

Approve 10/11/2011.

5.1

**NEWPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, September 13, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**1.0 OPENING ITEMS.**

**1.1 Call to Order.** Chairperson Patrick K. Kelley called the Regular Meeting of the Newport School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Newport Public Schools' Administration Center, in Room 924.

**1.2 Roll Call.** Attendance was as follows: School Committee Members: Chairperson Patrick K. Kelley, Vice Chairperson Rebecca Bolan, Sandra J. Flowers, Ph.D., Jo Eva Gaines, Robert J. Leary, Thomas S. Phelan, and Dr. Charles P. Shoemaker. School Department: Superintendent of Schools John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D., Director of Curriculum and Instruction Caroline Frey, Ed.D., and Director of Human Resources Frances Eames.

**1.3 Pledge of Allegiance.** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**1.4 Moment of Silence.**

- **Dr. Maureen FitzGerald Sharples:** who passed away on Sunday, September 4, 2011. She was the wife of Dr. Robert Sharples, and was a Business Teacher at Rogers High School for seven years before becoming an administrator at Bridgewater State College for 20 years. She ended her career in education as Director of the Academic Learning Center at the Newport Naval Base.

**2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT.**

- No Public Comment was received.
- School Committee Member Dr. Shoemaker publicly read aloud a prepared statement (attached) regarding his health concerns.

**3.0 Resolutions and Certificates of Achievement.** No Resolutions and/or Certificates of Achievement were presented.

**4.0 STUDENT ACTIVITIES.**

**4.1 Student Council Update: Amy Richards.** Presenting for Student Council President and School Committee Representative Amy Richards was Vice President Gabriel Hermes, who provided the Committee with an update on Student Activities of the Student Council planned for this fall. Discussion followed regarding the implementation of this year's new Dress Code Policy and how to increase student participation at athletic events.

**5.0 CONSENT AGENDA.**

Mrs. Gaines made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**5.1 Approval of Minutes.**

**5.1.1 Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, August 9, 2011.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, August 9, 2011, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**5.1.2 Special Meeting Minutes of Thursday, August 18, 2011.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of Thursday, August 18, 2011, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**5.1.3 Special Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, August 31, 2011.** Mrs. Gaines made a motion to consent to the approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, August 31, 2011, as presented. Dr. Flowers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**5.2 Personnel Actions—No Items.**

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

**6.0 ACTION—No Items.**

**7.0 DISCUSSION ITEMS.**

- 7.1 Aquidneck Island Mentor Program—Update.** At the request of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi, Aquidneck Island Mentor (AIM) Program Coordinator Nichole Lewis and Rhode Island Mentoring Partnership Director Susan Thomas provided the Committee with an update on the Aquidneck Island Mentor Program, as follows: (1) relationship between Aquidneck Island Mentoring and the BOLD Program; (2) status of the AIM Program; (3) how mentoring is working; and (4) National Mentoring Partnership. Discussion followed.
- 7.2 NWEA—Growth Analysis—Update.** At the request of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Frey presented information, via a PowerPoint Presentation, regarding how the district utilizes NWEA and the Fall/Spring Growth Analysis from the 2010-2011 School Year and Testing Recommendations for 2011-2012. Discussion followed.
- 7.3 Recent Legislation—Medicare Enrollment—Municipal Employees—Update.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that new legislation—RIGL 28-54-1 passed, which would impact the issue of life-time health benefits for retirees. Director of Human Resources Fran Eames provided the Committee with a brief presentation regarding the possible implications of this new law for the Newport Public Schools. Discussion followed.
- 7.4 Pell School Building Committee—Update.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that the Pell Building Committee met on Wednesday, August 31, 2011, and reviewed the latest schematics, discussed the exterior options, reviewed the project's cost estimates to date, and selected five (5) construction firms with substantial school construction experience: Bacon & Agostini Construction of East Providence, RI; Dimeo of Providence, RI; HV Collins of Providence, RI; J&J Contractors of Lowell, MA; and KBE of Farmington, CT to be prequalified for the Pell School Construction Bid. Dr. Ambrogi further stated that the next Pell School Building Committee Meeting would be held on Tuesday, October 18, 2011, to review the bids; and the next day, a Special School Committee Meeting would be scheduled to award the bid for school construction, targeting an occupancy date in the Spring of 2013. Discussion followed.
- 7.5 Sullivan School Students to Triplett School—Opening Report.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that a successful opening to the 2011-2012 school year occurred at Sullivan at Triplett this past week. He praised Director of Property Services Paul Fagan, Sullivan at Triplett Principal Maria Mare Schulz, the custodians,

teachers, and Vinny Butler, who was replacing Gary Micheal as the districtwide carpenter. Dr. Ambrogi then provided the Committee with a brief synopsis of the upgrades to the building. Discussion followed.

- 7.6 Truancy Summit—Next Steps.** As a result of the Truancy Summit held on August 18, 2011, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi stated that the next step would be to develop a smaller working group to drill down into the underlying causes for truancy. He further stated that he had received several offers to be members of this small working group and that the first meeting would be scheduled in the beginning of October. Discussion followed regarding improving parent engagement, the possibility of restoring the public transportation route (RIPTA) to Rogers High School, and expanding the role of the Newport's Judicial Hearing Board.

**7.7 Subcommittee Reports.**

Newport School Committee/Newport City Council Subcommittee Chairperson Mr. Leary (for the Newport School Committee) stated their first meeting of the new school year would be scheduled to take place on Tuesday, September 27, 2011, at 11 a.m., at the Administration Center, in Room 924.

Newport School Committee's Finance Advisory/Audit Committee Chairperson Mr. Leary requested that their first meeting of the new school year be scheduled shortly for an Audit—Update.

Dr. Shoemaker cited that more advocacy on the part of Newport's municipality is needed in promoting local education. He stated that he recently attended a meeting with state and local leaders advocating continued collaboration between municipalities and school districts.

Wellness Subcommittee Chairperson Ms. Bolan stated that the Nutrition Advisory Committee, a subgroup of the Wellness Subcommittee, was the Guest Speaker at the Rhode Island Food Bank's Meeting, wherein the district was praised as a leader in the state for its healthy eating initiatives, realizing contractual gains in their recently negotiated food service contract, and in being the only district in the state for establishing their own menus. Ms. Bolan stated that the Governor's wife, Mrs. Chafee, was in attendance and stated that she was hopeful the district might be eligible for grant monies. Ms. Bolan also stated that the Nutrition Advisory Committee was invited to present at this year's National School Board Association Conference to be held in Boston, MA, to speak to the district's initiatives and accomplishments in promoting healthy eating.

**8.0 REPORTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF.**

**8.1 Expenditure and Revenue Reports.** No Expenditure and Revenue Reports were presented but will resume at the Committee's October Meeting.

**8.2 Enrollment Reports.**

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi reviewed the Enrollment Reports as of Friday, September 9, 2011. He stated that approximately 83 new students enrolled into the district since July 1st. Of that, only 22 students came from Fort Adams. Dr. Ambrogi further stated that an analysis would be needed to find out where the remaining 61 students originated from.

As a result of the new students enrolled into the district, Dr. Ambrogi updated the Committee on the revision of the elementary school bus transportation schedule. As a result of the revised schedule, which went into effect yesterday, he indicated that significant improvement had already been realized. On behalf of the School Committee, Mr. Kelley extended his apologies to the parents regarding the school bus transportation scheduling concerns experienced during the first week of school.

Dr. Flowers made a motion to accept the Enrollment Reports, as presented. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**8.3 Damage Reports.** No Damage Reports were presented.

**8.4 Superintendent's Update.** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ambrogi listed for the Committee his activities to date. He stated his enjoyment in visiting the schools on opening day. Dr. Flowers made a motion to accept the Superintendent's Update, as presented. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

**9.0 SUGGESTED MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS.**

**9.1 Meeting and Agenda Requests.** The Committee reviewed Meeting and Agenda Requests.

**10.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

- 10.1** At 8:43 p.m., Ms. Bolan 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).

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**SEALED MINUTES—CONFIDENTIAL**

**OPEN SESSION**

At 9:14 p.m., the meeting was called in Open Session.

**11.0 ADJOURNMENT.**

At 9:15 p.m., Ms. Bolan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Gaines seconded the motion, which carried unanimously (7-0).

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**Patrick K. Kelley**  
Chairperson

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**John H. Ambrogi, Ed.D.**  
Clerk

Dear everyone,

As you may know, I have an unsteady gait and have had pain in my legs while walking. I have been examined several times during the past year, and it was noted that I did have transitory double vision, weakness in the legs and the instability, but MRI and CT scans did not demonstrate enough changes to make a diagnosis.

At the urging of my family I was examined Monday by Dr. Louis Caplan, a Boston neurologist. He noted many of the same findings, which have may have progressed since last examined. He felt the clinical picture could be explained by the diagnosis of multiple sclerosis. He also pointed out that some of the changes have been present for some time, suggesting the progression is slow. He also pointed out that multiple sclerosis in older men progresses much slower than in young woman. For these reasons he has not recommended any medication, but has recommended physical therapy.

As for the future plans, I will await to make further decisions based up the progression of the disease.

Charles Shoemaker, MD

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