

MINUTES
WEST WARWICK SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 9, 2012
JOHN F. DEERING MIDDLE SCHOOL
WEBSTER KNIGHT DRIVE
5:30 P.M.

This meeting was called to order by James A. Williamson, Jr., Chairman.

Members Present:

James A. Williamson, Jr., Chairman
Sean M. Murphy, Vice-Chairman
Elizabeth B. Brunero, Clerk
Joseph Florio, Jr.
Vincent D. Bradley

School Committee

David G. Lussier, Esquire

Attorney Present:

Administrators Present:

Kenneth M. Sheehan, Superintendent of Schools
Margaret Baker, Director of Financial Operations
Dr. Caroline Caswell, Assistant Superintendent of
Schools
Gregory Kortick, Athletic Director
James Monti, Director of Educational Reform,
Compliance and Technology
Philip Solomon, Assistant Principal, West Warwick
High School
Karen Tarasevich, Principal, West Warwick High
School
Kenneth Townsend, Director of Property Services and
Transportation
Paul Vigeant, Director of Special Education and Pupil/
Personnel Services

Recording Secretary:

Michelle M. Colozzo

Open Session

1. Open Session

Mr. Williamson opened the meeting at 5:37 P.M.

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2. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present:
Mr. Williamson, Mr. Murphy, Mrs. Brunero,
Mr. Florio, and Mr. Bradley.

3. Motion to go into Executive Session

Motion to go into Executive Session according to RI General Laws 42-46-4 and 42-46-5, Subsection (a) Paragraph 2

MOTION

**MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR.
THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GO INTO
EXECUTIVE SESSION ACCORDING TO RI
GENERAL LAWS 42-46-4 AND 42-46-5,
SUBSECTION (a), PARAGRAPH 2.** Motion
seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following
members voted in the affirmative: Sean M. Murphy,
Vincent D. Bradley, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph
Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion
unanimously passed.

4. Executive Session

Executive Session

a) Contracts: Discussion: Council 94 Negotiations/Revised Proposal

The School Committee met in Executive Session.

5. Open Session

Open Session

6. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present:
Mr. Williamson, Mr. Murphy, Mrs. Brunero,
Mr. Florio, and Mr. Bradley.

7. Reading of Mission Statement

Reading of Mission Statement

Mr. Florio read the mission statement:.

*The West Warwick Public Schools, in partnership with
the entire community, is dedicated to providing all
learners with access and opportunity to a challenging
comprehensive education while developing 21st Century
Skills in a safe, personalized learning environment.*

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8. Motion to Close Executive Session Minutes

MOTION

Motion to Close Executive Session Minutes

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE CLOSE THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

9. Student Representative

Student Representative

Madison Fisher, President of the Student Council, reported to the School Committee on upcoming events at West Warwick High School:

- The first blood drive was held on Friday, September 28th, and 64 pints of blood were collected, saving 192 lives.
- The high school had a very successful homecoming dance which was attended by over 450 people.
- The Powder Puff game will be played on Saturday, October 20th on Maznicki Field.
- Class officers and Student Council officers were introduced to the School Committee.

10. Audience of Citizens

Audience of Citizens

None.

11. Chairman's Report

Chairman's Report

Mr. Williamson said he would like to congratulate Mr. Townsend, Mrs. Tarasevich, and Mr. Ryan, the administrators, faculty, and staff, parents, and members of the School Committee on the Homecoming Dance—it was outstanding once again, unique to Rhode Island, nice and safe.

Mr. Williamson said there were a lot of kids and to have it go off without any problems is an amazing thing. He said there are key people and key students

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who really make it go. Mr. Williamson said real quick on the breathalyzer issue, he is going to basically say we will continue to take any and all measures to keep kids safe because obviously it's working.

12. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sheehan said every year he sets goals for himself and the district, and one of the first goals is trying to maintain the continuation of rigor associated with our curriculum levels. He said the second piece is really about what the number one goal is—for every teacher and every member of the committee—increase student achievement for every single child and the third one is to provide for the welfare and safety of our kids and create a nurturing environment—maybe we can do better. He said he thought we had a breathalyzer policy before it happened, from before he came and before Kenny Townsend came and before Mr. Williamson was on the School Committee. Mr. Sheehan said he took some things for granted, but we will get better at it, but what we won't do is compromise –what we try to provide for the kids, they give back to us in the classroom every single day, in the blood drives, on the athletic field, on the stage, we couldn't be more pleased and we want to keep them safe.

13. Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Approval: Executive Session Minutes: September 18, 2012 | a) Approval: Executive Session Minutes: September 18, 2012 |
| b) Approval: Open Session Minutes: September 18, 2012 | b) Approval: Open Session Minutes: September 18, 2012 |
| c) Approval: Payment of Bills: \$716,345.55 | c) Approval: Payment of Bills: \$716,345.55 |

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. Motion seconded by Sean M. Murphy. The following members voted in

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the affirmative: Elizabeth B. Brunero, Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

14. Approval: Homeschool Plans

Approval: Homeschool Plans

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee approve the homeschool plans of:

Ms. Jennifer Edwards
Mr. & Mrs. Colin Black
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Brodeur
Aaron and Nyiki Dozier
Mr. Robert Mather
Mr. & Mrs. Derek Noel
Ms. Sue Perry
Ms. Kelly Raymond
R. Young/C. Rice
Eva Piro Sasa

**MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR.
THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE
THE HOMESCHOOL PLANS OF:**

MOTION

**MS. JENNIFER EDWARDS
MR. & MRS. COLIN BLACK
MR. & MRS. KENNETH BRODEUR
AARON AND NYIKI DOZIER
MR. ROBERT MATHER
MR. & MRS. DEREK NOEL
MS. SUE PERRY
MS. KELLY RAYMOND
R. YOUNG/C. RICE
EVA PIRO SASA**

Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Vincent D. Bradley, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., Sean M. Murphy, and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Sheehan said for the record, we do have a few plans still out there that we are trying to get some

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information from parents a little more difficult –there has been a change in School Committee policy and some new expectations and some parents are challenging and information is coming from RIDE as well and we are planning to meet with a few of the parents this week or next week.

15. Discussion/Action: Increased Pension Contribution

Discussion/Action: Increased Pension Contribution

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee budget the following monies over the next two years to meet the ARC projections:

FY 12-13: \$1 million (already paid)

FY 13-14: \$1,251,225

FY 14-15: \$1,251,226

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY VINCENT D. BRADLEY THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS AS FOLLOWS:

FY 12-13: \$1 million (already paid)

FY 13-14: Budget: \$1,251,225

FY 14-15: Budget: \$1,251,226

Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Joseph Florio, Jr., Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Vincent D. Bradley, and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

16. Approval: Out-of- State Field Trips

Approval: Out-of-State Field Trips:

- a) **West Warwick High School Grade 12 students to WPI Invitational Mathematics Meet, Worcester Polytech, Worcester, Massachusetts, October 17, 2012**

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee approve the out-of-state field trip for West Warwick High School Grade 12 students to WPI Invitational Mathematics Meet, Worcester Polytech Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts, October 17, 2012

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MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE OUT-OF-STATE FIELD TRIP FOR WEST WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL GRADE 12 STUDENTS TO WPI INVITATIONAL MATHEMATICS MEET, WORCESTER POLYTECH INSTITUTE, WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, OCTOBER 17, 2012. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

b) West Warwick High School Grade 12 students to 6 Flags New England, Agawam, Massachusetts, October 21, 2012

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee approve the out-of-state field trip for the West Warwick High School Grade 12 students to 6 Flags New England, Agawam, Massachusetts, October 21, 2012.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE OUT-OF-STATE FIELD TRIP FOR WEST WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL GRADE 12 STUDENTS TO 6 FLAGS NEW ENGLAND, AGAWAM, MASSACHUSETTS, OCTOBER 21, 2012. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Sean M. Murphy, Vincent D. Bradley, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

c) West Warwick High School French, Italian, and Spanish Club Students to New York, New York, November 17, 2012

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee approve the out-of-state field trip for West Warwick High School French, Italian, and Spanish Club

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Students to New York, New York, November 17, 2012.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE OUT-OF-STATE FIELD TRIP FOR WEST WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL FRENCH, ITALIAN, AND SPANISH CLUB STUDENTS TO NEW YORK, NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 17, 2012. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Sean M. Murphy, Vincent D. Bradley, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

17. **Acceptance of Resignation for Retirement Purposes**

Acceptance of Resignation for Retirement Purposes: Science Teacher – West Warwick High School

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT WITH REGRET THE RESIGNATION FOR RETIREMENT PURPOSES OF DAVID TONKS, SCIENCE TEACHER AT WEST WARWICK, HIGH SCHOOL. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Joseph Florio, Jr., Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

18. **Acceptance of Resignations**

Acceptance of Resignation:

a) Part-Time Teacher Assistant on Layoff

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee accept the resignation of Thomas Ashley, Part-Time Teacher Assistant on layoff. Mr. Sheehan said Mr. Ashley verbally informed Mr. Vigeant that he has another job.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF THOMAS ASHLEY, PART-TIME TEACHER ASSISTANT ON LAYOFF. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero.

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The following members voted in the affirmative:
Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

19. Consent to Superintendent's Appointments

Consent to Superintendent's Appointments

a) **.5 Science Teacher in the Secondary Alternative Tutorial Program – Maisie Quinn School**

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee give advice and consent to the appointment of Courtney Going to the position of .5 Science Teacher in the Secondary Alternative Tutorial Program at Maisie Quinn School, retroactive to the start of the 2012-2013 school year.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GIVE ADVICE AND CONSENT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF COURTNEY GOING TO THE POSITION OF .5 SCIENCE TEACHER IN THE SECONDARY ALTERNATIVE TUTORIAL PROGRAM AT MAISIE QUINN SCHOOL, RETROACTIVE TO THE START OF THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero.

Mr. Vigeant said Courtney Going is a graduate of Rutgers and received her Bachelor's Degree in Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources and her Master's Degree in Biological and Agricultural Secondary Education, and she recently relocated to Rhode Island.

The following members voted in the affirmative:
Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

The School Committee congratulated and welcomed Courtney Going.

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b) Italian Club Advisor – West Warwick High School (2012-2013 school year)

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee give advice and consent to the appointment of Greg Gonsalves to the position of Italian Club Advisor at West Warwick High School for the 2012-2013 school year.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GIVE ADVICE AND CONSENT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF GREG GONSALVES TO THE POSITION OF ITALIAN CLUB ADVISOR AT WEST WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

c) Teacher – YMCA After-School Drop-In Homework Club – John F. Deering Middle School

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee give advice and consent to the appointment of Kelly Hersey to the position of teacher for the YMCA After-School Drop-In Homework Club at John F. Deering Middle School.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GIVE ADVICE AND CONSENT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF KELLY HERSEY TO THE POSITION OF TEACHER FOR THE YMCA AFTER-SCHOOL DROP-IN HOMEWORK CLUB AT JOHN F. DEERING MIDDLE SCHOOL. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Sean M. Murphy, Vincent D. Bradley,

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Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

d) Two (2) School Improvement Leaders (2012-2013 School Year) – John F. Deering Middle School

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee give advice and consent to the appointment of Concetta Piekos to the position of School Improvement Leader (2012-2013 School Year) at John F. Deering Middle School.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GIVE ADVICE AND CONSENT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF CONCETTA PIEKOS TO THE POSITION OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT LEADER (2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR) AT JOHN F. DEERING MIDDLE SCHOOL. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

e) Part-Time Custodians – Maisie Quinn and John F. Horgan Elementary School

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee give advice and consent to the appointment of Kevin Mann, II to the position of Part-Time Custodian at Maisie Quinn Elementary School.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GIVE ADVICE AND CONSENT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF KEVIN MANN, II TO THE POSITION OF PART-TIME CUSTODIAN AT MAISIE QUINN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Sean M. Murphy, Vincent D. Bradley, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr.

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Motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Sheehan recommended that the School Committee give advice and consent to the appointment of Joshua Faria to the position of Part-Time Custodian at John F. Horgan School.

MOTION

**MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR.
THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GIVE
ADVICE AND CONSENT TO THE
APPOINTMENT OF JOSHUA FARIA TO THE
POSITION OF PART-TIME CUSTODIAN AT
JOHN F. HORGAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.**

Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

20. Audience of Citizens

Audience of Citizens

Mrs. Crystal Wall addressed the School Committee regarding her concerns about the information that is being requested from homeschooling parents. She said she wanted to thank the School Committee for their time. Mrs. Wall said the School Committee approved a number of homeschool families tonight and on September 18th as well, but her family's name and many others were not presented, and when she contacted Dr. Caswell, she was told she was missing curriculum list or other educational plan. Mrs. Wall said this is not in accordance with R.I. law which says that you must keep and maintain attendance registers, so she respectfully declined. She said the law doesn't require an education plan nor does it provide the School Committee the right to approve. Mrs. Wall said West Warwick homeschool policy only reflects compliance with 16-19-2.

Mrs. Wall said Dr. Caswell has even gone as far as contacting our attorney, the Homeschool Legal Defense Association, and she doesn't think she was happy with the response, that we have a right to have our notices presented to you because the School

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Committee policy explicitly states that the Assistant Superintendent will submit the letter of intent to the School Committee at the next appropriate meeting. She said since Dr. Caswell is taking it upon herself to approve or not approve, we have gone back and forth and she has given us a number of forms and every one is a little bit different from the last. Mrs. Wall said the law is clear that the committee, not the Assistant Superintendent, gets to decide. She said all we are asking is that the committee, her elected officials, makes this decision, not Dr. Caswell. Mrs. Wall said we are law abiding citizens, complying complicitly with the laws of Rhode Island and School Committee policy.

Mr. Williamson said he is not really familiar with the law, but if he and Mrs. Wall could trade places for a second, you are asking the School Committee to approve something that we have no basis to approve; it's kind of difficult to say yes to something when we have no idea of what you are doing; if we could find some common ground, it would make it a lot easier. Mrs. Wall said every homeschooling family homeschoools for various reasons—for some of us, it is religious and we use religious textbooks, and what's to say you will say these are not good enough. Mr. Williamson said he thinks if there could be some dialogue prior to the approval process to circumvent the concerns ahead of time, then maybe that would help to move things forward. Mrs. Wall said it has been a rubber stamp for many years in West Warwick. She said we know our kids and what we need. Mr. Williamson said it's difficult to approve something blind.

Mrs. Wall said for years with the state law, this is how it's been done, this is how the policy is. She said she has been going by the school policy; it's just like playing in a football game and the rules have just been changed. Mr. Williamson said that's not fair, and he thinks if there were a dialogue before it came to the School Committee, maybe we could move forward. Mrs. Wall said part of our frustration is we literally received four different forms, and she has e-mails and

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she has a letter—we have gone above and beyond—we are using West Warwick policy and state law to a :”T”. Mr. Williamson asked do you have a legal representative? Mrs. Wall said yes, from Virginia, they represent close to 500 families in the state. Mrs. Wall said probably 12 of them just caved because they were intimidated by Dr. Caswell. Mr. Williamson said it concerns him when he hears the word caved. Mr. Williamson asked the number of families that haven’t caved, and Mrs. Wall said three. Mr. Williamson asked when did you make a submission? Mrs. Wall said March 6th of last year, and it was never approved—we had moved here late in the year, so we did submit a request, but it was never processed because she never received any notification, so she abided by the state she just moved from. Mrs. Wall said she received a letter on August 29th saying I needed all of this additional information, ISB numbers, copyright, and authors, and I decided I wasn’t going to do it.

Mrs. Wall said listing texts can be difficult because you could be using one series and your child is just not grasping it and you change to a different book. She said what’s to say the School Committee is going to come back and say every time you change your resources, you have to come back to us. She said the reason we homeschool is to let students learn in their own way. She said more and more information is being requested throughout the nation.

Mr. Sheehan said the reason why I forwarded it to Dr. Caswell is to make sure Dr. Caswell knew exactly what I would be recommending so she could respond to me. He said Dr. Caswell was assigned the homeschool piece Mr. Sheehan said there are very few guidelines. He said that he has asked for a position statement from David Abbott at the Rhode Island Department of Education. He said by statute by Chapter 16 of the statute, this School Committee cannot vote on anything without his recommendation, and when Dr. Caswell gives him something, he makes sure she dots the I’s and crosses the T’s, that he feels comfortable and that all of the material that we want is

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there. He said we have some people that don't want to tell what age or grade level their children are; if they choose to come back, we don't know what grade they are. Mrs. Wall said if they decide to come back, you will know, and Mr. Sheehan said why ask for approval then. Mrs. Wall said she is a law-abiding citizen. Mr. Sheehan said a lot of people would say what's the penalty. Mrs. McKenna said Rhode Island is considered an approval state, and very few are approval states.—you inform them, but they don't approve. Mr. Williamson asked from the states where no approval is required, how does it affect getting into college? Mrs. Wall said she has a niece who took the ACT and the SAT, and she got a full scholarship.

Mrs. Wall referred to Section V. of the new homeschool policy, under homeschool communication, it reads: if any change of policy toward homeschooling is being formally considered, all parents who are currently on record as homeschooling in West Warwick will be provided written notice. She said she would appreciate the next time there is a change, she would appreciate being notified.

Mr. Sheehan said the law requires when there is a policy change that it has three different readings so if there is anything that may be germane to different groups of people, they can go on line and see it on-line.

Mr. Sheehan said Dr. Caswell will be reviewing this, and you will be hearing back from me before the week is over.

Mr. Sheehan said obviously the intent of parents is to provide the best education for their children—that's their right, but in defense of Dr. Caswell and the West Warwick Public Schools, unlike you who are very serious, we have other people who are not doing what they are supposed to do and those kids are being shortchanged and there is no way to protect them because the law doesn't allow it. That's why we are making policy; we are not trying to make it hard.

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Mrs. McKenna said they take their children's welfare seriously—they are our own children and we care about those children deeply. She said that she doesn't walk into classrooms and explain to someone how to teach. Mr. Williamson said and you are asking for the same respect. Mr. Sheehan said RIDE and the principals do walk into the classrooms and evaluate them. Mrs. McKenna said she can give a portion of what she gave in June prior to the summer—it explains explicitly what I am planning to teach—we are not hiding things. She said Mrs. McLaughlin at the library knows her—she is there every week picking up books—we are serious about what we are doing. She said the paperwork that is being sent to us is condescending.

Mr. Williamson said that he respects what you are doing—perfectly respectable means of education. He said if we could change places for a minute, when we get 30, 40, 50 families, and 95% comply, it makes it difficult for us to understand why the 5% is not complying. Mrs. McKenna said she sympathizes with approving blindly when you haven't seen it. Mr. Williamson said that's why we rely on experts. Mrs. McKenna said in the law there is a clear distinction between curriculum and course of study. She said she started in Middletown and the law says I must teach what is substantially equal. If she asked for the curriculum for the day, they said they couldn't do that—we do the same thing—it depends on what needs to be taught—why would someone put me in a position to lie? Mr. Sheehan asked how would we be able to evaluate—22 districts of 36 rubber stamp, but we are trying to protect the kids. Mrs. Wall asked if you think you are the authority, and Mr. Sheehan said I can't go to your home and they don't take standardized tests.

Mrs. Karen Tarasevich, Principal of West Warwick High School, said she wanted to thank everyone who helped out with Homecoming—it takes a tremendous amount of work to set up—there is a tremendous amount of labor involved. She said these are the extra

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things that keep kids involved, and almost 500 kids showed up.

21. School Committee Discussion for the Good and Welfare of the School System

School Committee Discussion for the Good and Welfare of the School System

Mr. Williamson said we did start the administrators' reports, and Mr. Florio said he has a question for Mr. Vigeant regarding Medicaid reimbursement. Mr. Vigeant responded to Mr. Florio's questions. He said we have a number of students considered Medicaid eligible based on the regulations and law, and with parent permission, we can access Medicaid reimbursement monies to pay for things like nursing, speech-language, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy; my department has taken a very aggressive position to try and get parents to give consent. He cannot and would suggest that you do not try to twist their arms. He said we are trying to get them to give an answer regarding medical eligibility. Mr. Vigeant said in some situations, parent approval is not required, but in this particular situation it is required. Mr. Florio asked are we talking a large amount of money. Mr. Vigeant said last year we were able to bring in about \$500,000.

Mr. Vigeant said we are getting closer to getting a decision from everyone and we can certainly let you know at the next meeting. He said our school social workers have outreached to our families in a pretty aggressive way to have them make a decision one way or another. Mr. Florio said it is not coming out of their pockets. Mr. Williamson said some of the families he knew personally, and there were some fears that if they signed, it would eventually cost them money. Mr. Vigeant said in the next two weeks, he will be making calls to those families himself to try and get an answer; for whatever reason, some people are suspicious of what we are trying to do. He said his department is trying very hard to get as many parents as possible.

Mr. Sheehan commented on the amount of resources it takes to get this reimbursement: principals and

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secretaries and Mr. Vigeant calling parents and having to put other things aside. Mr. Bradley asked why do we need parents' signatures?

Mr. Vigeant said it's from the Department of Human Services that monitors us—we were monitored about a year ago—they came and looked at our consent forms and signatures. Mr. Bradley said he doesn't think we should have consent forms—when you provide services to children, you should get paid for them. Mr. Vigeant said he is not disagreeing—he is just trying to follow what he understands the law to be.

Mr. Bradley said this is the time he should probably should say how much he has enjoyed being with the School Committee and how well he has been treated.

Mr. Lussier said this is the last meeting for two members. Mr. Williamson said he doesn't know the timing—he assumes it will happen soon after the election and the new committee will be here on the 13th, and if it doesn't happen, we will be here for one more. Mr. Lussier said if there's a question, they have to go before the Board of Elections—when you win by 25 or 10, then it's going to the absentee and shut-in votes. He said it's been years since we had meetings when the new numbers haven't been sworn in yet.

Mr. Florio said this School Committee is not by any stretch rubber stampers—we go over things—all five members of us. He said he wasn't privy to this before, but now that he has been on the School Committee for two years, he knows the School Committee does a really diligent job. Mr. Sheehan said he agrees.

22. Adjournment

MOTION

Adjournment

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE MEETING. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Vincent D. Bradley, Sean M. Murphy,

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Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and James A. Williamson, Jr. Motion unanimously passed.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth B. Brunero, Clerk

Michelle M. Colozzo, Recorder