

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

February 12, 2008

Open Session

Mrs. Morris called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. Four School Committee members were present: Robert Faria, Eileen Lovett, Steven Santos and Mildred Morris. (Stephen DeCastro absent). Also present: Dr. Jacqueline Forbes, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Robert Silva, Esq. and Mr. Andrew Thomas, Esq. A motion was made by Mr. Santos to move to Executive Session in accordance with RI General Laws, Section 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel, (a) (2) Collective Bargaining/Litigation, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

A motion was made by Mrs. Lovett to return to open session, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

Mrs. Lovett reported that a vote was taken in Executive Session regarding the contract of the Human Resources Director. A motion was made to accept the contract for Mr. Lonnie Barham as proposed and recommended by the Superintendent, seconded by Mr. Faria.

Vote 4-0. Mr. Faria requested that the Superintendent provide details of the vote. Dr. Forbes explained that we are waiting for the consolidation report from Roger Williams University feasibility study due at the end of February, which could have an impact on future staffing in the School Department. For this reason, the School Committee was hesitant to enter into a three-year contract; therefore, they compromised with an 18 month contract pending recommendations of the consolidation study, with an additional 18 months. Mr. Silva further explained that the contract discussed between the School Committee and Mr. Barham was for 18 months and subject to the consolidation report. Discussion in executive session and approved in public session. Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye.

A motion was made by Mr. Faria to seal the minutes of the executive session, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 4-0.

Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence were observed.

Record of Previous Meetings ¶ A motion was made to accept the minutes of meetings held on January 7 and 8, 2008, seconded by Mr. Faria. Mr. Santos noted a change in the January 8th minutes regarding his presence at the open call and also asked about the personnel docket posting referred to in the minutes. Mr. Silva related that he had provided a legal opinion on this matter and the agenda is posted on the Secretary of State's website. Dr. Forbes said there

was no direction to do this; no vote was taken after discussion at a prior meeting; she asked for clarification on this. Discussion regarding the fact that the docket is not ready when the agendas are posted. Contract non-renewals are not included in the published material. Dr. Forbes asked the Human Resources Director if this were possible. Mr. Barham said the posting can be done within 48 hours of the meeting, although he prefers it the way it is now. Mr. Silva said the School Committee needs direction to do this and needs a motion to do a double posting. Mrs. Morris mentioned that the item was not on the agenda. Mr. Silva said minutes are part of the public record and this is not unlawful. Mr. Faria mentioned the open meeting law. Mr. Silva advised that the open meeting laws are contradictory; out of abundance of caution. Mr. Faria said that the records of positions and names within requirement of open meeting laws. A motion was made by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mr. Santos. Vote 4-0.

Chair's Report
Mrs. Morris commented that she was impressed with the presentation of senior projects and the students' dress. She commended the culinary students from the CTC regarding the spaghetti dinner for the band. She attended a RIASC meeting two weeks ago and there was discussion regarding the financial situation of school districts in RI which is a sad state of affairs; it is the same all over RI. Also, a letter was read from Mrs. Eileen Lovett regarding her resignation from the School Committee effective March 4, 2008. Mr. Santos said it had been a pleasure working with Mrs. Lovett, who always tried to do what was right for school children and Mr. Faria

echoed those sentiments and said that Mrs. Lovett would be sorely missed. Dr. Forbes said that Mrs. Lovett will continue to be a strong supporter of schools and extended her personal thanks on behalf of students and staff of the School Department.

Student Liaison ¡V Laura Gazal presented a report on recent high school activities.

Hearings ¡V None

Reading of Communications - Mr. Faria commented on the band dinner and PTSO forum at the high school recently held regarding alcohol. Inspiring ¡V talking about the issues of drinking and questions parents ask.

Report of Superintendent and Staff

Dr. Forbes report included the following:

„X The Superintendent attended an Advanced Leadership Development Seminar for Superintendents on February 1st and 2nd at the NEAG School of Education at the University of Connecticut, along with other Superintendents from RI, CT, NY and NJ. Rhode Island Department of Education invited Dr. Forbes to attend and paid for the cost of the seminar. The conference focused on the collaborative inquiry process, large scale instructional improvement,

systemic change and a review of various conceptual models and best practices in organizational development.

„X Kindergarten registration is underway in the month of February; so far, 200 students have registered and everyone is encouraged to register children turning five years old by September 1st.

„X Commissioner McWalters awarded the high school preliminary approval for the diploma system and in a letter stated that „East Providence is to be commended for its work in forming a strong leadership team, for its communication strategies regarding the graduation requirements, for the strong personalization strategies advisories and Individualized Learning Plans to support student goals, and for a strong, comprehensive, counseling program.“ Dr. Forbes commended the high school faculty and administration’s efforts.

„X At a joint City Council and School Committee meeting, Dr. Forbes and Richard Brown, City Manager were directed to meet regarding a deficit reduction plan which will be ready by the end of March. We are awaiting the Roger Williams University Consolidation Report on February 25th.

FY 2007-08 Financial Report „V Mr. Capron presented the January financial report, which projected a deficit of \$3.3 million. Mr. Santos asked about any movement up or down or trends. Mr. Capron advised that tuitions are beyond estimates; health insurance is down a bit which balanced it. Additional students are coming in with needs and one or two tuitions can make a difference. Mr. Faria asked about

the percentage from last year. Mr. Capron advised this is a timing issue only and there is an additional payroll this year. Mr. Santos asked where we are in terms of last fiscal year. Mr. Capron reported that all accounting completed for last fiscal year, auditors have started and all items have been posted.

Personnel Recommendations ;V Mr. Barham presented the personnel items:

APPOINTMENTS:

Filomena Freitas Supervisory Asst., Hennessey School

Karen Greene Supervisory Asst., Waddington School

Motion: Mrs. Lovett/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

RETIREMENTS (Close of 2007-2008 School Year):

Jean Arnold (29 yrs) English Coordinator, RMS

Paula Braman-Duarte (31 yrs) Social Studies, EPHS

Christine Carroll (35 yrs) Guidance, EPHS

MaryAnn Cronan-Napoli (29 yrs) Family & Consumer Science, EPHS

Michele Dunn (34 yrs) Grade 1, Oldham School

Catherine Estrella (28 yrs) School Social Worker
Suzanne Gorham (34 yrs) Special Education, Resource, MMS
Thomas Grady (33 yrs) Mathematics Coordinator, RMS
Wilma Johnson (28 yrs) English, Grade 7, MMS
John Langella (38 yrs) Science/Biology/Oceanography, EPHS
Linda Lareau (31 yrs) ESL/History, EPHS
Dawn Lydon (34 yrs) Kindergarten, M.J. Francis School
Linda Manni (37 yrs) Art, EPHS
Karen Panzarella (31 yrs) Special Education, Self Contained, EPHS
Ann Rourke (47 yrs) Art Department Head, EPHS
Claudia Kelley Rowley (19 yrs) Reading Specialist, MMS
Fernanda Silva (32 yrs) Foreign Language, Portuguese, EPHS
Barbara Sullivan (35 yrs) Grade 4, Hennessey School
Sharon Waterman (34 yrs) Director of Special Education, ADM
Belinda Wilkerson (32 yrs) Counselor-in-Residence, Providence College

Motion: Mrs. Lovett/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (Maternity)

Katherine Capron Grade 4, Oldham School

Approx. March 24, 2008

Erica Ellinwood Grade 1, Silver Spring School

Approx. March 15, 2008

Kathie Rietheimer Grade 4, Orlo Avenue School

Approx. March 10, 2008

Christina Salois French Teacher, MMS

Approx. March 31, 2008

Motion: Mr. Santos/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

EXTENDED PERSONAL LEAVE

Karen Mellen (yr 2) Health Occupations

2008-2009 school year

Motion: Mrs. Lovett/Second: Mr. Santos. Vote 4-0.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Lisa Poirier Supervisory Assistant, Waddington School

December 1, 2007 to December 1, 2008

Motion: Mrs. Lovett/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

RESIGNATIONS:

Danielle Reis Supervisory Asst., Kent Heights School

Effective February 15, 2008

Robert Dickerman Freshman Baseball Coach, EPHS

Motion: Mrs. Lovett/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

RESCINDING RETIREMENT:

Dolores Bliss Bus Assistant

Motion: Mrs. Lovett/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

In addition, Mr. Barham advised that 53 teachers and 4 secretaries received layoff notices due to budgetary constraints. A motion was made to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent by Mrs. Lovett, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

Dr. Forbes wished all the retirees well for the tremendous amount of dedication to students. Mrs. Morris commended the teachers as well for their service and thanked Mrs. Sharon Waterman for a wonderful job. Thanks to all for their loyalty, dedication and hard work toward high and moderately performing schools. Dr. Forbes explained that lay-offs are due to budget constraints and hopes all will be recalled at a later date.

Facilities Update ¶ Mr. Tavares provided a report as follows:

„X High school ¶ Problems are still being worked out during the break-in period of the new heating system. Because of various

problems, he met with Dr. Forbes and other staff members, determined what the problems were, and they had a meeting with the engineer and contractors. At the conclusion of discussions, concerns were expressed about the boiler company and it was decided that Dr. Forbes would be sending a letter to them. The engineer, Mr. Lussier of ATC, has already been receiving faxes from the boiler company. Mrs. Morris asked if they would be coming here. Dr. Forbes expects that ATC and the manufacturer of the boiler will remedy the situation immediately. Mr. Faria expressed concern regarding the soot problem and asked if it presented a health hazard and he expressed concern about the unknown water problem. He asked how long it will be to correct the problems. Dr. Forbes will be working with legal counsel to get this done immediately. The engineer and his staff have been present daily making adjustments and calibrations. Mr. Faria said this is negligence to the extreme with a building of 2000 students plus employees. Mrs. Morris asked about the quality of the oil. Mr. Tavares said the oil had been tested and met the standard for #4 oil. Dr. Forbes said we are working on reducing condensation and soot, which is inside the boiler; the staff took pictures and has evidence for ATC and the manufacturer. Mr. Faria would like the School Committee to receive updates daily. Mr. Santos asked if there is any danger. Mr. Tavares advised there is no danger; this involves the backflow at the boiler itself. Mr. Faria felt it was negligence. Mr. Silva advised that a letter was sent out and we will wait for a response; the School Committee is correct that it should be acted on immediately.

„X Renovation has been completed in the band room at the high school. Mr. Faria asked for an itinerary of what work is being done and to make the School Committee aware of what is scheduled. Painting is to be done by students as part of community service. Dr. Forbes reported that work was completed on Riverside Middle School to prepare for the SALT visit. The High School is preparing for a NEASC visit and work will be prioritized there; she hopes to have ongoing work done. Dr. Forbes conducts an eyesore walk through to determine anything that diminishes the educational environment, as the staff deserves better. Most items are in the Facilities Plan, but she can send a list to the School Committee. Dr. Forbes would like the learning environment to be better for students. Students and parents will assist in cleaning up the high school.

„X The power outage at the high school on 2/6/08 was caused by a power surge through the main breaker. Mr. Tavares explained how the problem occurred; the generators worked fine.

„X Mr. Tavares explained the sequence of events at Whiteknact School regarding the roof. Two additional roofing companies will submit quotes on the repairs; every classroom was tested and we will continue to follow up; we are waiting for a report from Mr. Al Cabral of

Department of Health.

Mr. Santos read from the report that "fungal air samples contain moderate amount of mold." Mr. Tavares said that will be true in all buildings; there is no standard for mold.

Dr. Forbes explained that Mr. Cabral of RI Department of Health and R.I. Analytical attended meetings and were not concerned about that statement regarding mold; however, CO 2 levels needed to be checked.

Mr. Santos noted that filters need to be cleaned and changed. Mr. Tavares advised that this has been done routinely and a crew will be going there to address all noted problems in the building. Mr. Santos mentioned about vents in closets and if there was a need to do them more often than six months. Mr. Faria said he needs to be aware of these things such as air quality tests. The district has a Five Year Facilities Plan and many items are coming due which are all in the report. Mr. Faria said we are so far behind the eight ball. Dr. Forbes informs the School Committee so the School Committee can do a better job informing public

Requests for Home Schooling V Mr. Rodericks presented a request for home schooling. A motion as made by Mrs. Lovett to approve, seconded by Mr. Santos. Vote 4-0.

Curriculum Report ıV Mr. Edward Daft spoke regarding the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) tests administered in October 2006. Results have been posted on the RI Department of Education web site at <http://www.ridoe.net/Assessment/necap.aspx> and are viewable by the public. He explained that the NECAP tests were designed to measure student performance against the learning goals described in the Grade Level Expectations. Consistent with this purpose, primary results on the NECAP tests are reported in terms of achievement levels that describe student performance in relation to these established state standards. There are four achievement levels: Proficient with Distinction, Proficient, Partially Proficient, and Substantially below Proficient. Students receive a separate achievement-level classification (based on total scaled score) in each content area in which they complete a test. There is no overall classification of student performance across content areas. School and district level results are reported as the number and percentage of students attaining each achievement level at each grade level tested.

It is important to note that the Departments of Education in NH, RI, and VT do not encourage or promote comparisons among schools and districts. NECAP was designed so that each individual school or district can evaluate its performance against a set of Grade Level Expectations and achievement standards. There may still be discrepancies in some school results. Principals have been directed to review individual student/school results and report any issues or concerns regarding public data. RIDE reporting meetings are

scheduled for February. State and individual school classifications should be announced in the spring.

Program of Studies ¶ Mr. Daft reported that building principals were present to review program offerings, to discuss curriculum changes for the 2008-09 school year and the program of studies for East Providence High School, Martin Middle School, and Riverside Middle School.

He noted that in compliance with state mandates and to appropriately meet proficiency requirements, principals will be requesting that the Family Consumer Science and Wood Technology programs at the secondary level be discontinued at the end of this year. These classes would be replaced with Technology Education and Robotics. The International Technology Association Standards for Technological Literacy Areas of Study Areas of study have been attached. Additionally, to better align our course offerings at the middle school level, the principals will be requesting that French no longer be offered at Martin Middle School since it is no longer offered at Riverside Middle School. Spanish and Portuguese will remain at the middle schools. This move will strengthen the remaining languages and allow students more opportunities to develop literacy and comprehension skills to address current proficiency levels in ELA. French, Spanish and Portuguese would remain course offerings at the high school.

Dr. Caroline Caswell, Principal of East Providence High School

reviewed the changes in courses being offered and advised that last year's program of studies was submitted to the School Committee along with the new draft. Mrs. Sandra Forand, Principal of Riverside Middle School and Mr. Frank DeVall, Principal of Martin Middle School reviewed the courses being dropped to support the high school; students will enter ninth grade more proficient; the rationale and emphasis on reading. Regarding French being dropped at the middle school, Mrs. Forand explained that 70% of students reading proficient and it are better to focus on literacy and reading. Dr. Caswell explained that the requirement is two years for foreign language; there is no state requirement or School Committee policy on this. Dr. Forbes asked for a motion to approve the Program of Studies as presented. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to approve, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Vote 4-0.

Report of Sub-Committees ¶V Mr. Faria asked that the School Committee set the example going forwards by eliminating their health benefit; he felt that School Committee represents their constituencies and this would set the example that the School Committee is doing their part. Mr. Santos concurred with Mr. Faria; he does not think elected officials should receive medical benefits as part of their compensation at the expense of the constituents they are serving. This would show that the School Committee is serving the public for the right reasons and not to be self serving. Mrs. Lovett agrees that if a School Committee member does not need the benefits, they should not take them, which would make it possible for those who need

them. Mrs. Morris gave 44 years to the School Department and co-pays 10% of her benefits; for her continued service, she would like her benefits to continue. Mr. Faria explained that this was not meant for any one person. A motion was made by Mr. Faria that going forward, all health benefits for School Committee members would cease, seconded by Mr. Santos. Mr. Silva advised Mrs. Morris that her vote could be construed as financial benefit and recommended that she recuse herself from the vote out of an abundance of caution. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, nay; Mr. Santos, aye. Mrs. Morris recused herself from the vote. Motion carried 2-1.

Unfinished Business - None

New Business

V.D.1. Code of Student Conduct ;V Amended Policy ;V A motion was made by Mr. Faria for Second Passage, seconded by Mrs. Lovett.

Roll call vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye.

I.E. By-Laws ;V Amended Policy ;V First Passage - Dr. Forbes reviewed the changes to the School Committee;s By-Laws and Mrs.

Lovett reviewed the changes to the Question and Answer Period Guidelines at School Committee Meetings. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to approve first passage, seconded by Mrs. Lovett. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Faria, aye; Mrs. Lovett, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mrs. Morris, aye.

Payment of Bills

Local Operating Bill List:

Warrant #000796 2/7/08 \$ 1,899,271.67

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. Santos. Vote 4-0.

Warrant #000797 2/7/08 \$ 504,316.32

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. Santos. Vote 4-0.

Warrant #000798 2/7/08 \$ 95,564.66

Motion: Mr. Santos/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

Federal Bill List:

Warrant #000795 2/4/08 \$ 187,379.03

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. Santos. Vote 4-0.

Mr. Santos asked for a time frame on paying bills. Mr. Capron

advised that the city provided additional money for us to catch up; however, this will reduce the allocation in other months. This will only help us catch up for a short time. Mr. Faria asked that the School Committee receive a list of bills from the 2006-07 budget.

Question and Answer Period

Kathy Blackmar asked about the day the test was done at Whiteknact School, if the letter to the boiler company regarding the high school boiler concern, was sent certified mail and if a letter would be sent by our lawyer. She asked how far back have the bills been backed up.

Mr. Faria asked if there were any bills left over from 2006, if not at the next meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Santos to adjourn at 9:50PM, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Eileen Lovett, Clerk of the Committee