

MINUTES

Providence School Department
797 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

CONVENE MEETING

1. Call to Order at 6:30 PM – Vice-President Nina Pande called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM –

Due to the fact that the Superintendent got held up a Motion was made to start the meeting with Public Comment

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

2. Superintendent's Comments – Recognition of PAC Leadership

Board Members Present: Nina Pande, Keith Oliveira, Natalia Rosa Sosa, Julian Dash, Magaly Sanchez, Brian Lalli and Robert Wise

Robert Wise arrived at 7:30PM

Absent Board Member: Maila Touray

APPROVE AGENDA

3. **Approve Agenda as Presented**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

4. Public Comment – Right to be Heard began at 6:40PM and ended at 7:22 PM
 - Wanda Trinidad – Parent of Juan Espinal who attended Roger Williams Middle School and is now in PAIS was here to ask for help. She stated that her son's pea coat was stolen from his book bag and no one called her to inform her or to ask her to bring her child another coat and it was cold out the day it happened. She also states that she spoke to the principal of the school and was told that they would get her son another coat. Instead of a coat she got a wind breaker and states now her son has no coat because of this incident and she is unable to buy him another one.
 - Kimberly Rome – She is a full time working parent who states the bus transportation policy needs to be carefully reviewed. She also stated that everyone next year should be able to ride the bus because that is the safest way

to get to school. Mandates state that you must live 1 mile away from the school if you attend elementary, 1 ½ miles away for middle school and 3 miles for high school. How do you expect a 5 yr old Kindergarten student to walk 1 mile to school. Then the drivers state that they will not leave children younger than 7 years of age alone at the bus stop. Sue Lusi speaks about attendance but how can the children get to school if they have no transportation?

- Jill Davidson – Mother of 3 children who believes there should be transportation for elementary school children. It should be on a first come first served basis. Past district practices allowed hardship cases and now they are not allowed to write letters for hardship. I submitted a request for my children only if there were seats available on the bus.
- Osiris Harrell – I’m here to speak on the Transportation Policy issue. I have 2 children in high school and it states they need to live 3 miles and over to qualify for a bus pass. I understand if the crow flies the bull flies too. I drove the other night and it was 3 miles and still they say we don’t qualify. What about a single mother who can’t afford to pay for transportation? It will cost \$164.00 a month for 2 children in high school. Have you taken that into consideration? You are making it harder for children to get to school and that is why there is a bigger dropout rate amongst the black and brown community. They are struggling to pay for rent, what makes you think they could pay for bus passes? Who made this decision? You have to look at this policy better.
- Krystal Swepson – Coalition to Defend Public Education – I support Osiris in his remarks about public transportation. I was one who did not have a car and could not walk on sidewalks. Any student who does not have a bus pass or qualify for one will be standing outside. In the winter a lot of people don’t shovel their sidewalks and it makes it harder for the children to walk to school because they have to walk in the streets making unsafe for them to do so. Also, recess time has been cut down and this is also unfair to the children. They need to run around and be children.
- Councilman Brian Principe – Good evening everyone! Quick updates Asa Messer @ Bridgham came out better than expected and also the transition was a smooth one. WSBEC still remains committed to the children. Don’t pat yourselves on the back yet, the middle school should not have been moved. Achievement First was given time to plead their case and the Mayoral Academy got the rubber stamp from the same Board who sacrificed schools.
- Shannah Green – Parent of a 3rd grade student who came to discuss the District Wide Recess Policy. I sent out various letters to parents regarding recess for public school children. It gives kids the capacity to learn more because they are

more active. Social Emotional Skills are very important and social interaction with the other children is necessary. I believe recess should be a mandated thing and should be built into the day.

- Erica Edwards – I'm here to speak on the Transportation Policy. I have 2 children in MLK, one of them being a Kindergartener. We live .95mile from the school and we do not qualify for transportation and now my children also attend JCC Day Care because I thought they would be able to get dropped off there. Now the policy changed and there are no more hardship cases. My husband and I have to sneak out of work to take my daughter to JCC Day Care. In the morning we have to be to work for 9:00AM and we can't because we have to drop the children off when the bus stop is in our neighborhood but we are told the bus is full. There are 57 students on the bus and the bus holds 71 students but we are still told the bus is full.
- Beckah Greenwald-Speck – As Osiris said it's when the crows fly – I have two children in public school this year, I work in youth development with children in Woonsocket. High School kids decided to advocate for themselves. I have 5 teenagers and we lived very modestly. I bought my daughter a bus pass and it was stolen from her bag in gym. It was stolen the first week of school. Do they have a policy on theft?
- Steve Smith – I want to piggy back on Councilman Principe's remarks. Always be fair. One topic here tonight is the 1.1 million to Mass Insight. Shared governance and paying for a 3 year contract. Please I ask that you put this on hold. Now I would like to speak about Annette Pisaturo who passed away. She was at Roger Williams for 28 years and who ever paid attention to her learned a lot. She had the gift and she had tremendous magic in the classroom.
- Jane Zogott – Parent of a 3rd grader at Vartan Gregorian – I'm also the PTO Chair of the Recess & Playground Committee. I heard 4 schools got the approval for 15-20 minutes for recess from downtown. I you want kids to like school recess should be mandated as they can become better learners. We had policy it was approved it was just never followed.
- Olivia Milonas – I'm a parent of Vartan Gregorian, I have 2 children in PPSD and I'm here to talk about the recess policy. Parents are concerned about the lack of recess in the schools. Children need to run around and burn off energy. I want to submit to you a statement with over 40 signatures addressing the lack of recess in the schools. A recess policy needs to be implemented and 10 minutes is not appropriate for recess time for children. I urge you to consider maybe 20 minutes every other day.

- Kathleen Crain – I'm a parent of Vartan Gregorian and former President of the School Board. I am here to discuss forced placements and negotiations with PTU. The Superintendent told me that forced placements were occurring. In my sons third grade classroom an offer was made and accepted and Human Resources has not given any answers. I've been told there were 58 forced placements in 25 schools. I know most of you because I worked side by side with you and you are here for the students and parents, stop hiding.
- Owen Crain – I'm a 3rd grader at Vartan Gregorian and I am here to talk about the lack of recess in our school. I think it would be great if we had recess and even if we are given 5 minutes of recess that would be good.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

5. School Board Comments

- Magaly Sanchez – How many busses have been added and how many hardship cases have been granted? How much money have we saved so far?
- Keith Oliveira – It is my understanding that Policy hasn't changed, when was policy adopted? My question is the fiscal analysis and how it affected the budget. We need to review policy, fiscal analysis, attendance and AYP. As part of the process do we have a Public Hearing?
- Nina Pande – I'm curious to know at what point was hardship eliminated and how was the policy changed? Options to better this policy, what could work to solve these issues? We need to be more aware of data which board has asked for. It is critical for us to have the full picture. We do not have a recess policy? To clarify Councilman's Principle comments, it is not true that I had anything to do with writing PTU contract and as far as Achievement First Application comment, it was a RIDE decision not School Board.
- Julian Dash – It's hard to have a quantified understanding. What is the fiscal note for Elementary and Middle School kids? We are losing kids to drop out. What would it cost the district to bus these kids? Understanding the thought process on the pickup times are there any options to ease that?
- Brian Lalli – We need to have a Hardship Committee in place. I just heard the mother of the .95 K students and I think that is ludicrous. People are working hard to keep their households going. Is there some way to evaluate each request? We should have someone in place who can really take a look at these issues. We need to put policy and theory into practice.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Minutes 8-22-11

MSV – Wise, Lalli (7-0) MOTION APPROVED

7. Personnel Actions

- **Nomination of Probationary Teachers/Change of Status
Tabled to 9/26/11
MSV – Dash, Oliveira (7-0) MOTION APPROVED**
- **Nomination of Probationary Teachers/New Hire
Tabled 9/26/11
MSV – Wise, Lalli (7-0) MOTION APPROVED**
- **Career & Technical Education Program Coordinators (120 days) and (full-time)
MSV – Pande, Sanchez (7-0) MOTION APPROVED**
- **LTSP/New Hires
MSV – Dash, Oliveira (7-0) MOTION APPROVED**

8. Home School Candidates

MSV – Wise, Lalli (7-0) MOTION APPROVED

9. Consent Agenda Approval: Minutes 8-22-11; Personnel Actions; Home School Candidates

MSV – Oliveira, Sanchez (7-0) MOTION APPROVED

REPORT ON PERSONNEL

10. Acting Assistant Principal – Asa Messer Elementary School @ Bridgham – Erica Dickson – Effective: 9-20-11; Salary \$79,133.

MSV – Oliveira, Wise (7-0) MOTION APPROVED

11. Assistant Principal – Carl G. Lauro Elementary School – Renee Grant-Kane – Effective: 9/13/11; Salary: \$86,744.38

MSV – Oliveira, Dash (7-0) MOTION APPROVED

12. Assistant Principal – Frank Spaziano Elementary School – Cheryl Merola – Effective: 9-13-11; Salary: \$86,744.38

MSV – Dash, Lalli (7-0) MOTION APPROVED

REPORT ON CONTRACTS

13. **Mass Insight School Turnaround Group Contract**

This item was Tabled until 9/26/11

14. Contract Approvals: Mass Insight School turnaround Group Contract

POLICY & PLANNING

15. Report on School Opening
16. Review of Transportation Policy

GOVERNANCE

17. Presentation and discussion of Proposed Rules for School Board Teacher Disciplinary Hearings – 1st Read – Information was introduced in Open Session by David Igliazzi Esq.

FUTURE MEETINGS

18. September 26, 2011 – Workshop Meeting; October 11, 2011 – Business Meeting

RETIREMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

19. Retirements & Resignations

8:53 PM - A Vote was taken to Convene in Executive Session

ROLL CALL: Oliveira Aye, Rosa-Sosa Aye, Pande Aye, Sanchez Aye, Lalli Aye, Wise Aye, Dash Aye

EXECUTIVE SESSION

20. Convene in Executive Pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)Personnel; RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)School Board Job Performance; RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2)Collective Bargaining; RIGL 42-46-5(a)(9) Level B Grievances

REPORT ON EXECUTIVE SESSION VOTES

21. There were votes taken in Executive Session and the minutes were sealed

ADJOURN

22. The meeting adjourned at 10:12PM