

MINUTES
PROVIDENCE SCHOOL BOARD
PCTA Auditorium
41 Fricker Street
Providence, RI 02903
MARCH 14, 2011

CONVENE MEETING

1. Call to order at 6:30 PM – Board President Kathleen Crain called the meeting to order at 6:37PM

The following Board members were present: Kathleen Crain, Robert Wise, Brian Lalli, Nina Pande and Philip Gould

Magaly Sanchez joined the meeting at 6:45PM

Absent Board Member: Maila Touray, Julian Dash and Melissa Malone

2. Superintendent's Comments – Superintendent Brady made a brief comment on the agenda item of school closures.

APPROVE AGENDA

3. Approve Agenda as Presented

MSV – Pande, Lalli (5-0) MOTION APPROVED

PUBLIC COMMENT

4. Public Comment began at 6:45PM and ended at 7:45PM
 - Noel Frias – A student a Bridgham Middle School spoke against the closing of the school.
 - Karina Wood – Spoke about the teacher dismissals and also invited everyone to a Public Forum on Saturday, March 19, 2011 at the John Hope Settlement House to discuss Education Priorities.
 - Terrell Osborne – Spoke about how parents get phone calls to notify them of early dismissals, public forums etc. and was suggesting they also call parents when School Board Meetings were taking place especially when closures or other major topics arise.

- Dawn Clifton – Spoke regarding the teacher dismissals at Reservoir Avenue and also invited everyone to the Public Forum at the John Hope Settlement House on Saturday, March 19, 2011.
- Anna Kuperman – She’s a teacher at Classical High School and has been in the system for 13 years. She also spoke about the 1936 teachers that were terminated and also informed everyone of a meeting being held at URI on the 15th.
- Blossom Kirschenbaum – Spoke about the media coverage the board was getting and told them all how photogenic they looked. She also expressed to them they had made worldwide news. She wanted to know why the previous President of the Board and the present President of the Board voted differently on the termination of teachers. She wanted to know was the board divided. She also stated she supported the Mayor and him taking a 10% pay cut.
- Osiris Harrell – Parent said he wasn’t a brown noser but he would be remiss if he didn’t mention that he came to see Nkoli Onye about a serious situation regarding a child at one of the high schools. He wanted to thank and commend Nkoli Onye and Dr. Guy Alba for handling the situation expeditiously and in a very professional manner. He said that’s the way the parents and community need to be treated when they have a matter that requires their attention. Afterwards his son spoke on the closures of the schools and wanted to know how this would affect class size.
- Cindy Aubin – Stated she has been in the system for 24 years 21 of them at Flynn Elementary. She also said she loved the families and communities.
- Patricia Dalomba – Instructional Assistant at Flynn and has worked there for 14 years. She told the board how hard they worked to build relationships with families.
- Alexander Lucini – He came to speak as a concerned citizen. He is a music teacher who is pursuing his masters at RIC. He told the board he was 24 years old and that he would outlast everyone on the panel.
- Steve Smith – President of the Teachers Union came to speak on the terminations of the teachers and closing of the schools. He wanted the board to know they would be asking for individual hearings for well over 1600 teachers. He told them the evaluation item on the agenda was part of their Collective Bargaining and also questioned if the school closings were for financial savings. He also stated "While we understand that the city is taking this action for financial reasons, school closings do cause tremendous disruption to students, parents, teachers and the community.

- Paula Joel - She has been a teacher in the system for the past 24 years. She is the Health & Physical Education teacher at Flynn school who asked the board to reconsider closing the school.
- DeWayne Hackney – Thanked everyone who came out to show support especially Mr. Almeida, Councilman Narducci and Councilman Jennings regarding the closing of the schools. He also suggested that the Public Comment section of the agenda be held later in the meeting so that way the people attending the meeting can comment on topics that have been discussed.
- Heather Goetz – Teacher of Flynn school thanked Board President Kathleen Crain for acknowledging that teachers are professionals. She also said the teachers will be there for the duration and they will continue working with the children.
- Councilman Narducci – Said he’s been asking for the School Department not to close neighborhood schools for the past four years. He also said he respected the Superintendent and School Board for some of the decisions that have been made. The Councilman also stated that there would be 375 students taken out of Windmill and also stated that one of his constituents told him she called the placement office and was told she had no school choice. In other words she had no say in the matter as to where her child would be going next. He also asked the Superintendent and the School Board to reconsider the closing of Windmill. He also suggested that the Board should be elected and not chosen by the Mayor.
- Councilman Brian Principe – Thanked everyone for coming out. He also stated that we were all facing this issue together. He questioned if West Broadway at Bainbridge would be renovated. He told the Board with the closure of these 4 schools there would be an increase of transportation costs. He also stated he was not happy about the fact that there would be no middle school in Federal Hill now.
- Councilwoman Sabina Matos – She thanked the Superintendent and the School Board for listening to all of their comments. She also asked that we make sure the elementary schools were all up to code.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

5. School Board Comments

- Philip Gould responded to some of the comments that were made. He said he was speaking on behalf of his colleagues. We are not obtuse or deaf. He said that a vote of 4to3 didn’t mean that the Board was divided. He also stated that maybe the Board should be elected because it would change everything from revenue to the Mayor’s decisions.
- President Kathleen Crain said we changed the school board comments section so that they could respond to public comment. She also explained that sometimes board meetings could go for 3 or 4 hours and they didn’t want the public to wait all that time to make their public comments. She stated that School Board Policy

is to have neighborhood schools and that they will definitely look into why and why not it's not happening.

CONSENT AGENDA

Recommendation: The Superintendent recommends School Board approval of Consent agenda items.

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda as presented

A Vote was taken to take each items separately – MSV – Crain, Pande (6-0) MOTION APPROVED

6. Minutes 2-24-11 & 2-28-11

MSV – Lalli, Pande (6-0) MOTION APPROVED

7. Personnel Actions

MSV – Pande, Sanchez (6-0) MOTION APPROVED

8. Personnel Actions – The Board also voted to dismiss Kimberly Rose & Stephen Tremblay

MSV – Malone, Dash (6-0) MOTION APPROVED

9. Home School Candidates

MSV – Lalli, Sanchez (6-0) MOTION APPROVED

10. Consent Agenda Approval – Minutes 2-24-11 & 2-28-11; Personnel Actions; Home School Candidates

REPORT ON CONTRACTS

11. Council of Great City Schools for Special Education and ELL audit

12. Contract Approvals – Council of Great City Schools for Special Education and ELL audit

MSV – Lalli, Wise (5-0) MOTION APPROVED – Philip Gould excused himself from this vote

POLICY & PLANNING

13. School Closures

14. SIG Schools – Transformation Model by Kristi Bond

15. Staff Tobacco Free Policy 1st Read: Administrative Procedure by Tomas Ramirez

16. Professional Development Annual Report – Postponed to next board meeting 3/28/11

17. Evaluations

FUTURE MEETINGS

March 28, 2011 Public Forum and Workshop – April 11, 2011 Public Forum and Business

RETIREMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

18. Retirements & Resignations

8:00PM – A Vote was taken to Convene in Executive Session

MSV – Crain, Pande (6-0) MOTION APPROVED

Roll Call: Crain Aye, Gould Aye, Lalli Aye, Pande Aye, Wise Aye, Sanchez Aye

EXECUTIVE SESSION

19. Vote to Convene in Executive Session Pursuant RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)Terminations; RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)Superintendent’s Evaluation/Job Performance; 42-46-5(a)(2)Collective Bargaining & Litigation

A Vote was taken to come out of Executive Session, Seal the minutes and Adjourn the meeting

MSV – Pande, Lalli (5-0) MOTION APPROVED – Philip Gould had left

VOTES TAKEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

20. The votes were taken and the minutes were sealed.

ADJOURN

10. The meeting adjourned at 9:30PM