

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 25 2011

WESTERN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

400 PHENIX AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:00 P.M.

PUBLIC MEETING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

PUBLIC WORK SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PUBLIC MEETING

AGENDA

The regular monthly meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at Western Hills Middle School with the following members present: Chairperson Iannazzi, Mrs. Ruggieri, Mr. Bloom, Mrs. McFarland, Mrs. Culhane, and Mr. Traficante (Mr. Lombardi reported late, with cause to public session). Also present were Mr. Nero, Dr. Lundsten, Mr. Balducci, Mr. Votto, Mr. Dillon, Mrs. Nota-Masse, Mrs. Coogan and Attorney Cascione.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. It was moved by Mrs. Culhane and seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri 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 (Contract Negotiations' Update-Bus Drivers/Trades People/Mechanics, Custodians); (Teacher Negotiations; Teacher Assistants/Technical Assistants/Bus Aides Arbitration Award), (Secretary Negotiations), (School Banner), (Transportation

Contract),(Volunteer Policy)

Call to Order – Public Session – Public Session was called to order at 6:50 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted and the roll was called. – A quorum was present

No votes were taken in Executive Session.

Executive Session Minutes Sealed – April 25, 2011

Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mr. Bloom and unanimously carried that the April 25, 2011 Executive Session Minutes remain confidential.

Minutes of Previous Meetings Approved – March 7, March 16, and March 21, 2011

Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mrs. McFarland and unanimously carried that the minutes of March 7, March 16, and March 21, 2011 be approved.

Public Acknowledgements / Communication

There were none.

Chairperson's Communications

There were none

Superintendent's Communications

Superintendent Nero addressed the committee with a few notations in regards to the Park View Middle School activities. He noted that Park View has met all target areas regarding state testing and is considered a high performing school. Park View recently held its 17th Annual TNT (Top Notch Talent) show that included over 120 students that participated in the show. The show was a success with a sold out audience and raised over \$2,000. Park View teachers continue to work diligently implementing all state, district and school initiatives. Also, two of our middle schools (Bain and Park View) came together and organized a student / faculty basketball game at Cranston East on April 13, 2011. A select group of students had the opportunity to play against each other, followed by the two faculties. There were raffles and free throw contests; all proceeds were donated to the Rhode Island Leukemia Society. Mr. Nero will have to defer activities from Rhodes and Peters Schools until the next meeting of the School Committee.

School Committee Member Communications

There were none.

Public Hearing

Students (Agenda/Non-agenda Matters)

Emma – Attends Park View currently:

I would like to speak for Mrs. DeRobbio. She was my 4th grade teacher and I hadn't had a very good year before her. I had just moved here and I didn't like school anymore. But when I went to her class, she made things fun. I loved to learn and I went from a "C" student to an "A" student. She noticed the talents that I had to learn and she was the one to recognize me to EPIC. I don't think I would be where I am right now learning if it wasn't for her. I'm so grateful for that. I think she is just an amazing teacher.

Members of the Public (Agenda Matters Only)

Linda Stanelun – Principal of Oak Lawn Elementary School

I just want to take a moment to recognize someone on behalf of all of Oak Lawn School. Five years ago I met Mrs. Mary Gavek and I have been very grateful ever since. On behalf of Oak Lawn School we'd like to recognize the retirement announcement of Mrs. Gavek as one of the most dedicated, compassionate and humble people we have in our profession. Thank you.

Jeannine Nota-Masse – Administrator

As a parent of a child who is currently enrolled in Mrs. Gavek's class and on behalf of all of the parents that she has guided and helped in giving advice to over the years; I'm sure there are thousands of us; I also wish to thank her for all of her hard work. She had the enthusiasm of a teacher who just stepped into the classroom

yesterday and it's an amazing feat to continue to do that after 30 something years. Congratulations, Mrs. Gavek and thank you for all your hard work, on behalf of the students and parents that you have helped along the way.

Mrs. Hiltman

I just wanted to know where I can find the minutes of the sub-committee meetings on the website. I haven't been able to find any of the minutes and

Ms. Iannazzi

You can send a request in to the Superintendent's office. They will get back to you within the time frame.

Superintendent Nero

I apologize, but I didn't get the request unless it was lost in the mail. Would you send a request again tomorrow? The sub-committee for the West Banner is what she is looking for.

Consent Agenda / Consent Calendar

Chairwoman Iannazzi stated that the proposed Consent Agenda are: Resolutions No.'s 11-4-7, 11-4-8, 11-4-9, 11-4-10 (with addendum), 11-4-11, 11-4-12, 11-4-13, 11-4-14, 11-4-16, 11-4-17, 11-4-22, 11-4-23 and 11-4-24.

Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri and unanimously carried to accept the above resolutions. (Mr. Lombardi was not at the meeting at this time)

AS follows:

NO. 11-04-07– Decision on appeal of a discipline issue for Elementary School Student (A).

NO. 11-04-08- Decision on appeal of a discipline issue for Middle School Student (B)

NO. 11-04-09- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

Allison Bell, Middle\Secondary Special Education

Donielle DiFanti, Elementary\Middle Special Education

Patricia McChrystal, Library & Media K-12

Rachel Knowlton, Middle\Secondary Special Education & Business

NO. 11-04-10- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the retirement of the following certified personnel be accepted:

Mary Gavek, Teacher

Oak Lawn

Effective Date...June 30, 2011

Marlene Greene, Teacher
Gladstone
Effective Date...June 30, 2011

ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. 11-04-10 – CERTIFIED RETIREMENT(S)

Ann Marie Ferro, Teacher
Eden Park
Effective Date...June 30, 2011

Beverly Prestage, Teacher
Program Supervisor
Effective Date...June 30, 2011

NO. 11-04-11 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignation(s) of the following certified personnel be accepted:

Phyllis DeMaio, Teacher
Leave
Effective Date...April 25, 2011

NO. 11-04-12- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the

Superintendent, the following non-certified employee(s) be appointed:

Nicole Eggleston, Bus Monitor

Transportation

Effective Date...March 14, 2011

Authorization...Replacement

Fiscal Note...11845090\12245090 51110

Lynn Cull, CNA

AEP

Effective Date...March 30, 2011

Authorization...Replacement

Fiscal Note...77962124 51110

NO. 11-04-13- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

Kenneth Lotz, Custodian

Kevin Webster, Custodian

NO. 11-04-14- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the retirement(s) of the following non-certified personnel be accepted:

Robert Goff, Bus Driver

Transportation

Effective Date...June 30, 2011

POLICIES

NO. 11-04-16- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Tutoring Policy Guidelines #5112.3, be approved for first reading (See policy attached).

NO. 11-04-17- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the policy statement for Fund Raising/Commercialism, Commercial Goods, Services and Materials; Policy #5135.1 as amended, be approved for second reading. (See policy attached).

PURCHASES AND PURCHASED SERVICES

NO. 11-04-22- RESOLVED, that the following purchases be approved: Subscriptions in the amount of \$6,414.59 (Pending the availability of funding 2011-2012)

Number of bids issued 4

Number of bids received 3

NO. 11-04-23- RESOLVED, that the following purchases be approved: Athletic Supplies in the amount of \$15,262.78.

Number of bids issued 14

Number of bids received 10

NO. 11-04-24- RESOLVED, that the following purchases be approved (GRANTS):

Conversion of Gas Burner at Park View funded through ARRA in the amount of \$234,566.

Number of bids issued 6

Number of bids received 3

SPONSORED BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

NO. 11-04-02 – Whereas, Gail DeRobbio, is an Elementary Teacher at Waterman School and has been with the Cranston Public Schools for the past seven (7) years, and

Whereas, Gail has been selected as one of the Rhode Island State-level finalists in the 2010 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching (PAEMST) Program, and

Whereas, this is the highest recognition that a Kindergarten through 12th grade Mathematics or Science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States, and

Whereas, Gail has been selected from a field of outstanding candidates for this prestigious award and her application has been submitted for review by a National Level selection committee, to be announced by the White House in the late spring/early summer 2011.

Be it RESOLVED, that Gail be congratulated by the Cranston School

Committee for this most prestigious award for her outstanding contributions to Math and Science education, and for the honor she has brought to herself and to Cranston Public Schools.

Be it further RESOLVED, that Gail receive a copy of this Resolution signed by the members of the Cranston School Committee.

Resolution read by Mr. Traficante:

Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri and unanimously carried to accept the above resolution (Honor Resolution)

SPONSORED BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

NO. 11-04-03 – Whereas, Lisa Ann Davis, Elementary Teacher at Glen Hills Elementary School, has earned the prestigious National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Certificate, and

Whereas, Lisa has demonstrated by earning National Board Certification that she has met the high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. NBPTS Certification is a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these rigorous standards through intensive study, expert evaluation, self assessment and peer review, and

Whereas, as part of the process, Lisa Ann Davis built a portfolio that included student work samples, assignments, videotapes and a thorough analysis of her classroom teaching. Additionally, Lisa was assessed on her knowledge of the subjects she teaches, and

Whereas, Lisa is committed to the five core propositions of National Board Certification in her commitment to students and learning,

knowing the subjects she teaches and how to teach them; is responsible for managing and monitoring student learning, think systematically about her practice and learn from experience; and is a member of a learning community.

Be it RESOLVED, that Lisa Ann Davis be recognized by the Cranston School Committee for her outstanding accomplishments in earning certification from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

Be it further RESOLVED, that Lisa be presented with a copy of this Resolution signed by the members of the Cranston School Committee.

Resolution read by Mrs. Ruggieri.

Moved by Mrs. Ruggieri, seconded by Mrs. Culhane and unanimously carried to accept the above resolution.

SPONSORED BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

NO. 11-04-04 – Whereas, eleven students from Cranston High School East have distinguished themselves at the 2011 Rhode Island State DECA Competition by winning 11 awards. In the 6 events students were entered in, they were awarded eight 1st place, one 2nd place, and two 3rd place finishes, and

Whereas, the overall winners are:

Brittany Abatiello 1st Place International Business Plan

Megan Duchesne 1st Place International Business Plan

Janet Huang 1st Place International Business Plan

Michaela Crudele 1st Place Creative Marketing Project

Narine Hagopian 1st Place Creative Marketing Project

Raven Sannon 1st Place Creative Marketing Project

**Darien Khea 1st Place Entrepreneurship Participating
Event – Franchising**

**Alexander Caraballo 1st Place Fashion Merchandising Promotion
Plan**

Astrid Ramirez 1st Place Fashion Merchandising Promotion Plan

Spencer Brown 2nd Place Entrepreneurship Written Event

Kassandra Ferland 2nd Place Entrepreneurship Written Event

**Daniel Dwyer 2nd Place Marketing Communication Team
Decision-Making**

**Derek Habershaw 2nd Place Marketing Communication Team
Decision-Making**

Bing Chen 3rd Place Entrepreneurship Written Event

Chunying Wu 3rd Place Entrepreneurship Written Event

Whereas, eleven students qualified from Cranston High School East

to represent the State of Rhode Island at the International DECA Competitions in Orlando, FL, April 28 through May 3, 2011.

Be it RESOLVED, that the Cranston School Committee extends its congratulations to all of these students for their exceptional accomplishments.

Be it further RESOLVED, that the Cranston School Committee extends its congratulations to their teachers, Mrs. Janis McGuirl and Mr. Richard Abruzzini, and Mr. Sean Kelly, Principal of Cranston High School East, and that they receive a copy of this Resolution signed by the members of the Cranston School Committee.

Resolution read by Mr. Bloom.

Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mr. Bloom and unanimously carried to accept the above resolution.

SPONSORED BY DR. JUDITH A. LUNDSTEN

NO. 11-04-05 – Whereas, Audrey Kampper is a teacher at Cranston High School East and has been with the Cranston Public Schools for almost sixteen (16) years, and

Whereas, Audrey has been recognized as the winner of the 2011 Lawrence Scadden Teacher of the Year which annually honors a K-12 science educator who has made an outstanding contribution to science students with disabilities, and

Whereas, the Lawrence Scadden Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award recognizes outstanding elementary and high school science

teachers who have engaged all students, particularly those with disabilities in learning science, mathematics, engineering and/or technology and this selection places Audrey in honored company as a national award winner and recognizes her for her innovative and creative approach to science teaching, and

Whereas, this award and recognition clearly identifies Audrey as an educator who believes in this mission.

Be it RESOLVED, that Audrey be congratulated by the Cranston School Committee for the time, talent and dedication which she has devoted to the students of Cranston East and that these students will certainly make a difference in their lives whether they pursue a path in science or simply apply the skills and concepts they have learned through her teaching.

Be it further RESOLVED, that Audrey receive a copy of this Resolution signed by the members of the Cranston School Committee.

Resolution read by Mrs. McFarland and handed by Dr. Lundsten.

Dr. Lundsten

As many of you know, I worked besides her and it's been my pleasure both as the Executive Director and as the Assistant Superintendent to work with Audrey. She's always one of the first teachers to step up to help with curriculum issues, student issues, resources and materials.

She's one of our many Science Teachers that should be recognized

for her outstanding contributions to our students and as a colleague. I enjoyed working with her and give her an award that she greatly deserves. Congratulations, Audrey.

The role was called. All were in favor.

Mr. Nero – I apologize but the Consent Agenda had several retirements and I just wanted to wish well to the following dedicated employees of Cranston Public Schools with their many years of service. Mary Gavek, a teacher at Oak Lawn for the last 23 years, Robert Goff who has been in transportation for the last 10 years, Marlene Greene, a teacher from Gladstone Elementary School has been a teacher for 34 years; Ann Marie Ferro – Eden Park – teacher for 26 years and Beverly Prestage – Cranston West Social Studies teacher for 33 years and also the Program Supervisor. We wish them well in their retirement. Congratulations.

SPONSORED BY MR. LOMBARDI

NO. 11-04-06 – Whereas, the Cranston High School East Boys' Soccer team has been awarded the Rhode Island Officials Association Team Sportsmanship Award for conduct both on and off the soccer field, and

Whereas, they did not have the winning record but accomplished the task of not receiving a single yellow card or red card throughout the entire season and played every game respectfully and clean.

Be it resolved that these students and their coach(es) be acknowledged for this prestigious accomplishment.

Be it further resolved that these students and coach(es) be presented with a copy of this resolution signed by the members of the Cranston School Committee.

Resolution read by Mrs. Culhane.

Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mrs. Culhane and unanimously carried to approve this resolution.

POLICY AND PROGRAMS

NO. 11-04-15- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following Conferences/Field Trips of Long Duration be authorized:

1. Meaghan McGonagle, Richard Willett, and Anne Mantia, all teachers at the Cranston Area Career & Technical Center, and twenty-one (21) students, to travel to Lake Buena Vista, Florida from April 29, 2011 through May 4, 2011 to compete in the National DECA Competition and attend leadership/career development conference sessions, at no cost to the School Department. Please see attached Field Trip of Long Duration form.

2. Steven Krous, teacher at Cranston High School West, and five (5) students to travel to Galveston, Texas from April 28, 2011 through

May 1, 2011 to compete in the National Ocean Science Bowl (NOSB) National Finals, at no cost to the School Department. All travel expenses paid by national organizers of the competition, The Consortium for Ocean Leadership (COL). Please see the attached Field Trip of Long Duration form and back-up material.

3. Lori Velino and Martha Sylvestre, both teachers at the Cranston Area Career & Technical Center, and sixteen (16) students to travel to Kansas City, MO to compete in and attend leadership/career development conference sessions at the Skills USA National Competition from June 19, 2011 through June 25, 2011, at no cost to the School Department. Please see the attached Field Trip of Long Duration form and back-up material.

Motion on the above Resolution was made by Mrs. Culhane, seconded by Mrs. McFarland for discussion:

Amendment to II-04-15 – It was pointed out that we need to have a friendly amendment to this resolution for Item #1, noting that the teachers will be bringing eight (8) students and not the 21 originally reported. Ms. Iannazzi asked if there was any objection to the friendly amendment. There being none, the role was taken. All were in favor and the Resolution passed as amended 6-0.

At this time, Mr. Lombardi arrived at the meeting.

BUSINESS

NO. 11-04-18- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the

Superintendent, the Cranston School Committee accepts the school district's 2009-2010 Financial Audit as presented in the Auditor's report for the year ended June 30, 2010.

Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri for discussion:

At this time the auditors were called to make their report. Ms. Iannazzi suggested that the committee move for all four of these resolutions at once. A motion was moved by Mr. Traficante to take all four resolutions together, seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri for discussion:

NO. 11-04-19- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Cranston School Committee accepts the school district's 2009-2010 Federal Single Audit for the year ended June 30, 2010.

NO. 11-04-20- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Cranston School Committee accepts the City of Cranston Communication of Matters Prescribed by Statement of Auditing Standards #115 for the year ended June 30, 2010.

NO. 11-04-21- RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Cranston School Committee accepts the school district's Communication of Matters Prescribed by Statement of Auditing Standards #114 for the year ended June 30, 2010.

Discussion on the above four Resolutions:

Jim Prescott, Partner at the firm of Braver PC.

I'm going to talk about the financial statements and some of the other reports that we issued that has to do with the June 30th of 2010 Audit.

As an accountant, I'm a historian so we're talking about past events. Ray Celona is the manager on the job and he would be able to help with any questions to do with some of the details. You should've gotten a package that says Financial Statements on it. I'll just point out a couple of things about it:

- Our opinion, which is what we get hired to do, is on page 1 and 2. That opinion is what we would call unqualified which means, we as auditors have come to the conclusion that the financial statements are fairly presented. We don't necessarily check every transaction when we look at the numbers. We come up with schemes in which we test certain internal controls and to satisfy ourselves that the numbers in the financial statements are fairly stated.**
- To point out to you, last year the school ran a surplus which appears on page 4, of \$1.6 almost \$1.7 million dollars. That surplus has to be taken into account the transfer from the City. The City transfer funds to recover/eliminate the deficit.**
- The other things in the financials in the back are a comparison. If you look at supplementary financial information. Starting on page 30 you'll see a comparison of the revenue that you budgeted and what actually happened.**
- You should have also gotten a statement on Auditing Standards Number 114. It's required communication between the auditors and the governing body which in this case is the School Committee. I just**

pointed this out to you so you'll know that these are requirements that we're supposed to tell you about.

- Pointed out the Bullet points.**
- Agreed with management about the accounting principals used.**
- They had some adjustments but they were typical for these adjustments.**
- No management representations; no consultation with other auditors; no opinion chopping.**
- No other audit findings. Basically the audit went relatively smoothly.**

We also do a single audit, which we examine the federal funds that the City gets and that includes the School Department's federal funds. You have this report – OMB 33; you'll see that this report talks about interim controls over these federal funds; talks about the federal funds specifically. This year, Cranston, in particular, like many other communities, received a lot more federal funds because of the recovery act and you had the flood here too. We had six major programs that we didn't have the previous year. So we examined those.

You might have gotten this 115 letter. I think most of these comments are related to the City side.

You can peruse that; it's a City document.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I'm actually not sure who is going to answer this question. On page 6

of the 115 Document, regarding the fund balance deficits under the Managements Response; I'm concerned by the wording of that response. When I first looked at it, it appeared to me that what we were stating was that we did have a guaranteed annual payment of approximately \$400,000. We know that we have that as a guarantee for this year; but we also know that we have not received any contract information for next year and the next line stating that the payment would be targeted to reduce inter-fund deficit generated by lunch fund. We have not really discussed that at all and I was just concerned about that.

Mr. Balducci:

I actually have not prepared this management response; this was actually done by the City's Finance Director and not by the School district.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

How can the City respond to a contract that isn't in place yet and a contract that is a school food service contract.

Mr. Balducci:

Ultimately they are responsible for paying all of our bills whether its general fund or food service related. We do owe them the money back. Mrs. Ruggieri: I understand that we owe them the money but it looks to me as though they're under the impression that we are guaranteed this \$400,000 every year and that's certainly not the case. We have no idea what this next contract language is going to state.

Mr. Balducci: That is correct; however, this response was written by this end. **Mrs. Ruggieri:** So are we going to correct this response with the City? **Mr. Balducci:** We will bring it to their attention to make sure that they are aware of it and to make sure all future contracts with the food service company take any type of guarantee into consideration.

Mrs. McFarland:

I would just follow up and ask if there are any other areas of concern that were responded to and we did not have any in-put. Are you comfortable with your school department although there was a recommendation for various state contracts in regards to how you do the funding for employees time and documentation for compliance of federal laws and regulations. You feel comfortable with that, that their recommendation is that they haven't implemented anything yet?

Mr. Balducci: We feel we have proper procedures in place to identify employees paid out of federal grants and again, they have a different opinion so we will work with the auditors and make sure that our policy, going forward does meet their federal guidelines. **Mrs. McFarland:** I would ask that we basically follow up in writing with a letter to Mr. Prescott and his firm to let them know that you do not agree because the recommendation and there is a management response that you will develop and review those procedures which would ultimately be us and the City Council which has not occurred at this time. I think we need to follow up with a letter to Mr. Prescott

that we don't agree with him and some of these findings although you most recently said that you were fine with the rest of the documents. I don't want to go through each and every one of them but I clearly think that we need to

take a look at it and make sure that we follow up in writing to the firm to let them know that we don't agree and that the City is responding on our behalf without us making responses.

Mr. Balducci: Just for clarification; this response regarding the federal grant did come from me and again, we will work with the auditors to make sure that we do correct our policy to make sure it is in compliance. Mrs. McFarland: So we did respond to some of them and some we did not respond to?

Mr. Balducci: As Mr. Prescott mentioned, this is a City-wide document including both City and School district decisions. As Mr. Prescott said, the only issue was this one and that was related to the School district. All the other ones were responded to by the City. This particular one to do with the Federal Grants, I responded to. A discussion ensued.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

With regard to those recommendations on Page 5 of 115, there was another compliance requirement and the response, again, was that the School Department and the City review the requirements and develop policies and procedures. In two places where the response is now that we are going to address it; we are going to create policy and procedure. Is that the correct response or is that the response

and now the next step is going to be....because I'd like to know then, if this is what we are actually doing, have you contacted the City just to start review of the policy and procedure. What is the time line for this to be completed? How is it that it is a significant deficiency and how is it that it was never identified before. Mr. Balducci: Again, the auditors believe there was a significant deficiency; we believe we have the proper internal controls and record keeping to monitor how employees are paid through the grants. As I stated, we will work with the auditors to make sure based on their recommendations that we create a procedure to satisfy them. We believe we're already there but again, from their perspective they believe we're not and we will work toward that. This is just an internal function; we don't have to get together with the City on this. This is just internally; we will come up with procedures to satisfy their recommendation. Again, you have to remember, this is a City-Wide document that is where a department of the City; when it mentions about policies and procedures, it's just specifically for our own benefit. A discussion ensued.

Mrs. Culhane: I think that it is important that it be addressed because even during our last budget process there were questions that were raised as to does that money goes directly to the general fund, what teachers are hired by that fund, etc. It is correct in saying we do need to have some procedure so that we can identify exactly where every single one of those federal dollars go.

Mr. Prescott: If you notice at the top, it says, "The following

deficiencies do not constitute a material weakness”, we’re just trying to point them out. We didn’t agree with the documentation that the school was doing. It doesn’t mean it was incorrect; it’s just something that we thought they should correct. Ray has done these sorts of single audits and many other communities around the State and this is a typical comment. Cranston’s not anything unusual; I’m just trying to help people improve their internal control. Overall, there’s good control over the federal funds here. I don’t want to leave a bad impression.

Mr. Bloom: On the financial statements on page 3 A-1, there’s a claims deposit there for \$1.5 million; is that related to the health insurance? Mr. Prescott: “Yes”. Mr. Bloom: Last year we had \$18.5 million in payments for health insurance and about \$17 million in actual claims. Where is that \$1.5 million to day. Mr. Balducci: I didn’t receive March’s financial statements from the WB Health Collaborative but I can tell you what it is through February: we have eaten away at the \$1.5 million; we have about \$700,000 there on reserve through February. Mr. Bloom: The Health Insurance is being funded on a regular basis based upon anticipated claims. Mr. Balducci: We contribute approximately \$1.6 million per month to the WB Collaborative and we hope that covers all of our monthly claims; however, it has not. Basically they have used, not only our \$1.6 but they have used the excess funds that are sitting there right now. Mr. Bloom: So if we run a deficit on the Health Insurance, that money...some of it was there for this year and may be available at the

end of the year. We'll find out when they close the accounts at the end of the year.

Mr. Bloom: The \$1.6 million – other funds – what is that? **Mr. Balducci:** That's basically ...the fund 1 cash account is used as the bank to support all the expenditures for all of the auxiliary accounts; grants in particular. Those grants work as you have to expand the dollars first and then seek reimbursement from the federal government through the State of RI. This is basically money that's due back to the general fund that I have advanced, i.e. pay their bills, and set an inter-fund receivable from another fund. There are no write offs based on how you expend; you have to spend the money first so that you know exactly what you spent and then you just seek reimbursement.

Mr. Bloom: There's an \$11 million due to the City of Cranston which is different by \$6.5 million. There's about a \$5 million difference there which I note also shows up...there's a reconciliation between the budget accounting that we're doing and these actual statements that are being prepared for the City which that \$5 million is coming from that reconciliation but can you explain what the reconciliation is and why it is different from our budget statements. (Pg. 16) **Mr. Prescott:**

The number on the balance sheet on Page 3, there's \$11 million that really has to do with the cash that the City has advanced on the schools behalf. As the City pays bills, the cash amounts get charged there. It doesn't necessarily relate to the revenues or the expense.

There might be a correlation there. The reason that you owe the City money is because you had a deficit. It's just a correlation; it's not a direct relationship. A lengthy discussion ensued. Mr. Bloom: Why is there an additional \$5 million liability to the City? I see it as a liability; I see the credit; where is the debit? At this time, Mr. Balducci and Mr. Bloom discussed this issue.

Mr. Bloom: This reconciliation on page 16 which ties back to page 30 and that's what I am having difficulty understanding. Mr. Prescott: All this reconciliation is doing is reporting a revenue and expense on a budgetary basis to revenue and expenses on a gap basis, which is generally accepted accounting principals. The income statement on page 4; that is not reported on a budgetary basis; it is reported on a gap basis. That statement is recorded on a gap basis which is generally accepted accounting principals. Page 30 is reported on a budgetary basis. Mr. Bloom: Do you have a more detailed or something that you could make available and send it to me.

Mr. Bloom: Page 25 – Other Post Employment Benefits – We have an unfunded liability of \$31 million on post retirement benefits; is that correct? Mr. Balducci: As of June 30, 2010 I'm happy to announce that we just received our most recent Actuarial Report which is coming out to the committee in the Friday update, that \$31 is now down to \$26 million. We are heading in the right direction. Mr. Bloom: Are we funding this right now? Mr. Balducci: We are meeting our retiree obligations on a pay as you go basis. We have

not been successful in setting up a fund where we contribute to the fund and invest the proceeds, make interest earnings off the proceeds and then pay from that fund. As their expenses are incurred, we pay back the Blue Cross in this case is our health care carrier. Mr. Bloom: The \$26 is way down from the \$35 million a couple of years ago, am I correct? Mr. Balducci: Yes, we are heading in the right direction. A lengthy discussion ensued. At this time, Mr. Bloom asked for a breakout of the above. Because there is their own sub fund number as identified in the reports, we will look at it and try to get some information for the last 3 or 4 years, if we can.

Mr. Bloom: Page 27 – Other Long-Term Liabilities – Accrued compensated absences – what is it? An answer of – Accrued vacation and sick time. Mr. Balducci: The way we look at it, if we shut our doors on June 30, 2010, this would be identified as our obligation.

The roll was taken on the following four (4) resolutions: 11-4-18, 19, 21, and 11-4-21:

All were in favor. The resolutions passed unanimously.

Public Hearing on Non-agenda Items

There were none.

Adjourn to Public Work Session

Ms. Iannazzi: If there is no objection from the School Committee,

based on the number of bus drivers present, we'd like to take the Item #2 out of order and hear the Transportation Bus Contract first. There being no objection Item # 2 was taken first.

Ms. Iannazzi asked Mr. Lombardi to take the chair.

Transportation/Bus

Mr. Lombardi: Madam Chair, it is my understanding that you have a statement to make.

Ms. Iannazzi:

At some point this evening, the Cranston City Council is expected to pass a resolution asking the School Committee to further study whether privatizing transportation services is an effective long term economic solution for our City. I am not going to comment on the merits of this; however, I would rather offer a general statement.

In my address at Inauguration night and again in my budget letter, I pledged to work collaboratively with the Mayor and the City Council. They have asked us, or they are about to ask us, to spend more time studying this issue; and because I want the School Committee to work with our colleagues in government, I think we should take the Council's request seriously.

However, with that being said, as many of you know, my father is the Business Manager for the Laborers' Local Union 1033. The bus

drivers are members of the Laborers' Union Local 1322. Armed with this information I contacted the RI Ethics Commission and spoke with a staff attorney. The staff attorney and I agreed that the appearance of impropriety is so great, based on my father's employment, that I should file a recusal and not participate in the discussion relative to the RFP for transportation services. I would like to state for the record that I have not participated in nor have I attended any sub-committee meetings of the transportation committee. Mr. Lombardi will be chairing any portion of a public meeting where transportation privatization or collective bargaining with the Laborer's Union is discussed.

Mr. Lombardi:

That being said, ladies and gentlemen, this is a Work Session; it is an opportunity for everyone to be heard and we will afford everyone the opportunity to be heard to the extent that they want to be heard on the subject matter. There will be points both for and against various issues on this point. All I would ask is that everyone afford everyone else the same courtesy that you would want afforded to you. This is a work session; this will not be a give and take between the School Committee and the members of the public on this issue and we are going to invite public comment and no vote will be taken tonight regarding this issue. Any issues regarding transportation will be taken up, at best, at the May 9th, 2011 School Committee meeting scheduled here at 5:00 p.m. That being said, I invite.....there are no speakers listed; given the fact that we have representatives from First

Student here, I would invite members of First Student, if they so choose, to make a presentation before the School Committee.

Chip Johnson – Director of Business Development for First Student

We aren't really prepared to make a full presentation tonight. We understand this is a working session and we are here to answer questions. I think that at the outset a couple of clarification points would be appropriate. We look forward to working with you as you decide what's best for the City and the students and employees in this process. While we are the largest operator of school buses in North America and have participated in more privatizations than any other company, we understand it is a very charged issue. We would like to state at the outset that one of our primary goals is to hire every single employee that you have working for you right now. Details of that employment would be negotiated. We operate a lot of operations here in RI; most of them are organized. We currently actually have a contract with the Laborer's Union so we would expect to enter negotiations with whoever the current work force chooses to have represent them and wages and benefits would be negotiated at that point. Basically if there are questions we will respond to questions.

Mr. Lombardi:

One of the questions I have: You are aware that our City Council across the way is seeking a resolution that we do a ten (10) year study. My concern is that because the people of the City of Cranston have already voted making the City Council the ultimate signatory on

any and all negotiated contracts, are there any deadlines that you face in terms of being able to accommodate the school district? Should we have to wait for the City Council to act?

Mr. Johnson:

The deadline ends....there's a certain amount of time once a decision is made for us then to sit down and negotiate our own agreements with the employees. There are vehicular issues that we need to deal with. Our proposal is based on investing 3.8 almost \$4 million in new fleet and that does not include the dollars that we would pay you for your existing buses. We intend to purchase but then retire the 95 and 96's that are the large buses that do your home to school transportation and replace those with a newer fleet. There is a time frame to do that so that at some point this spring and into the summer, there's a point at which we would be uncomfortable trying to start up for September 1st. For us to order the new buses and we were going to order 28 new buses; we would need to be able to place orders within a couple of weeks from tonight. That doesn't mean that we can't

Mr. Votto:

I just want to clarify one thing, Mr. Lombardi, that we run summer programs (ESY) and at this point we have pushed it back a week into July so we'll be transporting our kids at the beginning of July. We think about the school year in terms of transportation being in September but in essence July is when we continue to bus our kids in

the new fiscal year.

Mr. Johnson:

Based on that, we could certainly do a January 1 start so we can be as flexible as needed just based on delivery dates and order times.

Mrs. Culhane:

Thank you for coming tonight. What are your retention rates like overall in your company as far as your employees. Mr. Johnson reported that he does not have that information tonight. He would make it available to the committee.

Mr. Votto:

In discussion with First Student, we've asked them if at the May 9th meeting they would take their H.R. folks here so those questions would be asked then.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I need a clarification on something regarding the buses. 28 of those buses will actually be new because they'll be the 2011 but the remaining 61 buses are actually not a new fleet. Is this correct? Mr. Johnston: This is not a brand new fleet but they are newer than what you have and they would be recent used. Mrs. Ruggieri: What is the cost of a 2003 bus? Mr. Johnson: It depends on the size, the model; I think a 2007-2008 full size bus would be in the 45-50,000 dollar range.

Mrs. Culhane:

I have a question which may be more for our departments. Under summer, in the bus transportation information, what does that include? Is that just ESY or does that include the summer camps program.

Mr. Balducci: That is both the ESY and I believe it takes into consideration the Summer Recreation Program through Parks and Recreation. Both of those are reflected in that.

Mrs. Culhane:

My other question is how do we account for our field trips? I understand the process; I know that it gets billed out but where are your records on that? Where are our financials on what our cost is as a district is and how are we reimbursed through those PTO's?

Mr. Balducci:

We accommodate those expenditures in a separate fund outside of the school districts main operating fund. Basically it's a matching up of revenue...the bill's sent out to the PTO and the salary related expenditures with the driver and we look at that expense, send out the bill, receive the money and then at the end of the year, hopefully, your expenditures and revenues match up. Mrs. Culhane: Is that something we can get a copy of in our updates? Say, last year's expenditures?

Mr. Balducci: "Yes".

Mrs. McFarland:

Regarding the planning of the routes and schedules; the first year, I guess, we would keep somebody on to make sure that we maintain them as they've been maintained for the last 20 years; after that what responsibility; who would actually do that within your company and take that responsibility?

Mr. Johnson:

Based on the bid specifications, the requirement was that the contractors take responsibility for routing for the second year of the contract. The norm is for us to designate a routing person; use computerized routing; run all of the routes by the school district for final approvals.

Mrs. McFarland:

How far in advance do you give the opportunity for that to occur?

Mr. Johnson:

When we get student lists...there is a give and take of information.

Mrs. McFarland: So there is a time frame that has to be established and created to make sure that each of you are meeting your deadlines and time frames.

Mrs. McFarland:

Regards to the new fleet of busing that you would have, there's also an adjustment that would occur for vehicles that may not be in operation for that particular day or there may be some circumstance that may occur. There's 75 miles per day in the vehicle by 10% if there's a decrease impact the service levels, how would that be handled? Would you describe those?

Mr. Johnson:

That's referring to the contract language. The bid specs address the number of buses and then a 75 and 100 mile standard average so there's an excess mileage charge if the home-to-school fleet and the special needs fleet exceeds that average. The language on a significant reduction in the overall fleet is something that was not required in the bid spec. but is language that we normally get in a contract. We would sit down and negotiate. The issue is that if we base our operation on an 80 bus contract, our facility costs and staffing costs (fixed costs) are spread over those 80 vehicles. If there's a significant drop in the vehicle count and the way the contract is written, if a bus doesn't run, we don't charge you for the bus. If you go from 80 buses to 79 buses, we only bill you for the 79 buses. But if that number continues to decrease, there's a point at which we have a significant cost issue. The example that I used was the City of Springfield, two years ago, ran 180 buses. They had a big deficit and cut it to 70 buses in January. We had to renegotiate that contract to cover the facility costs. This isn't on a particular day; it's on a particular year. If there's an issue that happens and a bus doesn't run, we charge you for the buses that run. If you change walk limits, bell times and we go from 45 buses running home to school and go to 15 buses, we need to have the right to sit down and renegotiate that. That is language that we would recommend be in the contract.

Mrs. McFarland:

In regards to the next one being cancellation or dismissal for ...it would be changed from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. for cancellation. Is this correct? Mr. Johnson: For a snow day and I believe....we're not going to be on Fletcher so we won't have any flooding problems. Mrs. McFarland: My question is, are there any other reasons besides weather? Mr. Johnson: Normally weather is the significant issue for a morning cancellation. Mrs. McFarland: What if you had a reduction in staff, what would you do? A lengthy conversation ensued. Also, in regards to the problem if a driverit looks like, as a contractor if you not knowingly permit ...do you take full responsibility of things like smoking or drinking and do you let the districts know. Mr. Johnson: Absolutely!

Mrs. Culhane:

The question about reduction of buses, what if you reduce the number of buses through re-routing? What then becomes our responsibility if it's on your end and not on ours? Mr. Johnson: I think the chances of a significant number of bus reductions is unlikely so if we run 75 buses instead of 80 that's not an issue. What we're looking to do is to protect the company from the risk of a significant structural reduction in bus count and if the 10% is difficult, we entertain 15; that's a negotiated number.

Mrs. Culhane:

You have two listings that don't have any items in them; it's additional costs and one time expenditures. I'm just wondering what

is in that? It was noted that those are numbers that are part of the current bargaining situation going on.

Mrs. McFarland:

Some of these things that you said are all negotiable; shouldn't we have an analysis of both these items; all these questions that have arisen this evening that would actually give us different scenarios?

We have a standard contract here and you're telling me that every question I've asked or some of the questions I've asked are based upon those particular scenarios; however, you also said it needs to be negotiated and I don't have any of those fixed costs or numbers to make that determination because we could go from a contract that looks like you can provide something to not being able to provide very much at all. That would be a concern to me. Mr. Johnson: If for example, the issue on negotiating prices with significant reductions, that's something that we can provide numbers and put as an amendment into the package. That is not something that we have to wait three years and then deal with that down the road. Also, it was not something that was requested in the bid submittal but it is a somewhat standard feature in bidding. Mrs. McFarland: Do you also

have an outline of what you provide, benefit wise, not just the question that was proposed in regards to retention of employees; but also the benefit packages, health care costs and vacation/sick time, pension, annuities; do you have all of that as well listed for what you do in Rhode Island? Mr. Johnson: We don't specifically have that; we have that information when we make a formal presentation and a

lot of that is negotiated.

Mrs. McFarland: In regards to all the buses that we talked about earlier and you said that you would notify us if something occurred and you indicated that there were cameras on all those buses; do you have your policies and procedures of how you handle that? If you saw somebody smoking or somebody drinking and that occurred and you smelled smoke on the bus and you went back and you had to review the camera, what are your policies and procedures for handling those situations? Do you have a policy in place that handles all of those scenarios and how you would do notification?

Mr. Johnson: We do have formal policies regarding prohibited substances so the smell of alcohol will trigger a very different kind of response than the smell of cigarettes. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Mr. Lombardi:

I'm a little concerned because of what you just said in terms of there's no formal presentation tonight because you didn't expect us to make a formal presentation. For something that the School Committee did to mis-communicate that to you, I apologize on behalf of the School Committee. We took tonight to be the work session to inform us to get both sides of this rather volatile issue and then be able to make a decision based on what we learned tonight and then ultimately vote on this on May 9, 2011. I'm a lawyer so Iyou seem like a very nice man and your promises are nice promises but I can't wait until May 9th to know what's in concrete. These are questions that we're going to need to know before we make any kind of a

dramatic leap into the privatization world. I'm not saying one way or the other. Things like the questions that Mrs. McFarland has asked are very important issues. Things such as what districts are you in in the State of Rhode Island and how have you fared based on your contracts with those various districts in terms of the promises of what you made. More importantly, because I'm a lawyer, I'd like to see the safety records as well. I think that the safety records are very, very important to me because we have a fiduciary obligation to our children not withstanding where we go with it. I'm a little bit taken aback to be very honest with you because I had expected that the way we did with food service, we'd get this elaborate presentation from First Student; we'd get folks on this side of the room to say how wrong you are and then have us make a knowledgeable decision at that point. I think we're engaging in an exercise in futility if we're dealing with speculation and nothing concrete here, respectfully. We're in negotiations on one side and we've got the issue of privatization on another; we've got the City Council breathing down our necks on another side; we've got the Mayor breathing down our necks on another side and we're dealing in speculation. It's a little bit frustrating. I don't blame you; if the communication was somehow not sent, I apologize for that but there is a lot of holes that we're going to have to fill before May 9th and I regret to say this but we may need to have another work session on it.

Mrs. McFarland: I know that we've already said that we are under the impression that this would be a presentation but there's clearly no

numbers. The only numbers we have are generated by the City by the School Department side so with that, all of the questions that have been posed here are all “ifs”; are all “maybe’s” and are all suggestive things that you might want to implement. None of it is clearly before us; no dollar amounts, no policies, no procedures, no employee retention, no comparison to other cities and towns and how you’ve been able to be successful in those over a period of time. None of that is here. I agree that we’ve come to the end this evening and really need to have another work session where you need to provide all of those scenarios and all of those dollar amounts and clearly all of the information that you would be providing on a yearly basis.

Mr. Johnson:

I would like to suggest that the bid submittal that we placed back in December had safety records and accident records. It was a requirement to be submitted. We provided them. The dollar amounts for the bid are in our bid submittal. The numbers from Dec. 2010 are still good. We have not taken those numbers off the table and that would be the basis for a contract.

Mr. Bloom:

What numbers are we lacking right now in terms of evaluating here? The only thing that I have heard is in the event that there is a substantial change in the number of buses that are running, but other than that we have routes, etc. To be honest, Paula, I think a lot of this information is in this bid proposal with the exception of the specifics

that wasyou identified. Mr. Johnson: Everything is in the bid proposal. We could sign a contract tonight based on that bid proposal. A discussion ensued regarding the contract.

Attorney Cascione:

The sheet is part of negotiations.

Mr. Bloom:

This has the dollar rates for the routes. That's how we determine how we're going to pay for the service. I also understand from counsel, this document of specifications is going to be incorporated in the contract. Everything in here is part of that contract. This analysis that we have is so that we can understand the cost differentials between making the decision between outsourcing the transportation relative to our existing budget vs. the costs that are outlined in here with the exception of a significant reduction in the fleet. That being said, some of these questions about safety procedures and so-on, I think that it would be helpful if we could get an analysis or a memo comparing the safety procedures that the school has in place for identifying substance abuse or smoking, etc. I have to assume that we have the same issue that we have to maintain that we are trying to impose on the third party.

Mr. Votto:

We have policies and procedures that all our employees receive at some point in time regarding substance abuse, smoking, etc.

Mr. Bloom: Could we get a memo comparing our existing procedures to the procedures that First Student would put in place so that we could have an assessment as to whether or not they are comparable to what we have today. **Mr. Votto:** As soon as Mr. Johnson supplies the district with his information we will get that to you.

Mrs. McFarland:

Again, I'm going back to the contract and when we asked you the question of the bus fleet and you said there would be no facilities cost; if a bus route is reduced by 10%, there would be a change in the contract – decrease or increase – what would that cost be? You said that there would be a charge but that's not in the contract or in here. We went by the scheduling of the routes; you said two years that cost would be incurred by us for two years; that's not in here. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Mr. Johnson: The bid spec was designed that you would do the routing for the first year and we would take whatever routes you give us and run them for the first year. For the second year, during the course of that first year, we build a computer routing system and starting with the second year, we design the routes with your right of refusal. That costand the price is already.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I did just want to make clear that there are some things that we were

provided. There is an accident list in here of everything from 2008 and above. And there's also safety programs; a whole section of safety programs. To be fair and to say that they're not providing us with any information is inaccurate. They did provide us with this information andI read it from cover to cover so there are things that were provided to us that we are questioning tonight thatit is in here. I'm not saying that everything is in here and I'm not saying that we don't have all of the financial things that we do need in order to make this decision; however, there is information in here.

Ms. Iannazzi:

Not commenting on the merits of anything, I just had an update from Council President Tony Lupino just sent me a message. He wanted to let the public know that the Council's Resolution to study the 10-year plan was approved by a margin of 6-0 with Councilman Favochio refusing.

Mr. Votto:

I just want to clarify something Mrs. McFarland said. We're going to have to have our own person on board in year two for scheduling but we built that into our analysis that you have in front of you. It's our cost; it is not going to be in their contract so we recognize that it's on our side of things. Also, I think in regards to the change that she was mentioning in terms of the 10% that could be in the contract if the fleet changes, I think what Mr. Johnson said and what the contract will reflect will be renegotiated so it's hard to determine unless I think

he suggested he may put costs in the back of an addendum that will show what those might be but it's a contract opener just if we should reduce our fleet by 10%.

Mrs. Culhane:

I know that your H.R. person isn't here yet but of the 18 districts where you are in Rhode Island how many of those are unionized? Mr. Johnson: We actually run 21 different districts and 19 of them are organized. Mrs. Culhane: For the ones that aren't can we be provided withwe've asked you about employee benefits and information and you said that that's all negotiated; can we get a copy of what your standard procedures are for your employees? Even if it's when you first go into a contract, you're obviously not organized so there must be some sort of flat rate information per region or per district. Can we be provided with minimally, that information? Mr. Johnson: Yes.

Mr. Bloom:

I wanted to comment on the question that Paula was raising. There maybe changes in terms of routes; there may be changes in terms of the fleet size; but those are addressed in the contract and what it says is that they're going to take responsibility of the route and those costs are included within the budget so ifmy impression is that if 95% of the issues here are addressed in terms of the scope of the contract and that the only thing that is lacking at this time is the reductions in fleet size.

Mr. Lombardi:

I'm trying to merge the concept of Ms. Iannazzi's announcement she just made about the City Council, I understand that a resolution doesn't have the effect of an ordinance; however, we are aware that the legislative body has decided that they're going to ratify any and all contracts. What effect, in your opinion, does that resolution have on the discussion that we're having tonight in light of the fact that they're now going to look for us to give them a 10 year study?

Mr. Votto:

I can't speak for the City Council, but they are going to ratify our bargaining unit contracts not our contracts with food service or with transportation; that does not go before the City Council. As you stated and Mrs. McFarland was on the council; I was on the council one time and Mr. Traficante was also. As we know, we pass resolutions all the time. None of those are binding; we pass them; they go to the General Assembly as a council. As a School Committee we pass them and they go to the General Assembly. All it is, is putting them on record on what they think we should do. How they react in terms of bargaining unit agreements that come before them based upon possible privatization, that's a question you're going to have to ask them.

Mrs. Culhane:

In the contract under section 9 on Insurance, what happens in the

event that there is some kind of claim that is over this million or two million dollars. I know that there have been instances with your bus company or with other bus companies; there have been significant personal injury loss. Whose responsibility does that come? Mr. Johnson: The numbers in that standard contract are not accurate. The Insurance Certificate in our bid submittal is the accurate number and meets the requirements that were set forth in the bid specifications. Mrs. Culhane: In the event that some kind of award is in excess of this, does that then become the district's responsibility or is it still covered under your umbrella if it is in fact your liability. Mr. Johnson: I believe the standard language in the bid specifications that we responded to, we hold the School Department and employees, etc. harmless from any action/omission whatever that's our responsibility.

At this time, a lengthy discussion ensued regarding the Insurance issue of the contract.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

As far as the Management Staff on Page 13, the contractor says that we'll have people available to school department officials during the school day when school is in session from the earliest beginning run until the conclusion of the last returning run; but we do have runs that are in excess of our school day. We have various sporting events, etc. Who is going to be available for those runs and do we have to change the language that we make sure that we have

someone who's available for those times.

Mr. Johnson: We have the office staff from very early in the morning until the last home to school route gets in for late charters and things depending on how many vehicles are out, we could potentially have staff stay on andwhen games are really late, it may just be phone connections and we have access to people but the office might not actually be staffed. **Mrs. Ruggieri:** I think we need language that specifies that there will be a contact available; at least a phone contact available during those extended runs that comes after the school day. In addition, will we be provided with a call line to handle complaints that parents or anyone can call if there are problems right now? It's very easy to connect to the office and to get a human being to respond to whatever your complaint is, in a timely matter. I didn't see anything in here that said anything about providing that kind of customer support or all of our parents and drivers and things like that. **Mr. Johnson:** We will have local lines and we will have staff in the facility to answer calls. We have some internal guide lines to respond to questions. We do not intend answering machines. We want to have a person in there.

Mrs. McFarland:

This is to the administration in regards to this formula in the bus transportation bid. Who made the determination that we weren't going to keep a facility? Who decides that because there are two options as well and you've only given us the scenario of one option and not the second option where what would happen to our facility;

why was that determination made and who made that decision?

Superintendent Nero:

We bid the job both ways. We presently rent a facility that we have for \$1 per year. We did not want to look into what the negotiations would be regarding whether we could even have that facility if it was outsourced vs. it being part of the school. That's why we bid it both ways. The present facility at Fletcher Ave. is rented to the District for \$1 per year.

Mr. Bloom:

Mr. Johnson, absenteeism and having drivers available has been a problem for the district. What procedures would you have in place to address that; what type of history do you have with the current schools that you are operating here in Rhode Island for having drivers available?

Mr. Johnson: The goal is to have a 10% spare factor for both vehicles and drivers. For information specifically on current operations I would turn to my operations manager, Phil. He is the Regional Operations Manager for the State of Rhode Island and has a lot more data than I do.

Phil R. - Regional Operations Manager for Rhode Island:

Good evening, we have a schedule in place pending the award of the contract. To put it very aggressive, recruitment plan in place. We've done this throughout the State over the last couple of years with the

addition of the State-wide contract that's come up through the RI Dept. of Education. We've run some job fairs and most recently our last job fair was the beginning of April. We had a very high turn out of approximately 140 applicants and we would look to do something similar in Cranston solely for the purpose of servicing the contract. That would be our goal upon official notification, is to put an aggressive recruitment plan in place. We would also look to do some internal recruitment bonuses, employee referrals and that type of nature to make sure that we maintain that 10% spare ratio that Chip had mentioned. That's our goal in all of our contracts; to make sure that we have the 10% spare factor in all our contracts.

Mr. Bloom: Were you able to achieve that in the other districts in Rhode Island?

Mr. R.: In everythere are certain markets and demographic issues that we do struggle with but we usually have other districts that may have a surplus and because we have the State fairly well covered with 19 contracts in the State, we're able to share drivers back and forth between districts. We are allowed to do this as long as they are white-carded and licensed in Rhode Island they can service any contract.

Mr. Bloom: Can you provide some references on that? Can we follow up and confirm that that is the case? It was noted that there is a complete reference list in the bid specifications.

Mr. R.:

To go back to one of the other questions asked about safety; we could provide you with our National Handbook. We have two separate handbooks. We have one that is a union handbook and also a non-union handbook. We can provide you with both of those; they are pretty comprehensive as far as disciplinary actions and policy and procedures that we as a company enforce.

Cranston Public Schools Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Analysis

Ms. Iannazzi:

We will now discuss the Cranston Public Schools Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Analysis. I will give the public time to clear out.

Mrs. Culhane:

We had asked to discuss the Audit Report that's not an audit report. The Augieri Report.

Mr. Lombardi:

I'll move to table this item in the Work Session to the next work session.

The roll was called to table this item; all voted unanimously to table this item.

Announcement of Future Meetings – May 9, May 18 and May 24, 2011

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the School

Committee, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Lombardi and seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Lombardi

School Committee Clerk