

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence, City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

September 13, 2011

Open Session

Mr. Charles Tsonos, Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. School Committee Members Present: Luisa Abatecola, Stephen Furtado, Ryan Tellier, Chrissy Rossi, Charles Tsonos. Also present: Mr. Edward Daft, Assistant Superintendent, Andrew Thomas, Esq.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag & Moment of Silence were observed.

Public Comment I – None

Andrew Butler, Student Liaison presented a report on high school events and activities.

Student/Teacher Recognition – East Providence High School Seniors, Taylor Grant and Taylor Chianese, members of the Tidal Wave Soccer Club, were recognized and congratulated for competing and winning the Bronze Medal for the U.S. at the Dana Cup in Denmark this summer.

Report: Interim Superintendent's Report

Mr. Daft reported that the opening of school was on time and went very well with many activities to welcome parents; however, there are still bus issues to resolve. Due to increased traffic and the number of runs from buses, the elementary runs were 15 to 30 minutes late. After discussion with the Transportation Director, Mr. Linneman, and the principals, it was decided to go back to the original start times for secondary schools, realizing the hardship this might cause. As a result, the schedule will be changed on September 19, 2011 to give reasonable notice to students and staff and reasonable accommodations will be made for parents; students will receive new schedules tomorrow. Mr. Daft advised that a notice will be posted on websites and a Connect-Ed message will be sent out to families. The changes are: High School: 7:25AM to 1:45PM and Middle Schools: 8:05 to 2:20PM.

In response to a question from Mr. Tsonos about what went wrong with the plan submitted and accepted by the School Committee, Mr. Linneman explained every effort is made to save money; in this particular case the decision to change the times of the high school and middle school did not work out due to some external factors explained by Mr. Daft earlier, it was decided to change the times back now, because the routes did not work out. In response to a question from Mr. Tsonos about ways to anticipate this might happen; Mr. Linneman explained that runs increased due to many new registrants, more administrative transfers of students, special education students

and other factors and the right course of action was to make the change now; it was originally thought the change would save about \$91,000 and the department is continually looking at ways to save money. Mr. Tsonos requested that this be tracked every day.

School Construction Work Update – Mary King reported that Farrar & Associates will be at the next meeting to provide a more detailed report; through the energy savings bond work is proceeding with new windows at several schools; water conservation; boiler rooms, pool, sprinklers; abatement at the high school taking place now; work at CTC for cosmetology program will be wrapped up by the end of November.

Finance Report – Mary King, Finance Director reported revenues are at about 80% with only two months left in the fiscal year; the next revenue payment will be received at the end of October, but there will be no dramatic changes; on the expenditure side, \$699,000 has been budgeted for deficit reduction; a \$1.6 million deficit expected for FY 2011, will now be about \$1 million instead; the city will not allow us to use cash to pay vendors; this report is not dramatically different from the last time.

Discussion regarding Johnson Controls saving money; Ms. King explained that savings will impact next fiscal year; lights, 2013 will see complete full year savings, light, water, boilers, etc.

rebates are expected by 10/31, but are not projected in since she has

not received official confirmation yet.

**Personnel Report on Retirements/Resignations/Leaves of Absence –
Mary King presented the personnel items:**

Resignations

Edward Jameson Jr. Landscape/Greenhouse Teacher, Effective 9/6/11

Rita Gervais Spanish Teacher, High School, Effective 8/30/11

Annette Schofield Math Teacher – Martin M/S, Effective 9/7/11

Maria Bigelow Teacher Assistant, Meadowcrest, Effective 9/6/11

Rescinded

**Mark Stickney 2/5 Physics Teacher – High School, Effective
Immediately, Effective 9/6/11**

**Dana Vasconcelos Special Education Teacher, High School, Effective
9/6/11**

Personal Leave of Absence

Kathleen Caffrey Grade 4 Teacher – Francis Elementary – One Year

Consent Agenda

**Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Mr. Tellier to approve
the minutes of the meeting held on August 18, 2011, seconded by
Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 5-0.**

Action Items

Personnel Appointments/Recalls – presented by Mary King:

Appointments

Patricia McChrystal, Librarian/Media – Oldham/Whiteknact – Effective 9/6/11 Due to Resignation

Marta Monteiro Secretary, Martin Middle School Library – Effective 9/7/11 Due to Retirement

Stephanie Stewart Secretary, Riverside Middle School Library – Effective 9/7/11 Due to Retirement

Beverly Pendrak Supervisory Assistant, Francis School – Effective 9/8/11 Due to Resignation

Cindy Steger School Nurse/Teacher – Riverside Middle School – One Year – Due to LOA Effective 9/19/11

Lillian Martin School Nurse/Teacher – Francis/St Margaret – One year – Due to LOA Effective 9/14/11

Ruth Dickinson School Nurse/Teacher – Oldham/Meadowcrest Due to Resignation – Effective 9/19/11

Recalls

Niurka Ferreira Teacher Assistant Effective 9/8/11 Temporary Position at Meadowcrest

Motion to approve by Mr. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 5-0.

Requisitions – Bill List

Warrant #1130 9/8/11 \$ 2,880.00

Warrant #1131 9/8/11 \$ 16,870.49
Warrant #1133 9/8/11 \$ 269,623.79
Warrant #1134 9/8/11 \$ 727,479.97
Warrant #1135 9/8/11 \$ 123,320.82

Motion to approve by Mrs. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Request(s) for Home Schooling –Motion by Mrs. Rossi to approve requests recommended by Interim Superintendent, Mr. Daft, seconded by Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 5-0.

AYSO Fees – Motion by Mrs. Rossi to table, seconded by Mr. Furtado. Vote 5-0.

High School Fields- Mr. Tellier proposed the idea of school fields being managed by the city; our fields are not eligible now to receive grants; if the recreation department can get grants, the city has bond money which could be put into the fields for grading, fences, and other items. There is a fraction of a bond for \$1.5 M to renovate entire fields at the high schools. This would enable teams to play at the high school; having a fence would allow admission charges; we could rent out the fields to others; with turf, almost year-round use would be possible. A number of different programs could go there, such as AYSO soccer and we could get our fields in better shape along with other improvements. The City would have to put a full time manager there to take care of the grounds; this could involve the

CTC program with experience and hands- on training which would benefit students and would help by working with the Athletic Director for our teams to get first priority; this would also benefit the public to have access to the fields. A motion was made by Mr. Tellier to move in that direction to see what we need to do with the fields, to find out about bond money, and use of full time personnel through the City Manager, working with Interim Superintendent and staff, seconded by Mr. Furtado. Discussion: Mr. Daft noted turning fields over to the city could involve bargaining unit problems, but he will sort through it. Vote 5-0.

Revised Policy II D.5 Use of School Building/School Grounds (First Passage) Motion by Mr. Tellier to approve, seconded by Mrs. Rossi, Vote 5-0.

Mary King, Finance Director, presented information on the Fiscal Year 2012-13 budget in a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights: Statewide Comparisons of student populations, per pupil costs and percentage of city property taxes for education; FY 12 revenue and expenditure projections, cost drivers creating the FY12 deficit, major sources of funds; and areas of budget cuts already made. The School Department has a \$6.3 million deficit and another \$1 million dollar deficit is expected for FY11; another \$7.2 million dollar deficit is expected for FY12.

New Business

Mr. Furtado asked to discuss the Affirmative Action Policy; Mr. Pina from the City's Affirmative Action Office hopes to handle both city and schools. Mary King advised that the School's Human Resources Department has handled this in the past and recommended that once we have a new Director on board, Mr. Pina can discuss it with the department director.

Traffic Patterns at Oldham and Waddington - Mrs. Rossi was concerned about two elementary school situations with cars parked on both sides of road; she knows it is not that severe all the time, but asked if the Facilities Director, Mr. Catelli, could look at it to alleviate some of the issues on traffic patterns. Mr. Catelli will speak to Steve Coutu, Public Works Director, look at the situation, and report back at a later date.

Discussion regarding procedures for crossing guards: Mr. Daft reported that safety patrols are placed by the police at the high school and some other schools; the policy is that we can request assistance and they will provide it if necessary. Mr. Tsonos pointed out a situation on Roger Williams Avenue where kids cross by themselves and that this School Committee is interested in safety; there is a crossing guard on Wilson Avenue, which does not have as much traffic as Roger Williams and he would like us to look at a crossing guard for Roger Williams also. Since there is no bus transportation and kids have to cross, this is not acceptable; he asked about any other locations where crossing guards may be

needed and would like this handled right away.

Public Comment II

Tony Gouveia commented that in 2008-09, the School Committee decided to go along to get along; there was a \$4.5 million budget cut during the year and they should have told the City Council no. The School Committee should pass a real budget and send it to the City Council and not just hope they agree with it; this budget has not one new program for teachers or kids; there are no more cuts to make. Numbers of \$6 million, \$7 million and \$12million were presented; even if teachers do not come to work you can't save that much money; they have cut us to death; be an advocate; if budget is real, present it to City Council, who will cut your budget; you will run a deficit, they will blame you; everyone knows what to do; do not go along to get along, just pass the budget.

Announcements – Mr. Rossi congratulated everyone for the city-wide Waddington Playground project; kudos to the committee and congratulations the kids.

Mr. Daft announced that students, parents, and teachers are needed for meetings on the NEASC accreditation process; please contact Ms. Sheehan Principal of EPHS to volunteer for that committee. Tomorrow, a meeting will be held at the HS library for instructions on how to use Powergrade.

Mr. Tsonos spoke about the community spirit and Townie Pride shown during the Waddington project and that it was a great day with a lot of hard work; the same project will happen at Kent Heights, which will be rescheduled. Also, discussion about ticket prices being increased at football games and the hardship that will cause some families. Mr. Daft advised that the price of a ticket is \$5 for adults, \$4 for students at the gate; tickets sold at school are less; \$3 and \$4 for football; there is information posted on the athletic office website about tickets available at \$30 and \$40 for the season.

A motion was made by Mr. Furtado to convene in Executive Session for purposes of discussing: Personnel - R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a) (1), Collective Bargaining R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a) (2) Litigation/Pending Litigation -R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a) (2), seconded by Mrs. Rossi.

Vote 5-0.

The School Committee returned to Public Session. A motion was made by Mr. Furtado to return to public session and to seal the minutes of the executive session, seconded by Mr. Tellier.

Vote 5-0.

Report Executive Session Votes – Mr. Furtado reported that a vote

was taken in executive session to approve the East Providence Education Association contract dated 11/09 to 10/31/11. Motion by Mr. Furtado to approve, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0. Unanimous vote.

A vote was taken to approve a legal decision (regarding JC) and to forward that decision to his legal counsel, motion by Mrs. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0. Unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Furtado to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Stephen Furtado, Clerk of the Committee