

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

BUDGET ADOPTION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2013

WESTERN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

400 PHENIX AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:00 P.M.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC MEETING

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC BUDGET WORK SESSION

MINUTES

The Budget Adoption II 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: Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Traficante, Mrs. Ruggieri, Mr. Trent, Mr. Gale, Mrs. McFarland and Mrs. Culhane.

**The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. It was moved by Mrs. Culhane, seconded by Mr. Gale and unanimously carried that the members convene 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:

- a. (Contract Negotiations' Update – Secretaries)**
- b. (Teachers)**
- c. (Bus Drivers)**

Call to Order – Public Session was called to order at 6:45 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted and the roll was called. A quorum was present.

Ms. Iannazzi reported out that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Executive Session Minutes Sealed – February 26, 2013 – A motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session was made by Mrs. Culhane and seconded by Mr. Gale. The roll was called and all were in favor.

**Minutes of Previous Meetings Approved – January 22 & 31, 2013
A motion was made by Mrs. Culhane, seconded by Mr. Traficante and unanimously carried to approve minutes of previous meetings above.**

Public Acknowledgements / Communications

There are no Public Acknowledgements

Chairperson's Communications

Ms. Iannazzi:

I just wanted to take a moment to pause and this has been a very difficult budget season and we have over the past several years asked our employees to continuously do more with less. I just want

all of our employees out there to know that it is genuinely appreciated by the School Committee. We may not be able to financially reward your dedication but we all feel a tremendous amount of pride knowing that we represent Cranston Public Schools. The reason we have that pride is because of the dedication of our employees. So, thank you all very much.

Superintendent's Communications – No communications tonight.

School Committee Member Communications – There are none.

Public Hearing

Students (Agenda/Non-Agenda Matters) – There are none.

Members of the Public (Agenda Matters Only)

Mr. Tomlins, 400 Farmington Ave.

I'm going to take 2 three minutes all total. I'll talk on the agenda item first. I agree, Ms. Iannazzi, with what you said. It's very difficult and you're faced with the big elephant in the room and that's the unfunded liabilities which has got you and the City that there's somehow a big cloud over the financial structure. If you saw in the paper the City of Providence is now suing the company that gave them the longevity notices for the recent settlement and now they're \$10 million in the hole. If the court overrules anything that the legislature voted and the governor signed in any way it's going to

affect every City and town. The Governor is now waffling by saying that maybe they should do arbitration after they went through that whole process and he signed it. When the issue came up by the way, although I wasn't here I did read a lot of your comments in the paper. When the issue came up about salary increases, the \$1.2 million everybody understood that was hard to fly but I appreciated Mr. Traficante's comments. When the Mayor put in for a 3% for key employees and most of those I knew their achievements; I knew their work history and I argued. I said that somewhere along the line, people who've been around 5/6 years should be awarded. I'm also a fiscal hawk. I think it's worth pointing out that those individuals that are denied a raise, whether they're from the City side or the school side and you probably commended them for the work they do; the administration and the teachers; from my point of view on the budget I think you have to be diligent; there's no question in my mind and having attended the Council meetings that it's going to be a tough budget year. They are on or bound for this unfunded liability and incidentally it's not working at all with the unions on the City side. It is as much up in the air today as it was yesterday. That just puts a lot more pressure on it. They know they have to do something; they're under the gun right now. They're on a watch so I think what you're doing today...you've done a pretty good job under very, very strict circumstances some of which you hopefully might not see in the future. Thank you.

Lizbeth Larkin, Teacher at Park View Middle School/President of CTA

Mr. Tomlins, I would like to thank you for that bit of good news that you had to state for the unions that are on the school side. We really shouldn't be the Tale of Two Cities; we should really be all one but we know that we have not been living that reality in a very long time. Over the last few years it's really been because we've all come together in our love of Cranston Public Schools to work collaboratively because with the demographic and that we've realized the necessity to fund some of these and we've seen a lot of great programs being cut, hacked and decimated and it really breaks the hearts of the people that work for Cranston Public Schools. They are very hard workers and they've made great sacrifices and I don't see the same on the other side at all. There really shouldn't be sides; we should be in this together but I also want to remind people that the teachers were in a three year contract and when we realized that we needed to pay the debtthis is kind of on the budget because basically when we needed to pay the debt, we were dis-allowed to pay that debt but we ended up coming up with \$5.1 million and many employees on the school side have gone without a lot less, doing a lot more and required to do far more and yet I do appreciate your recognition of that, Ms. Iannazzi. You know it; we all know it and it's really difficult every day to stand before people and then ask more of them. That's why I speak tonight.

I speak tonight because I want to thank you for seriously considering the amendments that I brought forth to you about the budget to once again decimate the middle schools and cut the programming and to

fund other areas. We cannot keep doing this. We know our demographics are changing. We know our needs are changing. We have a 41% poverty rate and it's growing. Our economy doesn't seem to be jump starting and as we know Rhode Island, it's one of the last ones that really gets going economically. Basically we have a large growing population of ELL students and those students need the support like every other student. The teachers need the support. It's the bottom line. We have a growing significant need with the Special Education population. You cannot do this work without support; and I am really tired of hearing, not from you, but from the name-sayers, "Oh the teachers; the teachers". The teachers are working harder than ever and longer. There is no summer's off and all of that. There is no leaving at 2:30. Basically I'm asking you, in this budget, to find some kind of means in some way that we can make an agreement to add this once again RIDE required Math Interventionist because of the NECAP testing. It is totally driven by RIDE; they demand, and demand and demand and they never give us any support for these initiatives. I don't think that Cranston Public Schools can continue to cut valuable employees to fund our needs. We cannot, as individuals who have families and homes and kids in college and all the same morals as everybody else and people who have lost jobs and homes and family members that are struggling. We are people and we cannot keep giving out of our salaries and cut, cut, cut to fund the programs in Cranston Public Schools. I want to thank you very much for listening to me and taking under the consideration the amendments to not remove these employees.

Consent Calendar / Consent Agenda – No Consent Agenda Tonight.

RESOLUTIONS

BUSINESS

NO. 13-02-10 - RESOLVED, that the Five-Year Capital Budget plan which begins in the 2013-2014 school year, as recommended by the Superintendent, be approved.

**Moved by Mrs. Ruggieri, seconded by Mr. Traficante for discussion:
We have Mr. Zisseron and Donna-Marie Frappier here to answer any questions on the above Resolution #13-2-10.**

Mrs. Ruggieri:

My concern with the Capital Budget falls under your area because we know that the NECAP's are going to be changing over to the PARCC Assessments and my concern is that the PARCC Assessments are all done on computers and it's not to say that...I don't think that our buildings right now could handle all of our students taking a test at the same time on a computer. My concern is that there's nothing in this budget that prepares us for that and I was looking for some kind of direction or planning in that area.

Ms. Frappier:

There are actually two State Technology bonds that were awarded. One of them is in the amount of \$20 million that's going to bring a wireless access to all of the schools (354 schools in Rhode Island). I was at a meeting this morning for 2 ½ hours at which time the point that they are at right now is they're selecting the vendors and once the vendors are selected, which would be within the next two weeks, we have to call the vendors to do a site survey at each of our buildings. We actually have to call three vendors so we'll have 66 site visits which I am going to try to have all the three vendors at the same time. That's going to take the infrastructure that we have now and expand it. The second bond that we have is a bond for bandwidths and that will increase the bandwidths. The first part that you're looking at is internal to the building, say Western Hills for example; that's going to bring that to the capacity so that we should be able to have everybody hitting the internet at the same time. The second part, which is the bandwidth, means that we're not going to come from the building and not be able to get out. Those are both State funded bonds. All we have to do is dot all our I's and cross all of our t's and be in attendance at every single meeting; but we can't do anything until they give us the list of vendors.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I guess that my concern would be ...are you saying that the bonds are State Bonds? Ms. Frappier answered "yes". Mrs. Ruggieri: So they're already sold and the money is already there? Ms. Frappier stated that it is already there and the way they are doing it is they are

making it so that each district is going to call in these vendors and then the vendors are going to supply three quotes and then I'm going to sit with the Department of Ed and they are going to go through those. Once they decide which is the best fit for our school and also based on price, we do what is like a Grant Application that we're automatically awarded. That's the way they are distributing the funds to the individual schools. No one is excluded. It's not like your school has too much; it has nothing to do with poverty level and that's the reason that I make sure that I'm in attendance at all those meetings. This wasn't targeted at the low poverty schools. It's supposed to be equity throughout. The time frame is supposed to be; the piece of it that's the wireless is supposed to be done in two years and actually they set up a time line of five years because realistically that's an awful lot of schools. They are trying to align it with when PARCC comes into place. We all just sit there as districts today saying that we're waiting for that list to be released and as soon as that list of vendors is released, we will be calling them.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

When is the PARCC expected to be switched over? Dr. Lundsten: It is expected to be ready by 02/2015. But what we need to keep in mind, too, is they are aware that not every school may be prepared to do it all on line so there will be a paper and pencil version of it. Obviously our preference is to go with it being all on line. Donna-Marie has also been looking at the actual hardware that we need in the buildings to make sure that we have enough available at

that point. Ms. Frappier: The PARCC all along over this past year; we've been doing surveys and then revisiting those surveys and they've given us the opportunity to say how many kids can we test at one time. I went at the very low end of the spectrum to see what they would come back with. I said at the elementary school we could do one session per day which is very doable for all of us and I never thought they'd actually allow that but they are allowing that. They are making that window for PARCC a 20 day window which will allow us to very easily; I'm very confident even with what we have now. The only thing that would restrict that is where that PARCC test is sitting. We can have the infrastructure; we can have the band width to get there but at the other end of it, they've got to be able to receive all of those hits coming at the same time. They actually are doing, in this coming year, a trial run of that which we're participating in so we have to give them a picture of what it looks like when we have 20-25 kids on at the same time.

Dr. Lundsten: Donna-Marie and Jim Dillon have gone to every single meeting that's been put forth by RIDE or anybody else that has anything to do with the PARCC Assessment. They report out to us weekly at the Executive Session so we're trying to keep on top of this so we're prepared. This will help us with other assessments too.

Mrs. Culhane: Thank you for that information. It lets us breathe a little easier knowing that something is coming. There's no match? This is all grant money? The infrastructure piece and the wireless

piece, we won't have to come up with any matching? Ms. Frappier: No, we will not have to do any matching. All of the matching that they ever looked for from us is more for the e-rate reimbursements that we get. We usually have 51%; we've gone up to 61%. So, we're going to get 61% and for that kind of funding you have to show participation in your investment in the whole thing. I will also e-mail the links to all of you and that will give you the little lump sum of what the technology bonds are all about.

At this time, Mr. Zisseron was asked to answer some questions:

Mrs. McFarland:

Good evening Joel. I have questions on your capital requests over to the City which indicates two bond referendums; two bonds that you have left, correct? The rest of the bonds are anticipated in future bonds that voters would have to vote on to allocate any additional areas.

Mr. Zisseron: We only have two bonds. We do not have any repair or renovation bonds on money. We have a middle school bond that was in 2006 passed by the voters for \$9.5 million; we have not received one penny. The City has not appropriated any money for expenditures. We've had approval from School Committee and City Council on projects out of that bond but it still remains not being sold for cash. The other one we have is a repair/renovation bond for the Vocational School. Many years ago, before we went through what we

did with the Voc school, there was talk of the City just taking it over and a bond was passed for approximately \$1.2 million but that was specifically for Voc School. Mrs. McFarland: So neither onewe only have one other bond that's sitting out there that has not been actually allocated to the School Department because it sits with the Administration. It is previous past but where would you allocate that money...that \$9.5 million. Mr. Zisseron: We already have approval for roughly \$4.3 million to spend which was approved by the Cranston School Committee and the Mayor in his budget request to the City Council. We have approval. Mrs. McFarland: What year is that? It's not a current year; it's not a current council; it happened some time ago in 2008. The City side keeps telling me that you need to re-request that amount; we keep going through this; now we're in 2012 and we seem to think that we have this sitting out there; we don't; because they've forgotten about all of that. Mr. Zisseron: With all due respect, Mr. Balducci and I met with the City Finance Director and he stated to us, back in October, he was going to go out for bonding for \$4.3 million for those approved projects. He has not done this yet. Mrs. McFarland: Where do they stand now today? Do we have correspondence from them in any means that says that they are going to do that or they were going to do that? Mr. Balducci: We don't have any written correspondence; however, in the last couple of weeks I have been in contact with Mr. Strom; he is in the process of putting the data together to go out to market and work with his financial advisors. As Mr. Zisseron said, we did meet last fall and it has taken some time but again, based on what I've been hearing from

the City, it looks like they are moving forward. Mrs. McFarland: Where would those projects be listed on the budget because I have 2012-2013 blank; 2013-2014 blank andMr. Zisseron: You have to go back to three years ago on our request from the School and City Council. You'd have to go back to 2011-2012; that was approved for \$675,000 and then you have to go to 2012-2013 which was a replacement of corridor tile at Western Hills, Bain, Park View and the Park View windows and we've got to go back before that to 2010-2011 for \$1.7 million for renovation of Science rooms. These were all approved. Mrs. McFarland: Can you understand my concern that when we sit up here and we are a new body after an election occurs, we curreted with a new body. When I get this Capital Budget it doesn't tell me any of that. It tells me that I have no future bonding; that I don't even know about these potential projects and there is nothing in the Superintendent's budget, there's nothing presented to me this evening in this Capital Budget that indicates that any of that that you just read to me, exists, except for...! Financially you know that and as the person that oversees facilities for the School Department, you know that but we don't know that unless we keep all of those records. My problem is that it needs to carry over consistently until the work is actually done and completed. It has to consistently carry over somewhere so that someone is knowledgeable and has some clear understanding that there's \$4.3 million that will ultimately go out to bid for projects because right now it looks like we have no projects going on; nothing planned until 2014-2015. When I look at this it is what it tells me. Mr. Zisseron: I

understand very clearly what you're saying and perhaps what we've got to do is when we do submit a five-year plan that there should be a side note to the School Committee of what is out there but what has not been funded yet by the City. Mrs. McFarland: I think that would be important for all of us to know because unless we're in the trenches every day and doing your job, I'm not going to know that so it needs to carry over; even though it goes to the Planning Commission, you can still carry it on here and show us and note it. You could put some type of notation on here that shows that that is what it is continuing to do. Mr. Zisseron: We've been going at this with the City now for two years; we're told that it's going to go, and it never goes. Now we're back into it again. Mrs. McFarland: I think that historically that's the same concern on the City side; they have no idea either because when you talk to them, they're saying that they don't have any Bond Referendums. The only person that has that knowledge is the Finance Director and Mayor's Office because those are the only people having the conversation about it. No one else is in the know. We all need to have some knowledge of it. Mr. Zisseron: You're right. Once you pass a resolution on bond projects; once the City approves it in their budget; now it's in the hands of the Administration and then it could just sit there forever. It would be approved; but sit there forever before the money is ever released. Mrs. McFarland: And, nobody has any knowledge of it and they're all questioning and saying that they're not going to be spending that kind of money on the City side.

A discussion ensued. Mr. Zisseron noted that he would put something together for the Superintendent on bringing this issue up to date.

Mr. Traficante:

Mr. Balducci, let's assume that Bob Strom starts selling these bonds at \$4.5 million by the passage of the municipal budget which is sometime in May. How soon can we utilize that money for projects?

What is the time frame on that? Mr. Balducci: I believe it would be up to his time line as far as when he believes the project would be completed. Mr. Traficante: No, when could we start that project?

When could we utilize that money to start a project? Mr. Balducci: Whether it's in this fiscal year or next fiscal year its cash in the door.

Mr. Zisseron noted that the money could be utilized the following summer. You have to go into the design; you have to get the architect. We have one design ready project that's four years old which is probably up to \$2.3 now which was originally \$1.7; we're going to probably have to cut back and take a long look at that project. The other projects, by the time you go in to design and bid, you're not going to make it this summer. If you're going to do windows, it takes you anywhere from 8-12 weeks for delivery of windows. You're not going to do it this summer. Asbestos tile; we want to remove the entire corridor tile in all three middle schools. That's not going to be done by....

Mr. Traficante: Having been on the municipal side, we are at the mercy of the Mayor and the Finance Director. That's unfortunate even though we pass project after

project; the City Council and the Mayor have to not only approved projects but they have to put money aside in the Capital Budget and it's quite obvious they do not want to incur debt. That's the bottom line. Mr. Zisseron: At one of the meetings that we had with the Finance Director, he's telling us that our bond rating is good, interest rates are low...then what are you waiting for. That was supposed to happen back in October; it's very frustrating when you've got \$9 million and you haven't done one project since 2009.

Mr. Traficante: May I ask, Joel, that you kindly speak to Mr. Strom one more time and come back at the next meeting and give us an indication as to when he plans to begin these projects.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

Mr. Balducci, I would like you to actually have correspondence in writing with him so that we can start some kind of record with the City side Administration. I think, Mr. Zisseron, it's frustrating for all of us year after year to put a Capital Budget through to the City and have every project cut and every project denied. We look at this Capital Budget and we say these are the things that we really need to get done and these are the things for safety issues and age and all these things and we say that these are basic needs now; we're talking bathrooms, windows and heating systems. Basic needs for the students of Cranston for City owned buildings...I think we need to start going to City Council meetings and presenting these things to them over and over and over again. The more that this gets talked

about and the more people hear about this, maybe there will be some kind of impedance for things to move forward. I look at these projects year after year and year after year we sit there and they say, “No, we’re not going to do that”. The Science labs right now we’re talking about voters approved the bond; this project should have been well under way and now we talk about if we even want to look at it; we have to start all over again. I think we need to do something differently. I’m tired of banging our heads up against the same wall over and over again. We can’t just keep submitting this year after year and crossing our fingers. We need to now be a pro-active body and say, “This needs to get done; these are your buildings; these are your kids; let’s take care of this stuff now!”

Mr. Zisseron:

You’re right and I don’t want to mislead you either. Part of this 5-year plan is to show what we feel our needs are going to be for the future. It doesn’t mean that we have the bond money today. We’re going to go before the voters for 10-15 million dollar repair and renovation bond so that we can get some of these projects done so I don’t want to mislead you in what this is in showing what our needs are going to be in the next 5 years, but, there is money for the middle school. We need to get that money and start working with that money.

Mrs. Culhane:

I think what’s frustrating is the fact that the public hasn’t been heard. This Administration is refusing to listen to the voting public who

voted for a chunk of this money six years ago. We're going on to six years now. For six years, the Mayor has not been listening to you saying that you approved money for the schools. As a parent of three Cranston Public Schools' children and a taxpayer, I'm really burnt about that. I'd like to see every media outlet in the state; I'd like to see every taxpayer; I'd like to see everybody who can do it, pick up the phone and call the media; call the Administration; call the Mayor's Office and say, "We approved this and we want it. Why don't you care enough about this for our kids?" Again, these are our needs going through five years. What I would like to see is this document and for everything that's needed is a picture of the repairs that are needed and I'd like it placed on the Mayor's desk and then let the Mayor tell the public, "I don't really think your kids need any of this." I'm really tired like everybody else and it's nothing that you can do, Joel, because it's out of your hands. We're beggars at the trough of the City. For all those people that keep saying that I'm looking for Daddy Warbucks with my hands out; I want my kids to have windows in the middle school; I want my kids to be Twenty-First Century learners that can have science labs. If that's me looking for Daddy Warbucks well so be it. I'm doing it for my kids and for yours.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I've never been confused with a defender of the Fung Administration but let's just point out that it is six years so it's more than one Mayoral Administration that have let the children of Cranston down.

Mr. Traficante:

I'm not referring to the Middle School bond or the Vocational School bond but you have to be very pro-active very quickly about next year. We've got to float a repair and renovation bond. Our asset protection money in our budget is minuscule. We cannot support some of your emergency needs with that asset protection money. We need a Repair and Renovation Bond. We haven't had one in four years. We asked for one a couple of years ago but the Mayor at that time would not do it. We've got to push now! Early for next year!

The roll was called on Resolution No. 13-02-10:

Mrs. Culhane Yes Mr. Traficante Yes

Mrs. Ruggieri Yes Mrs. McFarland Yes

Mr. Gale Yes Mr. Colford Yes

Ms. Iannazzi Yes

POLICY AND PROGRAM

Motion was called on Resolution #13-02-11. The roll was called:

Mr. Colford Yes Mr. Traficante Yes

Mrs. Culhane Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Gale Yes Mrs. McFarland Yes

Ms. Iannazzi Yes

NO. 13-02-11 -RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following Field Trip(s) of Long

Duration/Conference(s) be authorized:

1. Edd Spidell, Pre-Eng./Robotics teacher at the Cranston Area Career & Technical Center,

travel to Karlsruhe, Germany from May 6 – May 10, 2013 to attend the 2013 IEEE

International Conference on Robotics and Automation, at no cost to the School

Department. All funding provided by the Perkins Grant.

2. Jeannine Nota-Masse, Assistant Superintendent, Katrina Pillay, Evaluation Coordinator,

Cheryl Anderson, Assistant Principal at Cranston High School West, Michael Crudale,

Principal at Park View Middle School, and Roxanne Murphy, Principal of Chester

Barrows Elementary School, to travel to Chicago, Illinois from March 13, 2013 through

March 16, 2013 (Mrs. Pillay to return on March 18th) to attend the ASCD 69th Annual

Conference and Exhibit Show (ASCD – Association of Supervision & Curriculum

Development), at no cost to the School Department. All expenses covered through

Title II. See attached Conference Forms.

3. Christopher D'Ambrosio, Assistant Principal of Cranston High School East, to travel to Parris Island, South Carolina from April 2, 2013 – April 5, 2013, to attend the Marine Corps Educators' Workshop, at no cost to the School Department. All expenses are covered by the Marine Corps. Please see the attached Conference Form and back-up information.

TABLED RESOLUTION

A motion was made by Mrs. Culhane, seconded by Mr. Gale to remove Resolution #13-02-08 from the table. The roll was called and all were in favor.

A motion was made by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mrs. Culhane, for DISCUSSION:

NO. 13-02-08 - RESOLVED, that the 2013-2014 Operating Budget, as recommended by the Superintendent, be approved.

Mrs. Culhane:

Our annual budget questionnaire, Mrs. Schiff submitted some questions. Was she provided a copy of the answers to her

questions? Mrs. Culhane offered her copy of the answers to Mrs. Schiff.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

Mr. Balducci could you give us an update as to where we are? **Mr.**

Balducci: I've been looking at the budget adjustments in two different ways. One the adjustments off the bottom line increase and then the other category is the request of city dollars. We began the budget process with approximately \$6.2 million bottom line increase of which we were asking for approximately \$3.2 million in new city dollars. Based on the adjustments that took place at the last meeting, our bottom line increase now stands at approximately \$4.1 million. Our request to the City is just under \$1.2 million.

Mr. Traficante:

Let's talk about the city dollars, not to get confused with the gross budget. The request for city dollars was approximately \$3.2 million. We reduced the budget by \$1.8 regarding the 2% salary increase, which brought us down to \$1.3 million. We then added back 482,000 which brought it to \$1.8 million and we also added in \$7,500 for that Safety Services Officer which brought it to \$1,860,000. Is that where we stand right now? **Mr. Balducci:** No, because one of the last adjustments was to set aside approximately \$693,000. Based on our budget we would make the reduction with the understanding that they would fund that set-aside.

Mr. Colford:

I want to try to clarify if we are still talking about Plan A and Plan B?

Ms. Iannazzi answered that we are going to get to that item soon.

At this time, Ms. Iannazzi asked Mrs. McFarland to assume the chair.

Ms. Iannazzi:

Mr. Balducci, I have a budget presentation question. Last year we had included a line item for the OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) and I noticed it wasn't in this particular one but it was in the presentation that we gave the Mayor in that budget document. Do you need an amendment to include that again or is that justI know in this budget that you're presenting to us is UCOA and the budget we present to the Mayor and the Council always looks different. Is that automatically in that or do you need an amendment from the School Committee to include that in the Mayor's presentation? Mr. Balducci: The OPEB or the Other Post Employment Benefits is not a required item from a budgetary standpoint yet. If you look at the executive summary portion of this document, you will see that I have included that as part of my three year forecast out. Any document that is submitted to the Mayor and ultimately discussed with the Council will identify that obligation on a go-forward basis. From a budgetary standpoint, again, it's not something we have to worry about yet; however, it is coming and that's the reason why I put it on everyone's radar screen from a forecasting standpoint.

Ms. Iannazzi:

To continue, I would like to present an amendment to the budget to add \$532,589.40 to Fund 1 which would include six FTE's which would be Student Math Interventions and with the understanding that these positions would be for one year only subject to a language of approval that we would work out with the Cranston Teachers' Alliance. It would be a one year position until we could reassess to see what other regulations are coming from RIDE and whether or not there's a more efficient manner in which to achieve these. I would offer that in the form of an amendment. The amendment was seconded by Mrs. Culhane for discussion:

Mr. Colford:

Are we locked in to these six full time employees then in terms of pensions and benefits and long-term or does it mean that at the end of the year if those dollars are not there, the positions go away?

Ms. Iannazzi:

It would all be subject to an agreement with the Cranston Teachers' Alliance but historically in the past when we have had grant funded positions, we have been able to work on a Memorandum of Agreement which is a supplement to the contract where we would say essentially that those positions are one-year positions. We did it, for example, with ARRA Funding. The teachers still gain seniority and they have re-call rights, I believe, if we have vacancies but it would be understood that they are one-year positions.

Mr. Colford:

Then my question....these are all middle school positions now and some of the questions I have for Ray and for Joe earlier this week were in regards to the amount of classroom time that the teachers are fulfilling right now. Jeannine was kind enough to answer most of my questions on this. As I understand it, and correct me if I'm wrong, at high school typically teachers are working between five and six classrooms teaching between five and six classes per day. (It was noted that it is in fact four to five per day and not five to six). In the middle schools we're teaching between four and less or three and four; approximately four per day. In terms of looking in allocating labor, it seems that we have 181 middle school teachers which if I compared them to the high school teachers who are teaching approximately 181 less classroom time than high school teachers are. How are the high school teachers more efficient and able to spend more time in the classroom with students than the middle school teachers are? Is it due to technology or is it becauseis there a principal here? Maybe Joe could answer this for me.

Mr. Rotz:

First I can start with Law and Regulations. The big push a few years back was about personalization at the middle school level and things like advisory period. We took that into consideration when we were organizing our contracts and the amount of teaching time is in the contract. We also had to eliminate some of our Unified Arts

Programs; we used things like extending performance skills time where we worked on targeted interventions. If you look at the schedule, you have two days out of the week that they are teaching more than four classes because they're doing interventions with students in class. Those are the team teachers that I think you are referring to. Mr. Colford: Are those interventions to do with Math or specifically to go after some of these NECAP opportunities? Mr. Rotz: They are for Literacy and Numeracy; we try to target our testing areas. Mr. Colford: Is there an opportunity to put more of those classes; those blocks of time that are not in the classrooms specifically, to reallocate some of those shifts. I look at it as a scheduling thing and how are we allocating all of our labor and are we being as efficient as possible. Ms. Iannazzi: Mr. Colford, just be a little cautious that we don't go over the line and start negotiating. Mr. Rotz: I'm trying to walk that fine line and again, the personalization piece, teaming, when we have teachers that are working on Common Planning time that's built into the schedule during the day. A lot of that is around personalization and team teaching and doing more project based learning.

Mr. Traficante:

I'd just like to ask the Superintendent her opinion on this proposal.

Dr. Lundsten: We definitely need to put Math Intervention in. We need to do it during the school day. The mandate from RIDE says we have to make these interventions available. At this time, Dr. Lundsten explained in a scenario to Mr. Traficante. Dr. Lundsten noted that we

could do this after school; we could do summer ramp-up programs but are we really going to help the students that we need to help? That's on a volunteer basis. Another district tried that; they put together one of the best intervention ramp-up programs I've ever seen. They got like 10 kids to come during the summer. We need to do something for these children now to make sure that they are ready to take those NECAPS and it's just a fact that none of us like this but it's what we need to do at this point. To make sure they're ready in the 11th grade to do this. All the research out there says that if we don't hit these kids in middle school and in 9th grade, the chances of them graduating are not good. Believe me, I don't want to sit up here in four years and think that we didn't do something that we need to do to support these students so that they can graduate and move on to be career-ready/college ready. We need to do this during the day. Are you asking me if this is my favorite thing to put six FTE's back into the budget knowing what our financial condition is? It's not. Think about what Mrs. Culhane just said. This is supposed to be about kids; we're supposed to be doing what's right for kids. We need to go to the City Council and fight for this. We need to keep fighting because we need to make sure our kids are ready when they leave us that they can be fully employed, go to college and not have to take a remedial course. That's not where we're supposed to be.

Mrs. Culhane:

In regards to Mr. Colford's point, I think we really can't get into comparing teaching on what elementary does, compared to

secondary, etc. Each set up is so entirely different that to just look at how many hours they're teaching; it's like comparing apples and chickens. It is really just very different so I would caution anybody on that to look at those straight numbers because a lot goes into, as Mr. Rotz said a lot goes into that. I have a couple of concerns about this. The first one is what is essentially the difference between a Math Interventionist and a Math Coach? Are we talking about the same thing? Dr. Lundsten: A Math Coach works with the adults. They may go in a classroom and they model a lesson. A Math Coach we can take out of Grant Funds, depending on the school and the criteria. A Math Interventionist actually works with students; small flexible groups; they pre-test, they teach the skill and once the youngsters get the skill, they do a post-test and then they move on. They should have kids moving in and out of these groups based on what their needs are. They specifically do work with small groups. Mrs. Culhane: There are a couple of things that concern me; one thing that concerns me and another thing that frustrates me. I'll go with frustrates me first. We cut EPIC for our gifted students; we looked at those students who were truly gifted and I understand it's not in the BEP and there's no regulation for it but we said to those kids that we're not going to help you anymore; we're not going to give you extra. There are plenty of teachers who are compacting in the classroom and to them I give you a lot of credit but there's also teachers who quite frankly have 28 kids who have Special Education kids in their classrooms too and they can't do that. It's not realistic for them to think that they can do that. It frustrates me that now we're

looking at the kids who aren't performing and saying that we're going to help them. Yes, we should be helping those kids but I just feel it's unfair to both groups of children; it's unfair to all the children. I'm concerned about that. The second thing is that I'm very concerned about the fact that we're going to do this flip/flop thing. Mrs. Ruggieri and I talked about this. We're going to do really well in math and then all of a sudden are we going to see a decrease in our reading NECAP scores because we focus so much on Math; we put so much effort on Math and let's face it if you can't read; you can't do Math. If you can't do Math, you might be able to read. I'm not saying that one is more important than the other. I'm concerned about what kind of precedent we're setting for the future. I don't know if anybody else has those concerns or you can put my concerns to rest. Dr. Lundsten: What we're doing now is we're looking at the English Language Arts curriculum. Mr. Rotz and Mrs. Nota have had several meetings. We're actually pulling teachers to look at that curriculum so we can align it with the common core because the common core makes subtle shifts but important shifts and we need to do for ELA so we are looking at that piece. But before we go any further with ELA we need to make sure that the curriculum is aligned. In the mean time, Jeannine, how many teachers have we put through the Common Core training on the English Language Arts? Mrs. Nota-Masse: Nearly 500. Dr. Lundsten: We were apprised over the weekend that there are some small grants out there to do some more work with that. I've asked and directed Mr. Rotz and Mrs. Nota to put those grants together and we're going to try to get some more grant-type

funding to support not only the English Language Arts but the Math piece. We are looking for that also. I am equally concerned. If you look at our NECAP scores for Reading, they look pretty good but they've leveled off. There are still a small percentage of youngsters that we need to get to proficiency.

Mr. Traficante: Superintendent Lundsten, to follow up on that, what percentage of our math kids did not score a 2; scored below proficiency? Dr. Lundsten: There's a significant number; we had it at the last meeting. I don't have it with me. Mrs. Ruggieri noted that she has it.

- Grade 6 152 Scored a 1 159 Scored a 2
- Grade 7 139 Scored a 1 149 Scored a 2

Dr. Lundsten: Just so you understand, the students that score the 1's are the ones that appear to us when we look at it from 8th grade to 11th grade; if they score a 1 or 2, more than likely they are going to score a 1 or 2 in the 11th grade. When they score the 1, those are the students that will not walk across the stage.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

Do we know what our 11th grade looks like or actually our 10th grade? It was noted that 10th grade does not take the test; it is the 11th grade. Mrs. Nota-Masse: There are approximately 400 kids in the 11th grade did not score a 2 or better. That's all throughout the district; all three high schools. Dr. Lundsten asked if Mrs.

Nota-Masse would explain to the School Committee as well as the audience what she has been doing in regards to that. Mrs. Nota-Masse: I've met with all three of the high school administrators to discuss....we have to develop Progress Plans for all of the students who did not score a proficient grade. That is a RIDE mandate and they are holding us to the task of developing progress plans for each of those students by communicating with parents on a regular basis and setting up interventions and opportunities for mediation. There's one thing, and I am probably guilty of it too, that we talk about the NECAP test as the be-all-end-all of a child not graduating. That is one piece of a larger component of Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements; the PBGR system that we often talk about. Yes the NECAP is a significant piece of the proficiency control file that we have for students but I do want to make very clear that the child in the 11th grade; October of the 11th grade, takes the NECAP. We expect them to do well enough to score a 2 or better on both sections which is Reading and Math. The writing portion does not count for Graduation at this point. If they do not score in that October testing, and those are the results that we just received at the beginning of February, those students will have another chance in October to take the test again. If they make progress, then they're ok. They need to make progress and have achieved more correct scores on that test. If they don't do it, then they take it again in January of their senior year. As a high school person, it makes me very nervous because now the clock is ticking for those students and they need to achieve some kind of growth on those tests. In addition to that, we

can also make an argument or a case if you will, that the child that has achieved proficiency in various other measures of the district's choosing so at some point we may be able to say, "This child has taken the NECAP three times, has taken our district-wide assessments, has taken our district assessments that are electronic and we refer to them as the NEWA and the STARR; those are programs bought that we can assess progress. There is a larger picture of the proficiency profile that we look at kids; it isn't just the one shot NECAP deal. I don't want to diminish the importance of NECAP but I think it's easier for us to get wrapped up in if they don't pass, they don't graduate. It certainly doesn't help them toward graduation but it is incumbent upon us to make sure we have the supports in place to have the children be able to prove that they are growing in their proficiency. They may never score a 4, which is the top score on the NECAP but if we can prove that they are making growth then those students will be ok. They won't make growth if we don't help them along and the problem that we also face is the children take the NECAP in the 8th grade. Then they don't take it again until the 11th grade. We aren't able to have a NECAP score for those children in those in-between years. When we talk about the fact that we have to profile them coming out of the 8th grade so if they scored a low 2 or a 1, those are the children that we do concentrate our efforts on because historically we have seen that those are the students that are at risk for not achieving the score. I know it is the high-stakes testing that makes everyone nervous. I would like to think that if this is ever challenged, and I'm sure it will

be at some point, that if a district can prove that the child has achieved proficiency in various other ways, then we will be able to confer a diploma; however, we need to make sure we have those supports in place so that we can stand and prove to whomever is asking, I guess, that we have assisted the child and developed some sort of improvement plan for them. Getting back to your question, we often get wrapped up in the sound bite of the NECAP but it is a bigger picture issue and those of us who work in the high schools and the middle and the elementary, live it every day. The original question was what am I doing and that is that we've met with all the high school folks. We obviously know the students who have achieved 1 on either Math or English or both and we have set up interventions that take place during the day. We will offer things after school and again with high school kids, the after school thing is difficult because students work; they have family obligations; I would prefer that we give them their supports during the school day because that's when we have them. A couple of weeks ago one of the parents stood up and said that it was really important that parents understand the importance of NECAP and getting your children to school. We talked today with administrators from East, West and the Charter School. If the children are not in school, it is almost a guarantee that they will not achieve proficiency on these tests. If we have them in front of us, I'd like to think that the folks out there work miracles with kids and I've seen it happen and I know all of you have too. But, if they're not there, it's impossible; if we don't have them in front of us every single day and our absentee rate contributes to this.

Mrs. Culhane:

I know that you're talking about the 8th grade so they don't take it again until the 11th grade. I'm not trying to be tongue and cheek about this but what about their grades? Wouldn't we be able to identify them...if we took the NECAP's away and never looked at NECAP's again, wouldn't we still be able to gage where a child is by their grades? Mrs. Nota-Masse: Yes, we can identify students who are just generally at risk of not being successful in high school and if you take the NECAP and put it aside. But there are also students who are able to do well in school and just not test right. Mrs. Culhane: I guess where I'm a little bit conflicted is that for students that are like that; then you've got this NECAP saying that what they're looking at; that's what they're basing these 6 FTE's on is the fact that we need to raise their NECAP scores, are we putting in as much effort on looking at their grades as well. Is that a combined effort together? Mrs. Nota-Masse: Don't forget, for a child to graduate they still have to pass, in Cranston Public Schools, 24 credits, which is four years of English, 3 years of Science, 3 years of Math plus an applied Math; so we still have other requirements; their portfolios, their community service; all the other pieces of that PBGR puzzle that we talk about all the time; the Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements. NECAP is a piece of that; however, it is a significant piece and that is the piece, again, that gets a lot of attention. We also have students who don't graduate because they don't pass senior English or they don't pass four years of gym and health and that's probably a bigger piece than

students who don't pass NECAP. Mrs. Culhane: I guess the reason why I mention it is because right now you're looking at it being a \$600,000 piece and it just seems rather unfortunate; I understand it's necessary but it seems unfortunate that that amount of money and effort; somehow it gives the appearance that it's not being spread around. Mrs. Nota-Masse: I know that the schools, from our end, we look at the whole child and all of the content areas. Science and Social Studies contribute to their success on Math and ELA as well. Obviously everybody who works in the school contributes to the growth, the whole growth, of the child. I don't want to diminish the importance of the NECAP. It is a piece of a larger puzzle. Again, it's incumbent upon us to make sure we have those children ready to take NECAP or PARCC test that is coming down in a couple of years which will be more rigorous and aligned to the Common Core standards which is different than what the NECAP is aligned to.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I just want to add one thing. To back up a little to Mrs. Culhane's point. You talked about being a little frustrated that we tend to juggle a lot of balls in the air. Meaning that every time RIDE passes a new regulation or a new mandate we put aside what we were previously working on and jump to the next item; but that's why in this amendment the language is so important in that it is a one year amendment meaning if it doesn't work, if RIDE moves on to something else or if we find a more efficient manner of providing a Math Intervention, we are protected in our ability to implement new

programs the following year or move on to whatever RIDE might be moving on to next year.

Mr. Gale:

In this amendment, are we also talking about the After-school Programs that's part of the \$532,000 – Plan A and Plan B? (It was answered that it is not part of those plans)

Dr. Lundsten:

It does include, actually, for Plan B; it does include monies for After School Programs but I would tell you at this point that if you just wanted to go with the 6 FTE's; let's try that first and then we could look for grants. Obviously that also depends on what happens on Friday; that will affect the 21st Century learning grant; it's going to affect all the other grants that we have that are placed with federal dollars.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I have a couple of questions about this Plan. If we're only going to do it for one year, what is going to be our evaluation tool to see if it has worked? The other question is, for only doing it at the middle schools, we're sitting here and we're saying that they only take it in 7th and 8th grade and they don't take it again until 11th grade. How are we going to know that it actually does work because there's going to be that three year gap between the time that they've taken it to see if there's an improvement until the 11th grade and are we not looking

at what this impact is going to be on our elementary schools to say that they're taking it for a number of years and they're coming up to the middle schools and taking it and getting the support and they're not taking it again. I know that we need to do something and I know that this was a good plan as far as starting but I wonder what the back end of it is going to look like.

Dr. Lundsten:

I think what you need to keep in mind is that we have been working at the elementary level with the Math. We've realigned the curriculum and I think what I would really like to do is a work session so that you could see how we've realigned the curriculum and how we realigned it to the Common Core because there's subtle shifts so for example, your kindergartener now needs to be able to count to 100. Not only do they need to be able to count to 100 but they need to be able to start up at say, 35, and he's going to be able to go 36, 37, etc. That is a subtle shift but it's an important shift that we need to make sure that all of our kids need. We have worked on that piece; we have now, with the help of the union, we have a K-12 Math Coordinator who is working to make sure that we aligned both vertically and horizontally with that. He's also put some extra pieces in at the elementary level. Jeannine spoke to you at the last meeting on the fact that we now have 25 teachers who we have helped fund to get additional Math Certification. We're making small steps but we're moving towards that way. At the high school, they've had numerous conversations, for example, we put Algebra 1 in for every student;

that's a step in the right direction. They have worked to put ramped up courses in there and Jeannine just explained what else they're going to do for the folks who need extra help. The other piece of that, as far as measuring, I think we need to look at it both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively we already have some assessments in place that we could look at so we could do pre and post-testing to see if we make some difference for these youngsters. I think we need to be very specific about what the outcome should look at. Then we should re-evaluate this in the spring of next year.

Mr. Colford:

Would we need to put those qualifications in now before we voted on this; those quantitative numbers or is that something we could add in after? Put language in for the evaluation tool, etc. **Ms. Iannazzi:** I think that's something that has to be worked on with an MOA. We need to leave to Liz and Jim Parisi and Ron Cascione. We can talk about that in Executive Session.

A motion has been made and seconded on the floor for amending the budget to add \$532,589.40 for 6 FTE's for Math Intervention from Fund 1. The roll was called on the amendment:

Mr. Gale Yes Mr. Colford Yes

Mr. Traficante Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mrs. McFarland Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. Ruggieri:

As far as our elementary schools with the Math, I know that they've started to use the Encore and the other Tools; are all of our elementary schools teaching math in the same way, right now? Dr. Lundsten: They are supposed to be. We're trying to do walk-throughs and monitor that.

Ms. Iannazzi:

Just by way of general comments, we have made some amendments in an attempt to preserve jobs. As I said at the last meeting, I'm going to say it again tonight, we've done our part; it's now up to you to do your part. We need you all to come to the Council Meeting; we need you to speak; we need you to support the School Committee's budget. The last several years, the Council has looked out; they have seen no one in the audience and they have taken some observation that nobody cares about Cranston Public Schools. You are your own best advocate. You need to be present; you need to voice your opinion; you need to call your council person. I had a conversation this morning with Chair of Finance, Steve Stycos. The budget session for the School Department is tentatively set for April 25th. Everyone please reserve that date and be present.

There being no further discussion on the budget, as amended, the roll was called:

Mr. Traficante Yes Mrs. McFarland Yes

Mrs. Ruggieri Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Mr. Colford Yes Mr. Gale Yes

Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Public Hearing on Non-agenda items

Mr. Dick Tomlins:

Spoke on general items and “Tale of Two Cities”. I would recommend that you read my article on RIDE, Ride Out of Town. We’re allowing in this City in this State and when I hear the Council talk on certain things that they can’t do anything about certain things, that get’s whatever hair I have going up straight. Form a committee of your own.

Go up there, present your case, time after time, after time. There’s no question that RIDE has done more damage, as I said in my article, to education as well as the federal programs and of course they’re recipients of the federal programs, than anything I’ve ever seen. What we’re talking about here tonight is doing remedial work in our schools. We’ve got a remedial program going in our schools and I question that. As I said the other night, I was brought up with peanut butter and jelly and for dessert we had condense milk on toast with sugar. I shouldn’t be standing here tonight, as I said. I should be expired and I certainly shouldn’t be able to talk anyway intelligently because I had that horrible education and there was 60 in a class. I know all about the lack of the family. I think it was said tonight that there are 51% of the students; but to me that’s no excuse because it has to start ...It’s like we’re going round and around. When it comes to a problem in Math or any other subject, in order that we don’t ...I

think it was Mrs. Culhane that said the pendulum of this country, we here, we go way over here to fix something. It happens every time. Why can't the teachers in their own committee say that they know they have a problem with Math? Why can't they fix it themselves? There's got to be Math teachers as I said before, A, B, and C. I don't know why we have to ...RIDE has to come riding into town and tell you there is trouble with Math so now all of a sudden we go out and we hire more people and we start remedial programs on Math. What do we have these teachers here for? I'll never stand here and believe that the teachers in this City aren't capable of solving those problems. Don't we know what a student is doing by their grades? OMG. Their grades don't count anymore. We have to have somebody to test the kid here, test the kid here. Are we telling ourselves; the teachers are in the class; that's where it's at right there that they don't know everyone of their students and they don't know that they're doing X,Y, or Z and they need some help. A lengthy speech ensued at this time.

Liz Larkin:

Thanks, again, Mr. Tomlins. Twice in one night. Actually the issues are that the basic public education in America is consistently shackled to any new fangled idea that comes along. It is not the educators that work in the schools. It is the system. We no longer catch up; as a matter of fact Mr. Colford, you have alluded to certain things this evening; I don't want to single you out but you did allude to them. Basically you cannot run schools like a corporation. Kids

are not widgets. I understand that you indicated about minutes but if you look at each individual elementary school or secondary and an actual fact, if you look at the middle school and you look at the periods, we have more teaching periods in our last contract and we have two period 1's and we have a required advisory. In actual fact, middle school teachers are with students, educating them in some way and supporting them for 239 minutes per week. The high school secondary people have 235 and they also have an advisory but their advisory is set up a little bit differently. Every single time we catch up to something they change the game. We can never catch up and a very good friend of mine and a valued educator, John Santangelo, who is a Math educator in this school and who is Vice President of the Cranston Teachers' Alliance and who is a National Leader in Thinking Math for the AFT; they cannot keep up with the changes. Back in the day, and I've been around a long time, we had curriculum. We followed that curriculum. You came into a district and you said, "You're in fourth grade and this is the curriculum". You didn't have this helter skelter thing where everybody was trying to reform, reform, and reform. Now we're going to Common Core Standards. We just got the GLE's and GSE's. Now we're doing both of them and juggling them. No one is giving up on one thing. So we're doing GLE's, GSE's, Common Tasks, and now we're not going to be doing that anymore; now we're going to do Common Core Standards, which is the old way of aligning curriculum and yet not everything's aligned. These poor teachers are giving assessments that aren't even aligned to Common Core Standards. NECAP, which we're talking about, is

not even going to be around because we're going to be doing the PARCC. How does one become successful in any kind of assessment if it's constantly changing? The other issue is if you look at the private schools and you look at what they're doing, we're doing the same things but we accept all students and we have to educate every single person. Our curriculum is very similar; however, they are not held to the fascias RIDE. They are not held to those same standards. We are getting crucified yet if you look at the grades; you look at the progress; you look at the wonderful art projects; music projects and these whole children; they are doing outstanding things. All we talk about is NECAP Testing which is obsolete and doesn't allow multiple pathways. I have one more statement. I worked in 8 different schools from layoffs and moved. I taught in grades from 3-8 and I have seen a lot of changes over the years. This is the worst and the pits. I'm going to tell you something; these schools were beautiful buildings and I am now at Park View and it is a tragedy. The other day my classroom, not being labeled to be regulated, was in the 80's. I had to turn on an air conditioner. I told the kids that we're not going to turn on the air conditioner because I don't have air conditioning in my classroom but we were in a computer lab, which mind you we all work for by going to RTTI. I opened up the window to get a little fresh air because the kids are hot and it's an incubator in there and they're all sneezing and wiping their noses; I opened the window; the window keeps going because you never know which one is going; and now I, the educator, who's supposed to be going around to every computer, which mind you,

doesn't keep up because we can't even do our attendance in the morning. I'm holding the window and without sending a kid to the office without a pass, I had to let him go and say, "John, go get somebody right away." The kids leave their computers and come over and say its ok if this window falls because there's no car or anybody down below. I said that that is really comforting to know that since 2006 a long time ago Park View, then, was supposed to get new windows. We have snow blowing in buildings; heat going out; toilets that don't work; sinks that don't work; pipes that are obsolete. There was a school in Providence deemed uninhabitable; they closed five schools; one of these schools is now going to be Achievement First. And mind you it is completely being redone by corporate dollars. I wish that they would support public education and what made this country great. If one of our schools became the Mayor's school, they would have windows and they would have heat; they'd have an infrastructure; they'd have everything. We deserve the same thing. Thank you, Ms. Iannazzi.

Mr. Colford:

Ms. Larkin, I certainly appreciate the challenges that the teachers are up against especially in the facilities and certainly the citizens of Cranston are here and they want our students to have the best possible schools they can have. I know without a doubt, my kids have been in these schools just over ten years, and I have seen some tremendous educators; unbelievable. I have also seen some educators that I think have some opportunities to help them improve.

The challenges are not going to get any easier. Financially we are all up against these challenges; every single one of us, as you talked about. I know up here, these people volunteer a lot of their time for a lot of years; a lot longer than I have and I certainly understand that. Unfortunately or fortunately, as that may be, it is a competitive world out there and we have got to prepare these kids to be able to compete in that market place. From a business standpoint, absolutely, if Cranston Schools are the highest as an employer I sit down in an interview and I say this kid graduated from Cranston, he automatically sits up here vs. some other schools that he may have graduated with. That's a value that you have the ability to bring to these students. As far as moving the goal post, I know in my business it happens all the time; every day. Unfortunately, yes, sometimes I have to teach to that; sometimes I have to change how my approach is to the people. Those are the things that we are up against. We're all in this together; we certainly want dollars; believe me, I looked at this and one of the first things Ms. Iannazzi asked me when I joined this group was if I would want to be on the budget committee for Capital Improvements. I said I would, how much is in there. There is no money there but we want you to see what you can do. With the Superintendent's help and guidance I've been with Mr. Gale as well; we've been visiting a lot of facilities. My goal is to visit every single one of them. I want to see firsthand; show me. I don't disagree; absolutely we need to do that. We also have an unfunded liability in this City that I understand is \$270 million. That comes for all of us. How do we make that happen? I think the challenge is to

make all of this work. I wish we didn't have to deal with the dollars but it is a necessity. We have to deal with that piece of it. Thank you.

Kerri Kelleher, 83 Freedom Dr.

I don't have quite the passion that Ms. Larkin has but there are some really valid points and we've talked about the windows at Park View for as long as I've been coming to the School Committee. What 's frightening to me is a Park View parent who is a friend of mine who was talking about the windows too and she said, "What's wrong with the windows at Park View?" It's getting the information out of this room to the parents who don't come to School Committee and don't necessarily know what's going on. Ms. Iannazzi, a few years ago you told me that you took your City Council person from your Ward around to your schools and your buildings. With a new council, I would beg you all to do the same. Take your new council person, before this Capital Budget comes out, and show them your buildings. If they don't want to go, please let us know who doesn't want to go. Then we need to do something to make sure the parents at Barrows, Gladstone, Rhodes or Stadium know there's asbestos in your floor tiles and all you parents at Park View; those windows don't open or if they do, they're going to fall out and hopefully not hit a car. This is something that we've come to almost laugh about because it's so pathetic that it is almost a joke. But it's a reality; but the reality in this room is not translating out in the general public so whatever the cry for these building improvements, and I've driven around and I've seen a lot of these schools and were in a lot of these schools with BASICS;

there are some sad state of affairs going on. To have to work in conditions where it's the middle of winter and its 90 degrees or 80 degrees in your classroom or conversely it's freezing; with all the other working conditions these teachers are dealing with, it is absurd that there are basic facility issues and safety issues ongoing. Whatever everyone in here knows, we have to get the word out to the public and get parents involved and get parents active in what is going on in their schools. They're not getting it and it's that breakdown that's going to kill us in the end. Thanks.

Announcement of Future Meetings – March 13 & March 18, 2013

Adjourn Public Work Session

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mr. Gale. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula McFarland

School Committee Clerk