

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall - Council Chamber

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

December 10, 2013

Open Session

Mr. Monteiro, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Members present: Elizabeth Clupny, Timothy Conley, Anthony Ferreira, Richard Pimentel, Joel Monteiro. Also present: Kim Mercer, Superintendent, Robert Silva, Esq. and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

Motion by Ms. Clupny 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 Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to suspend Executive Session until end of public session, return to Public Session and to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

Report Executive Session Votes – Ms. Clupny reported that one vote had been taken; the Committee voted unanimously to send out a Request for Proposals for Legal Services.

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

Community/Staff Recognition

Julie Motta, Assistant Superintendent, recognized and thanked the Colonial Baptist Church and Girl Scout Troops for their donations of Thanksgiving Baskets to East Providence students and families; Cori Durfee accepted a certificate of thanks and recognition.

Student Liaison Report – Joshua Conception reported on High School events and activities. He also reported that he had received complaints about the fact that the SmartBoard is not operating in the AP calculus/statistics class (Room 22) and cannot be used during class.

Mr. Ferreira requested a list of SmartBoards that are not working; SmartBoards should be fixed right away; he stressed the need for a good maintenance program.

Public Comment I – Agenda Items - None

Superintendent's Report

Update on New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC) – Superintendent, Kim Mercer expressed disappointment in the response from NEASC regarding the high school accreditation

and she read the letter from NEASC dated 11/22/13 to inform everyone as to where we stand; some items have already been addressed, funds have been allocated for a capital account and we will be looking at a Stage II Construction project. The Superintendent recommended that we not appeal the NEASC decision, but to just do the work and then write our response letter.

Mr. Conley agreed. Mr. Monteiro agreed there has been no action in five years and this needs to get resolved now; there is a need to stay focused and get done in one year what should have been done over five years.

Facilities Report - Superintendent Mercer reported that change orders were the topic at a facilities meeting last week.

Comments:

Mr. Monteiro - requested an update (from Mr. Catelli) on using the new machine on the gym floors; to check out floors, and determine how the work will be scheduled.

Mr. Conley - basketball court at Riverside Middle School is in desperate need of refinishing

Mr. Monteiro added there have been roof leaks from rain storms; he asked for a report on that and if any warranties;

Mr. Ferreira concerned about roof leaks over 1 ½ years at the high school; a report should be written on all the issues which have occurred year after year and never addressed; ceiling tiles were

replaced in schools; we put a couple million dollars into floor tiles; now the roof is leaking on the floors and damaging tiles; doors are being left wide open. He said he never receives a report; he will push for the next ten months; there are problems with gutters at the high school from 15-16 months ago; he is going to do his own report; Whiteknact has holes in the gutters; he believes we have to start looking at gutters, roofs, leaky windows, pointing, and we need to get equipment for the Facilities Department; a lift was received today and training will be done; he would like the specs; He was adamant that the School Committee receive a report on all these items. He noted that we have to do a better job with cleaning vents out; one at Whiteknact was clogged and looked like it had never been cleaned; we have to do a better job this year.

Security Update – Mr. Feola, Security and Energy Manager, reported:

Construction to lock buildings down starting tomorrow; meetings with principals starting crisis response; will be done by next week; first evacuation of the high school went well; discussed door locking with principals; addressing issues as they occur; schools putting crisis teams together.

Mr. Ferreira expressed concern about the back door at the high school.

Mr. Feola: Career Technical School is done; high school will be done;

working on a buzzer system with multiple cameras at doors

Ms. Clupny asked about the practice of propping the doors open at the high school;

Mr. Feola –teachers have been looking out for that; camera will be installed shortly

Ms. Clupny asked about the status of a security policy which had been discussed

Kim Mercer explained that we are in the process of developing a culture where we want our schools to be safe; this will be part of our security plan; all schools will be locked down

Mr. Feola – commented that everyone will jump on board once the word is out; right now things are going well.

Mr. Monteiro asked what options would the Principal have if they know that an employee is propping a door open.

Mr. Feola commented that everyone needs to be educated about the safety of the schools and seeing the evacuation drill at the school is taking it to next level.

Kim Mercer added that we are developing an understanding of safety for students and staff; she would rather go the educational route; making everyone understand why we are doing it; safety concerns are being addressed.

Assistant Superintendent, Julie Motta, noted that part of professional standards for Principals is to maintain a safe building; there are standards to keep students safe.

Mr. Feola stated that the Superintendent would be notified about any specific security concerns.

Ms. Clupny has received reports even up to last week about doors being propped open; if not done at home, why would someone do that in a school building; she does not think it would be unreasonable to enforce that rule; all schools should be universal and doors should not be propped open.

Mr. Feola stated that all three secretaries have cameras and can view and talk to anyone entering the building; first is the lock down and then go on to the next step.

Mr. Ferreira had questions about procedures for doors; what is the “window of time” to leave a door open; he has some issues to address with Superintendent.

Mr. Monteiro added that the building principal has policies to stop door propping which should be enforceable and subject to discipline if violated; this should be addressed as a building rule. Mr. Monteiro said he would like to think everyone would follow the rules, but all need to know that School Committee is taking this seriously and doing all they can to maintain safe schools.

Superintendent assured all that if any violations of the plan,

additional measures can be put into place.

Ms. Clupny said this is an ongoing issue; everyone talks about it; same behavior going on and we did not do anything about it; behavior will not change without incentives.

Mr. Monteiro asked when our policy will be effective in buildings with principals.

Kim Mercer explained that all the schools know we are serious about security; she has conducted walk-throughs of all buildings with police, fire, and security personnel.

Mr. Monteiro added that a plan has been rolled out and is active; if any repeats, can the Principal be held accountable; if not, a course of action important; it is a rule and someone has to be held accountable if not enforcing it.

Mr. Feola stated that cameras will be in place and it will be up to the Superintendent and security to enforce the rules; perhaps we can check with other school districts to see how they handle it.

Mr. Monteiro asked if it would be possible to get some information for the School Committee to put something together; he would like this taken care of.

Personnel Report on Resignation/Leaves of Absence/Retirement

RESCINDED APPOINTMENT

Nicholas Shattuck - Middle School Athletic Coordinator

RETIREMENT

**Lorraine Rappoport-Reading Specialist-Whiteknact-Effective
12/31/2013**

RESIGNATION

Lindy Ianucci-ELL Specialist-Orlo-Effective 12/20/2013

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes - None

Finance Report – Kim Mercer, Superintendent, reported that 11.28% of revenues (\$8,221.384) have been received for the period 11/1/13-12/6/13; expenditures for the same period are at 9.77% (\$7,117,138).

Mr. Monteiro questioned if an opportunity to refinance existing debt under State Article 13?

Malcolm Moore, Finance Director, responded that the city is looking at that and have to do research on the bonds; working with First Southwest and according to them, there are savings.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to accept the Finance Report, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Action Items

Personnel Appointments

Daniela Malkasian Teacher Assistant 1:1–Orlo0Effective 01/02/2014

Nichole Federowicz Girls' Indoor Track Coach-EPHS (1yr)-Effective 2013/2014 School Year

Nichole Federowicz Girls' Outdoor Track Coach-EPHS (1yr)-Effective 2013/2014 School Year

Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Conley.

Discussion: Mr. Conley would like a thorough canvassing for positions; even volunteers or organizations who would be interested; he wants openings advertised and posted. Vote 5-0.

Contracts

Kim Mercer requested approval of a contract for the Assistant Director of Special Education and

The School Committee Administrative Assistant. Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve the contracts, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 4-1.

Mr. Conley voted nay and reiterated he is not in favor of contracts.

Contracts for the Security and Energy Manager and the Night Supervisor are being held for further study and next agenda.

Requisitions – Bill List

Warrant #

1345 11/21/13 \$ 868,969.61

1347 11/26/13 \$ 247.25

1348 12/6/13 \$ 94,066.25

1349 12/6/13 \$1,786,678.94

Motion: Ms. Clupny to approve; seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Home School Request(s) - Superintendent Mercer recommended approval of the requests. Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

Posting of the Schedule of School Committee Meetings for 2014 – Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Amended Policies – Second Passage:

II.A.1. Superintendent’s Responsibilities Policy

II.A.3. Numbers in Class (Enrollments)

V.A.1. Statement of Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action

IV.F. Family Involvement Policy

II.D.5. Building Use Policy

New Policy - Waiver for the State Assessment Graduation Requirement

Motion to approve second passage of the above policies by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Conley.

Vote 5-0.

Old Business

PTA Reports – Izilda Teves of Orlo Avenue School reported that an event (Bingo and Santa) will be held on Friday this week.

Public Comment II – Non Agenda Items

Fred Rybka was concerned that some teachers do not have the math manipulatives they need to teach.

Kim Mercer, Superintendent, suggested that teachers check in with their Principal to see what money they have in the budget to purchase small items; money was budgeted for manipulatives by the Curriculum Coordinator. Some teachers are creative and make their own.

First grade math night will be held at Oldham School on December 18th; parents are invited to attend.

Izilda Teves, mentioned Identification Badges; as a parent, she expressed concern that security does not happen at each school. Kim Mercer stated that all employees should have and wear badges; yellow badges have been ordered for subs who work in our schools.

Mr. Ferreira went to math night; he thanked Julie Motta. He would like the teachers to have the best educational tools they need and it is up to the School Committee to figure out how to pay for that. He believes that the teachers go above and beyond; he would like to follow up on those needs.

Mr. Monteiro thanked the School Committee members and expressed appreciation for everyone working hard together this year to reach the same goals.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to close the public session and to reconvene 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 Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0. Ms. Clupny announced that the School Committee would be returning to open session at the conclusion of this Executive Session.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to reconvene open session and to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0. No votes were taken.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Elizabeth Clupny, Clerk of the Committee