

Approve 04/21/2009

5.1

NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, March 10, 2009

MINUTES

Call to Order. Chairperson Mrs. Jo Eva Gaines 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 Jo Eva Gaines, Vice Chairperson Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Rebecca Bolan, Sandra J. Flowers, Ph.D., Patrick K. Kelley, Robert J. Leary, and Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker. School Department: Superintendent of Schools John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D., Business Manager Michael Saunders, Director of Property Services Paul Fagan, Director of Student Services Amy Donnelly Roche, Special Education Coordinator Barbara Smith, Cranston-Calvert School Principal Jennifer Booth, Carey School Principal Kimberly Behan, and Thompson Middle School Principal Eric Thomas.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

1.0 MOMENT OF SILENCE.

- **Dr. Charles A. O'Connor, Jr.:** who passed away at his home, in Portsmouth, on Sunday, March 1, 2009. He was the husband of the late Mary C. McGinn. Dr. O'Connor was a Teacher and Principal in the Pawtucket School Department and Superintendent of Schools in Warren, Newport (1962-1964), and Providence. He was an Assistant Regional Commissioner for the U.S. Office of Education from 1970 to 1977 and finished his career at Salve Regina University in 1980.
- **James J. O'Connell, Jr.:** who passed away at Newport Hospital on Thursday, March 5, 2009. He was the husband of Anne Hayes O'Connell and the father of Rogers High School Counselor Patrick O'Connell. Mr. O'Connell was a lifelong resident of Newport and graduated from Rogers High School in 1937. He retired as the Deputy Dean of Administration at the U. S. Naval War College in 1980.
- **Francis P. DeMenezes:** who passed away on Thursday, March 5, 2009. He was the husband of the late Elaine (Vandal) DeMenezes and the father of Speech Language Pathologist Cheryl DeMenezes. Mr. DeMenezes was born in Newport and graduated Rogers High School in 1962.

- **Agnes Riddick:** who passed away at St. Clare Home, in Newport, on Monday, February 23, 2009. She was the wife of the late Walter Lewis Riddick. Ms. Riddick was a long-time resident of Newport and worked ten years for the School Lunch Program.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT. No Public Comment was received.

3.0 STUDENT ACTIVITIES.

3.1 Student Council:

3.1.1 Update—Michael Turchetti. Student Council Representative Michael Turchetti updated the Committee on Student Activities—Student Council: National History Day; Pennies for Patients; and Japanese Exchange Student Program.

4.0 RESOLUTIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT.

4.1 Resolution: Rogers High School Freshman Basketball Team. On behalf of the Newport School Committee, Chairperson Jo Eva Gaines read aloud and presented a Resolution to the Rogers High School Freshman Basketball Team for winning the Rhode Island Boys Freshman State Basketball Championship on February 12, 2009, at St. Mary Academy-Bay View. Accepting the Resolution was Coach Brian Sullivan. Each of the ten (10) players received a personalized Resolution. On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Kelley commended the Team Players. Mr. Leary made a motion to accept the Resolution, as presented. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.0 CONSENT AGENDA. Discussion followed. Mr. Leary made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, as presented. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.1 Approval of Minutes. Mr. Leary made a motion to consent to the approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, February 10, 2009, and Special Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, March 3, 2009, as follows. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

- **Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, February 10, 2009.** No amendments were made.
- **Special Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, March 3, 2009.** No amendments were made.

5.2- Personnel Actions.
5.5

5.2 Resignations. N/A.

5.3 Retirements.

Mr. Leary made a motion to approve the Retirement of: M. Odette Bradfield, Business Office Coordinator, Administration, effective June 30, 2009. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Leary made a motion to approve the Retirement of: Nancy O'Leary, Clerk/Typist, Sullivan School, effective June 30, 2009. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.4 Leaves of Absence.

Mr. Leary made a motion to approve the Maternity Leave of Absence of: Glenna Johnson, Speech/Language Pathologist, Carey/Sullivan Schools, effective Remainder of 2008-2009 School Year. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Leary made a motion to approve the Parental Leave of Absence of: Aaron Sherman, Grade 1 Teacher, Carey School, effective returning on May 26, 2009. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.5 Appointments.

Mr. Leary made a motion to consent to the Appointment of: Suzanne Bessin, Building Leader, Thompson Middle School, effective March 11, 2009. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Leary made a motion to consent to the Appointment of: John Burns, Freshman Baseball Coach, Rogers High School, effective immediately. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (7-0).

Mr. Leary made a motion to consent to the Appointment of: Kacie Gallo, Assistant Outdoor Track Coach, Boys' Team, Rogers High School, effective immediately. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (7-0).

Mr. Leary made a motion to consent to the Appointment of: Gregg Gizzi, Head Baseball Coach, Rogers High School, effective immediately. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (7-0).

Mr. Leary made a motion to consent to the Appointment of: Ashlee Irons, Assistant Outdoor Track Coach, Rogers High School, effective immediately. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (7-0).

Superintendent of Schools John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D., distributed the approved Personnel Actions (attached) dated March 10, 2009, as presented.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 Governor's Budget Recommendations—Federal Stimulus Package—Impact on Newport Public Schools. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the Governor's Budget Recommendations—Federal Stimulus Package and how these recommendations would directly impact the District, such as the increase in health-care co-pay (to 25%) and state pension system (retirement age to 59 and elimination of cola—effective July 1, 2009). He highlighted a memorandum received from Commissioner Peter McWalters regarding Rhode Island's allocation from the Federal Government on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Title I Part A - \$36.9 Million; ESEA School Improvement Grants - \$10.9 Million; IDEA Part B - \$43.2 Million; Education Technology (Title II-D) - \$3.2 Million; and State Fiscal Stabilization Funds – \$165.3 Million. Discussion followed.

6.2 Update on Transitions—Carey School to Underwood School and Fifth Grade to Thompson Middle School.

At the request of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi, Principals Kimberly Behan (Carey School to Underwood School Transition) and Jennifer Booth and Eric Thomas (Fifth Grade to Thompson Middle School) updated the Committee on the planned activities for the transitions of both Carey School to Underwood School and Fifth Grade to Thompson Middle School, as follows:

Carey School to Underwood School—Kindergarten Open House: February 27, 2009, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Joint PTO Meetings—May and June, 2009; Family Barbeque—May, 2009; and Teacher Outreach—to take place after the Job Fair. Discussion followed relative to the Underwood School Facility: Parking, Security, Lunchroom Capacity, Enrollment, and Dropoff Procedures. Mr. DeAscentis requested the administration compose a listing of issues to be addressed and resolution status.

Fifth Grade to Thompson Middle School—4th and 5th grade parents invited to Mall Coffee Hour (April, May, June); 4th and 5th grade students and parents invited to the Faculty/Student Basketball Games: March 13, 20, and 27; 4th and 5th grade students and parents invited to Thompson Middle School Talent Show; 4th and 5th grade classes to visit Thompson Middle School and/or 6th grade students to visit all elementary schools to talk to 4th and 5th grade students (May); PTO Representatives from Thompson's PTO to attend all elementary school PTO meetings to address questions from a parent point of view (April & May); Thompson Middle School Principal to meet with elementary principals to discuss curriculum concerns (March); Thompson Middle School Principal, Faculty, Guidance, and Dean to attend and address a 5th grade Grade Level Meeting (May); Ice Cream Social at Thompson Middle School – traditionally scheduled for August; Salve students from the Community School to survey parents & students to find out Community School Programs they would like to

see at Thompson Middle School; Community School to schedule a Parent Breakfast; Students in grades 4 & 5 to visit Community School After-School Program in April; and Thompson Middle School Mall plans parent workshop series to address concerns (April). Discussion followed. Committee Members requested a Workshop with Thompson Middle School's School Improvement Team regarding the continued Transition Activities.

6.3 Subcommittee Reports:

- 6.3.1 Ad Hoc School Building Committee.** Chairperson Mr. Kelley stated that the Ad Hoc School Building Committee had requested the School Committee to receive its recommendation to construct a PreK-4 Elementary Facility on Tuesday evening, March 3, 2009; participated in a Community Forum, sponsored by the Newport Public Education Foundation, on Thursday evening, March 5, 2009, regarding school construction; and had placed an Action item on this evening's Agenda to seek the School Committee's approval of constructing a PreK-4 Elementary Facility. He indicated that the School Committee and City Council would be meeting jointly on Wednesday, March 18, 2009, beginning at 7:15 p.m., for the purpose of discussing the School Building Construction and Bond.
- 6.3.2 Facilities Subcommittee.** Chairperson Mr. DeAscentis stated that the Facilities Subcommittee met on Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at 4 p.m., at Triplett School, Room 104, and discussed a plan, to be brought forward to the Committee, to address energy efficiencies for Rogers High School
- 6.3.3 Finance Advisory/Audit Committee.** Chairperson Mr. Leary stated that the Finance Advisory/Audit Committee met on Thursday, March 5, 2009, at 4 p.m., and reviewed the Fiscal Year 2010 Tentative Budget to be presented this evening as an Action Item in preparation for the School Committee to meet with the City Council tomorrow evening, March 11, 2009.
- 6.3.4 Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Liaison.** Chairperson Mrs. Gaines stated that the Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Liaison Subcommittee would be holding their first meeting on Tuesday, March 17, 2009, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at the Administration Center.
- 6.3.5 Policy.** Chairperson Dr. Flowers stated that the Policy Subcommittee held their first meeting on Wednesday, March 4, 2009, at 4 p.m., and reviewed two state-mandated Policies [Special Education Staffing and Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, and Anti-Bullying (adding: Dating Violence and Sexual Violence)] for First Reading to be presented this evening

- 6.3.6 Public Relations/Community Outreach Subcommittee.** Chairperson Ms. Bolan stated that the Public Relations/Community Outreach Subcommittee held their first meeting on Friday, March 6, 2009, at 11:30 a.m., at Central Administration, and discussed plans for going forward. Mrs. Gaines indicated that, beginning in April, 2009, on the second Wednesday of each month, WADK would be appropriating air-time to Newport Public Schools for Public Relations and Community Outreach.
- 6.3.7 Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC).** Representative Mrs. Gaines stated that the Rhode Island Association of School Committees would be meeting on Saturday, March 21, 2009.
- 6.3.8 Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force.** Representative Mr. Leary stated that the Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force would be administering a Student Survey to address under-age drinking and that they were reaching out to the community/businesses regarding the prevention of substance abuse.
- 6.3.9 Wellness.** Chairperson Ms. Bolan stated that the Wellness Subcommittee met on Wednesday, February 25, 2009, at 3 p.m., at Coggeshall School Cafeteria, and would be holding their next meeting on Wednesday, April 22, 2009, beginning at 4 p.m., at Underwood School Cafeteria. She further indicated that the Wellness Subcommittee has been broken out into three working subgroups and that the Subcommittee was focusing its efforts on the upcoming renewal process for the Food Services Contract.

7.0 ACTION.

- 7.1 Special Education Local Advisory Committee—Appointment.** At the request of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi, Director of Student Services Amy Donnelly Roche and Special Education Coordinator Barbara Smith informed the Committee that the new state regulations require the local School Committee to appoint the Special Education Local Advisory Committee Members and approve their By-Laws. The School Committee will be appointing George “Chuck” Holland (absent), Diana Kriner, and Christa Velardi as the Parents for the Local Advisory Committee. Diane Kriner addressed the Committee. Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to appoint the Special Education Local Advisory Committee, as presented. Mr. Leary seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).
- 7.2 Special Education Local Advisory Committee By-Laws—Approval.** Dr. Flowers made a motion to adopt the Special Education Local Advisory Committee By-Laws, as presented. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

- 7.3 Policy No. 4.5.1: Special Education Staffing—Amendment—First Reading.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi informed the Committee that the new state regulations require School Committees to have a Policy on Special Education Staffing. He stated that the state law used to have classroom maximums, but the law changed to conform with the federal law, which has no class size maximums but leaves the decision up to the IEP Team. Dr. Ambrogi indicated that the new Policy would provide needed flexibility to have staffing changes that best address the needs of our students. Discussion followed. Mrs. Gaines requested that the School Committee receive information as to the number of Special Education Students the District has in each Special Education Classroom. Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to amend, for First Reading, Policy No. 4.5.1, Special Education Staffing, as presented. Mr. Leary seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).
- 7.4 Policy No. 5.4.6: Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, and Anti-Bullying (Adding: Dating Violence and Sexual Violence)—Amendment—First Reading.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi informed the Committee that the state recently passed a law to require each School Committee to have a Policy on Dating Violence and Sexual Violence. He stated that this Act is known as the Lindsay Ann Burke Act, which also requires an instructional component. Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to amend, for First Reading, Policy No. 5.4.6, Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, and Anti-Bullying (adding: Dating Violence and Sexual Violence), as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Director of Student Services Amy Donnelly Roche defined the implementation of training procedures for Staff. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).
- 7.5 Approval of Fiscal Year 2010 Budget [Tentative].** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi presented to the Committee the Fiscal Year 2010 Tentative Budget. He stated that the Budget increased from the current year's Budget (representing an Appropriation of \$38,124,384), by 1.34 percent, (representing an Appropriation of \$38,634,105) and, as a result of decreases in state aid from the Twin River revenues, an additional 2.64 percent from the City Appropriation would be needed. Dr. Ambrogi indicated that this increase was substantially below the state cap for tax levy, which, next year, would be 4.75 percent. He indicated that this Budget didn't eliminate any programs, but did result in a reduction of five (5) positions—one Principal, one School Clerk, one Custodian, one Third Grade Elementary School Teacher, and a Business Office Coordinator. Discussion followed. Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2010, as attached. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion. The motion carried (6-1). The Member voting against the motion was: Robert J. Leary. The School Committee will present the Tentative Budget to the Newport City Council tomorrow evening, at the Pre-Budget Consultation Meeting.

- 7.6 Act on Ad Hoc School Building Committee Recommendation.** Chairperson Jo Eva Gaines read aloud the Letter of Recommendation from the Ad Hoc School Building Committee addressed to the Newport School Committee. Discussion followed. Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to approve the recommendation from the Ad Hoc School Building Committee to support the construction of a new PreK-4 Elementary School. Ms. Bolan seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mr. Leary stated the Plan was appropriate but that he could not support a Bond Referendum for November, 2009, given the current economic times, and, therefore, would be abstaining from voting on the motion. Dr. Shoemaker stated that, given the cost of the Plan, he would like to wait to make a decision until the Committee meets with the Council, and, therefore, would be abstaining from voting on the motion. The motion carried (5-2-0). Robert J. Leary and Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D., abstained from voting on the motion. The School Committee and the City Council will meet on Wednesday, March 18, 2009, beginning at 7:15 p.m., for the purpose of discussing the School Building Construction and Bond.
- 7.7 Assignment of School Committee Members/School Building Liaison.** Ms. Bolan made a motion to approve the School Committee Member/School Building Liaison Program. Mr. Leary seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mr. DeAscentis spoke in favor of the motion listing positive aspects of his Proposal. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reiterated his objection to the Proposal, stating the negative aspects. Cranston-Calvert School Principal Jennifer Booth, Thompson Middle School Principal Eric Thomas, and Teachers' Association of Newport President Stephanie Martland echoed Dr. Ambrogi's reservations to the Proposal. Public Input was received from: Terri Flynn, mother of a student, stating her support for the Proposal. The motion failed (3-4). Those Members voting in favor of the motion were: Vice Chairperson Hugo J. DeAscentis, Jr., Rebecca Bolan, and Patrick K. Kelley. Those Members voting against the motion were: Chairperson Jo Eva Gaines, Sandra J. Flowers, Ph.D., Robert J. Leary, and Charles P. Shoemaker, M.D. Chairperson Jo Eva Gaines encouraged all Members of the School Committee to participate in school functions.
- 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 from Business Manager Michael Saunders. Mr. Leary made a motion to accept the Expenditure and Revenue Reports, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).
- 8.2 Enrollment Reports.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the February 27, 2009, Enrollment Reports. Discussion followed

relative to dropout prevention plans and concepts being further developed by the administration. Chairperson Jo Eva Gaines indicated that she would be assisting in the launching of a Grant Program Initiative through Salve Regina University regarding dropout prevention. Mr. Leary made a motion to accept the Enrollment Reports, as presented. Dr. Flowers the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

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: Coldwater Creek Meeting—Adopt a School Program (02-09-09); Building a Healthy Newport Environment Coalition Meeting (02-12-09); NSC—Ad Hoc School Building Committee Meeting (02-12-09); AASA Convention (02-19-09 to 02-21-09); NSC—Ad Hoc School Building Committee—Educational Value Sub-Group Meeting—@ Sullivan School (02-23-09); NSC—Facilities Subcommittee Meeting (02-24-09); NSC—Ad Hoc School Building Committee Meeting (02-24-09); NSC—Wellness Subcommittee Meeting @ Coggeshall School Cafeteria (02-25-09); NSC—Ad Hoc School Building Committee Meeting (02-26-09); NSC—Evaluation Subcommittee Meeting (02-27-09); NSC Meeting: To Receive Ad Hoc School Building Committee Recommendation (03-03-09); Urban Education Task Force Conference (03-04-09); NSC—Policy Subcommittee Meeting (03-04-09); RHS—National History Day (03-05-2009); NSC—Finance Advisory/Audit Committee Meeting (03-05-09); Newport Public Education Foundation Forum—Re: School Construction (03-05-09); Meeting with Aquidneck Island Superintendents and Principals—Re: Scheduling (03-06-09); East Bay Educational Collaborative Board Meeting (03-06-09); NSC—Public Relations/Community Outreach Subcommittee Meeting (03-06-09); and Meeting with Jo Eva Gaines and Father Malm on Non-Violence Initiative (03-06-09). Discussion followed. Chairperson Jo Eva Gaines requested that the East Bay Educational Collaborative come before the School Committee to discuss their Program of Services provided to the Newport Public Schools. Dr. Shoemaker informed the Committee that the Rhode Island Expenditure Council would be releasing its Report relative to Regionalization. Mr. Leary made a motion to accept the Superintendent's Update, as presented. Dr. Flowers 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 monthly Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Report. Mr. Leary made a motion to accept the Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center Report, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

9.0 SUGGESTED MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS.

Dr. Ambrogi reviewed suggested meeting dates and agenda topics.

10.0 Executive Session.

At 9:23 p.m., Dr. 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. Dr. Shoemaker seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

SEALED MINUTES—CONFIDENTIAL

OPEN SESSION

At 10:00 p.m., the meeting was called in Open Session.

Adjournment. At 10:01 p.m., Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Leary seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Jo Eva Gaines
Chairperson

John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D.
Clerk