

# **CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE PUBLIC WORK SESSION**

**APRIL 9, 2014**

**WILLIAM A. BRIGGS BUILDING (REED CONFERENCE ROOM)**

**845 PARK AVENUE, CRANSTON, RI**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:00 P.M.**

**PUBLIC WORK SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE  
SESSION**

**PUBLIC SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PUBLIC WORK  
SESSION**

## **MINUTES**

**The Public Work Session of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at the William A. Briggs Building with the following members present: Ms. Iannazzi, Mrs. Ruggieri, Mr. Traficante, Mr. Gale, Mrs. Culhane, and Mrs. McFarland. Attorney Ronald Cascione was present.**

**The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. It was moved by Mr. Gale; seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri and unanimously carried that the members convene to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws –**

### **1. PL 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel:**

**A. Reconfiguration of ELL Program**

**B. Student Transition Plan**

### **2. PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining:**

**A. Contract Negotiations' Update(s)=**

- B. (Secretaries)**
- C. (Teachers)**
- D. (Teacher Assistants)**
- E. (Bus Drivers, Mechanics)**
- F. (Tradespeople)**
- G. (Custodians)**

### **3. PL 42-46-5(3)**

- A. District Safety Plan**

### **Call to Order at 6:55 p.m. – Public Session**

**The roll was called; there was a Quorum present.**

**Executive Session Minutes Sealed – Ms. Iannazzi stated....no votes were taken in Executive Session. Moved by Mrs. Culhane; seconded by Mr. Traficante. The roll was called; all were in favor.**

### **Public Work Session**

#### **Affordable Health Care Presentation**

**Theresa DeMattie of Segal Consulting presented regarding the Affordable Health Care Act. (See Handout “A” on file at the**

**Superintendent's Office). She discussed the following:**

- Affordable Health Care Act Compliance**
- Comparative Effectiveness Research Fees**
- Preventative Services for Women**
- New Employer Requirements**
  - o W2 Reporting**
  - o Protection of Employees**
  - o Employer Exchange related notices**
- Ban on Waiting period of more than 90 Days**
- New Rules for Wellness Programs**
- Other Health Plan Mandates Effective in 2014**
- Payments to Temporary (2014-2016) Reinsurance Programs and how they affect us**
- Health Insurance Industry Fee**
- 2014 Requirements – NON – GF Plans**
- Cost-Sharing Limit Effective in 2014**
- Individual Mandates**
- Health Insurance Exchanges**
  - o Core functions of the Exchange**
  - o Status of the Health Insurance Exchanges**
  - o Individual vs. Small Business Exchanges**
  - o Who may Buy Exchange Coverage**
  - o Qualified Individuals**
  - o Essential Health Benefits**
  - o Essential Health Benefit Categories in Statute**

- o Exchange Benefit Levels
- o Tax Credit Eligibility
- o Employer-Sponsored Coverage and Premium Assistance Tax Credit
  - Employer Shared Responsibility
- o Employer Strategies
  - &#61607; Minimizing the Employer Penalty
  - &#61607; Design a 60% MV Plan
  - &#61607; Maintaining an affordable plan
    - The Exchange
- o Pushing Under-65 Retirees (non-Medicare) retirees to the Exchange
  - The Excise Tax
- o 40% Excise Tax on Health Plans that Cost Above a Certain Threshold
- o Issues
- o Example Plans
- o Projection of Excise Tax
- o Employer or Employee Pays?
- o Avoiding the Tax
- o How to Prepare for 2014 and Beyond

## **Waiver Policy**

**Ms. Iannazzi stated - let's move onto the Waiver Policy**

**Mrs. Nota stated – that our Waiver Policy will start going into effect for students who did not pass the NECAP tests. You all passed it back in November and December of last year. That is in effect and I just wanted to update you on that it is ready to go and we are starting to accept the waiver to the Superintendent’s Office. The only change to it was that we can now accept college acceptance, so to a 2-4 year non-open enrollment college or university. We accepted that as a waiver for the NECAP. So if you have a student who got a 1 on the math or 1 on the English, but was accepted to a 2 or 4 year non-open enrollment college or university, the automatically will go through the waiver.**

#### **Safety and Renovation Bond Update – Dr. Judith Lundsten**

**Dr. Lundsten stated - we are continuing to meet with RIDE, the whole package is due to them by Friday. We met with them last week and we are well on our way with getting that together. Mr. Votto has been wonderful in collecting all the pieces and getting his together. When it is done, the application will be about a 1000 pages. They have to send it electronically, so Mr. Votto is working tomorrow and the next day to get this together. We are bringing in some extra help because to get that up and rolling into one document, is huge. We are doing better with the application process, but what need to tell you about is the last time we went we were told we need to submit a five-year master plan with a variety of options. Mr. Traficante suggested that we take the two middle schools and make one middle school a 6th**

grade center. I looked at our actual numbers for those kids that would be in 7th and 8th grade in 2016. I presented this to Joe DaSilva and appear to be all right. I just wanted you to be aware. If you want to see those work sheets, I will be happy to provide those to you. Mr. Votto has also spoken to bond council, who was hired by the City. It is someone from Edwards and Angell. We had the language on that bond for the enacting legislation. We are going to meet tomorrow morning with the school committee. I have also spoken to Hannah Gallo about getting a meeting set up with the Cranston delegation to support the bond. She was gracious about helping out with that and Ms. Iannazzi is helping with that as well. The next steps after we get the stamp of approval from RIDE are that it will be presented in a work session at the Board of Education at RIDE. Then it will go before a regular meeting. When I know those dates and we are on the agenda, I will notify you. That is where we currently are with this. We are meeting with the fire department to make sure that we are complying with what we need to do there. We are all set for the summer with the floors for Bain and Park View for the asbestos removal. We have bids out for the sprinkler system for Arlington and the E building at Cranston West. Joel has worked up specs for the following summer of 2015 to do the fire safety for Oaklawn, Edgewood and Highlands. Also, we have been working with the architect to get the window schematics for Park View and that will be for the summer of 2015. That is where we are.

Mr. Votto stated that on the Agenda for Monday night will be have a

**revised Bond Repair resolution because remember we asked for 11.8 million, now we are asking for 15 million and we have to revise it. Also, the five-year capital plan will be different that what was originally submitted by Joel based on the information that we had from the study and we prioritized it. That will be on the agenda as well.**

### **403b Program**

**Mr. Votto stated - that we have a vendor that operates our 403(b) plans by monitoring them through IRS regulations. (See handout "B" on file with the Superintendent's Office) We sign people up but they make sure that we keep in compliance. They do all the reporting with the IRS. They have sold their business to the Omni Group and the Omni Group has given us a transfer agreement. We had Ron look at it and he has no problems with it, so we have it before you on Monday evening. It is just a transfer of business from CPI, who is our current vendor to Omni Group who will continue to monitor and support from the IRS perspective. That will be on the agenda for Monday night as well.**

### **Lunch Prices**

**Mr. Balducci stated – in your packet you should have received**

documentation regarding our food service programs need to evaluate the price that is being charged for lunch. (See handout "C" on file with the Superintendent's Office) The end result, based on the formula that was used that the price of lunch goes up 8 cents. It is an odd amount, so we are bringing our recommendation to you folks to begin next year increasing our lunches to 25 cents. The elementary schools are now at \$2.25 and we are asking it to go \$2.50 beginning next year and from \$3.00 to \$3.25 next year.

Mrs. Culhane asked – what is the State average?

Mr. Balducci stated – you should have received an email that I sent out this week showing you this.

Mr. Gale stated – if they only recommended 8 cents, then how come we are going up 25 cents?

Mr. Votto stated – we have not had an increase in 8 years.

Mr. Balducci stated – it was actually two years before Sodexo came on board, 2-3 years....and we have not raised the prices since Sodexo came on board.

Mr. Galed= stated - So basically the study that they did said that the increase cost of lunch is 8 cents, so we are kind of profiting a little bit? Am I looking at that correctly?

**Lynn Conca, Food Director with Sodexo stated – This increase has been overdue. This quarter will get you through at least another five years. Obviously the cost of food has risen significantly. The cost of milk in itself has is 28 cents per carton.**

**Mr. Votto stated that the 8 cents per RIDE is for us to break even. We need to have a surplus to replace equipment. Whatever surplus we keep goes right back in.**

**Mr. Ruggieri stated – if we are raising the prices and part of it is going to the cost to replace equipment, I would like to see some of it go towards food choice. We are already had the high end. We are the third highest in prices.**

### **Special Education Self Contained – Reconfiguration**

**Mrs. Matoin stated Michele Simpson discussed Specialized Programming in Cranston Public Schools (See handout “D” on file in the Superintendent’s Office)**

- Discussed it as a whole in the middle school**
- Discussed ESL**

- How ESL has increased since 2009. Active students have gone up.
- At an all-time high in our census of 601 active students as of today and 178 monitors
- There is no additional funding and how we can better serve the ESL and ELL kids with what we have
- How can we allocate staff more effectively and be smarter with our funding
- Keep this as a cohesive program at the middle level and provide more support to eligible children that are not yet enrolled.
- The regulations are changing.
- We offer ESL programming in 7 schools
- Combining Park View and Bain programs
  - o Bain is more centrally located
  - o They will have access to Title 1 services, which means interventions.
  - o They will have access to Bain +2 after school programming, summer programming
- Two year plan to lessen student impact
  - o Year 1, which would be next year. All incoming 7th graders will go to Bain and the Sheltered program would go to Bain
  - o Two FTE's would move to Bain to support the students there
  - o One FTE would remain at Park View for one year to service the Grade 8 students that are there. If they are in the mainstream already, there is no reason for them to move.
  - o One FTE will become available to support two additional elementary schools that have a high number of eligible, but not yet enrolled.

o Year 2, the remaining teacher will become an itinerant and would not service 2 more elementary schools.

• At the end of year 2 we will have doubled the amount of elementary schools that we can now support.

Jenny Chan-Remka, Principal at Bain spoke about the high level of ESL student's inclusion model.

Mrs. Simpson stated - we are trying to utilize our staff in a better way and meet the needs of our students and the changes taken place. We are trying to put more programs at Park View. Our plan will be, at Bain there will be the ESL program and at Park View there will be the Self Contained Special Education and at Western Hills there will be a Self-Contained Special Education. It would be a layered effect. All the self-contained students will be assigned a series of programs.

## **Alternative Learning Program and Physical Therapy Services Agreement**

Mr. Balducci stated – he wanted to talk about a couple of contracts that will be before you on Monday evening.

- Alternate Learning Program - (See handout “E” on file in the Superintendent's Office)
- Physical Therapy Services Agreement (See handout “F” on file in the Superintends Office)

## **Program of Studies**

**Joe Rotz stated that he emailed the Program of Studies to everyone. If there are any questions, feel free to ask. There were some minor updates, dates and corrections, typos, etc. The only major modification to the document, is we are adding two new course. One in science and the other in technology. I did add a narrative about the credits. If you want additional information, I have an overview of both.**

**Ms. Iannazzi stated that it will be here on Monday and if anyone would like a printed copy of it before then, let him know or print it off your email.**

**Mr. Votto stated – when we have the field trips of duration, we usually make 12 packets. Would you mind if we bring one or two to the meeting and if you have any questions about that particular field trip, we will have a copy for reference.**

## **Student Policies**

**Discussion of Student Policies to be deleted. (See Handout “G” on file with the Superintendent’s Office.)**

**Mrs. Iannazzi stated – some of these policies were old and outdated**

**and should be removed. (See handout “D” on file in the Superintendent’s Office)**

**Adjourn Public Work Session to Public Meeting**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Gale, seconded by Mrs. McFarland; all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Paula B.M. McFarland**

**Clerk**

**&#8195;**