

# **Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee**

**Tuesday, September 20, 2016**

**Archie R. Cole Middle School Library**

**100 Cedar Avenue**

**East Greenwich, RI 02818**

**6:00 p.m. Executive Session, Mr. Plain made a motion to go into executive session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-4 and §42-46-5 (a) (2) Teacher Negotiations. Mrs. Winters seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.**

**Those in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters, Vice-Chair; Mr. Matt Plain; Mr. Michael Fain, Mr. Stuart Peterson and Dr. Yan Sun. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Gail Wilcox, Director of Administration; Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Student Services; and Attorney Matthew Oliverio were also in attendance.**

## **7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting**

### **I. Call to Order**

**Ms. Mark called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.**

### **II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

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

### **III. Public Comments**

**Mrs. Patty Harwood, 56 Allen Drive, questioned the topic of dyslexia**

and when the topic will be discussed with the School Committee.

#### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

##### **a. Regular and executive for August 16, 2016**

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the regular and executive minutes.

##### **b. Special and executive for August 23, 2016**

On a motion by Mr. Peterson, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 4-0 to approve the special and executive minutes. Mrs. Winters and Dr. Sun abstained.

##### **c. Special and executive for August 29, 2016**

On a motion by Mr. Fain, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted 4-0 to approve the special and executive minutes. Mrs. Winters and Mr. Peterson abstained.

##### **d. Regular and executive for September 6, 2016**

On a motion by Mr. Fain, which was seconded by Mr. Peterson, the Committee voted 5-0 to approve the regular and executives minutes with one change from Mr. Plain (\*regular minutes- page 2, paragraph 4), the Committee voted 5-0 to approve the regular and executive minutes. Mrs. Winters abstained. \*Mr. Plain asked that the last two sentences be deleted and “we need to comply with statutes and regulations including IDEA whether we have a policy or not” be inserted.

#### **V. Superintendent’s Report**

Principals’ will send PARCC information home this week. Discussions have already taken place with various parent (PTG) groups. If there is interest in a collective meeting, one may be

planned for the future. Mrs. Day and BOK members were thanked for their attendance at today's R.I. Healthy Breakfast Conference. Open houses continue throughout the district. Meadowbrook is tonight, Hanaford tomorrow night, and Cole on Thursday. Dr. Mercurio will attend the EGHS PTG meeting in the morning. AFTERPROM EG will now have a link on the main page of the EGSD website.

Representatives from AFTERPROM EG may attend future meetings to discuss the event either during public comment or as an agenda item. Some upcoming items on the October 4th agenda include an update on senior exhibition, URI College of Pharmacy (research on substance abuse), and the RIDE submission for capital maintenance.

#### **VI. School Committee Concerns**

Mr. Plain asked if the SEAC could provide an update at a future meeting. Ms. Harwood noted an update would take place after the group's next meeting (in October).

#### **VII. Action Items**

##### **a. Appointments**

- 1. Truancy Officer Part Time - District-wide-Donald Mong**
- 2. Math Teacher 0.5 FTE-Cole-Patricia Hart**
- 3. PE/Health Teacher 0.4 FTE-Cole-FTE-Wilson Knerr**
- 4. Asst Coach Football –EGHS-Dan Alexander**

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve appointments #1-4.

##### **b. Resignations**

- 1. Jacob Keeling, PE/Health Teacher 0.2 FTE, Cole**

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the

**Committee voted 6-0 to accept the resignation.**

**c. Home School Approvals**

- 1. Grade K**
- 2. Grade 2**
- 3. Grade 9**
- 4. Grade 11**
- 5. Grade 8**

**On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Peterson, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve home school requests #1-5.**

**d. Additional position: Self-Contained Severe/Profound Paraprofessional 1.0 FTE- Meadowbrook**

**On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the additional position.**

**e. FY2017 Transportation Revision/Update**

**Dr. Mercurio summarized recent adjustments that have been made to the routes. Some adjustments have worked, some have not. Some students are still arriving late to school; some are on the bus for long periods of time in the morning and afternoon. Dr. Mercurio, School Committee members, and building principals have met with Ocean State twice to discuss the ongoing issues. Parents are still asking for multiple adjustments, however, Dr. Mercurio is reticent to move stops at this point. He continues to go to stops to meet with parents. Ocean State Transit has recently (9/19/16) provided GPS data that shows the exact pickup/drop off times for each stop. Ocean State was told the route times need to coincide with times posted on the Students are asked to be out at the stop five minutes prior to pick up**

**time, but buses cannot be there any earlier or they need to wait.**

**Ocean State has offered Safe Stop (at no charge) for this school year. A link for parents will be provided this Friday. Dr. Mercurio wanted to see how the revised stops worked for a week before providing the link. Dr. Mercurio would like to form a transportation subcommittee, which will report to the finance committee. The Charge of the subcommittee will be approved simultaneously while seeking approval. The contract for Ocean State Transit expires in 2017. Dr. Mercurio also suggested using the Flahive Group as a consultant. Dr. Mercurio would like to fix the issues in a budget neutral manner to make sure the stops are met with fidelity and getting students' to school on time.**

**Numerous parents voiced their frustrations and concerns with the ongoing bus issues. Complaints regarding communication were voiced, questions on timelines for resolution, accountability of Ocean State Transit (penalties in contract for performance, delay in payment due to issues, etc.), bussing issues going to/from sporting events, drop off/pick up at Frenchtown School. It was also asked if next year's routes can list each student's name/school to ensure that all students are accounted for. Mr. Peterson noted the town has adjusted the light on Middle Road. Dr. Mercurio was also asked to collect ridership per building.**

**Mr. Cobain discussed the recent bus issue that caused him to cancel**

**an athletic event. He stated there are not enough buses and athletes are arriving at their event with minimal time to warm up. Mr. Cobain said he's never experienced the challenges with busing that he is seeing at this point in the school year.**

**Mr. Plain made a motion to allocate additional funds to utilize an additional bus, to**

**charge a subcommittee of the finance committee to undertake a review of transportation protocols, and to authorize Dr. Mercurio to resolve issues with the bus company above and beyond the current authority in a fiscally neutral manner. Mrs. Winters seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.**

#### **VIII. Advisory/Subcommittee Update**

##### **a. Policy Committee**

**Mr. Plain summarized the student/parent meeting that took place on September 14, 2016 to discuss field trips. Valuable input was received from students and parents. The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for September 26th at 10:00 a.m. All administrators have been invited and interested members of the public are welcome. The field trip policies and the proposed Transgender Non-Discrimination Policy will be discussed.**

**Mr. Plain gave background details on Field Trip policy #2196, discussed the proposed revisions, and the impetus for the Non-School Sponsored Field Trip Policy. Mr. Plain said the Charge of the Policy Committee might need to be revisited and the**

Committee might want to consider soliciting applications from members of the public (for a non-voting or voting role) A member from administration and possibly another SC member could also be added. Mr. Plain read the language in the BEP (Basic Education Plan) that speaks to academic enrichment and equal access. Mr. Plain also noted the Commissioner's letter (August 2009) to the R.I. Interscholastic League in which he stated it is not appropriate to charge fees for extra curricular activities. Mr. Plain also discussed the recent RI Superior Court case involving Cumberland School charging fees for summer school. The Commissioner originally ruled the initial fees were appropriate. However, Judge Karns reversed the decision. Mr. Plain discussed numerous practical issues implementing the revised policy. He said the district could accept grants, fundraising, and donations for field trips. Right now the Field Trip Policy is status quo. Ms. Mark asked if previously approved field trips could be grandfathered in with the current policy. Mr. Plain said the Policy Committee would have to discuss that matter. The proposed Transgender Non-Discrimination Policy was also reviewed. The Policy Committee will discuss this policy on September 26th. It is anticipated this policy will receive a second read/possible adoption at an October meeting.

## **IX. Discussion**

### **a. Teaching and Learning: CCRI Education and Employment Opportunities of The Future Conference**

Dr. Mercurio provided highlights of the conference he attended, which was lead by

**CCRI president Dr. Hughes.**

**b. Superintendent's Goals 2016-2017**

**Dr. Mercurio made slight revisions to his goals based on the Committee's feedback to align the goals with the strategic plan. Ms. Mark thanked Dr. Mercurio for taking the time to revisit/adjust the goals and add goal #4. Dr. Mercurio said the curriculum piece is huge and needs someone to monitor/shepherd the process. Dr. Mercurio was asked to add goal #5, the monitoring of the two major initiatives (School Start Time including transportation and all day kindergarten. Mrs. Winters and Mr. Plain both remarked (as they did last year) that Dr. Mercurio already has a significant amount of work on a daily basis. Ms. Mark asked if Dr. Mercurio wanted to further reflect or pare down some of the goals or view them as aspirational. Dr. Mercurio said he would like to keep all goals as targets. These goals are scheduled for adoption on October 4th. The Committee has a mid-year check in on goals in January.**

**c. FY2016 Update**

**Mrs. Wilcox noted the district currently has a \$120,000 surplus for FY2016.**

**X. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn at 9:33 p.m.**

**CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO**

**SECRETARY**