

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee
Tuesday, May 17, 2011
Archie R. Cole Middle School
100 Cedar Avenue
East Greenwich, RI 02818

ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA MAY BE SUBJECT TO A VOTE

The regular session of the East Greenwich School Committee was called to order in the Cafetorium of Archie R. Cole Middle School at 7:15 P.M. by Chair, Dr. Deidre Gifford. Those in attendance were: Mr. Robert Durant, Vice Chair; Mrs. Susan Records; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mr. David Green; Mr. Paul Martin; and Mr. Jack Sommer. Superintendent Dr. Victor Mercurio; Director of Administration, Mrs. Maryanne Crawford; Director of Facilities, Mr. Robert Wilmarth; and Director of Student Services, Mrs. Paula Dillon were also present.

7:16p.m. Regular Meeting

I. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Executive Minutes for April 13, 2011; the Regular and Executive Minutes for April 26, 2011; and the Regular and Executive Minutes for May 3, 2011 were unanimously approved (7-0).

IV. Recognitions

The following recognitions were made:

- a. EGHS-David Bui and Han XU-Winners of the National Merit Scholarship
- b. National French Contest-Cole-Kathy Luo, Katarina Diepholz, Will Emery, Wei Li, Angela He, Emily Rhodes, Kaley McMullen, and Alana Mason
- c. Sharon Foley-Rhode Island School Social Worker of the Year

V. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Mercurio attended the Prom on Friday evening at Rosecliff Mansion in Newport. It was terrific and everyone had a wonderful time. He also attended Cole's National Junior Honor Society Award Ceremony which was held at West Valley Inn. Forty-two students were recognized. Joanne Leach did a fabulous job as the facilitator.

VI. Action Items

- a. **Retirement**-Maureen Maggiacomo, Frenchtown/Meadowbrook
On a motion made by Mr. Durant and seconded by Mrs. Winter, the retirement was unanimously accepted (7-0).
- b. **Approval of Field Trip** – Cole, Purple Team, Lake Compounce-Bristol, CT-June 17, 2011
On a motion made by Mrs. Winters, and seconded by Mr. Green the field trip was unanimously approved (7-0).
- c. **School Committee Resolution-Contract Continuation**

Mr. Durant said that he supports the resolution and would like it sent out to the entire state. On a motion by Mr. Durant, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the resolution was unanimously approved (7-0) with the following minor changes by Dr. Gifford:

- Third Whereas-change **calamitous** to **serious**
- Fourth Whereas-change **\$300** to **multi-**
- Ninth Whereas-change **a** to **an**

d. Fund Balance

Mrs. Crawford stated she is still waiting to get something official from RIDE. The title for the Fund Balance is **Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 54** which will be effective June 30, 2011. Mrs. Crawford said right now it is a very fluid policy that will change, but needs to be adopted by June 30, 2011. The last major changes were made in 2002. Mrs. Crawford attended a meeting with Business Directors from other R.I. districts and the consensus was uncertainty and confusion about the policy. There is a lot to look at. Mr. Durant expressed concern about the unassigned fund balance percentage possibly dropping to 1.5-2.5 for operating expenditures. Mrs. Crawford stated there will be many changes as we move along and she's unsure of the hierarchy within the town and the policy. It is unclear who will have the deciding vote. Mr. Green questioned whether there will be language changes upon adoption. Mrs. Crawford stated that it is definite that there will be many changes and we should focus on formalizing a policy. Mr. Green also questioned the hierarchy. Mrs. Crawford responded, "At this time, I am not clear on that issue. I will be consulting with our legal counsel." Dr. Gifford questioned whether there is a possibility that we will need to transfer funds to the town. Mrs. Crawford said that right now there are just too many unanswered questions. Dr. Mercurio said that he would set up a meeting with the Policy Committee and have Mr. Sequino present for a discussion on town and school responsibilities. Mr. Sommer stated that a formal policy should be established between the town and the school. Mrs. Crawford said that she will be evaluating the Fund Policy over the next month and will present to the School Committee at the end of June.

e. ESCO

Mr. Durant said that at the May 3, 2011 School Committee meeting, an East Greenwich resident, who was asked by Dr. Gifford to speak, gave insightful input on the ESCO process. Dr. Gifford asked whether we should engage in the bidding process and if so questioned whether we have the option of using the audit provided by Schneider. Mr. Durant stated there are three project options (a base project, base project including new lighting with lamps and ballasts for various schools, and base project and lighting with new fixtures where needed). Mr. Eric Fare from Schneider Electric was introduced. He stated that at the high school there are lighting projects with fixture rework. He mentioned all of the financial options: National Grid rebate, RIDE's 40% reimbursement, and financing through RIHEBC. Mr. Durant asked whether there is a possibility of going in with the Town. Mr. Fare stated that the Town does not get the 40% from RIDE. The economic timing is right now as more competitive bids enter into this while we still have 40% from RIDE. Dr. Gifford asked Mr. Wilmarth whether he had any comments. He said, "No." Mr. Durant made a motion to move forward with negotiations with Schneider Electric with pricing and financing options for all three. Submission to School Committee for approval is necessary before entering into any contract. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Winters. The Committee unanimously approved (7-0)

VII. Discussion Items

a. Mr. Cobain-Winter Sports Report

Mr. Cobain stated that student participation for 2010-2011 is up. He gave a brief synopsis on Winter Sports:

- Boys and girls basketball finished in the State Finals
- Girls JV basketball team moved down to Division II and were the Division II State Champions
- Boys swimming (with only 11 boys) placed 3rd in the state.
- First Team All-State Wrestler 145 lb.
- Girls indoor track relay team won state championship
- Fall and winter challenge cup standings-3rd place

Overall, he noted East Greenwich had a very successful winter season. Mr. Martin questioned whether the same cheerleading squads attend Football, Hockey, and Basketball. Mr. Cobain explained that the same squad is used for Basketball (home games only) and Football. Hockey uses a different squad. Mr. Cobain noted the concession stand construction is coming along nicely and the next phase is the roof. The expected opening is the end of June. He said that when the lines on the playing fields' are painted in the spring, the fall sports' fields should be painted also to prevent fading. The fields' lines need to be freshened up every year. The baseball fields are not laid out properly which has led to a drainage problem. The JV Field slopes and collects water. However, they juggle with 2 fields and have not fallen behind with the schedule. He noted that with Varsity and JV games held the same day, students are waiting around too long for bus transportation. Mr. Martin asked whether coaches were evaluated, especially the football coach. Mr. Cobain stated that he performs an informal evaluation. He also explained that the Golf team is small and are transported by parents and the coach to matches. Our swim team practices in East Providence and the Hockey team in West Warwick.

b. School Lunch Contract

Mrs. Crawford stated that East Greenwich is in the third year of a five-year contract with Aramark. As of the end of April, Aramark has reported a deficit of \$21,552.00. Mr. Tom Hoagland, Aramark General Manager of Operations for RI, has explained that the deficit is due to increased labor, food, and fuel costs. Mrs. Crawford stated that Aramark is hopeful that they will be able to narrow this deficit to keep it under the \$8,000.00 cap, but she feels that there just won't be enough time between now and the end of June. She stated that she is very happy with the service. Lunch sales have increased substantially. Dr. Gifford asked whether we should consider increasing lunch cost to the kids. We may want to look at a .25 cents increase to the elementary schools. Mr. Durant agreed that we should look at the pricing. Mrs. Crawford said that lunch prices are \$2.00 at the elementary schools, \$2.50 at Cole, and \$2.75 at the high school. Dr. Gifford suggested looking at the price of lunches in other districts within the state. Dr. Mercurio stated that the lunch price in North Kingstown is \$3.00. Mrs. Crawford stated that if we consider bidding out, it will need to be done by June 1, 2011 and that any deficit would be part of the bid. However, she is concerned with a low bidder having the means to cover the deficit clause. She will explore increasing lunch prices with Aramark, and report back to

the School Committee in June. Mrs. Crawford reiterated that she is pleased with Aramark. Dr. Gifford expressed concern that Aramark may look into buying less expensive food, and find it difficult in following the nutritional guidelines.

c. Budget FY2012

Mrs. Crawford stated that Professional Development will be funded by the Race to the Top dollars. The Race to the Top grant is for five years. We will save on the cost of substitutes in the amount of \$38,636.00. Dr. Gifford asked whether all the schools would be equal with their contributions totaling \$30,000.00. Mrs. Crawford stated that they will not be equal, since some of the schools, particularly Frenchtown, just don't have the means. Mrs. Records stated that without the Race to the Top money next year it seems we could be starting out \$150,000 in the hole. Mrs. Crawford said that there will definitely be an increase in the pension plan and that will be a focal point within the budget for next year. Next year's budget will certainly be a challenge.

d. Fields' MOU

Dr. Mercurio stated that he and Mr. Sequino will be meeting with Mr. Dias of DEM on Wednesday, May 18, 2011 to discuss the Fields' MOU-should the town turn the fields over to us. He will report back to the School Committee when he has more information.

VIII. School Committee Concerns

Mr. Martin asked about the School Committee's role in the graduation ceremony and whether they will be presenting diplomas. Dr. Mercurio stated that the School Committee will sit on the stage and those interested in giving out diplomas should let him know. Mrs. Winters asked whether the posting for the High School Vice Principal closed. Dr. Mercurio stated the closing is May 27, 2011. Mrs. Records would like a meeting to discuss technology, specification, and equipment issues. Mr. Sommer expressed concern about the wearing of cleats on the turf fields. Perhaps a sign can be posted to help deter walking on the turf with cleats.

IX. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Martin, which was seconded by Mr. Durant, the Committee voted (7-0) to adjourn at 8:52 P.M.

Margaret M. Ucci
Secretary