

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

School Committee Meeting

September 8, 2009

Open Session

Mr. Carcieri called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. School Committee Members present: Luisa Abatecola, Shannon Barbosa, Robert Faria, Steven Santos, Anthony Carcieri. Also present: Dr. Mario F. Cirillo, Jr., Superintendent of Schools, Daniel Kinder, Esq. A motion was made by Mr. Santos, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa and approved by unanimous vote to convene in Executive Session for purposes of discussing:

- 1) Collective Bargaining: R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(2): Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Custodians, Secretaries, Principals;**
- 2) Litigation: R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(2): Court Action: EPSC v. EPEA; Public Comment Lawsuit; and**
- 3) Personnel: R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(1): Review of Superintendent's Performance**

The School committee returned to open session at 7:30PM. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag & a Moment of Silence were

observed.

Mr. Kinder reported on a vote taken in Executive Session. A motion was made by Mr. Faria to authorize Little, Medeiros, Kinder Bulman & Whitney, if necessary, to conduct interest arbitration with the teacher assistants union, seconded by Mr. Santos. Unanimously approved.

Mr. Barham reported that a vote was taken in executive session to implement the terms of Item (E3) regarding the second year of the Superintendent's contract; the performance appraisal indicated the Superintendent's performance as outstanding. Unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Mary Texeira commented that almost every community's experiences have been the same regarding budget problems, which were exacerbated by cuts at the state level. She felt that East Providence has handled it differently than other cities/towns in that the teachers have been demonized by the School Committee going to the media and City Council assaults. It was said by a School Committee member that the "money is going to the kids where it belongs." Teaching is a service job; they are charged to teach and paid for their expertise; there is "passion, volunteering, tutoring, parent conferences, etc." The city is undermining the respect she has earned and people need to care about the public demeaning,

because there will be more lost than money and benefits if it is allowed to continue.

Valerie Lawson, President of the East Providence Education Association wanted to clarify the teachers' action decided collectively as a membership which is not a "work to rule." She stated that the teachers have acted professionally in the past year, taken pride in their work, and their focus will continue to be on teaching and learning. They will work beyond contractual obligations: Stay after to tutor; college recommendations, email parents; coach ex-curricular activities. They have developed guidelines not to impact students; the educational environment has not suffered here and will not. They will not provide supplies or volunteer because it is not appreciated. She stated that this is not work to rule; they will be there before and after school and the learning environment will not be diminished.

Mr. Carcieri asked for clarification on some of Ms. Lawson's statements regarding discrepancies about participation by teachers in school activities.

Mr. Faria wanted to clarify what is being said about the deficit being on the backs of the teachers;

Last year, 28 bus aide positions were eliminated, health care was diminished. The custodians agreed to co-share and gave a percentage of their salary on their own. The city looked at sending

out an RFP for custodial services and is working now on this. Their previous contract had specific language regarding substitute janitors working with no health care and at minimum wages. Health care is a big part of the budget and they gave a co-share out of their salary. In addition,

secretaries have been laid off, and the number of staff decreased. Teachers are upset about this, but these issues need to be addressed with the executive committee; it is truly a shame to hear the rhetoric. We cannot continue doing what was done in the past and change is needed in order to survive; saying that the teachers have to bare the biggest burden is not correct.

Mr. Kinder stated that at this point the School Committee does not know what the union has voted to do; the lack of respect is two way. The School Department does not know if they will monitor the halls, lunch, supervise buses, participate in faculty meetings, attend open houses, PTA meetings, participate in SIT team meetings, serve on PBIS teams, faculty advisory committees or write letters for college recommendations. The School Committee does not know about chaperoning dances, bands, theatre, science/math nights, fun in the tub, sporting events, Townie Parade, fairs, car washes, pasta nights, all fundraisers, club advisors, etc. Will teachers stay after school to tutor; we do not know about after school meetings, curriculum planning, participation in professional development; proficiency based graduations, e-portfolios, which are critical to the education of kids. These are questions the School Committee and administrators

need to have answers to; they assume these duties are always part of teachers' jobs. Because we do not have answers to these questions, the teachers union may create more expenses.

Mr. Carcieri said he extended an invitation at the last meeting, which was recorded on Cox cable, to sit down and talk with the teachers; that was two weeks ago and we have not heard from anyone; we sent two letters previously and no one is coming to the table. He wanted to ask some questions, but Ms. Lawson declined to answer. This is not the spirit of communication we have heard from the teachers' union and he wanted rank and file to understand this.

Reports

Sub-Committee Reports

Reviewing Charges of Sub-Committees - Dr. Cirillo reviewed the areas of responsibility for the School Committee Sub-Committees: Budget/Facilities, Personnel/Contract Subcommittee, Community/Policy Subcommittee and Health and Wellness. He will be arranging for meetings to be held for sub-committees to be up and running. Shortly, the policy subcommittee will begin reviewing the policy manual. Mrs. Abatecola and Mrs. Barbosa have connected with our district nurse coordinator regarding the Wellness Committee meetings and will be meeting with her soon.

A motion was made by Mrs. Abatecola to reseal the minutes of the

executive session, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Superintendent's Report

Personnel Report on Retirements/Resignations/Leaves of Absence/Reassignments

Mr. Barham presented the personnel items:

Retirements

Raymond Lombardo Assistant Principal-EPHS Effective 9/11/09

Transfer

Shani Wallace Assistant Principal iV EPHS

Resignations

Margaret Quinn 1:1 Nurse/Teacher iV Waddington

Virginia Miller Social Worker ;V MMS

Evelyn Morse Supervisory Assistant ;V Kent Heights

Dolores O'Connell Supervisory Assistant ;V Kent Heights

Leaves of Absence

Margaret Furtado Supervisory Asst. ;V Francis 09-10 school year

Marc Thibault Educational Specialist ;V EPHS 09-10 school year

Dr. Cirillo thanked Mr. Lombardo for his years of service to the district and commended Ms. Wallace, who will be moving to the high school, for her wonderful service at Martin Middle School.

Qualified School Construction Bond Program ;V Mr. Joseph DaSilva from Rhode Island Department of Education was present to explain the Qualified School Construction Bond Program, the proceeds of which may be used to finance new construction, rehabilitation, and or repairs of public school facilities, including acquisition of land for a school building, and new equipment to be used in school facilities. Mr. Barham will be working on a comprehensive plan to be submitted to RIDE, which is subject to City Council and Board of Regents approval.

He believes that our district meets the criteria detailed in the selection process in areas such as over crowding, high school accreditation, life safety, and demographics.

Mr. DaSilva stated that our district's application would allow us to

compete for approximately \$22 million available to the state per year. The process is competitive and he would be available to assist in the application process. Mr. DaSilva explained that all projects qualify, but critical life safety issues would be a priority.

Report on the Opening of School - Dr. Cirillo reported that School Committee members toured school buildings last Friday and rated the conditions of buildings as outstanding for cleanliness and maintenance. He credited the custodial/maintenance staff for doing a wonderful job. There were many issues regarding capital improvements which needed to be addressed with the building inspector and Fire Department.

Mrs. Barbosa was very moved to see the excellent condition of the buildings. She commended a great staff and Dr. Cirillo, as there was more work completed this summer than ever before, including new doors at the high school. Mrs. Abatecola commended the custodial staff for a job well done. Additionally, Dr. Cirillo noted that a tremendous amount of work was completed by the custodian at the Career and Technical School in order to prepare the building for opening of school.

Culture of Achievement: Theory of Action of the EP School Department - Dr. Cirillo informed the School Committee regarding a presentation he made to staff on the first professional development day; §Building a Culture of Achievement: Preparing all Students for

College, Life, Work and Citizenship” is an articulation of the East Providence School Department’s theme. At the convocation, he detailed the shared vision, mission statement and theory of action. Two way accountability: staff will be engaged in professional development which will result in high quality instruction. The district will be able to celebrate the results of everyone working together and being held accountable. Dr. Cirillo stated this is another step in articulating what we are about; it is a living document and is subject to regular review, but he wanted to share it with the School Committee. The document will be available on the district website.

Financial Report – Mr. Edward Donaghue, Finance Director, continues to monitor the budget; he provided a summary and expects to be on track with expenditures at 83.46% and revenues totaling 76% through 8/31/09.

Facilities Report – Mr. Tavares, Facilities Manager related that approval was received today from the City Building Inspector, Mr. Walker regarding the high school. Also the Fire Marshall checked emergency lighting at the high school which was rewired. His staff struggled all summer, but he is pleased and proud of the work which was completed.

Dr. Caswell reported on the East Providence NECAP results/classifications. Highlights were:

Elementary Schools

Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2008-2009 ¡V school wide

Kent Heights Commended

Hennessey, Silver Spring, Whiteknact, Orlo, Frances, Oldham

Waddington ¡V16/17 targets met

Need - IEP Math

Waddington ¡V insufficient progress

Middle Schools

Martin Middle School -22/23 targets met

Need - IEP Math

Martin ¡V caution - on watch status

High School

17/21 targets met

Math (Race- Black) and math participation (91.41 IEP)

ELA ¡V participation (92.2 IEP)

Insufficient progress - in need of improvement, PS & I

Technology Proficiency

Both middle schools- 85% grade 8 students proficient

Dr. Caswell detailed some of the actions which have been taken in order to improve:

„X School Committee policy: 2007-2008 students must take the NECAP assessment to graduate; 2008-2009 - Class of 2012 must nearly meet, meet or exceed proficiency to graduate

„X Principals trained in data analysis

„X Principals presented to staff ¡V Spring 2009

„X Team attended Science data analysis ¡V December 16

„X Curriculum Writing K-12: Mathematics 2009-2010; Science 2010-2011;

ELA 2011-2012; SS 2012-2013

„X Instructional support

„X ELA

„X Elementary writing specialist ¡V September 2009

„X Middle school reading specialist September 2009

„X Mathematics

K-12 Curriculum written ¡V Wednesdays all year

Gizmos ¡Vtraining Monday and Tuesday, September 21 & 22

Elementary mathematics coach ¡V October 2009

Middle level mathematics coach ¡V October 2009

„X Science

Gizmos ¡Vtraining Monday and Tuesday, September 21 & 22

Millmark ¡V science resources to reduce the gaps with KITS

Save the Bay ¡V all Grade 7 students

Teachers will continue to look at data to see where the gaps are and look at intervention in different areas where the needs are for IEP students and address them. Dr. Caswell stated that scores will improve, but it will take time.

Kelly Ahrens, Director of Technology provided an overview of some of the technology improvements: new technology at elementary level, professional development center at administration building, and

a new website. At the elementary level, the infrastructure was in tough shape with no supports for teachers in the classroom. Ms. Ahrens would like to see this problem corrected this year with stimulus money; we can have centers in the classrooms; math, literacy, and science supports in classrooms and struggling students can go to computer centers in the classroom. Information will be provided regarding the training center at 80 Burnside; she will post professional development information for teachers to be able to communicate on line. She felt it was important to note that technology is part of the shared vision to bring teachers what they need to teach.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes ¡VA motion was made by Mr. Santos to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2009 and August 25, 2009 meetings, seconded by Mr. Faria. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Personnel Recommendations

APPOINTMENTS

Rochelle Larghi Interim Assistant Principal-MMS

Drew Hochman 2/5 SPED/Resource-ORLO

Maria Fazioli 1:1 Nurse/Teacher-WADD

Ana Paulo Art-Elementary (multiple schools)
John Gorham Student Liaison ¡V EPHS
Liza-Beth Allienello Secretary - MMS-House A
Kimberly Ramsay Secretary ¡V MMS-House B
Ann LaChance Secretary ¡V MMS-House C
Valerie Correira Supervisory Asst. ¡V Kent Heights
Margarita Moreira Supervisory Asst. ¡V Oldham
Jacqueline Rose Supervisory Asst. ¡V Oldham

Donna Santoro Supervisory Asst. ¡V Francis
Natasha Axelson Literacy Coach ¡V Secondary
Lorraine Rappoport Literacy Coach ¡V Elementary

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mrs. Barbosa. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Requisitions

Bill Lists

Warrant #924 \$1,855,194.93

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. Santos. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

Warrant #926 \$117,079.95

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mr. Santos. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

2009-2010 Budget ¶ A motion was made by Mr. Faria to approve, seconded by Mr. Santos. Discussion: Mr. Faria asked about breakdown on Title I funds. Mrs. Barbosa commented that she was happy to see more funds to going to children. Mr. Santos noted an increase in the revenue side based on an overall projected 3 1/2 % from different sources; the budget represents 2.9% over last year; is approved budget and is based on that and not the original number. Mr. Barham explained that \$1.1 million of that is going to deficit reduction. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, aye; Mrs. Barbosa, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye.

A motion was made by Mr. Faria to adjourn at 9:05PM, seconded by Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Shannon Barbosa, Clerk of the Committee