

**FEBRUARY 16, 2005**

**The North Providence School Committee met on February 16, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library at the High School. Members present were Chairman Marciano, Dr. Pallotta, Mrs. Reall, Mr. DaSilva, Mr. Cataldi, Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Martinelli. Also present were Superintendent Ottaviano and Mr. Scungio. Ms. Mickey, Mr. Milazzo and Ms. Celona were present for the regular meeting only.**

**Motion by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to recess the regular meeting and go into executive session for the purpose of discussing legal issues.**

**The meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m.**

**The meeting began by saluting the flag. Next, Chairman Norato asked for a moment of silence.**

**The first item on the Agenda was Correspondence. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was Superintendent's Report.**

**Chairman Marciano announced that the Student Recognition would be moved to the beginning of the meeting. He asked Mr. Goho and the coach to present the certificates. Members of the teams received their certificates. Next, Mr. Goho announced that Pam Emery is the first freshman to win a State title in North Providence. She was presented with an award and a jacket. Chairman Marciano offered congratulations to all the recipients on behalf of the School Committee. Mrs. Reall added that she was pleased to announce that the students are dismissed from the meeting to do homework.**

**Next was Field Trip Requests. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the field trips as requested.**

**Motion by Dr. Pallotta, seconded by Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Cataldi and carried to grant the field trip requests in accordance with School Committee policy.**

**Next was the Request by the Italian Foreign Language group to go to Italy. Mr. Scungio talked about whether or not the school should sponsor the trip. One of the issues is liability. He felt that the Committee should keep that in mind. The trip can still go forward without the School Department. It would just not be sponsored by the School Department. Mr. Martinelli felt that we could have them sign a waiver. Mr. Scungio stated that we have a form, but it is always questionable as to whether a judge would enforce it. Some courts feel that they are unenforceable.**

**Motion by Mrs. Reall, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and Dr. Pallotta and carried not to sponsor the trip to Italy. Mr. Martinelli voted nay to this motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6 to 1.**

**Next was Employee Residency. Mr. DaSilva spoke about the residency policy as it pertains to the law. He felt that language should be put on the employment application forms and at the interviews that certain jobs will be in accordance with the Town Charter. He asked that the rest be tabled until next month.**

**Next, Mr. Cataldi asked to move the Middle School Graduation issue next. He began by stating that he asked to have this issue put back on the Agenda for this month because this is the first class that will graduate from the new middle school. When the School Committee made the \$2,000.00 cut last year, he expressed concerns. The parents put a petition together with over 100 parents of students. While it is**

necessary to balance the budget, when you are taking something away that the parents feel is this important, we need to take another look at it.

Mr. Ferreira, principal at Birchwood, spoke about this being his 15th graduation. There has been talk over the years about doing away with elementary graduation. He felt that the high school graduation should be prevalent and that the focus should be on high school graduation. He felt that the middle school graduation should be held at the middle school without caps and gowns. He felt that it is time to move forward. If you allow this class to have a graduation, then you can't stop it.

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mr. DaSilva to reinstate the Birchwood and Ricci Middle School graduations for this year only, to be held as in the past, at the High School with caps and gowns. Mrs. Real! called for a roll call vote. Mr. Wilkes, aye; Mr. Cataldi, aye; Dr. Pallotta, aye; Mr. Martinelli, aye; Mrs. Reall, nay; Mr. DaSilva, aye; Mr. Marciano, aye. The motion carried by a vote of six to one.

Next was the Middle School Athletic Policy. Mr. DaSilva spoke about number 16 in the policy. He felt that if you allow students to transfer from school to school, parents will be moving them to the better schools. Dr. Pallotta expressed concerns with singling out a group of students that transfer by not allowing them to participate in athletics. He felt that the Superintendent uses her discretion in granting a transfer and that the student should be able to participate in all activities. Therefore, he could not support number 16 of the policy and felt that it needs to be revisited. Mr. Martinelli agreed with Dr.

**Pallotta and felt that the policy needs to be revisited.**

**Motion by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Dr. Pallotta, Mr. Martinelli, and Mrs. Reall and carried that if a transfer is granted by the Superintendent, that student will be granted all the benefits, including sports. Mr. DaSilva voted nay to this motion. The motion carried by a vote of six to one.**

**Mr. DaSilva requested that the Chairman set up a subcommittee to look at the policy and asked the Chairman to set it up by the next month. Dr. Pallotta asked if #16 would be off the table. Mr. Scungio explained that the Committee can always decide to entertain #16.**

**Next was the Educational Funding Summit. Mr. Cataldi asked to move forward because the local school committees cannot continue to be the scapegoats for unfunded mandates. He felt that he would like to set up an informal committee with Mr. DaSilva and Dr. Pallotta. He also felt that the Mayor, the Superintendent, and the Director of Special Education should be part of the committee. Mrs. Reall spoke about the fact that the Chairman appoints the members of all subcommittees.**

**Next, Chairman Marciano requested that the appointment of the Business Manager be pushed up before the budget.**

**Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the Committee grant advice and consent to the appointment of Linda Celona as Director of Finance effective February 17, 2005.**

**Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Dr. Pallotta and Mr. Wilkes and the entire committee and carried to grant advice and consent to the appointment of Linda Celona as Director of Finance effective**

**February 17, 2005.**

**Members of the Committee offered congratulations and asked Ms. Celona to take a seat with the other members of the administration.**

**Next was Leaves of Absence. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Leaves of Absence Requests by Assunta Fallone - High School Secretary for an Unpaid FMLA from January 31, 2005 to February 28, 2005; and David Lombardi -Elementary Physical Education/Health Teacher for Paid FMLA -10 days (exact dates to be determined).**

**Motion by Dr. Pallotta, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to grant the Leaves of Absence Requests as submitted.**

**Next was Non-Renewals (Layoffs). Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that due to the uncertainty of state and federal funding, the non-renewals provided to the School Committee in their packets be approved.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Dr. Pallotta and carried to approve the Superintendent's recommendation for non-renewals (layoffs).**

**The next item on the Agenda was the Budget FY 06. Superintendent Ottaviano spoke about the budget presentation on February 14, 2005. She read the portions of the presentation again and asked the members of the School Committee if there were any questions. Dr. Pallotta added that there was one public workshop prior to this evening. He congratulated Dr. Ottaviano for the work she has done on**

**this budget without a finance director or an assistant superintendent. He also thanked Lynn Murphy Mickey and the principals for their help. He added that he respected all the hard work and thought that has gone into these initiatives. However, it still has to go to the Council and Mayor. The School Department has to do its very best to try to manage its budget. We have come to the realization that the taxpayers are overburdened and the Governor keeps shifting the burden to the cities and towns. He felt that he has to recommend cuts that are reasonable and balanced with the taxpayers. The Town is in a very difficult position and cannot raise the income level to support this budget. The recommended cuts are being made in agony. He suggested 1.5 million dollars in cuts. He added that he strongly supports the Superintendent's budget. However, we must let the Mayor and the Council know that if the cuts are accepted, this is the very most the budget can be cut. If it is cut any more, it will force us into a deficit situation. Mr. DaSilva asked Dr. Pallotta what the percentage of decrease is? Dr. Pallotta stated that it is approximately 6%. Mr. Cataldi added that there is not much more that can be cut from the budget. He felt that Dr. Ottaviano did a great job. Mr. Cataldi recommended that the budget be cut by \$1,641.072, leaving the budget at \$39,673,229.00, which represents a 5.5% increase, or \$2,068,272.00. He also felt that the council and mayor should challenge the state instead of looking to cut more at the town level. The next item on the Agenda was Public Comments on Agenda items 3-5. Kathy Salvatore spoke about having two children at Ricci Middle School. She questioned whether or not they would be able to get the**

caps and gowns and the diplomas for the graduation. She also asked what the difference was between the gym and the auditorium. Mr. Rollins felt that when the financial summit is held, consideration should be given to private funding.

The next item on the Agenda was Requests to Address the Committee. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was Old Business. There being none, the next next item on the Agenda was Use of Property Requests.

The Use of Property Requests were voted on as follows:

Motion by Dr. Pallotta, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and carried to approve the Use of Property Requests as submitted in the February 16, 2005 School Committee Packets.

Next was Approval of Bills. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the N. Providence School Department List of Bills dated February 16, 2005 in the amount of \$817,661.44 be approved and paid.

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried that the N. Providence School Department List of Bills dated February 16, 2005 in the amount of \$817,661.44 be approved and paid.

Next was Approval of Minutes.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried that the Minutes of the January 26, 2005 Executive Session be approved as presented and kept closed in accordance with R.I.G.L. 42-44-4 and 42-44-5.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried that the Minutes of the January 26, 2005 Regular School Committee Meeting be approved as presented.

**Next was Comments on Agenda Items 7-12. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was Pending Business.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and carried to add #4. Centredale Field - for use by the High School to Pending Business.**

**Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Dr. Pallotta and the entire Committee and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**David Wilkes**