

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall - Council Chamber

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

September 8, 2015

Open Session

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

Members present: Jessica Beauchaine, Nathan Cahoon, Anthony Ferreira, Joel Monteiro, Charles Tsonos. Also present: Kim Mercer, Superintendent and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

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

Motion to Set a Curfew for School Committee Meetings – Motion by Mr. Cahoon to convene in executive session no later than 10:00PM; executive session one hour after that; seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Student/Teacher/Community Recognition - None

PTO/PTA Reports - None

Public Comment I – Agenda Items - None

Facilities Report by Anthony Feola, Interim Director; thanked custodial and maintenance staff, especially at Martin Middle School; teachers who gave up their time to be in the building so the clean-up could be done in time to open school.

Update on Current Projects and Athletic Fields - Boiler – worked out with insurance company; will not be replacing the boiler completely but every part except the inner shell; if any problems when operating; will warranty for a year; \$191,000 cost to the Trust; 4-6 weeks for arrival of parts; expect to have up and running for heating season. High School fields all set; problems with the net framework for Middle School soccer; lining Middle School fields with the city; nets are in but could not put them up because of missing poles; control valve needs to be redone; he has the complete athletic schedule.

Update on Security – card swipes have been completed for all but one school; Police Department doing new program with day police officers assigned to visiting elementary schools for awareness; bags being distributed to schools with cards to be used for fire drills or during an emergency.

Mr. Ferreira asked if the pumps are back at Martin yet

Mr. Feola –it has to be exact just like it was; unless exact does not exist; looking for information on pumping alarms; Mr. Ferreira would like to speak to someone from the Trust; can get model #'s of pumps; he felt that it does not make sense for the Trust (paid by taxpayers) he wants someone from Trust to lift another 2 ½ feet; pumps need to be high enough; there are pumps that can stay under water

Mr. Feola will speak to Trust (Frank) about replacing what is there to get us back operational; have a video from back flow company

Mr. Ferreira – when does heat need to go on

Mr. Feola will check with our HVAC person; part has already been ordered with 4-6 week delivery time; Trust has a heat trailer for back up; they will start demo of boilers soon.

Mr. Ferreira requested a timeline for the work;

Mr. Feola – meeting tomorrow morning; Phase II - will paint doors with SMMA construction team, Charlie from SBS team; Martin and Francis first signed off; signed off on Silver Spring last week.

Ms. Beauchaine requested a copy of the Phase II timeline similar to what the School Committee received before from SBS; requested update on concrete sidewalks and curbing.

Mr. Cahoon – will place on the agenda for the Facilities Subcommittee Meeting on 9/14/15.

Policy Sub-Committee Report- none

Superintendent's Report

Opening of Schools – Kim Mercer, Superintendent reported that a convocation for teachers was held on August 31st and the first day of school was Tuesday, September 1st and for the most part the opening was extremely smooth; for the amount of students we transport, there were just a few problems.

Mr. Ferreira requested a spreadsheet on the bus times that have improved; some routes changed;

Discussion about delays and how the bus times are determined.

Diana Clarkin – GPS through the bus company and drivers call in; some late arrivals, but all have improved; every district has problems at the beginning; 141 administrative transfers; students bused to other schools caused backlogs; school schedules improving daily. In response to question about a Waddington bus being late, there were calls about construction sites causing as much as 15 minute delays; drivers let the kids know they might be running late because of that.

Ms. Beauchaine suggested that we get communication from the city on construction and to get extra help to answer calls at beginning of school. It was noted that one new bus had broken down.

Update on Silver Spring Special Education Program

Eileen Crudele, Director of Pupil Personnel, thanked the following: the Bradley Partnership for their assistance to staff and administrators: Mr. Feola for getting rooms painted and furnished; Kelly Ahrens for trouble shooting on computers; Linda Dykeman for

assisting in getting orders processed; Dawn August for additional curriculum materials; Diana Clarkin for assisting in providing consistent transportation and, an amazing staff in place at the school.

On August 31st, a meet and greet was held for parents to see the space and teachers; we secured subs for consultation meeting on Friday.

Questions from School Committee: curriculum materials there; working on relationships with staff; this week will start DIBELS; math coaches next week; waiting for horseshoe tables; SmartBoards; wire set up and boards end of September; placing order for materials for individualized students; Mrs. Crudele has the information on where Craft students were located in the district (will not announce publicly); divided among schools; she communicated with Dr. Gillen; and the log system has been discontinued and replaced by email; there are 18 students in the program and we anticipate only one new student during this school year; a past experience report will be sent to receiving schools; information from Dr. Gillen will be given to staff; Mrs. Crudele explained where assistants are assigned; she has no one specified to be in the Kindergarten class; assistants will be used to meet IEP needs first.

Monthly Calendar on School Events – Ms. Beauchaine wanted to be sure the calendar is on the website and that we will continue to keep it updated.

Status on Staffing – Kim Mercer provided information on current

vacancies on school personnel; reviewing applications for Human Resource Director and Jr. Accountant/Benefits positions; recommendations should be presented in near future.

Personnel Report on Resignation/Leaves of Absence/Retirement

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Ana Carvalho-Supervisory Assistant-SS-Effective 2015/2016 School Year

Courtney Neves (1 Yr.) – Grade 5 teacher – Waddington-Effective 9/22/15-to assume Literacy Coach Position

RESIGNATIONS

Brian Kelly-Social Worker-District-Effective August 31, 2015

Kelly Baker-Special Ed/SC/Therapeutic Classroom-SS-Effective August 28, 2015

Andria DeVaul Goss-Special Ed/SC-Kent Heights-Effective August 26, 2015

Robert Rodericks-Girl Soccer Coach-RMS-Effective August 31, 2015

Patrick Holmes-Teacher Assistant-MMS-Effective September 3, 2015

Kelly Giorgi-Kindergarten Teacher-WADD-Effective August 31, 2015

Finance Report – Linda Dykeman reported revenue of \$56,930,535 and expenditures of \$56,643,552 as of July 31, 2015. Mr. Cahoon questioned Note #1: added consolidated positions owed to the city; Mr. Monteiro stated that under Title 16, School Committee forced to use school funds for uses we did not choose to; he requested input from legal on that issue; violation quantified by the finance report; discussion regarding what can be done about that. Mr. Monteiro responded that the city not responsible; state not going to step up; maybe we have an argument to hold state responsible; Budget Commission superseded all; school department forced to increase the budget; will wait for legal; justification of funds.

Presentation of 2015-2016 Budget

Linda Dykeman, Deputy Finance Director – School Department requesting \$77,607,624 for FY 2016 budget. Reviewed line item increases and discussion took place regarding additional funds for improved infrastructure, building maintenance/repairs, percentage of taxes allocated to schools, importance of more competitive teacher salaries, and the importance of transparency and credibility as to the use of taxpayer dollars.

Action Items

Elementary Standards Based Grading Report Cards – Discussion:

Mr. Monteiro stated there are still questions.

Kim Mercer - teachers are comfortable with it and gave feedback; she did not believe there were many problems with parents; teachers have been teaching it for three years; a pamphlet is a good idea, but she recommends sending a letter home to parents. Discussion about when focus groups will be held.

Ms. Beauchaine – Middletown puts information about FAQs questions and standards; she highly recommended it.

Mr. Monteiro – if we roll out focus groups first quarter, it will give us comfort; there is time before first quarter

Ms. Beauchaine – teachers and administrators are looking for something to use; she agrees with tweaking as we go forward.

Discussion about how Skyward would be used; Superintendent noted that any report card can go into Skyward.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine to accept the report card and tweak it if necessary; get feedback, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote: 3-2; Ms. Beauchaine, Mr. Ferreira and Mr. Tsonos voted aye; Mr. Cahoon and Mr. Monteiro voted nay.

Appointment of the Superintendent Interview Committee – Mr. Cahoon stated that the position of Superintendent has been advertised on School Spring and a set of goals has been established to provide to applicants; the timeline is to get a Superintendent in place before Superintendent Mercer leaves at the end of the year; a

Superintendent Selection Group is needed to narrow the applicants down; School Committee will interview in public on or about November 17th and plan to hire by November 24th. Mr. Cahoon read the goals. Five School Committee members will serve on the committee; discussion regarding other representation needed on the Search Committee; after discussion, it was decided that the presidents of all four unions will be included, a Principal, Mrs. Patricia Barlow; Linda Dykeman, Deputy Finance Director, and Eileen Crudele representing special education; Motion by Mr. Cahoon to approve, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Approval of Minutes\School Committee Meetings 6/15/15, 7/14/15 and Facilities Sub-Committee Meeting on 8/5/15; motion by Mr. Cahoon to approve, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Home School Request(s) – Motion by Mr. Cahoon to approve, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Approval of CTC Student to Attend a National Conference – Motion to approve by Mr. Cahoon, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Personnel Appointments: Superintendent's Recommendations:

Cornelia McCarthy-Literacy Coach-District-Effective September 22, 2015

Brooke Burke-Math-EPHS-Effective September 1, 2015

Heather Osborne-Roach-Special Education Teacher-KH-Effective September 9, 2015

Brian Ferguson-Special Ed/ Therapeutic Class K-2-SS-Effective September 14, 2015

Erin Simard-Kindergarten Teacher-WADD-Effective September 9, 2015

Caitlin Ponte-Girls Assistant Soccer Coach-EPHS-Effective 2015/2016 School Year

Courtney Mendence-Teacher Assistant-TBD-Effective September 3, 2015

Caroline Nikitas-Secretary-Silver Spring-Effective September 9, 2015

Bianca Goncalves-Supervisory Assistant-HENN-Effective September 2, 2015

Deb Duarte-Supervisory Assistant-ORLO-Effective September 2, 2015

Stephanie Carroll-(1yr) Supervisory Assistant-SS-Effective September 2, 2015

Kimberly Wind -Supervisory Assistant-WADD-Effective September 2, 2015

Jennifer McCarthy-Supervisory Assistant-FRANCIS-Effective September 2, 2015

Courtney Neves (1 year) Literacy Coach – District – Effective 9/22/15

RECALLS

Elizabeth Sauco -Latin Teacher 1/5-EPHS-Effective August 31, 2015

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to approve, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Requisitions – Bill List

Warrant #

1541	8/20/15	\$	500.00
1542	8/25/15	\$	34,000.00
1543	9/3/15	\$	297.12
1544	9/4/15	\$	36,712.73
1545	9/4/15	\$	946,260.45

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

Awarding of Bid – Portable Radio System – awarded to: Challenge Electronics \$23,348; motion to approve by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Mr. Cahoon. Vote 5-0.

First Passage of 2015-2016 Budget

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to accept first passage with an amendment of additional \$3 million dollars; (to be determined by Superintendent and Finance Director, where to place it in the budget) separate line for another \$1.5 million to show where it would be most needed, seconded by Mr. Ferreira. Vote 5-0.

Passage of Resolution regarding HPV Vaccine – Mr. Monteiro placed this on the agenda for discussion; he felt this should not be a condition of attending school; Ms. Beauchaine noted that you can opt out without a resolution. Mr. Monteiro had a problem with the

mandate since this is something that does not affect schools. Ms. Beauchaine wanted to take the recommendation of the CDC and pediatrician over her own; would like someone from the health community to speak on it. Mr. Monteiro is arguing if a vaccine is a requirement of attending school; this presents no risk to the student body. District Nurse Coordinator, Kathleen Carrigan, stated that during a teleconference, the Health Department was adamant about not excluding any students from school for not receiving the HPV vaccine; collecting data as it comes in; fielding questions from the Middle Schools. Superintendent Mercer read the information from the Department of Health letter regarding exemptions.

Mr. Cahoon requested that the School Committee extend the meeting curfew by 20 minutes, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0. Mr. Monteiro requested something in writing from the Superintendent and Chair that no exclusions would take place for students not receiving the HPV vaccine and to let parents make their own decision. Superintendent will send talking points to the School Committee. Motion by Mr. Monteiro to have a notice written and signed by the Superintendent and Chair that no child would be excluded from school, seconded by Mr. Cahoon. Vote 5-0.

II.D.5. Use of School Buildings/Grounds – Amended Policy – First Passage

Discussion: on page 1 – Right to deny the use of school facilities/grounds; discussion about if a reason has to be given when

denied use. Attorney Thomas advised that once we allow use of our facilities, we need to be consistent on approving or denying use. Ms. Beauchaine motioned for first passage (remove the same language from page 10); seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0

IV.D.1 Placement, Promotion, Retention and Grading – Amended Policy – Second Passage

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine to approve (strike item #3); Mr. Cahoon noted numeric grades listed; either change the policy or the grading; revise paragraph to make allowance for standard based grading approved tonight; Mr. Monteiro requested to table until we agree on grading rubric; Motion by Ms. Beauchaine to table until further work by policy subcommittee, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Public Comment II – Non Agenda Items

New Business

Fundraising for School Uniforms – Ms. Beauchaine received questions about funding for uniforms in the budget. Also, we need to pay a stipend in order to ensure the School Websites are done. Superintendent will discuss this with the union. Mr. Monteiro opposed to a stipend being a requirement of that work.

Advertising Sports Events - tabled

Announcements

Congratulations to the Boy's and Girls' Soccer Teams Won!

Mr. Ferreira – door walk through tomorrow at 4:00PM. Discussion about dates to walk through all schools; Mr. Ferreira will make a list room by room and provide copies; School Committee did not see need for all School Committee to go at one time. Mr. Ferreira will tour Francis School on Sunday, September 13th at 9:00AM.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon that the Committee 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. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

School Committee returned to Public Session; no votes taken in Executive Session; Motion by Mr. Cahoon to seal the minutes of the executive session, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Motion by Mr. Cahoon to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Monteiro. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Nathan Cahoon, Clerk of the Committee