

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall - Council Chamber

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

April 8, 2014

Open Session

Mr. Monteiro called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM. Members Present: Elizabeth Clupny, Timothy Conley, Anthony Ferreira, Richard Pimentel, Joel Monteiro. Also present: Kim Mercer, Superintendent, Julie Motta, Assistant Superintendent, Robert Silva, Esq. and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

Motion by Mr. Pimentel that the Committee convene in Executive Session for purposes of discussing: Personnel § R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a) (1) - Legal Services; 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.

Motion by Ms. Clupny to return to Open Session and to seal the

minutes of the executive session, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0

Report Executive Session Votes

Ms. Clupny announced that one vote was taken in Executive Session; the School Committee voted unanimously in favor of accepting school safety plans for East Providence Schools.

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

Julie Motta, Assistant Superintendent presented the following recognition of students and staff:

Teachers - Eureka Math Night - recognized and thanked eight Elementary School Teachers for hosting grade level math family nights for Grades K-5.

EP High School Hockey Team Championship ¡V Boys¡ Varsity Team and coaches congratulated on their success and presented with certificates.

CTC DECA Competition ¡VMrs. Karen Mellen, Director presided over recognition of seven students who were awarded first place medals in each of their competitive events earning the right to compete at the national level.

Ms. Kerrie Calabro-Pepin of the RMS Guidance Department recognized and thanked speakers who participated in a Career Day recently held at Riverside Middle School; also, members of the Riverside PTA Board were commended and thanked for their hard work and dedication to the school.

Bus Driver and Monitor recognized for "above and beyond the call of duty" to ensure the safety of a student in their charge.

Student Liaison Report V Joshua Conception reported on high school events and activities.

Public Comment I V Agenda Items

Mary Teixeira, teacher at Silver Spring School, thanked Superintendent Mercer for trusting and granting the teachers' request that Mr. Kirkutis assume the role of acting principal in the absence of the Principal, Mrs. Caffrey.

Judy Lopes V Whiteknact PTA V questioned if the entire roof at Whiteknact is being replaced this summer or on just a portion of the building. Mr. Catelli confirmed a full tear off/replacement of the Whiteknact School roof. Mr. Ferreira asked if any discussion regarding CO2 reports for Whiteknact. Mr. Monteiro stated that the Superintendent is working on putting a consistent plan together to get the information we need.

Superintendent's Report

Facilities Update ;V Mr. Ed Catelli provided an update on the progress of the work in the science lab:

dry wall, plumbing and gas lines; 4/14 painting will be started; 4/15 drop ceiling; lighting 4/16; floor on 4/17; duct/hood tentative for 4/17; hope to be in good shape by end of April. Painting continues at the High School; bathroom mirrors, stairwells and railings; great colors; looks good.

Mr. Ferreira asked if we are on schedule for the playground. Mr. Catelli stated that he is waiting for a letter to take possession of the playground equipment. Mrs. Rossi, City Council member, who was in attendance at the meeting, offered to make a call tomorrow to clear up any misconceptions about the playground donation to the city. Mr. Ferreira said he found it amazing that this donation was made a year ago and still not completed; he has been involved with playground projects around the city and does not believe this project should be held up for a letter. Mr. Catelli responded that the soil is being tested, loam being brought in; in addition; sprinklers and seed; we have been putting all attention on High School; still muddy there; painting going on there; the city is hoping to get started in the next couple of weeks. It has been a long winter; we have a lot of staff working at the high school to get it in shape; couple of bathrooms near administrative offices to be worked on; plan is to get caught up

over summer months.

Mr. Ferreira asked about the auditorium; existing peg board not working out. Mr. Catelli had concerns about using the same type product; he talked to SMMA regarding another product; concerns are about dampness, humidity; no air conditioning there; will try to come up with a better product so this will be the last time we do it; not painting until summer; we do not want the painting to look like patch work.

Personnel Report on Resignation/Leaves of Absence/Retirement:

RETIREMENT

Lisa Rose-Kindergarten Teacher-Orlo -30 Years -Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

Leonilda Moreira-Teacher Assistant-Kent Heights 23 yrs.-Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

RESIGNATION

Jennifer Palumbo-Special Education Teacher-Orlo-Effective End of 2013/2014 School Year

Rita Varin-Fisher-Supervisory Assistant-Francis-Effective 04/01/2014

FMLA

Julie Quaranto-Pre-K Teacher-ELC-Effective Approx. 06/02/2014 -13 weeks

Crystal White-Special Ed/Resource Teacher-MMS-Effective

Approx.05/27/2014 iV 13 weeks

Dena Francescon-Special Ed/Resource Teacher-Hennessey-Effective

Approx. 06/02/2014 iV 13 weeks

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes iVMotion by Ms. Cluny to approve the minutes of the meeting held on February 26,

2014, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Finance Report iV Kim Mercer. Superintendent, reported Revenues of \$31,866,809 and Expenditures of

\$31,422,220. Motion to accept by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0

Action Items

Personnel Appointments/Recalls

APPOINTMENTS

April Valois School Psychologist iV District-Effective May 1, 2014

AJ Lascola Boys' Track Coach-MMS-Effective 2013/2014 School year

Patrick Saunders Assistant Musical Director-EPHS-Effective 2013/2014 School Year

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

Home School Request(s) iV Motion to approve by Ms. Clupny, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0.

Field Trip Requests:

Martin Middle School Students ¡V Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve a request for an annual trip for 6th Grade students to Alton Jones Campus, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

DECA Students - Motion by Ms. Clupny to approve request for CTC students to attend International Career Development Conference in Atlanta, GA, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Requisitions ¡V Bill List

Warrant #

1368	3/18/14	\$	630.00
1370	3/18/14	\$	3,465.00
1372	3/26/14	\$	708,294.21
1373	3/27/14	\$	4,735.52
1375	3/31/14	\$	115,373.02
1376	4/2/14	\$	232,848.67
1378	4/2/14	\$	29,199.60
1379	4/2/14	\$	767.00
1380	4/7/14	\$	80,497.39
1381	4/8/14	\$	1,346,742.68

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

Discussion: Mr. Ferreira asked for details on City Public Works item 003211; information to be provided to him.

Reduction of Split Teams at Middle Schools/Redistricting ¶ Julie Motta, Assistant Superintendent, presented data and results related to the School Committee's approval to explore the possibility of eliminating split teams. The plan allows for: the same number of teams among both middle schools, with no reduction in staff; the elimination of three of the current four split teams with the only remaining team being eliminated at Riverside in 2014-15. The plan accommodates all current parent requests, allows room for parents to decide who have not responded to date, and there is no change in department coordinators schedules; they will still teach only four classes. Discussion and questions:

Kim Mercer stated that she has met with faculty at Martin and Riverside Middle Schools.

Alyssa Chamberlain ¶ RMS ¶ concern about 8th grade at 28; Martin has 20; not equitable.

Kim Mercer ¶ these are estimates; we do not know at this time; contract in year two will balance out; she met with both schools ¶ RMS twice; some instances we do not know; gave parents a choice; in one to two years will even out;

Julie Motta ¶ class size numbers either way are estimates;

Mr. Pimentel - asked about enrollments at both middle schools (585

MMS and 570 at RMS);

Tim Conley asked for rationale on three extra students at MMS;

Julie Motta iV five teams at each of the schools iV ten total iV six at MMS and four at RMS;

Joel Monteiro iV questions about teachers not being able to go to team meetings, IEP meetings;

Mr. Conley iV had questions about grade 5 numbers;

Frank DeVall, Principal of Martin Middle School;Vasked to try to keep number at 26 iV Bradley and ELL; split teams iV does not want to see that at Martin; puts school into separate meetings or taking teachers out of class for IEP meetings; he does not want to support taking teachers out of the classroom for meetings.

Fred Rybka iV asked how RMS would benefit from this; there might be teachers who may not want to speak up about it; more students in the classrooms; conspiracy to close RMS; hopes School Committee is comfortable with this;

Julie Motta;V explained the disadvantages of split teams;

Mr. Conley noted that some class sizes are larger at 26-23-28;

Mr. Ferreira wants teachers to be comfortable with this;

Mr. Monteiro explained that in some cases we do not have staff available to teach; he heard from both sides; we are still underfunded as a district; we have to be able to provide and support a schedule for students; this was a huge error on part of the district to have created this situation three years ago.

Ms. Forsythe ¡V 46 Hilton Avenue ¡Vher son had scheduling problems; how would you handle if class is maxed out; scheduling nightmare;

Julie Motta¡V teachers brought the split team problem to the administration for a solution

Kim Morato of RMS- literacy and numeracy to be assigned; one team, no literacy; how many students in interventions? Couple of literacy classes higher than expected; she is an advocate for keeping numbers low; some parents concerned about no enrichment at RMS ¡Vhow are kids benefiting from that?

Ms. Tarantelli ¡V still taught four classes at RMS ¡V teach 5 content and no literacy classes; teach two grade 5 content classes; use 2 blocks; now three;

Kim Mercer ;V teaching new curriculum; a lot to learn two curriculums; restricts unified arts; split not good for teachers or students; to go back would require another team; doing assessments now; need dedicated teachers working closely with kids; need people who have degrees and a lot of skills; what we intend is to put a fifth person on the team to address intervention and enrichment; it is a good model and works in school districts; doing what is best for students; 28 not unreasonable; we will not know enrollment numbers until September; the goal is to eliminate as many split teams as possible and all should work together on that.

Mrs. Rossi, City Council member felt that about \$1 million dollars is needed for more teachers;

Kim Mercer ;V does not think that model is needed; we do not need another team right now; we could have put students back to Martin.

Mrs. Rossi ;V goal should be zero kids and the best education possible; if this is a funding problem, have we run the numbers?

Kim Mercer;V need to run schedules first; does not think we need another team; if we cannot do it, we will have to look at that;

Mrs. Rossi ;V felt this should not be voted on until we have answers; how much do we need; we have a surplus;

Mr. Ferreira stated that he would not vote for this; how can we make it work; he needs all information.

Programs make numbers work with the budget based on some comments from teacher and administrators, programs were stripped year after year; if the Superintendent needs more money, we have to push for that; cannot put continued stress on staff who have been asked to do more for two years.

Mr. Conley felt that our kids get a good education with very limited resources; all care about the kids; to say substandard education to kids; he will not stand for that.

Mr. Monteiro 28 in a classroom-alternative is not to allow anyone to stay; split teams less desirable than not; how to make this transition without going over a hurdle; we do not know the budget numbers until November; cannot plan for September faculty; kick can down the road; how do we get to no split teams because we are limited.

Motion by Mr. Conley to table this issue until an analysis of the cost of two teams at RMS, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 5-0.

Discussion

Mary Teixeira jV does not know about split teams; Superintendent is doing the best job with the budget we have; lunch workers made comments at a prior meeting about making less money than five

years ago; our teachers are the lowest paid staff in the state; money not there with lowest paid staff; she makes \$9000 less since her salary was cut; saved city \$3 million; if city pays us what should be paid; tack another \$3 million on; does not make most educationally sound decisions ;V based on money, that;is it. Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent are working on it; if starting out, would want reasonable wage; we cut the aides, forced to do it all; no books at elementary; all make do with less than we need; school district underfunded; forces decisions to be made which are not the best decisions; have to be cautious; she hopes the day will come when we are funded adequately to make good decisions for kids.

Mr. Conley commented that he is aware of issues with teachers.

Mrs. Rossi ;V champion for school system; to say City Council has extra money is questionable; history (NEASC) comes down to what a quality education is; buildings falling apart and accreditation issue; 99.9 say yes to taxes; people care if we did the right thing; have not been good stewards of their money; previous administrations just balanced the budget; she thanked teachers

Mr. Ferreira disagreed with that; taxpayers are tired of what is a financial burden; they will support if they knew what it is and how much will it cost with exact hard numbers; he cannot ask for more money if he does not know what we are doing with it; taxpayers were asked for more money for construction.

Mr. Monteiro;V motion on the table to get numbers for April 14th on what it will cost for staffing; when we get numbers if push for staff; follow year look at layoffs; he is in full agreement with getting information; will have to make difficult decisions and it will not be easy; he supported Mr. Conley, seconded by Ms. Clupny. Vote 5-0.

School Lunch Program Price Increase ;V Linda Dykeman, Deputy Finance Director explained that all districts must comply with this federal mandate: New prices are: Elementary \$2.45 to \$2.50 and Secondary \$2.70 to \$2.75; breakfast prices remain the same. Motion by Ms. Clupny to accept, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0

Revised Policies ;V First Passage:

„X IV.D.1. Placement, Promotion, Retention and Grading

„X Compulsory Education Policy

Motion by Ms. Clupny to table until the next meeting, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Request to Name EPHS Gym/Court ;V Mr. Monteiro recommended tabling for further work and discussion; Motion by Ms. Clupny to table, seconded by Mr. Pimentel. Vote 5-0

Old Business

PTA Reports ;V Izilda Teves of Orlo Avenue School;V Alex and Ani Sale on May 1st from 6-8PM; 15% discount.

Fred Rybka;V Oldham fundraiser April 30th 4-9 PM; Orange Leaf in Seekonk.

Public Comment II ;V Non Agenda Items

Izilda Teves, parent at Orlo asked about the shortage of substitute teachers; the big issue is the rate of pay; teachers can get more money elsewhere; can we look into it again; put it on the May meeting agenda. Also Tools for Schools at Orlo not done, if it was, where can she get a copy; and teachers received \$1000 to purchase Brain Path; asked who to contact; asked how many home school kids do we have?

Mr. Ferreira asked how School Dude program works. Mr. Catelli stated that each school puts information into the computer and sends to his office regarding facilities issues; work is distributed to maintenance personnel prioritizing the most serious items.

Discussion: Mr. Ferreira asked if there is a slot for cost, amount of time spent and time job finished.

Mr. Monteiro said he did not see any input on response time; do we need additional staff? Does not know that information. Date of completion is needed.

Mr. Ferreira stated that if the program was purchased by the city, information should be filled in; where do we know where to go regarding budget; how do we support with blank piece of paper; where are facts to back it up?

Mr. Catelli will meet with staff about it; emergencies not in school dude; discussion about putting items in School Dude to have a more accurate picture of work needed and what is being done.

Mr. Ferreira - if over 300 heating issues in the School Department plus emergencies, we need to evaluate how bad our heating systems are;

how many roof leaks; at what point do we know how to fight for that; we need to know what the requests are for; School Committee needs to know what is being asked for. The previous School Committee was blamed for the high school issues; we need to be able to go to the City Council and fight for the funds to take care of the problems. Discussion about type and number of jobs and the time to complete them; we do not have a capital line item; we do not have an argument to make without that. Mr. Monteiro said that we spent the money for the School Dude program, but capabilities are for incoming only. Mr. Ferreira wants a better idea of what the issues are and what issues do we need more money to correct.

Mr. Catelli answered that we take time to do paperwork; work off emergencies; negative situation every day.

Mr. Conley ¡V the concern is not giving this department credit for the scope of its activities.

Mr. Ferreira ¡V all work/problems should be put through School Dude; going forward we have to find a way to support this in the community.

Mr. Monteiro ¡V it is an accountability issue; School Committee cannot help if they do not have the information; we not in a position to request anything; School Committee does not know about an over-burdened department; this is not a personal attack; it is to cover ourselves; School Committee does not want to be restricted when an argument to be made, but need information; we need to find a better way to show what they are doing.

Mr. Catelli ¡V should take ride with guys on a daily basis

Mr. Monteiro ;V we know you are busy, but can ;t show it

Mr. Ferreira ;V his concern is putting money into buildings, but do we have money to maintain or check on it.

Mr. Monteiro - do we have help for regular calls and preventative maintenance; or just emergencies

Kim Mercer ;V at high school today ;V five things not in School Dude

Mr. Catelli ;V its crisis management

Mr. Monteiro - it is School Committee accountability; every day as a School Committee we make arguments; if we want more information, we need to have something; everyone working hard, but it is not on paper

Announcement ;V Riverside Middle School;V 2 events math on May 7th, Beauty and Beast May 8-9-10 at 7-9PM at RMS.

Izilda Teves ;V went to State PTA meeting; heard a speaker on School Safety talking about communication system including gym; Orlo has none;

Mr. Monteiro - looking into options; Mr. Feola stated that we cannot add on to the older systems. Ms. Teves questioned a lockdown. Mr. Feola ;V School Committee voted on an emergency plan; we cannot announce where kids will be routed to in an emergency; fire and police are on that. Ms. Teves said she was told something else.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Clupny at 10:57PM, seconded by Mr. Conley. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Elizabeth Clupny, Clerk of the Committee