

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

School Committee Meeting

June 12, 2007

Open Session

Mrs. Morris called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM. All members were present: Robert Faria, Eileen Lovett, David Medeiros, Steven Santos and Mildred Morris. Also present, Dr. Jacqueline Forbes, Superintendent of Schools, Andrew Thomas, Esq. and Robert Silva, Esq.

A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to move to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel, (a) (2) Litigation, seconded by Mrs. Lovett.

Vote 5-0.

The School Committee returned to Public Session at 7:30PM. A motion was made by Mrs. Lovett to return to public session and seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Medeiros.

Vote 5-0.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence was observed for Shirley Miranda who recently passed away.

Record of Previous Meetings – A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to approve the minutes of the School Committee Meetings held on April 23, April 25, May 1, and May 8, 2007, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0.

Chair’s Report – Student Liaison, Sean Snead, presented a report on high school activities. Mrs. Morris congratulated students and teachers involved in the recent exhibition of senior projects. She also attended a Pink Wave program at Francis School, which raised money for cancer research. Mr. Santos commended the students and Principal of Whiteknact School for their performance of Cinderella. Mr. Faria commended the great work by our students and encouraged members of the community to become mentors for senior projects next year.

Hearings - None

Reading of Communications – Mr. Faria mentioned the good deeds project at Francis School which received a \$2000 Feinstein grant which accumulated to \$5000, the Talent Show coming up at Hennessey School. Also Graphics Awards presented to Career/Technical School students. He also read a letter from

Congressman Kennedy, emphasizing to Commissioner McWalters that receive \$630,000 less than last year; the state in no better shape than the City.

Dr. Forbes reported that a request had been made to dedicate the computer lab at Riverside Middle School in the name of retiring Vice-principal, Fred Anderson. Motion by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mr. Medeiros. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye.

Mr. Medeiros presented a letter and notified the School Committee and City Council that he will resign his position on the School Committee effective September 4, 2007; the circumstances of his educational life will no longer allow him to devote the time required to the School Committee. Mrs. Morris said that he will be greatly missed.

Report of Superintendent and Staff

Dr. Forbes thanked Mr. Medeiros for his hard work on behalf of students. She commended Mr. Frank DeVall, Principal of Martin Middle School, the recipient of the RI Music Educators Association (RIMEA) Meritorius Administrator Award for outstanding support of music education and Mrs. Succi, Principal of Whiteknact School who was elected to the RI Association of School Principals Board of Directors. Dr. Forbes thanked Mr. DeVall and Mrs. Succi , true

educational leaders who make the School Department proud of their leadership in East Providence and throughout the state and all administrators should be commended for a positive close to the school year. Mr. Daft will be reporting on district testing later in the meeting.

Dr. Forbes reported that the district is still in a difficult position and facing an impending deficit. According to reports in the papers, it looks like East Providence will not receive any increase in state allocation, which means that we will probably not receive the 3% increase we usually expect from the state. This will cause our deficit to be increased to approximately \$3.5 to \$3.7 million. Dr. Forbes advised that the district is undergoing a program and fiscal audit at the present time and are preparing an exceptionally tight budget. She is in negotiations with the maintenance and custodial union and has not had any relief from the unions or the General Assembly to date. She has been in touch with our legislators and has not received additional funding for the costs of students living in group homes in the district. Dr. Forbes remains confident that the East Providence legislative delegation will continue its strong lobbying for the educational needs of our School Department; however, every indication is that there will be no additional funding.

Dr. Forbes also reported that in response to a request by a School Committee member, Steven Santos, to post meeting agendas on the East Providence School website, a link between the School

Department website and the Secretary of State's website has been developed by Mr. Robert Perry to create a more efficient way for the general public to access agendas and minutes. Since July, 2004, East Providence has complied with the open meetings law requirement that a Filer Coordinator (Patricia Iannelli) be designated to post meeting notices and minutes for the East Providence School Committee on the Open Meetings Website of the Secretary of State. To access the information through the East Providence School Department website, click on "School Committee Meeting Agendas" under "What's New" to view upcoming and past meeting agendas and recently filed meeting minutes for the School Committee or click on School Committee, which will provide a link to the Secretary of State's web-site. Contact information is provided on the website to reach Ms. Iannelli if you have any questions, require additional information or assistance. Dr. Forbes related that East Providence School Committee has and will continue to comply with the Open Meetings requirements.

FY 2006-07 Financial Report

Dr. Hilton presented a report. Mr. Medeiros asked about the projected deficit. Dr. Hilton explained that tuitions are better this month and he is hoping this trend will continue. Mr. Faria asked about the requested transfers on Page 2. Dr. Forbes explained that this provides for equalizing accounts and projecting ending balancing. Mr. Faria was concerned about rounding numbers. Mrs. Morris asked

if all bills are up to date. Discussion about how far the bills are behind. Dr. Forbes explained that it is beyond our control; we are only school district in the state with a fiscal year ending October 31, which sometimes puts us behind and the auditors have recommended that we change it as it puts us in a difficult situation. Mr. Faria remarked that it was mentioned in the audit as an item which needs to be addressed and asked what is being done to correct it. Mr. Faria asked about anything coming up which might be considered a problem. Dr. Hilton mentioned pension costs and the large payroll at this time of the year.

Personnel Recommendations – Diane Rodericks presented the following personnel items:

APPOINTMENTS

Greg McCarthy Principal, Secondary Summer School

Nancy Flanagan Guidance, EPHS

Robert Traverse Coach, Boys' Cross Country, EPHS

Fall Sport)

Michael Solitro Asst. Coach, Girls' Volleyball, EPHS

(Fall Sport)

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

Kimberly Laliberte Department Head, Science, EPHS

Motion: Faria/Second: Lovett. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs.

Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, nay.

Vote 4-1.

RETIREMENT

David Dann (27 yrs) Science/Biology, EPHS

Close of 2006-2007 school year

Carol Nicholas (16 yrs) Science/Biology/Chemistry, EPHS

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0. Close of 2006-2007 school year

RESIGNATION

Julie Martin (on leave) Speech-Language Pathologist

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

EXTENDED PERSONAL LEAVE

Paula Frank French Teacher, EPHS

2007-2008 school year

Motion: Santos/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

Belinda Wilkerson 2007-2008 school year

Motion: Lovett/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE (Maternity)

Nicole Monte Grade 1 Teacher, Hennessey School

Approx. September 20, 2007

Kristin Branco Speech/Language Pathologist, Orlo Ave.

Approx. September 24, 2007

Motion: Santos/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

TEACHER RECALL

Laura Laviano Special Education, Elementary/Middle

Gina Cunha Secondary Science/Biology

Motion: Lovett/Second: Medeiros. Vote 5-0.

Facilities Update

Mr. Barilla provided the following update on the High School Heating Project: Asbestos abatement will begin on June 18th; demolition of boiler #2 has begun and the demolition of the complete area will begin on July 3-5th. The new water heaters will be arriving in a couple of weeks. Boiler delivery is scheduled for on or about July 23rd. The project is on track as scheduled. Bids are being gathered for work on the pool and Mr. Barilla is working with the city to take a look at the deteriorating stairs and wall at Silver Spring; possibility of taking it down and resloping. Mr. Faria asked about maintenance areas related to the five year plan; no projects at this time.

Curriculum Update

Mr. Daft reported on the recent NECAP test results and Salt Survey data. The NECAP tests were designed to measure student performance against the learning goals described in the Grade Level expectations. There are four achievement levels: Proficient with Distinction, Proficient, Partially Proficient and Substantially Below Proficient. East Providence had six high performing schools; three moderately performing, one moderately and commended, one high performing with caution. Mr. Daft also explained an equity gap which needs to be addressed for next year in the school improvement team plans. According to SALT survey data, the community has confidence in the schools, students know clearly what is expected of them and there are positive interactions at the elementary schools. Also advisories are working well at the Middle and High Schools. Discussion regarding items which need to be addressed.

Mrs. Patricia Armstrong present a report regarding the high school accreditation. Every ten years, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges visits a school and evaluates its performance in all areas. To assist them in their evaluation, the school performs a self-study to analyze and evaluate all aspects of the educational practice. The NEASC team will be evaluating East Providence High School in March of 2008. Seven standards are addressed and the faculty has met on a regular basis to complete the complicated study.

Dr. Caswell, Principal of East Providence High School presented changes in curriculum.

Report of Sub-Committees

Mr. Faria reported on the finance subcommittee activities and asked if the School Committee had questions regarding the budget forums. Mr. Faria was pleased with all the public input at these meetings, and constructive criticism to make the process better next year.

Unfinished Business - Emergency Response Plan Update – Mr. Rodericks presented a report and a hand out. He advised that the Superintendent instructed that a monthly update be provided on security. The Emergency Response Plan has been revised as of June 2007.

New Business

East Providence Special Education Local Advisory Committee – The annual report was provided by Mrs. Rebello and Mrs. Brown; they asked for approval of their by-laws. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to approve, seconded by Mr. Faria. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Medeiros, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye.

II.F.6. Risk Management Policy – Vehicle Use - First Passage – Dr. Forbes asked the School Committee to review the policy regarding vehicles at the request of Mr. Medeiros. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to approve, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 5-0. Mr. Santos commented that he would forward his suggestions to clear up certain language in the policy.

I.E. School Committee By-Laws – Amended Policy – First Passage – Suggested guidelines were presented for approval. A motion was made by Mrs. Lovett, seconded by Mr. Faria. Discussion took place. Mr. Santos raised the issue about giving the public the right to speak similar to the City Council’s procedure. Mrs. Morris would like information from the School Committee Association. A motion was made by Mr. Medeiros to table indefinitely until more information is received, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 5-0.

City of East Providence/School Department Consolidation – Dr. Forbes placed this item on the agenda for public discussion. Discussion regarding a prior report which had been done concerning consolidation and the City Manager’s Report which was done in New London. Dr. Forbes reported that any move the School Department makes needs to have fiscal relief; she would like to be able to go through that document for potential savings. She will review it with the City Manager and try to identify areas to provide us with fiscal relief. Also the program audit should be completed by next week and a meeting will be set up with the auditors. Mr. Faria was frustrated

with the process, as someone has to say what positions could be consolidated and make recommendations about it. He would like an analysis and recommendations on consolidation areas such as buildings and grounds, legal department, personnel, business and finance. Dr. Forbes asked the School Committee's permission to work with the City Manager on the Buildings & Grounds position. She suggested starting with that one position.

Payment of Bills

Local Operating Bill List:

Warrant #000739 6/01/07 \$1,952,351.18

Motion: Medeiros/Second: Faria. Vote 5-0.

Federal Bill List:

Warrant #000736 5/15/07 \$ 176,691.64

Motion: Faria/Second: Lovett. Vote 5-0.

Question and Answer Period

Mr. Robert Enos commented that it was sad that Mr. Medeiros was leaving the Committee. He spoke about the challenge the School Committee is faced with, as the financial hole is getting bigger. He attended the sub-committee meetings; he feels that the School Committee needs to force the consolidation issue as the taxpayers need relief.

Mr. Tony Gouveia was concerned about making changes before receiving the report from the consultant; need to obtain the report first before talking with the City Manager about changes. He also said there is a glaring difference between 1996 report and now; schools have less people than 1996 and the City has more. In the New London report, the savings was only about \$25,000. He encouraged the Committee to analyze the audit report first and look at the level of services.

A motion was made to adjourn by Mr. Medeiros, seconded by Mr. Santos. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Eileen Lovett, Clerk of the Committee