

Approved 01/22/2008.

1.1

**NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting**

Tuesday, January 8, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER. Clerk John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D. called the Annual Organizational Meeting of the Newport School Committee to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Frank E. 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 (absent), 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. (absent), Business Manager Michael Saunders (absent), Director of Property Services Paul Fagan (absent), Director of Technology Anthony Tomah, Director of Human Resources Fran Eames (absent), School Building Principals, Administrators, and School Committee Counsel Neil P. Galvin.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

MOMENT OF SILENCE.

- **Leonora G. Friend:** who passed away on Wednesday, December 12, 2007, at home. Mrs. Friend retired from the Newport Public Schools in December 2006, as a computer operator, at the Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center, after serving over 30 years for the Newport Public Schools.
- **Paul E. Soto:** who passed away on Saturday, December 15, 2007, at Newport Hospital. Mr. Soto was the husband of Para Educator Martha Soto at Coggeshall School and the father of Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Teacher Angela Soto.
- **Joseph Pontes:** who passed away on Wednesday, December 19, 2007, at St. Anne's Hospital in Fall River, and who resided in Little Compton. He was the father of Daniel Pontes who is the Automotive Technology Teacher at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center.

- **Robert Hutton Watson:** who passed away on Friday, December 19, 2007. and who resided in New Hampton, NH and formerly of North Kingston, Rhode Island. Mr. Watson was the father of Kimberly Hassan a Second Grade Teacher at Cranston-Calvert School.
- **Ettorino DeAscentis:** who passed away on Friday, November 16, 2007, at Newport Hospital, at the age of 92. He was the uncle of School Committee Member Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr. and his wife Sheila DeAscentis, a Para Educator at Coggeshall School.

1.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

- 1.1 **Election of Chairperson.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. John H. Ambrogi called for nominations for the **2008 Chairperson** of the Newport School Committee. Mrs. Gaines nominated Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker. Dr. Galvin seconded the nomination of Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker. Mr. DeAscentis, Jr. questioned whether the School Committee could elect a Chairperson with a simple majority not full majority. Mr. DeAscentis requested that vote taken tonight be reaffirmed at the next School Committee Meeting.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. John H. Ambrogi called for further nominations. There being no further nominations, Dr. Ambrogi closed nominations. In accordance with RI General Laws and recent Ethics Commission rulings and decisions, Dr. Shoemaker indicated a conflict of interest in voting for himself as chairperson and abstained from the voting.

In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Dr. Ambrogi called for a "yea" vote from the Committee for the appointment of Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker as Chairperson, in alphabetical order, as follows: Mr. DeAscentis voted "yea", Mrs. Gaines voted "yea", Dr. Thomas P. Galvin voted "yea", Thomas S. Phelan voted "yea", and Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker abstained from voting. **The motion to appoint Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker as Chairperson passed unanimously with one abstention (5-0-1) Dr. Shoemaker abstaining.**

Election of Vice Chairperson. Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker called for nominations for the **2008 Vice Chairperson** of the Newport School Committee. Dr. Galvin nominated Robert J. Leary. Mr. Phelan seconded the nomination of Robert J. Leary. Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker called for further nominations. There being no further nominations, Dr. Shoemaker closed nominations.

In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Chairperson Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker called for a "yea" vote from the Committee for the appointment

of Robert J. Leary as Vice Chairperson, in alphabetical order, as follows: Mr. DeAscentis voted "yea", Mrs. Gaines voted "yea", Dr. Thomas P. Galvin voted "yea", Thomas S. Phelan voted "yea", and Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker voted "yea". **The motion to appoint Robert J. Leary as Vice Chairperson passed unanimously (6-0).**

- 1.2 **Subcommittee Appointments.** Dr. Shoemaker did not announce the 2008 subcommittee appointments.
- 1.3 **New Chairman – The Year Ahead.** Dr. Shoemaker reported that new schools will be the major effort of the new year. Dr. Shoemaker outlined the commitment of the School Committee to the new school project.

In September 2007, the School Committee approved a plan to move the seventh and eighth grade middle school students from Thompson Middle School to a newly renovated wing of Rogers High School on the Rogers campus, move the city-wide grade 3 through 6 students to Thompson Middle School and construct a new elementary school for city-wide students in Pre-K through grade 2 on the site of the Underwood Elementary School.

In December 2007, a Stage I application was submitted to the RI State Department of Education for approval of the plan. Successful approval at the RIDE, and then approval by the Newport City Council is required before a ballot referendum can take place.

Today, Superintendent Ambrogi and Property Services Director Paul Fagan appeared before the State Fire Chief to meet on Newport Public Schools request for waivers from the State Fire Codes which were strengthened after the Station nightclub fire. We are currently operating with waivers in many of our schools and it would be prohibitively costly to proceed with bringing our old outdated building into fire code compliance if the intent is to surplus them back the City of Newport for redevelopment.

If the building plan is to be successful, a strong community outreach program is going to be needed to ensure the successful passage of the bond referendum. The community must be convinced that it will save money by investing in new schools. The Newport City Council must be supportive of the project.

Academically, we all expect higher expectations for all our students. We want to see our test scores improve and we want to maintain high academic goals at the all levels. We plan to deal with the academic eligibility issue and hopefully come to a resolution that will satisfy everyone.

- 2.0 **PUBLIC COMMENT.** No Public Comment was received.

3.0 STUDENT ACTIVITIES.

3.1 Student Council:

3.1.1 Update—Amelia Dias. Ms. Dias reported that the Child & Family Services Adoptive Family Program was this year's Holiday project. Students are currently brainstorming fund raising ideas for the spring. An end of January Spaghetti Dinner or International Night fundraiser is being planned. Ms. Dias reported that the RHS Mock Trial team, advised by Mr. Ferris, won their trial this afternoon by unanimous decision against Cranston-East High School.

4.0 RESOLUTIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT. None.

5.0 CONSENT AGENDA. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, as presented. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.1 Approval of Minutes. Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, December 11, 2007; and the Special Meeting of Tuesday, December 18, 2007 as follows. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

- **Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, December 11, 2007.** No changes.
- **Special Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, December 18, 2007.** No changes.

5.2-5 Personnel Actions.

5.2 Resignations.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Resignation of: Catherine Ratcliff, Guidance Clerk, RHS, to Yearbook Co-Advisor, 2007-2008 School Year Only, effective immediately. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.3 Retirements.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the retirement of Holly Borgueta, Foreign Language Teacher, TMS; Karen Cipriani, K-5 Art Teacher, Carey, Cranston-Calvert, & Underwood; Loren Palmer, K-5 Music Teacher, Cranston-Calvert & Underwood; and Robert Toracinta, Special Education Teacher, Coggeshall; Kathryn Murphy, Grade 1 Teacher, Underwood; and JeAnne Kane, Librarian, Rogers High School; all effective at the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.4 Leaves of Absence. N/A

5.5 Appointments/Transfers/Recalls.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Recall of Rocco Danella, Grade 2 Teacher, Underwood effective September 4, 2007. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).

5.6. Requests for Home Instruction. N/A

Superintendent of Schools John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D., distributed the approved Personnel Actions (attached) dated January 8, 2008, as presented.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 High Expectations for All Students: Newport Area Career and Technical Center Program: Update. Dr. Ambrogi introduced Karen Mellen, Director of NACTC. Ms. Mellen thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak and provided an update on improvements that have been made at NACTC over the past few years. The NACTC staff would like to introduce a ninth grade program next school year to provide a full four year technical education and provide students with an additional year of opportunities to comply with RIDE Proficiency Based Graduation Requirement (PBGR) mandates. Eighth grade enrollment trends for area sending districts were presented along with projected NACTC enrollment trends. Several NACTC staff members were introduced. A discussion on the state funding of the local career and technical programs was held.

Dr. Ambrogi indicated that Ms. Mellen has not presented this proposal, but will be meeting with the NACTC governing council of area Superintendents this Friday and would hope to be able to present the concept of the plan to for their acceptance. The committee discussed the pros and cons of starting a career and technical program in ninth grade.

Mrs. Gaines moved to endorse the concept of a ninth grade career and technology program at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center. The motion was seconded by Dr. Galvin and was carried (4-2) with Mr. Leary and Mr. Phelan voting in the opposition.

6.2 School Level Bonus for Performance: Dr. Shoemaker indicated that as presented last month, School Level Bonus for Performance is a concept that he would like to begin discussing with the Teachers' Association of Newport during this round of collective bargaining. In researching source of performance bonuses, Dr. Shoemaker has found a variety of sources of potential revenue. Dr. Shoemaker would like approval from the committee to apply to private funds and organizations to receive commitments for potential bonuses or that might be interested in funding such a pilot program. Discussion was held with several committee members expressing concern. **The committee voted (5-1 Mr. Leary**

opposing) to allow Dr. Shoemaker to represent the committee in his research of obtaining funding for a bonus for performance program.

- 6.3 Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Eligibility:** Dr. Shoemaker appointed Mr. Carlin Chairperson of an ad hoc committee on Academic Eligibility. The intent of the ad hoc committee is to look at both TMS and RHS policies, to review the probationary process, IEP waiver, and to be sure all students who are in danger of getting an F receive intervention. The ad hoc committee will present a report and recommendations no later than June 1, 2008. The following committee membership was appointed:

Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Eligibility

David R. Carlin, **Chairperson**
Dr. Thomas Galvin, **Vice Chairperson**
Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr.
John H. Ambrogi, Superintendent of Schools
Patricia DiCenso, RHS Principal
Eric G. Thomas, TMS Principal
John Heino, Athletic Director
Teacher representing Band, etc.
Member of the Boosters Club

6.4 Subcommittee Reports:

6.4.1 Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Liaison. No report.

6.4.2 Policy. Subcommittee Chairperson Mrs. Gaines reported that the policy committee has met and prepared two changes that will be considered under the action section of the agenda tonight.

6.4.3 Wellness. Subcommittee Chairperson Dr. Galvin stated that Kids First will present a wellness program to the administrators on Wednesday, January 30, 2008 at 3:00 p.m.

6.4.4 Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC). Mrs. Gaines reported that plans are underway for the annual meeting this April in Florida. Mrs. Gaines also reported that the professional development session is scheduled for January, but it is not January 20, 2008 as previously noted. The correct date will be sent to the committee members.

6.4.5 Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force. No report.

7.0 ACTION.

7.1 2008-2009 School Committee Goals. Dr. Shoemaker presented the following

goals for the 2008-2009 School Year:

2008-2009 SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOALS

1. To implement the new provisions of the Federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* and State *Regulations of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Governing the Education of Children with Disabilities* to improve student achievement by carefully putting academic and behavioral interventions in place that reduce the over identification of students with disabilities.;
2. To continue supporting all efforts to comply with Federal "NCLB" and State Article 18 requirements, so that each student's achievement may be improved in all target areas and that the Newport Public Schools moves away from being under the requirements of Progressive Support and Intervention.
3. To continue to pursue "high expectations for all students" thereby challenging every youngster who attends Newport Public Schools based on his or her abilities and talents;
4. To work towards the successful passage of a bond referendum to establish a new primary school and a new seventh and eighth grade middle school wing at the site of the Rogers High School campus;
5. To continue to provide a realistic, educationally sound, cost-effective budget that supports district goals. This budget needs to be presented in a format that is transparent, easily understood and professionally presented to the citizens of Newport;
6. To support and revise the programs offered at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center;
7. To analyze, quality of the after-school and summer school services offered to students attending the Newport Public Schools with the goal of ensuring that these services provided to students outside of the school day and school year are appropriately coordinated with the goals academically, socially and emotionally of our core mission in the Newport Public Schools;
8. To analyze, review and better coordinate mentoring and volunteer services in the Newport Public Schools;
9. To carefully review ways that parents and guardians of students who attend Newport Public Schools may be more actively engaged in their children's educational program;
10. To review and revise the English Language Arts program on a K-12 basis so that there is a better coordination across the various grade levels.
11. To successfully complete a new collective bargaining agreement with the Teachers' Association of Newport.
12. To continue to explore efforts to advance curriculum by evaluating innovative avenues of access, such as on-line courses, inter-district collaboration, and or concurrent enrollment of students.
13. To offer an AP Biology Course at Rogers High School and to begin to discuss coordination of AP courses with Portsmouth High School and Middletown High School.

14. To explore the possibility of having a flexible day for the staff at Rogers High School with the goal of providing more opportunities for Rogers High School Students to take the courses that they want or need without concerns for scheduling conflicts.

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to hold a school committee workshop to develop the 2008-2009 school year goals. Dr. Galvin seconded the motion which carried unanimously (6-0).

- 7.2 **Appointment of School Committee Attorney.** Mr. DeAscentis, Jr. made a motion to appoint Neil P. Galvin, Esquire to the position of School Committee Attorney from January 9, 2008 to January 11, 2009. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gaines. Dr. Galvin, pursuant to RI General Laws § 36-14-6, indicated a conflict of interest and reclude himself from participation. The motion carried (5-0).
- 7.3 **Rogers High School Extra Curricular School Year Eligibility Hold Harmless Provision 2007-2008.** Dr. Galvin moved to approve the Rogers High School Extra Curricular School Year Eligibility Hold Harmless Provision 2007-2008 as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gaines and was carried (4-2) with Mr. DeAscentis and Mr. Phelan opposing.
- 7.4 **Policy Amendments.** Mrs. Gaines reported that the third and final reading for policy changes to Article I - Organization, Section 3 and Article II – Meetings, Section 7 are presented for approval.

Article I – Organization

Section 2. Election of Officers

The committee Chair and the committee Vice Chair shall be elected by majority vote of the full committee at the organizational meeting refereed to in Section 1 or at such time as any of the offices shall become vacant.

The clerk shall call for nominations from the floor. When all nominations have been moved and seconded, the clerk shall close nominations and call for a vote.

The person receiving a majority of the School Committee members' votes shall be declared chairperson.

Section 3. Appointments

- a. Sub-committee Chairs and Members; Liaison representatives shall be appointed annually.

- b. The Superintendent, in his/her position, of Clerk of the Newport School Committee, shall publicize the position of Legal Counsel for the School Committee. Said Legal Counsel for the School Committee shall be appointed at the Organizational Meeting in January that follows the general election of the School Committee Members.

Mrs. Gaines moved to approve third and final reading of Article I, Section 3, Subsection B, Appointment of Legal Counsel Policy as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously (6-0).

Article II – Meetings

Section 7. Order of Business – Organizational Meeting

The order of business of the annual organizational meeting shall be as follows:

1. Call to order by Clerk.

2. Election of Chair, Vice Chair
3. Sub-Committee Appointments (City Council Liaison, Policy, etc.)
4. Appointment of Legal Counsel
5. New Chair - A Look At the Year Ahead - preview of topics
6. Adjournment

Mrs. Gaines moved to approve second reading of Article II, Section 7, Order of Business. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously (6-0).

8.0 Reports from Superintendent and Staff: Expenditure and Revenue Reports, Enrollment Reports, Damage Reports, and Superintendent's Update.

8.1 Expenditure and Revenue Reports. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Expenditure and Revenue Reports as of December 31, 2007. **Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Expenditure and Revenue Reports, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).**

8.2 Enrollment Reports. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Enrollment Reports as of December 31, 2007. **Mrs. Gaines made a motion to accept the Enrollment Reports, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).**

8.3 Damage Reports. N/A

8.4 Superintendent's Update. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi briefed the Committee on activities to date: Meeting on District Personal Literacy Plans (PLP's); Environmental Team Meeting at Newport Hospital; Rhode Island Schools Superintendent's Association Meeting; Environmental Group Meeting at Newport Hospital; Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council Meeting – Review of Report; Child Opportunity Zone (COZ) Network Meeting; Twenty-First Century Community Learning Center Grant Meeting; and Holiday Visits to all Newport Public Schools. **Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to accept the Superintendent's Update, as presented. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).**

Dr. Ambrogi reported on today's attendance at the State Fire Marshall's office today concerning the variances to the state fire code. As you know, we are hoping for a bond referendum which would result in several of our older non-compliant buildings being turned back to the City of Newport. Effective immediately, we will begin training staff members in egress paths from the basement instructional and cafeteria areas at Cranston-Calvert,

Carey and Coggeshall Schools. Effective September 2008, Cranston-Calvert, Carey and Coggeshall will not be able to utilize the basements as instructional or lunch space. The final issue addressed was that of fire alarms – currently, alarm upgrades at the elementary level have been put on abeyance, until the bond referendum. Alarm upgrades at TMS and RHS will continue as scheduled.

Mr. DeAscentis indicated that he would be interested in actual cost estimates to sprinkle the Carey, Cranston-Calvert and Coggeshall basement areas.

9.0 SUGGESTED MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed suggested meeting dates and agenda topics for the months of January 2008 and February 2008, as follows:

- Tuesday, February 12, 2008:
Regular Newport School Committee Meeting
Thompson Middle School Cafeteria
- Monday – Friday, February 18 – February 22, 2008:
Winter Recess [No School]
- Tuesday, March 11, 2008:
Regular Newport School Committee Meeting
Thompson Middle School Cafeteria

Special Meetings may be scheduled, as required.

Adjournment. At 8:50 p.m., Mrs. Gaines made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (6-0).


Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D.
Chairperson


John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D.
Clerk

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
NEWPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MEMORANDUM

TO: Building Principals, Central Office Administration, and Union Presidents
FROM: John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools *Jack*
RE: **Personnel Actions – January 8, 2008**
DATE: January 9, 2008

The following personnel actions were taken at the January 8, 2008 Newport School Committee Meeting:

5.2 RESIGNATIONS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Catherine Ratcliff	Yearbook Co-Advisor, RHS	Immediately

5.3 RETIREMENTS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Holly J. Borgueta	Foreign Language Teacher, TMS	end of 07-08 School Year

Loren Palmer	Music Teacher, K-5, CC, Und	end of 07-08 School Year
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Robert Toracinta	Special Education Teacher, Coggeshall	end of 07-08 School Year
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Karen Cipriani	Art Teacher, K-5, Carey, CC, Und	end of 07-08 School Year
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Kathy Murphy	Grade 1 Teacher, Underwood	end of 07-08 School Year
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JeAnne Kane	Librarian, RHS	end of 07-08 School Year
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5.5 APPOINTMENTS/TRANSFERS/RECALLS

RECALLS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Rocco Danella	Grade 2, Underwood	9/4/07