

# **EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT**

**East Providence School Committee**

**East Providence City Hall,**

**145 Taunton Avenue**

**East Providence, Rhode Island 02914**

**February 14, 2012**

## **Open Session**

**Mr. Tsonos called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. Members present: Stephen Furtado, Ryan Tellier, Chrissy Rossi and Charles Tsonos (Luisa Abatecola absent). Also present: Mr. Edward M. Daft, Interim Superintendent, Mr. Robert Silva, Esq. and Andrew Thomas, Esq.**

**The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag & Moment of Silence observed in memory of Mrs. Abatecola's grandmother who passed away.**

**Recognition ¶ Mr. Daft recognized and congratulated eight elementary schools in East Providence for receiving the USDA HealthierUS Award; only 2% of schools in the nation received this award; total awarded was \$4,000 (\$500 per school). Nancy Roberts and Melissa Reed of Chartwells Food Service were present to speak about the award.**

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

**Report on City of East Providence Budget Commission ¶ Mr. Daft**

reported that he had been attending meetings twice per week; starting next week, there will be one meeting per week on Thursdays. Chairman O'Keefe has arranged to meet with all Department Heads; the goal of the Commission is to complete a five-year plan for fiscal stability.

**Public Comment I V None**

**Report: Interim Superintendent's Report**

**Finance Report V Mary King, Finance Director, presented the finance report as of 1/31/12; revenue shows that the schools received an early payment of state aid at the recommendation and request of the state Budget Commission. On the expenditure report; spending has slowed; report does not include all January invoices; due to timing, insurance line item indicates 90% spent and capital outlay line item appears to be overspent but are actually one time payments.**

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

**RETIREMENTS**

**Maureen Buckett (16 years) Teacher Assistant V EPHS - Effective 02/17/2012**

**Deborah Gomes (15 years) Teacher Assistant V RMS - Effective 03/05/2012**

**Helen Sorrentino (12 years) Teacher Assistant V WADD- Effective 05/25/2012**

**Ann Buckley (29 years) - Physical Education Teacher-RMS - Effective end of school year**

**Jorge Lopes (20 years) - Day Custodian-Orlo - Effective 06/30/2012**

## **RESIGNATIONS**

**Kerri Gravina Elementary Teacher-Effective end of school year following Leave of Absence**

**Janet Johnson School Nurse Teacher-RMS Effective end of school year ÿV Following Leave of Absence**

**Kevin Huelsman - Special Education Teacher-Effective end of school year**

**Rinda Foster - Special Education Teacher-Effective end of school year-Following Leave of Absence**

**John Gorham - Boys Tennis Head Coach-EPHS - Effective 02/08/2012**

**Michael Jones- 2/5 Physics Teacher ÿV EPHS ÿV Effective 2/17/2012**

## **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

**Jacquelyn Barker Third Grade Teacher-Orlo Elementary ÿV Effective 4/23/2012-end of school year**

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Michelle Cronin (yr. 2) 6th Grade Social Studies Teacher-RMS - Effective 2012-2013 school year**

**Sussi Perez - Educational Specialist-Whiteknact - Effective 02/24/2012**

## **Consent Agenda**

**Approval of Minutes jV 12/13/11, 1/10/12, and 1/24/12 - Tabled**

### **Action Items**

**Personnel/Layoffs jV Mr. Daft reported that management decisions were considered when reviewing the enrollments and all efforts were made to minimize the number of layoffs; letters were sent to 29 full-time equivalent teachers and eight educational specialists for a total of 37 positions. A motion was made to approve this action by Mr. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Rossi. Vote 4-0.**

### **Requisitions jV Bill List**

#### **Warrant #**

<b>1181</b>	<b>1/24/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>402,710.00</b>
<b>1182</b>	<b>1/27/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,485,856.14</b>
<b>1183</b>	<b>1/30/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>171,908.02</b>
<b>1184</b>	<b>2/2/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>225,303.07</b>
<b>1185</b>	<b>2/7/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>675.00</b>
<b>1186</b>	<b>2/8/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>9,870.00</b>
<b>1187</b>	<b>2/8/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>75,588.45</b>
<b>1188</b>	<b>2/9/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,017,478.83</b>
<b>1189</b>	<b>2/9/12</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>249,849.54</b>

**Discussion: Finance Director, Mary King stated that the department is now current on payables and in much better shape on a 60-day**

**status with all vendors, with the exception of one special education provider. Motion to approve warrants by Mrs. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 4-0.**

**Field Trip Requests ;V Motion by Mrs. Rossi to approve requests for CTC/DECA students to attend the International Career Development Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah from 4/26/12 to 5/2/12 and for sixth grade students from Martin Middle School to participate in a URI Alton Jones science program in April 2012, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 4-0.**

**RIASC Dues ;V Mr. Daft advised this item was brought to the Budget Commission and now coming back to the School Committee for second consideration; when first voted on, it was presented that if a member of RIASC, the department would save \$130,000/year on the gas contract; however, it has been determined that the savings were only about \$26,000 year. Mr. Daft was asked to bring the issue back to the School Committee for input. Mrs. Rossi answered that she could not warrant spending that amount of money in light of all the cutbacks and layoffs in the school department. Motion by Mrs. Rossi to not approve the payment of dues, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Discussion: Mr. Tellier asked how the gas and electric purchases would be made. Mary King, Finance Director, explained that the gas contract through RIASC had expired, market rates are now lower, and the city is not on a gas purchase agreement. Contract on electricity is through 2012, but she was not sure that saves the schools any**

money; there is a possibility schools might be able to piggyback on the city's plan; Budget Commission urged one group for the city and schools combined. Discussion regarding the benefits of membership in RIASC. Mr. Furtado asked to consider the amount of benefits School Committee receives, versus saving the dues; he mentioned the workshops, continuing education and the requirement that School Committees have six hours of training per year. Mary King advised that this is a large amount of money and all membership dues are now being considered; it is up to School Committee members to decide the benefits and value of paying the dues. In response to Mr. Furtado's question about asking RIASC for a reduction in the amount of membership dues because of the financial situation of the city, Mary King advised that she has not been approached nor heard from anyone on the issue. Mrs. Rossi advised that she paid for her own professional development last year; her feeling is that students get no benefit from this expense and that the School Committee can get this training from other sources. Roll call vote: Mr. Furtado, nay; Mrs. Rossi, aye; Mr. Tellier, aye, Mr. Tsonos, aye 3-1 not to pay RIASC dues.

#### **Vote on B & E Recommendations**

„X Enrollment Review ;V Motion by Mr. Furtado to continue to review enrollment numbers and to make adjustments accordingly, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 4-0.

**„X Elimination of Middle School Sports ;V Motion by Mrs. Rossi to not eliminate M/S sports, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Discussion: Mr. Tellier stated that although this program is not part of the Basic Education Plan, it is the School Committee’s job to promote both academic and social programs; sports are the reason for some students to come to school and he was not in favor of eliminating M/S sports. Mr. Furtado noted that other communities do not have middle school sports and that there might be other ways to get school sports done without spending \$105,000 in stipends for coaches; it may come down to the Budget Commission eliminating it any way.**

**Mr. Daft referred to the spread sheet showing categories; East Providence is not excessively high if compared to other districts; an analysis is being prepared to show the costs of high school sports programs. The Athletic Director, Mr. Amaral, has been working with Principal Janet Sheehan and David Eaton of the Budget Commission to make recommendations to the School Committee in March; the high school is more complicated; one issue will be to report out to the Budget Commission on Thursday and Mr. Daft will report back to the School Committee on this. Finance Director, Mary King advised we are moving to High School impact on both Middle School and High School. Mr. Furtado asked if any information about private fund raising as mentioned by Mr. Sweeney in the B & E Report. Mary King advised that the school department could not be involved in that not knowing where and what funds are coming; that would have to be organizations like Boosters, Townie Athletics. Mr. Amaral is looking**

at Coventry Schools program to determine if donations come to the schools; unless we know the money is there to fund it, we cannot include it in the budget. Mr. Tsonos stated that the plan is to bring this up again in March. Mary King stated that information from RIDE, Mr. Eaton, and Mr. Amaral is being compiled along with recommendations from the high school principal, Ms. Sheehan.

Roll call Vote: Mr. Furtado, nay; Mrs. Rossi, aye; Mr. Tellier, aye; Mr. Tsonos aye. Motion passed 3-1 to not eliminate middle school sports programs. Mr. Tsonos noted that although the School Committee is looking for every way possible to eliminate costs, it is difficult to put a price on certain things like middle school sports.

„X Review of Organization Structure ;V Mr. Daft has been working with the Budget Commission on discussions regarding consolidation of H/R and Finance Department functions. Motion by Mr. Furtado to review contracts and make changes, seconded by Mrs. Rossi. Vote 4-0.

„X Response to Intervention (RTI) and Coordinator - Mr. Daft explained the program is at the beginning stages in our district and the elementary schools are further along than the middle schools; a meeting was held today and he had discussions with the union representatives; a coordinator is needed to steer this ship; he will get information to the Budget Commission for approval. Mrs. Rossi noted this decision follows a recommendation in the B & E report.

**Discussion: Ms. Cheryl Ursillo, Interim Director of Pupil Personnel, commented that this decision is very significant for the district; in the B & E Report, Mr. Sweeney provided rationale for the value of this program which is in its infancy here, is thinly applied and lacks leadership. Other districts have indicated a reduction in special education costs as a result of this program and all East Providence students would benefit from this program in addition to reducing the number of students referred. Motion by Mr. Furtado that the Superintendent moves this recommendation (RTI Coordinator and Program), forward to the Budget Commission, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 4-0.**

**„X Facilities Changes ¡V Mr. Daft advised that the department is continuing to investigate all possibilities. Motion to table by Mr. Furtado for further study, seconded by Mrs. Rossi. Vote 4-0.**

**Public Comment II ¡V Laurie Brown was concerned with more cuts after some teacher assistants were eliminated last year and asked for more information on the number of layoffs of special education teachers and educational specialists. Mr. Daft responded that under this fiscal situation we are trying to create more efficiency while not lowering services; a collaborative model is being used at the high school.**

**Ms. Brown mentioned that the EP Local Advisory Group will hold a**

**Workshop for parents on February 29th and EPLAC is soliciting nominations for recognition of staff and programs at the May 10th program.**

**Mr. Tsonos recognized and expressed gratitude for the active support of 501C3 organizations throughout the city of East Providence.**

### **Announcements**

**Dunkin Donuts Scholarship program information presented by Mrs. Rossi.**

**Mr. Daft reported that the Career/Tech Night Program was a great success; approximately 150 students attended to view the new facilities and programs available. A public Vaccination Clinic for Whooping**

**Cough will be held on February 15th from 4-7PM at East Providence High School.**

**Motion by Mr. Furtado to move to 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 Mr. Tellier. Vote 4-0.**

**School Committee returned to Public Session; reported that no votes were taken in Executive Session.**

**Motion by Mr. Furtado to seal the minutes of the executive session,  
seconded by Mr. Tellier.**

**Vote 4-0.**

**Motion to adjourn by Mr. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Rossi. Vote 4-0.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant**

**Stephen Furtado, Clerk of the Committee**