

Approved 6/12/2007.

5.1

NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 8, 2007

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER. Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker called the Regular Meeting of the Newport School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Thompson Middle School Beatrice Berman Bazarsky Performing Arts Center and Cafeteria.

ROLL CALL. Attendance was as follows: School Committee Members: Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker, Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin (arrived at 7:03 p.m.), Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Jo Eva Gaines, Dr. Thomas P. Galvin, and Thomas S. Phelan; School Department: Superintendent of Schools Dr. John H. Ambrogi, Director of Student Services Amy Donnelly Roche (absent), Executive Director of Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Jacqueline Naspo, Ed.D., Business Manager Michael Saunders, Director of Property Services Paul Fagan, Coordinator of Human Resources and Information Services Fran Eames (absent), School Building Principals, Administrators, and School Committee Counsel Neil P. Galvin.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

1.0 MOMENT OF SILENCE.

- **John R. Drexel, III:** who passed away on Friday, April 13, 2007, at his home, in Newport, at the age of 87. Mr. Drexel was very involved in a number of charitable and social organizations. He is survived by his wife, Noreen Drexel, who has been a tireless supporter of the Newport Public Schools, and his three children, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.
- **Nancy H. Colton:** who passed away on Friday, April 13, 2007, after a brief illness. Ms. Colton is survived by two sisters, one of which is recently retired Thompson Middle School English Educator Connie Hayes.
- **Anne M. Allan:** who passed away on Friday, April 27, 2007, at Rhode Island Hospital, in Providence. Ms. Allan was a long-time educator for Newport Public Schools retiring after 31 years of service in 1998. She was a Science and Health Teacher Department Head, Cheerleading Coach, and Yearbook Advisor at Thompson Middle School.

- **Mary E. Pike:** who passed away on Monday, April 30, 2007, at Forest Farm Health Care Center, in Middletown. Ms. Pike is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, George W. Pike and Mary Beth Pike, of Newport. Both her son, George Pike, and his wife, Mary Beth Pike, were long-time educators for Newport Public Schools. George Pike was a Para Educator for Newport Public Schools, and Mary Beth Pike was a Science Teacher, Assistant Principal for Rogers High School, and then became the Director of the Newport Area Career and Technical Center.
- **Arthur DeAscentis:** who passed away on Wednesday, March 28, 2007, at home, in Newport. Mr. DeAscentis is the Uncle of School Committee Member Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr. Mr. DeAscentis was a retired Officer of the Newport Police Department.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT. No Public Comment was received.

3.0 STUDENT ACTIVITIES.

3.1 Student Council:

- **Update: Marina Zambrotta.** In the absence of Student Council Representative Marina Zambrotta, no update was given.

4.0 RESOLUTIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT.

4.1 Certificates of Achievement:

4.1.1: Newport Area Career and Technical Center:

4.1.1.1: Rhode Island Skills USA Competition. On behalf of the Newport School Committee and Newport Public Schools, School Committee Members recognized 11 students with Certificates of Achievement for their participation in the 2007 Annual Skills USA Awards Ceremony held on March 26, 2007, at the Rhodes-on-the Pawtuxet in Cranston.

The Newport Area Career and Technical Center sent 35 students to compete in 16 skills and leadership contests earlier in March. The results announced at the Awards Ceremony included 11 Medal Winners from the Newport Area Career and Technical Center.

The Gold Medal Winners, accompanied by Skills Advisor Colleen Murray and two teachers, will go on to compete in the Skills USA Nationals in Kansas City, Missouri, during the week of June 24, 2007. Ms. Murray briefed the Committee on the Competition and thanked the Committee for their continued support and for recognizing the Winners this evening.

The Medal Winners were:

<u>Gold:</u>	Vanessa Ferrer, Culinary Arts Claire Hayes, Advertising Design Dmitriy Kaplan, Automotive Technology
<u>Silver:</u>	Dayna Johnson, Cosmetology Maeve Heaney, Culinary Arts Bethany Lopes, Advertising Design Lauren Silveria, Academy of Information Technology Kody Batchelor, Advertising Design Robert "Zack" Seymour, Advertising Design
<u>Bronze:</u>	Lucia Nadale, Advertising Design Katelyn Simas, Health Careers

Interim Director of the Newport Area Career and Technical Center John Ball commended the students and thanked the Committee for their support in recognizing these students this evening. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi recognized the staff of the Career and Technical Center and the parents of the students who received these awards this evening. The Committee applauded the students, parents, and staff.

5.0 CONSENT AGENDA. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, as presented, with the exception of 5.1: Approval of Minutes (at the request of Mr. Leary), 5.5: Appointment (at the request of Mr. Carlin), and 5.6.1: Fiscal Year 2008-2010 Student Transportation Services (at the request of Mr. Leary) to be acted on separately. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.1 Approval of Minutes. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, April 10, 2007; as follows. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Vice Chairperson Mr. Leary suggested the term "Seal Minutes" placed at the top of Page 1 of the Minutes be removed and placed before the term "Executive Session" of the Minutes, as a separate page, and to consult with Counsel Galvin regarding this requested change to all Special and Regular Minutes of the Newport School Committee. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that he would request input from Counsel Galvin and report back to the Committee with disposition to the request. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

- **Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, April 10, 2007.** No amendments were made.

5.2
to

5.5 **Personnel Actions.**

Resignations.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Resignation of: Michael Breault, Principal, Coggeshall School, effective June 30, 2007. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Resignation of: Mitchell Williams, Technology Coordinator, effective June 30, 2007. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Retirements.

There were no Retirements presented.

Leaves of Absence.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Leave of Absence of: Jenifer Duggan, Grade 3 Teacher, Cranston-Calvert School, Leave without Pay, for the 2007-2008 school year. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Leave of Absence of: Jeannine Walsh, Reading Teacher, Carey and Underwood Schools, Maternity and Leave Without Pay, effective October 5, 2007 to the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Appointments.

Mr. Carlin made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Michael Whaley, Dean of Students, Rogers High School, effective the first day of the 2007-2008 School Year. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion. At the request of Vice Chairperson Mr. Leary, discussion followed as to the importance of this position and limited control contractually relative to management rights for posting and hiring. The motion carried unanimously (6-1). The Member who voted against the motion was: Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary.

Transfers.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Transfer of: Stephen Bruno, Custodian, Third Shift, Rogers High School, effective July 1, 2007. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.6 Bids:

5.6.1: Fiscal Year 2008-2010 Student Transportation Services. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to award the low bidder, Laidlaw Education Services, the Fiscal Year 2008-2010 Student Transportation Services, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion. At the request of Vice Chairperson Mr. Leary, discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

5.6.2: Utility Van. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to award the low bidder, Colony Ford Truck Sales, Inc., 7 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, Rhode Island, the Utility Van in the amount of \$25,452, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.6.3: Asbestos Tile Abatement—Rogers High School: Academic Wing. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to award the low bidder, A.A. Asbestos Abatement of Johnston, Rhode Island, the Asbestos Tile Abatement—Rogers High School: Academic Wing in the amount of \$44,835. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.6.4: Vinyl Tile Replacement—Rogers High School: Academic Wing. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to award the low bidder, Rene and Son Carpet Center, Inc., of Newport, Rhode Island, the Vinyl Tile Replacement—Rogers High School: Academic Wing in the amount of \$34,578. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Superintendent of Schools John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D., distributed the approved Personnel Actions (attached) dated May 8, 2007, as presented.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 High Expectations for All Students: Update—

6.1.1: Elementary Reading Academy. Executive Director of Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development Jackie Naspo and District Literacy Coordinator Adrian Poland presented information regarding the new Elementary Reading Academy and its criteria for placement, program components, rationale to provide support for the Academy, research relative to academic performance, social and personal adjustment, and dropout rate, and alternatives relative to developing clear standards, using multiple assessment measures, and redesigning schools. Discussion followed. Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker commended administration for the implementation of the Elementary Reading Academy.

6.2 Sheffield School—Formal Turnover to the City of Newport. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the draft analysis of the seven elementary schools currently under the care and custody of the Newport

School Committee prepared by HMFH Architects. Of these seven schools, not one is in great shape, but some are better than others according to engineers hired by HMFH Architects. According to this Draft Report, on a scale of 1 to 4, 1 being the best and 4 being the worst, Sheffield, Carey, and Cranston-Calvert Schools received a "4" and Coggeshall, Underwood, Sullivan, and Triplett Schools received a "3". With our substantial enrollment decline and the availability of substantial space in Thompson Middle School to house our fifth grade students allows us to take a look at, once again, turning Sheffield School back to the City. Discussion followed.

At the request of Dr. Galvin, Mrs. Gaines made a motion to suspend the rules in order to make the Agenda Discussion Item: Sheffield School—Formal Turnover to the City of Newport an Action Item this evening. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which failed (3-4). Those Members voting in favor of the motion were: Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker, Jo Eva Gaines, and Dr. Thomas P. Galvin. Those Members voting against the motion were: Vice Chairperson Robert J. Leary, David R. Carlin, Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., and Thomas S. Phelan. Discussion followed relative to the surplus of Sheffield School.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that this Agenda Item could be placed on the next Committee's Meeting under Action. Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker suggested that he could request a Joint Meeting with the City Council to discuss this matter before the upcoming Budget Meeting with the Council scheduled for May 30, 2007.

6.3 Thompson Middle School—Fifth Grade Move—September, 2008.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee his belief that we would have to move the fifth grade students to Thompson Middle School in September, 2008, given that this coming year, Thompson Middle School would be at two-thirds capacity. He also indicated that moving the fifth grade to the middle school has a significant and positive impact on reducing cost of the construction of the new elementary schools, in that one grade level no longer needs to be accommodated. Dr. Ambrogi stated that it is simply too late in the year to appropriately plan for this move for September of 2007, unless the School Committee voted to close another elementary school for September, which he stated that he could not support so soon after the trauma of closing Sheffield School. Discussion followed.

6.4 Subcommittee Reports:

6.4.1 Facilities Planning Subcommittee. Subcommittee Chairperson Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., stated that HMFH Architects delivered to the Superintendent of Schools, on Friday, May 4, 2007, a Draft Feasibility Study for presentation to the Committee at an upcoming School Committee Meeting to be scheduled within the next few weeks, and he also stated that a Building Committee is under continued draft formation

by the District under the provisions of the proposed Rhode Island Department of Education School Construction Regulations.

- 6.4.2 Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Liaison.** Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker updated the Committee on the scheduled Liaison Subcommittee Meeting of Monday, May 7, 2007, at Thompson Middle School Library, with topics of discussion: Budget and Financial Matters; Cooperative Efforts; and Other Post Employment Retirement Benefits. He stated that no formal meeting was held, given that two of the three Council Members were not present, and that the Subcommittee has not yet been able to reschedule this meeting.
- 6.4.3 Policy.** Mrs. Gaines updated the Committee on the recently held Policy Subcommittee Meeting of Friday, May 4, 2007. The next meeting will be scheduled for Monday, May 14, 2007, beginning at 2:30 p.m., in the Thompson Middle School Library. The Topic of discussion will be: Policies and Procedures regarding the Student Academic Eligibility for Participation in Interscholastic and Extracurricular Activities.
- 6.4.4 Wellness.** [Dr. Galvin](#) updated the Committee on the recently held Wellness Subcommittee Meeting of Wednesday, May 2, 2007, stating that the Wellness Subcommittee Membership would be expanded and in place this coming fall. The next meeting will be scheduled for this upcoming September, 2007.
- 6.4.5 Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC).** Mrs. Gaines updated the Committee on the activities to date of the Rhode Island Association of Schools Committees: (1) The Rhode Island Association of School Committees will hold its 2007 Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 12, 2007, at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick, and it is entitled "Found Dollars"; and (2) Chairperson Dr. Shoemaker showed a video clip of an ABC News Report relative to what a Long Beach, California, High School Teacher was able to accomplish with a multi-racial group of high-risk, low-achieving students. The video showed how the teacher got the students to document their experiences through a creation of a diary that was published in 1999 as a book entitled "The Freedom Writers Diary and subsequently a movie, "Freedom Writers" came out this year portraying this school's experience. After the video clip was viewed, Dr. Shoemaker stated that high schools are faced with the major challenge of trying to reduce dropout rates. Dr. Shoemaker then introduced Mrs. Kay, the wife of former, deceased School Committee Member and Past Chair Howard Kay, who was present in the audience, to brief the Committee on a similar program that her daughter, Susie Kay, founded, as a teacher in a Washington, DC, Charter High School, entitled "Hoop Dreams", which has become a nationally recognized mentoring program in Washington, D.C., to assist inner-city

public school students accomplish their dreams of attending college. Dr. Shoemaker indicated that the Newport Public Education Foundation would assist administration in exploring with Ms. Kay the feasibility of replicating any part of her Program into the Newport Public Schools.

6.4.6 Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force. Mr. [Carlin](#) stated that the Task Force received the award announcement on their recent Grant Application Submittal, and the City of Newport Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force was granted \$160,000 for three consecutive years to promote a greater collaboration between Newport Public Schools and the City's Task Force. Mr. Carlin also stated that the Newport Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force Annual Awards Luncheon was held on Friday, April 27, 2007, at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center's Colonial Dining Room, in honor of three Rogers High School Seniors and retiring Newport Area Career and Technical Center's Technical Assistant/Energy Manager Richard Niejadlik for their community service.

7.0 ACTION.

- 7.1 Authorization for Superintendent to Process Grants/Authorize Purchases.** Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to authorize the Superintendent of Schools to process P.L. 81-815, P.L. 71-874, Title I, and all other Federal, State, and private grant applications as a representative of the School Committee of Newport and to authorize purchases for instruction/office supplies, equipment, and services for the 2007-2008 School Year. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).
- 7.2 2007-2008 District Strategic Plan—Approval of Action Plans' Update.** Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to approve the Action Plans' Update to the 2007-2008 District Strategic Plan, as presented. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the 2007-2008 District Strategic Plan—Approval of Action Plans' Update. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).
- 7.3 2007-2008 School Calendar.** Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to adopt the 2007-2008 School Calendar, as presented. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the proposed 2007-2008 School Calendar. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

8.0 Reports from Superintendent and Staff: Expenditure and Revenue Reports, Enrollment Reports, Damage Reports, Superintendent's Update, and Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Report.

8.1 Expenditure and Revenue Reports. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Expenditure and Revenue Reports as of April 30, 2007. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Expenditure and Revenue Reports, as presented. Mr. Carlin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0). At the request of Vice Chairperson Mr. Leary, discussion followed relative to having the Available Balance Column reflective of the Encumbrance Column.

8.2 Enrollment Reports. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Enrollment Reports as of April 30, 2007, as well as the Quarterly Enrollment Report on Out-of-District Placements. He stated that the projected 2007-2008 Kindergarten Registration Enrollments would be finalized shortly and shared with the Committee. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Enrollment Reports, as presented. Mr. Carlin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0). At the request of Mr. Carlin, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that he would contact the Housing Authority to find out if the Newport Heights Project numbers would change when the Housing Authority moves to its next stage, which might be to raze the remaining Tonomy Buildings and erect new housing in place of them. At the request of Mr. Leary, discussion followed relative to Out-of-District Placements and the hope that these placements would be lowered given the newly established Alternative Education Program this coming year.

8.3 Damage Reports. There were no Damage Reports presented this month.

8.4 Superintendent's Update. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi briefed the Committee on activities to date: BC/BS of Rhode Island Municipal Advisory Board Meeting; Newport County Fund: Panel Discussion at CCRI---Paying for Public Education: Do we need a formula?; East Bay Educational Collaborative Meetings; Fire Department Meeting---Emergency School Response Plans; Rogers High School Meeting---Classrooms Walkthrough; HMFH Architects' Meeting; Council 94---Local 841 Meeting: Negotiations; NPEF Meeting---Aimee Lee, Development Director; Rhode Island Mentoring Partnership Meeting---Kara Abrams; Newport Police and Newport Fire Departments' Meeting; Newport Public Education Foundation Board Meeting; Newport Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force Awards Luncheon @ NACTC; RIPEC Meeting; NSC Wellness Subcommittee Meeting; NSC Policy Subcommittee Meeting; RHS National Honor Society Induction Ceremony @ RHS Library; Child and Family Services Meeting; and NSC/NCC Liaison Subcommittee Meeting @ TMS Library. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Superintendent's Update, as presented. Mr. Carlin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

- 8.5 Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Report.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Monthly Report. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Report, as presented. Mr. Carlin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

9.0 SUGGESTED MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed suggested meeting dates and agenda topics for the months of May and June, 2007, as follows:

- Wednesday, May 2, 2007, 9 a.m.:
Newport School Committee Wellness Subcommittee Meeting
Administration Center
- Friday, May 4, 2007, Noon:
Newport School Committee Policy Subcommittee Meeting
Administration Center
- Sunday, May 6, 2007:
Rogers High School National Honor Society Induction, 5 p.m.
Rogers High School Library
- Monday, May 7, 2007, 4 p.m.:
Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Liaison Subcommittee Meeting
Thompson Middle School Library
- Tuesday, May 8, 2007, 7 p.m.:
Regular Newport School Committee Meeting
Thompson Middle School Cafeteria
- Sunday, May 13, 2007, 6 a.m. to 1 p.m.:
Mother's Day
NPEF Mother's Day 5K Walk/Run
Rogers High School
- Monday, May 14, 2007, 2:30 p.m.:
Newport School Committee Policy Subcommittee Meeting
Thompson Middle School Library
- Thursday, May 17, 2007, 6 p.m.:
Rogers High School JROTC Awards Ceremony
Rogers High School Auditorium

- Friday, May 18, 2007, 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.:
Rogers High School Junior Prom
Easton's Beach Rotunda
- Tuesday, May 22, 2007, 6 p.m.:
NSC Employee Retirement Dinner
NACTC Colonial Dining Room
- Thursday, May 24, 2007, 7 p.m.:
Rogers High School Honors Night
Rogers High School Auditorium
- Monday, May 28, 2007:
Memorial Day—No School
- Tuesday, May 29, 2007, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.:
NPEF Showcase
Rogers High School
- Wednesday, May 30, 2007, 6:30 p.m.:
Newport School Committee and Newport City Council
Special Joint Meeting—2007-2008 School Budget
Council Chambers
- Tuesday, June 5, 2007:
Last Day of School for Seniors
- Monday, June 11, 2007, 7 p.m.:
AIALC Graduation
Rogers High School Auditorium
- Tuesday, June 12, 2007, 7 p.m.:
Regular Newport School Committee Meeting
Thompson Middle School Cafeteria
- Thursday, June 14, 2007:
Flag Day
- Friday, June 15, 2007, 6 p.m.:
Rogers High School Graduation
- Sunday, June 17, 2007:
Father's Day

- Tuesday, June 19, 2007:
Last Day of School
TMS 8th Grade Promotional Ceremony (Time to be Determined)

Suggested Additional Newport School Committee Meetings to be set up for Discussion/Action within the next few weeks: HMFH Architects to present Draft Feasibility Study; Sheffield School—Formal Turnover to the City of Newport; School Budget; and other items as may be needed.

10.0 Executive Session.

At 9:23 p.m., Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to go into **Executive Session** under jurisdiction of Rhode Island State Law, Chapter 46, 42-46-5 – Exceptions (a)(1) Personal Matters, and the person or persons affected have been notified in advance in writing and advised that they may require that the discussion be held in an open session; and (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

SEAL MINUTES

EXECUTIVE SESSION

OPEN SESSION

At 10:05 p.m., the meeting was called in Open Session.

Adjournment. At 10:07 p.m., Mrs. Gaines made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Phelan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D.
Chairperson

John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D.
Clerk