

Approve 10/12/2010.

4.1

NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 14, 2010

MINUTES

Call to Order. Chairperson Mrs. Jo Eva Gaines called the Regular Meeting of the Newport School Committee to order at 7:30 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., Director of Property Services Paul Fagan, Thompson Middle School Principal Eric Thomas, and Rogers High School Principal Patricia DiCenso.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

1.0 MOMENT OF SILENCE.

- **Richard D. Fraser:** who passed away on Monday, August 30, 2010, in Long Island, New York. Mr. Fraser was the father of Human Resources Department Secretary Betsey Oestreich. He was a Member of Manhasset Bay Yacht Club, New York Yacht Club, and North Hempstead Country Club and leaves behind his wife, Fay, of 57 years, three children, and four grandchildren.
- **Edward W. Corrigan:** who passed away at his home in Newport on Tuesday, August 31, 2010. Mr. Corrigan was the father of Coggeshall School Reading Teacher Elizabeth Khalfayan. Born in Newport and a graduate of De La Salle Academy, Mr. Corrigan was a three-sport athlete and a member of the 1944 Rhode Island State Basketball Championship Team. After serving in the Navy during World War II, he went on to work for Newport Electric Company, where he retired after 42 years of service. Mr. Corrigan was predeceased by his wife of 57 years, Marilyn R. (Weaver) Corrigan, and brother, Frank Corrigan, and survived by four children, eight grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.
- **John W. D. Carpenter, Jr.:** who passed away on Friday, September 3, 2010, at St. Clare Home, in Newport. Born in Newport and a life-long resident, he was the brother of Sullivan School Aide Dolores Means. After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II, Mr. Carpenter worked at the William B. Clarke Publishing Company, the James L. Maher Center, Dugan Brothers, and retired

from the Newport Daily News. He is preceded in death by his brother and three sisters and survived by his two sisters, aunt, and many nieces and nephews.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT. Public Comment was received from: Resident David Pemental who requested the need to improve the line of communications by First Student Transportation Company to School Building Principals regarding student pick-up and drop-off procedures.

3.0 STUDENT ACTIVITIES.

3.1 Student Council:

3.1.1 Update—Cassandra McCarthy. Student Council President and School Committee Representative Cassandra McCarthy and Student Council Vice President Devon Woolhouse provided the Committee with an update on Student Activities of the Student Council planned for this fall: Scheduling; Virtual High School Program; School Yearbook Pictures; Upcoming Student Council Meetings; Fall Sports; and Senior Project. It was noted that Cassandra McCarthy had just returned in time to attend this evening's meeting, as she was in Imperia, as a result of her winning the Festa Italiana Essay Contest. Ms. McCarthy shared her experience with the Committee. Dr. Flowers shared her experience as chaperon on the trip. At the request of Mr. Leary, Rogers High School Principal Mrs. DiCenso spoke to the contractual process of School Yearbook Pictures.

4.0 RESOLUTIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT. There were no Resolutions or Certificates of Achievement presented.

5.0 CONSENT AGENDA.

Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented, with the exception of Consent Items No. 5.3 (at the request of Mr. DeAscentis) and 5.4 (at the request of Mr. Leary), to be acted upon separately, for discussion. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.1 Approval of Minutes.

- **Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, August 10, 2010.** Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to consent to the approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, August 10, 2010, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).
- **Special Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, August 31, 2010.** Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to consent to approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, August 31, 2010, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**5.2- Personnel Actions.
5.5**

5.2 Resignations.

Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Resignation of: Kacie Gallo, Girls' Soccer Coach, Thompson Middle School, effective August 12, 2010. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Resignation of: Dianne Martin, Technical Assistant, Cosmetology, Newport Area Career and Technical Center, effective September 1, 2010. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Resignation of: Alyssa Michon, Softball Coach, Thompson Middle School, effective August 1, 2010. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Resignation of: Renae Smith, Special Education Para Educator, Cranston-Calvert School, effective August 30, 2010. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0). At the request of Mr. Leary, discussion followed as to the process.

5.3 Leave of Absence.

At the request of Mr. DeAscentis, Superintendent of Schools defined Catastrophic Leave language. Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to approve the Catastrophic Leave of Absence of: Bethany Borgueta, Science Teacher, Rogers High School, effective October 12, 2010 to November 9, 2010. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

5.4 Appointments.

Mr. Leary made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Justin Buffman, Boys' Soccer Coach, Thompson Middle School, effective September 15, 2010. Mr. DeAscentis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Dr. Flowers made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Rebecca Capece, School Psychologist, effective September 15, 2010. Dr. Shoemaker seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Dr. Flowers made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Allison Gontero, Kindergarten Teacher, Sullivan School, effective September 1, 2010. Dr. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Mr. Kelley stated he was pleased the candidate recommended was a Newport Resident. Dr. Ambrogio stated that approximately 150 applicants might have applied. Mr. Leary requested that the Screening Committee Form include how many applicants applied for the position and, as well, to increase the number of Screening Committee Members. Mr. DeAscentis echoed Mr. Leary's suggestions. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Appointment of: Amie Shinego, Grade 5 Teacher, Thompson Middle School, effective September 1, 2010. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion. Discussion followed. At the request of Mr. DeAscentis, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogio, again, stated that approximately 150 applicants might have applied. Discussion, again, followed on the hiring criteria of Newport Residents. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogio distributed the approved Personnel Actions.

5.6 Requests for Home Instruction. Dr. Shoemaker made a motion to approve the Requests for Home Instruction, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 Teacher Salary Step/Scale—Private School and Out-of-State Credit. School Committee Member Mr. Leary proposed procedural change to award credit for public school experience only within the State of Rhode Island. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogio reviewed the historical position of the School Committee that its hire of new professional staff include their experience in private and out-of-state schools. He stated should the School Committee wish to change this practice, he suggested to allow the Superintendent to negotiate what would or would not be acceptable for credited experience for a new hire. Discussion followed. Mr. Kelley suggested that Mr. Leary's proposed procedural change be brought forward for First Reading. Dr. Shoemaker emphasized that the Superintendent should be able to negotiate the salary step/scale of a recommended candidate. Chairperson Mrs. Gaines stated the Policy Subcommittee should meet prior to action before the next School Committee Meeting for action. Mr. Leary asked that this matter first be brought before the School Committee for action (First Reading) and then be referred to the Policy Subcommittee. Dr. Ambrogio stated that he would confer with Counsel Galvin as to next steps in this process.

- 6.2 School Bond Referendum—Update.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that the “Let’s Build” website was now active and could be accessed through the district’s website. He thanked Lynn Ceglie for the development of this website. He further stated that volunteers would be attending the Elementary School Open House Meetings to pass out Let’s Build flyers on Primary Day. Dr. Ambrogi urged anyone with ideas for the “Let’s Build” Committee, in encouraging individuals to vote, to contact either Chairperson Mrs. Gaines or him directly. Discussion followed.
- 6.3 Improve Parent Communications.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee ways that the District is improving parent communications through the use of the: I-Parent Program at both Thompson Middle School and Rogers High School and reinforcing the need to use that I-Grade Book with fidelity, parent list servs and the automated telephone system to inform and advise parents of ongoing activities or events, and to upgrade the district’s website to make it more user friendly, which is a priority for this school year. Dr. Ambrogi stressed the importance to continue to reinforce with staff the importance of the need to be customer friendly—to students, parents, and the residents of the City of Newport. Discussion followed. Committee Members cited the Strategic Plan and its Subcommittee, Educational Software Programs, its Public Relations Subcommittee, and Parent Involvement Policy as additional vehicles being utilized to improve parent communications. Mr. Kelley suggested the need to reinforce the consistent use of all of these parent communication vehicles with faculty and staff.
- 6.4 New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed with the Committee the upcoming schedule for the Rogers High School 10-Year Accreditation Site Visit by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) during the second week in November. Rogers High School Principal Patricia DiCenso reviewed the Accreditation Process with the Committee. Discussion followed.
- 6.5 Race to the Top—Information.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that the District had not yet received any specifics regarding the Race to the Top Initiative in Rhode Island. He did indicate, however, that there were several Committees currently working on the new Evaluation System, and Newport Public Schools was represented on these Committees by Mrs. Gaines, Dr. Flowers, and Dr. Naspo, with the goal to have the new Teacher/Administrator Evaluation System on line for the 2011-2012 School Year. He further stated that the Rhode Island Department of Education would be having a general meeting at the end of this month regarding the implementation of Race to the Top regarding the specifics of the Award. That meeting will be held on Thursday, September 16, 2010, and the Rhode Island Department of Education should have more information subsequent to that date. Discussion followed.

6.6 Thompson Middle School Redesign—Update. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi updated the Committee on the positive feedback he received from many teachers, as a result of his visit to Thompson Middle School last Friday. Thompson Middle School Principal Eric Thomas discussed the progress to date of the Redesign Process. Dr. Shoemaker and Mr. Kelley commended the Thompson Middle School Administration, Faculty, and Staff for the strides made to implement the Redesign Process. Discussion followed. At the request of Ms. Bolan, Dr. Ambrogi stressed that the flexibility grouping system is being utilized.

6.7 Subcommittee Reports:

6.7.1 Facilities Subcommittee—Summer Work Update. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi updated the Committee on the major activities completed over the summer: recess area at Thompson Middle School; new ceilings at Underwood School; new fire alarm system at Rogers High School; and work on the Arts area at Rogers High School, located next to the auditorium. Mr. DeAscentis provided details on the upgrades made to the outdoor recess area at Thompson Middle School.

6.7.2 Finance Advisory/Audit Committee—New Basic Education Program Implications for FY '12 Budget. Chairperson Mr. Leary stated that he had no report.

6.7.3 Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Liaison Subcommittee. Chairperson Mrs. Gaines stated that she had no update.

6.7.4 Policy Subcommittee. Chairperson Dr. Flowers stated that she had no update.

6.7.5 Public Relations/Community Outreach Subcommittee. Chairperson Ms. Bolan stated that she had no update.

6.7.6 Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC). Representative Mrs. Gaines stated that the Chairs' Annual Quarterly Meeting would be held this Saturday, September 18, 2010.

6.7.7 Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force. Representative Mr. Leary stated that he had no update but was pleased to report that the new Director for the Task Force had been selected.

6.7.8 Wellness Subcommittee. Chairperson Ms. Bolan stated that she had no update; however, she did indicate the need to schedule the first of two annual meetings to report out on Wellness Outcomes, as required in the district's Wellness Policy.

6.7.9 District Strategic Planning Subcommittee. Chairperson Mrs. Gaines stated that the Subcommittee would be reconvening the Members of the Community Strategic Plan on Monday, October 4, 2010, at Salve Regina University to review the final design of the District Strategic Plan.

7.0 ACTION—No Items.

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 provided the Committee with the Expenditure and Revenue Reports, as of August 31, 2010. Discussion followed. Mr. DeAscentis 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 provided the Committee with the Enrollment Reports, as of September 10, 2010. He stated that the enrollment represented 75 fewer students from last year's school opening, including a decrease of 20 kindergarten students. Discussion followed. Mr. DeAscentis made a motion to accept the Enrollment Reports, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded 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 listed for the Committee his activities to date: Bond Referendum Support Committee (08-10-10); Early Intervention (Baby Steps) Meeting (08-12-10); Teach for America Meeting (08-12-10); Early Intervention (Baby Steps) Gathering @ Easton's Beach (08-12-10); Bond Referendum Support Committee (08-10-10); Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association (RISSA) Meeting (08-18-10); Mystic Seaport—Museum Education and Outreach—Meeting (08-19-10); TMS Redesign Meeting with Administrators (08-20-10); Meeting with Student Organizer—Newport Squash (08-20-10); Back-to-School Celebration @ Sullivan School (08-21-10); Athletics (Coaches) Meeting (08-23-10); Bond Referendum Support Committee (08-24-10); Universal Free Breakfast Study—Meeting with Anthropologist (08-25-10); Newport City Council Meeting—Re: RHS Energy Program Resolution (08-25-10); NSC Annual Facilities Walkthrough (08-27-10); Bond Referendum Support Committee (08-31-10); Professional Development Day—Teachers (09-01-10); Opening of School (09-02-10); Teacher of the Year Selection Committee Meeting (09-07-10); Bond Referendum Support Committee (09-07-10); Teacher of the Year Announcement—at Underwood School (09-08-10); Early Intervention (Baby Steps) Meeting (09-09-10); and Monitoring of Universal Free School Breakfast Program @ Sullivan School (09-10-10). Discussion followed. Mr. DeAscentis

made a motion to accept the Superintendent's Update, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

9.0 SUGGESTED MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS. Suggested meeting dates and agenda topics were reviewed. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reminded the Committee of the upcoming BoardDocs Training Session scheduled for Thursday, September 23, 2010, beginning at 4:30 p.m., at the Administration Center;

10.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION.

At 10:16 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. Ms. Bolan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

SEALED MINUTES—CONFIDENTIAL

OPEN SESSION

At 10:43 p.m., the meeting was called in Open Session.

Adjournment. At 10:45 p.m., Mr. Kelley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Shoemaker seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

Jo Eva Gaines
Chairperson

John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D.
Clerk