee is doing things with the cart before the horse. He would defer to the administration on their word and wouldn't support this amendment at this point. It is a timing issue for him.

Mr. Stycos stated that he is really torn on this issue. He further commented that tonight the committee approved two additional teacher aid positions because of changes that happened in the special education population on the consent agenda. He asked if this would affect either of these aid positions. Mr. Nero said that it would not affect them. These are a result of projected numbers for next year at the request of principals and directors. Any single one of these is tied to some increase in credits or an increase in mandates such as the Read 180 program to bring up the equity. He referred to the second page of his memo and noted that at present the teacher at the Career and Technical Center has been teaching this reading program, but they don't have any room in their schedule next year to do this so that is why they had to go with a 1.0 teacher there. The district can't go without a .4 FTE occupational therapist. In the planning room, they are trying to bring equity. One of the things Mr. Knowlton is trying to do at West is to bring some things into line which may be a savings to the district in the long run as they look at programs at both the AEP and the IAS Program to try to do them in house as in the

same similar fashion that Cranston East is doing it with their planning room. The bi-lingual para is another necessity.

Ms. Iannazzi wished to make it clear that she was not against the new positions as they are stated. Her proposal calls for, as an example, if administration wants to hire a new teacher assistant the administration should find a teacher assistant who currently is not as necessary as this new position to eliminate. Mr. Nero stated that some of these are tied to IEP's or the anticipation of IEP's as a student moves up from one grade to the next one or may be going into an inclusion setting versus a self-contained setting. Those are some of the things that administration has been trying to do as a district. Maybe they can find a way to manage it, but he could not guarantee it right now.

Mr. Stycos asked if there would be any value to amending Ms. Iannazzi's motion to direct the administration to come back to the School Committee with a proposal to cover these positions with existing personnel. Mr. Scherza responded that this is what the administration tried to do as an executive team. They spent many hours together and fought amongst themselves. These are the pieces that they feel are absolutely necessary especially those in ESL for the English language learners and the special needs related pieces. They have already provided for not having any teacher assistants that are not required by IEP's right now. What they see in here is what they will need to do to accomplish some of the things the

committee cut earlier especially in the special education area. As they are bringing intense needs students back, they have to create the capacity to deal with them so that they can make those savings. They can't have it both ways; they can't cut them out and at the same time bring students back and

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service them properly. He understood what Mr. Stycos was asking but he honestly didn't believe that administration could find them under the existing personnel especially in lieu of the magnitude of the cuts being made. Mr. Nero commented that the original number of requests from all principals and directors may have been four times what this amount is right now. There were requests from the principals of 12.5 staff members; from the coordinators 19.1 staff members; total staff members requested was 40.5 positions. There were a lot of requests, but administration narrowed it down to what they considered the bare essentials in terms of mandates.

Mr. Traficante stated that what upsets him is that the vocational school wants a .1 FTE teacher. He asked what area this is, and Mr. Nero said it is reading. He explained that when he was a principal his staff would cover a lot of the SRA programs within his own staff at the building, but as staff was cut back, cut back, and cut back, it became a situation where they couldn't do it. He will send a memo to Mr. Stycos on what fractional part of a full-time or part-time positions

they are not teaching. There isn't any extra teaching FTE's that they use to have that they can look in their building for now. Mr. Traficante pointed out that it is a state vocational school, but every year the committee keeps subsidizing it. The short fall this year is \$600,000, and the committee keeps adding the burden to themselves, and the state doesn't come to the plate.

Mr. Scherza asked to respond to Mr. Stycos's question on the proposed new positions. They know for Cranston High School West for two years in a row it missed its target in special education math. They know what they have to do to fix some of that, but yet if they keep cutting resources rather than adding the resources that have been identified to fix the position, it is unlikely that they will get a better result if they are doing the same thing or less than what they did last year. He was glad to say that Cranston High School East has come up in this area and has actually made the target for the first year. West needs some help in the math area; they will see that reflected here.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway stated that once again this state doesn't do its part, and the committee keeps cutting into areas that they shouldn't be cutting into. She is not saying that they should target these positions that seem to be quite necessary for the needs of some of the special needs population as well as the special education population as well as all these areas especially at the state career and tech which needs to be funded by the state. The committee needs to

do its job tonight to try to tackle areas and find savings so that they can provide the basics to a lot of other students who are not getting what they need either. This is where the committee has to draw the line. Not to target these positions is not saying that they are not needed. They are asking the administration to do the impossible task of going back to the drawing board again. They have to start shifting it back on the state and making them do their job. The committee is trying to do the best they can for all the students in this district, and they need to go home and face everyone in their family and everyone on their block just as administration does. She feels the committee should take a stand on this. The state

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needs to step up, and she is not saying that they should abandon these children, the needs, or the positions; but Ms. Iannazzi is on to something, and she is willing to take a stand on it tonight. It doesn't mean that the committee can't revisit it; it means that they need to take a stand, and they need to move.

Mr. Lombardi remarked that he read the memo the district received from the state. Apparently, the state has opened up its purse strings on mandates' applications for reimbursements, and he became excited when he learned that Cranston is eligible for approximately \$466,000. Unfortunately, there were eleven items of potential mandated reimbursements, and not one of them related to school

related matters. They all relate on the city side for firefighters, police, etc. The school district is not eligible for one penny for state reimbursement.

Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway stated that the committee needs to stand up and fight for all the students tonight. This might not look like it, but they need to take a stand.

Mr. Stycos asked Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway how her comments related to Ms. Iannazzi's proposal. Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway responded that what she is hearing is that all of these issues that come back to the committee are tied and targeted to mandated areas of needs that the district is supposed to be getting support from the state. If the students have special education and don't meet the math target, the district has to bring in someone else to address it. These students are absolutely entitled to it, but when there is a full-time position at the Career and Technical Center which is a state funded institution, and the state is not funding it. Chairman Traficante remarked earlier that there is \$600,000 that won't be funded by the state, and it all ties into the picture. If many of these new positions are tied into mandates, once again the state is burying the district with the committee having to come forward with their own revenues and drain off yet again from the every day typical classroom needs, and it is hurting all the students.

Mr. Stycos stated that he agreed with Mr. Lombardi. He would vote

against it at this point. It may be that the committee will have to address it again in the future.

This Amendment was adopted with Ms. Iannazzi, Mrs. Tocco-Greenaway, and Mr. Traficante in favor; Mr. Lombardi and Mr. Stycos were opposed.

Mr. Stycos referred to the dental account and noted that there is the same situation where the committee voted to make the \$179,000 cut in the health insurance because they were projecting twenty family plans when they were going to pay for twenty individual. The same condition exists with the Delta Dental account.

Mr. Stycos referred to page 192 and stated that there is an estimate for twenty family plans at a cost of \$22,784.

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Mr. Stycos moved to reduce this amount, \$22,784, by \$11,392.

Ms. Iannazzi seconded the motion.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Stycos referred to page 190, the Administrative Performance

Account. He indicated that the committee eliminated all the pay raises in the budget, but there is this one left that wasn't addressed.

Mr. Stycos moved to zero that account out by reducing it by \$7,496.

Mr. Balducci stated that the \$2.3 million included that as well.

Mr. Stycos withdrew his motion.

Mr. Stycos stated that the 6th grades have been moved out of the middle schools, and this creates some physical room in the middle schools. He asked administration to come up with a rough plan on closing the Sprague Avenue Center and moving that into one of the three middle schools. He would like to know whether or not it is feasible. He knows that there has been a lot of discussion about Park View where the rooms in the basement are small, and they would be good for special education. This may be a good opportunity for that.

Mr. Laliberte stated that they may have some difficulty doing that because there are some regulations involving what has to be in place for children of that age one of which is bathrooms that have to be at their size, and they have to have a certain number of them per classroom. That may preclude them from doing something like this.

Mr. Stycos hoped that Mr. Laliberte could put together a proposal where the district would save a certain amount of money, but they would have to install bathrooms at a certain cost with the net savings reflected. Mr. Scherza said that they will look at it. He knows there

are Kindergartens and pre-schools have to be on certain levels and can't be on second floors. Handicapped accessibility is another concern.

Mr. Traficante asked Mr. Stycos to keep in mind that no matter what building it may be the city has the option upon selling it that the district may or may not get the money.

Mr. Balducci stated that thus far \$4,451,708 has been cut from the proposed budget.

Mr. Stycos referred to page 147 of the proposed budget. This is the line item for the position of PDI Coordinator. This position was established a number of years ago, and it is a half-time teacher who coordinates professional development for the teachers. He feels the district did okay as a district before they had this position, and the district is in

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pretty bad shape and ought to concentrate its resources on the classroom. This is not directly helping the classroom.

Mr. Stycos moved to eliminate this position saving \$50,781.

Mr. Lombardi seconded the motion.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Ms. Iannazzi moved to table the budget and this Resolution.

Mr. Lombardi seconded the motion.

It was adopted unanimously to table the budget to the February 25, 2008 School Committee meeting.

TABLED RESOLUTION

NO. 08-1-16 – RESOLVED, that the 2008-2009 Capital Budget, as recommended by the Superintendent, be approved.

CAPITAL BUDGET 2008-2009

BOND 04 – 25

Cranston High School West – Sprinklers \$2,400,000

Western Hills Middle School – Sprinklers

BOND 04 – 25

Cranston High School West – Bleachers \$ 150,000

BOND 427/529

Park View – Renovate Library \$ 100,000

Renovate Science Rooms \$1,700,000

Bain / Park View / Western Hills

BOND 04 – 25

Relocate and renovate four (4) portable \$ 400,000

classrooms; 2 at Woodridge School and 2

at Arlington School

\$4,750,000

This Resolution remains on the table.

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X. New Business

There was no new business.

XI. Public Hearing on Non-agenda Items

There were no speakers on non-agenda items.

XII. Announcement of Future Meetings

The next meeting and budget session will be held on February 25,

2008. School recess is February 18th to February 22nd. Keep in mind that the budget must be adopted before March 1st to be sent to the Mayor. February 25th will be the next budget session, and if need be, there will be a meeting on February 27th.

XIII. Adjournment

Moved by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Ms. Iannazzi and unanimously carried that the meeting be adjourned.

**There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was adjourned at
9:35 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea M. Iannazzi

Clerk

5113

STUDENTS

ATTENDANCE

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandated by Rhode Island General Laws 16-19-1. Regular attendance is absolutely necessary for academic success, as it develops a sense of responsibility, which is indispensable for survival in the workplace.

Policy Adopted: March 20, 1972 CRANSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy Amended: July 16, 2007 CRANSTON, RI

Resolution No.: 07-7-21

Policy Amended:

Resolution No.:

STUDENTS 5113(a)

MINIMUM ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Students in Middle and High School must be in regular attendance for a minimum of 90% of their course work per quarter. Students with excessive (more than five (5) unexcused class absences) will have their term grade reduced by 10 points of their quarterly grade. Students enrolled in minor classes (3 meetings per cycle) will receive a 10 point deduction for more than three (3) unexcused class absences. Students in Middle School in Unified Arts classes will receive a 10 point deduction for more than 3 unexcused class absences.

The following shall not be considered absences and shall not count

against students:

- **Absence from class due to in-school or out-of-school suspension**
- **Absence from class due to attendance at school-sponsored events**
- **Absence from class due to attendance at scheduled meetings with school personnel**
- **Absences from class due to religious observance**

The following excused absences determined by the regulations of the Truancy Court:

- **Illness confirmed by a Doctor's note within 2 days of return to school**
- **Dental appointments confirmed by a Dentist's note within 2 days of return to school**
- **Family bereavement confirmed with a newspaper obituary or death notice**
- **Legal/court obligations confirmed by a note from the courts**
- **Verifiable college and military appoints, prior permission from the Guidance Department and appointment verification forms are required (High School)**

All notes must be submitted within two days of the student's return to school.

Students that have absences exempted from counting against the

90% minimum requirement are still required to complete and turn in all make-up work missed due to their absence.

ABSENCE, TARDINESS AND DISMISSALS

1. Parents should call the school at 270-8049 for Cranston West, 270-8126 for Cranston East, 270-8030 for Western Hills, 270-8090 for Park View, or 270-8010 for Hugh B. Bain to report a student's absence.

STUDENTS

5113(b)

ABSENCE, TARDINESS AND DISMISSALS (CONTINUED)

2. Students who are absent or suspended will not be allowed to report to school or to attend any school activity during the period of absence or suspension.

3. If a student is absent (unexcused) from a class or classes in excess of five (5) times per quarter, the teacher will lower the student's quarterly grade by ten points.

4. Absences or dismissals by the school nurse are considered excused.

5. Family vacations during school time will not be excused by the School Committee Policy unless previously approved by the school department.

6. Parents wishing to appeal an attendance-related grade reduction should submit a written appeal to the Administration in the following

order: Assistant Principal, Principal, Superintendent, and School Committee.

7. Excessive tardiness to school is unacceptable. Students who accumulate more than three (3) unexcused tardies per semester will receive detention for each subsequent tardy according to school department policy. Should excessive tardiness become a serious or chronic problem, a student may be assigned Alternate Discipline Program, could be suspended out of school, Saturday Detention, or receive social probation. All days tardy beyond the 3 per semester will result in disciplinary consequences unless excused with verifiable documentation (i.e., doctor's note, dental note, legal obligation, etc.). All notes must be submitted on the day the student is tardy or least by the next school day.

A student who arrives late to class more than half way through the class, regardless of the class, will be considered absent from that class.

8. Students with unexcused tardies after 11:00 am are considered absent and are ineligible to participate in athletics or extra curricular activities on that day. Should the tardiness occur on the last day before a weekend, the student will be likewise, ineligible to participate in school related activities or athletics.

9. Personal family appointments, which can be scheduled during non-school hours, will be included in absence and tardy totals.

10. The classroom teacher will assign students who are tardy to class without an acceptable or verifiable reason appropriate disciplinary action. Students who are habitually tardy will be referred to the

administration.

11. Students who miss a class period or a whole day of school without permission will be considered truant. All students who are determined to be truant will be subject to disciplinary action and will receive no credit (zero) for all work missed or due during the truancy.

STUDENTS

5113(c)

ABSENCE, TARDINESS AND DISMISSALS (CONTINUED)

12. Students may be dismissed from school with a parental note, with an acceptable reason. All dismissals will be excused only with verifiable documentation by a doctor, dentist, legal obligation, death, religious observance, etc. These notes from verifiable sources or appointment verification forms must be turned in to the Main Office by the next school day that the student is present.

13. Students dismissed from school are ineligible to participate in athletics or extra curricular activities on that day or the ensuing weekend should it occur on the day before a weekend. Students may be allowed to participate in these situations with administrative approval.

14. For eligibility purposes with respect to extra curricular activities

and athletics, students dismissed for medical, dental, legal appointments, etc., must have such dismissal pre-approved by an administrator or designee. Upon the student's return to school from the appointment, verification documentation must be turned in to the office or to the coach or activity advisor, if school has ended, to be eligible to participate (parental notes will not suffice.) Any student clinically dismissed by the nurse due to illness may not return to school and is ineligible to participate in athletics or school activities.

MAKE UP POLICY

A student absent from school from one (1) to three (3) days will have one (1) class meeting per absence to make up missed work beginning on the initial day they return to school.

For students absent or suspended from school for a period of more than three (3) days, school work may be requested by the parent/guardian. A twenty-four (24) hour notice for such requests is required and will be made available by teachers through the main office. Students suspended from school will be allowed to make up all work as dictated by this policy.

In the event that a student is absent on the day a long-term project/assignment is due, the grade for that assignment will be reduced at the discretion of the teacher. Should the student submit

verifiable documentation for the absence (medical, dental note, etc.), the grade reduction may be waived.

Serious long-term illness make-up will be made up at the discretion of the teacher(s) and guidance counselor.

Any student that makes arrangements with a teacher to make-up work at an arranged time and fails to do so will be assigned a zero (0) for the work in question.

STUDENTS 5113(d)

FINAL EXAMS (HIGH SCHOOL)

A. Final exams are required in every course in grades 9 through 12. The final exam grade for each course will be weighted 15% of the final grade.

B. An exam schedule is published in June. Senior high school students are expected to report for their scheduled final exams and must remain in the exam room for the entire period. Depending on the schedule, students may be dismissed following their exams.

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR EXAMS (HIGH SCHOOL)

1. Final exams will be administered in all courses. Seniors with a grade point average of 90 or above may be exempt from their final exam in the courses with that average.

- 2. Should a student be tardy to an exam without an excuse or prior administrative approval, he/she will be admitted to the exam and allowed to take the exam during the remaining time in the exam period only.**
- 3. If a student is going to be absent from an exam and wishes to be granted the opportunity to take a make-up exam, a parent must contact the administration in writing or by phone (Main Office) prior to the start of the exam.**
- 4. If a student is absent from an exam and the administration has not been contacted in advance, the student will not be given a make-up exam and will receive a grade of zero.**
- 5. Make-up exams will be given at a time to be determined by the teacher.**
- 6. All students must remain in the testing site until the conclusion of the exam period.**

Regulations Adopted: March 20, 1972 CRANSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Regulations Revised: August 20, 1990 Cranston, Rhode Island

Regulations Revised: July 16, 2007

Resolution No.: 07-7-21

Regulations Revised:

Resolution No.:

NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL 4213

**NON-CERTIFIED SUPERVISORY AND
CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEE POLICY**

This document is designed to outline the policies, practices and procedures governing non-certified supervisory and confidential personnel, hereinafter referred to as employees. It is the employee's responsibility to make themselves familiar with the contents of this policy.

This policy is not an express or implied contract of employment. The Cranston School Committee reserves the right to change, modify or delete any provisions of this employee policy in accordance with its by-laws. Either the school department with school committee approval or the employee may terminate the employment relationships at any time with or without notice or cause. The Superintendent subject to the approval of the School Committee has the authority to enter into written agreements regarding the length of employment or grounds for termination.

Probationary Period

All new employees who fall within this job category are required to serve a probationary period of six months from their date of hire. This is designed to give the employee and supervisor a period of time to determine the potential for continuing employment with the school district.

Work Day

The normal work shift is eight and one-half (8 ½) hours, half an hour of which is an unpaid meal period. The employee is not eligible for overtime. Compensatory time or “Comp Time” programs are prohibited unless authorized by the Chief Operating Officer.

Performance Appraisals

Upon completion of the first year of employment and each year thereafter, the employee’s job performance will be formally evaluated by his\her supervisor. This appraisal will become a part of the permanent personnel record.

Merit Increases

Wage increases will be based upon the merit of the employee’s job performance. A budgeted percentage will be recommended by the

Superintendent and will be subject to the approval of the Cranston School Committee.

NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL 4213 Cont.d

**NON-CERTIFIED SUPERVISORY AND CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEE
POLICY CONTINUED**

Resignation

If an employee wishes to leave the employ of the school district, a two week notice is required. Resignations should be submitted in writing to his\her supervisor indicating the anticipated termination date.

-Dismissal

Serious violations of school department policy will be cause for immediate discharge. Such violations include, but are not limited to; theft; dishonesty; insubordination; unauthorized absences; misuse of school department equipment; fighting; use or possession of illegal drugs, weapons or alcohol; breach of confidentiality.

Confidentiality

The employee may know or have access to confidential information. An employee is not to discuss confidential information with anyone including and not limited to fellow employees, family, or friends. The sharing of confidential information between employees as part of their professional responsibilities is exempt from this provision. Any violation of this provision will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Benefits Eligibility

To be eligible for benefits the employee must be employed in a regular full-time position.

Health Insurance

Recognizing the importance of comprehensive health and dental coverage, the Cranston School Department contributes the major portion of the cost of available insurance programs.

For the employee, the difference between the school department's contribution and the total premium cost will be deducted from his\her pay check. If the employee is required to make a premium contribution, he\she will be automatically enrolled in the district's pre-tax premium conversion plan, whereby the contribution is made before the payroll earnings are taxed. If the employee does not wish to have this arrangement, he\she has thirty (30) days to contact The

Department of Human Resources. The employee's cost sharing will be set by the School Committee at the beginning of each fiscal year.

NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL 4213 Cont.d.

**NON-CERTIFIED SUPERVISORY AND CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEE
POLICY CONTINUED**

COBRA

In compliance with federal law, an employee and their qualified beneficiaries covered under the school district's Group Health and Dental plans may elect to continue their coverage under the plan if their coverage ends due to certain events.

Worker's Compensation

The employee is covered by the school department's worker's compensation insurance. Payment of claim is calculated in accordance with applicable state laws. The employee is required to report an injury sustained on the job immediately to a supervisor. Failure to do so may jeopardize eligibility for the benefit. An incident report form can be obtained from Human Resources.

Group Life Insurance

The Cranston School Department will provide free Group Life Insurance. The amount of life insurance is based on the schedule of benefits for the Group Life Plan. The employee may purchase additional coverage through payroll deductions.

Pension

The employee is required to participate in The Rhode Island State Employees pension system.

Tax Sheltered Annuity Program

An employee of the district is eligible to participate in one of the school department's several tax sheltered annuity programs.

Vacations, Holidays and Leaves

Employees are entitled to vacations, holidays and leaves as outlined below.

NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL 4213 Cont.d

**NON-CERTIFIED SUPERVISORY AND CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEE
POLICY**

Vacations

An employee is entitled to:

Length of Completed Service	Vacation Days
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1 YEAR	5 DAYS
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5 YEARS	10 DAYS
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10 YEARS	15 DAYS
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20 YEARS	20 DAYS
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An employee, after one year of service, will receive one (1) recess period as well as their earned vacation days.

Holidays

An employee is immediately eligible for paid holiday time. The list of holidays will be issued at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Paid Time for Illness

An employee will receive one sick day per month during the first year of employment and, on every anniversary, will receive fifteen days for the coming year. Sick time should be used only for legitimate illness of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, child, mother or father or other family members in the

immediate household). Unused sick time will not accumulate. The employee may use up to three (3) sick days per year for personal business. Request for personal days should be scheduled at least seven (7) days in advance.

The employee will have a seventy-five (75) day long term ill bank which may be accessed after an employee has been out for five (5) consecutive work days or from the day of an inpatient hospitalization.

Any absence due to illness in excess of three (3) consecutive days will require a physician's note which will outline the reason for the illness, next evaluation and/or return date.

Leaves of Absence

The school district offers both paid and unpaid leaves of absence.

NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL 4213 Cont.d

NON-CERTIFIED SUPERVISORY AND CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEE POLICY

Bereavement Days

This leave may be granted for a maximum of five (5) calendar days for the death in the immediate family (father, mother, sister, brother, son,

daughter, spouse, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or other family members in the immediate household).

In case of death of a grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, a leave may be granted for three (3) calendar days.

In the case of death of relatives by marriage or blood relatives not listed above, a leave of the day of the funeral will be granted.

Jury Duty

Should the employee be called to serve on a jury during a scheduled work day, the school district will pay the regular wages for that day and the employee will be required to submit his\her compensation from the court system to the payroll department.

Military Reserve – If an employee is an active military reservist, and is required to serve two weeks active duty during the year, the employee will be eligible to receive the difference between his\her regular weekly pay and any weekly pay received from the Reserves. The employee will be required to produce a statement of earnings to the payroll department.

The employee may also qualify for the following unpaid leaves:

Military Duty – If the employee enlists or is drafted into any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, the employee may return to the district without intervening employment or beyond the maximum limit prescribed by state or federal law.

Medical Leave – After completion of the employee’s probationary period, an unpaid medical leave may be granted up to one (1) year. A physician’s certificate must be submitted with the request for leave to Human Resources.

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO ALL EMPLOYEES HIRED AFTER 7/1/07.

Policy Adopted: August 20, 2007

Resolution No. 07-8-35

Policy Amended: February 11, 2008 CRANSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Resolution No.: 08-2-16 Cranston, Rhode Island