

**The Pawtucket School Committee held its regular meeting on Tuesday, February 15, 2011 at the Jenks/JMW Complex for the Performing and Visual Arts Media Center, 350 Division Street, Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 02860 at 6:00 PM. This meeting was opened to the public.**

**I. Meeting will come to order. Roll call:**

**The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.**

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-here; Ms. Bonollo-here; Mr. Coughlin-here; Mr. Noonan-here; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here; Mr. Spooner-here**

**Also in attendance was Mrs. Deborah Cylke, Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Kimberly Mercer, Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Mr. Thomas Conlon, Business Administrator and Mr. Stephen M. Robinson, Legal Counsel for the School Committee.**

**II. Pledge of Allegiance:**

**The Chairperson led the audience in the pledge of allegiance.**

**III. Possible Recess to Executive Session:**

**The Chairperson commented that the committee may recess to executive session in accordance with provisions under Title 42, Chapter 46, Subsection 5(a) (1) (job performance/character/physical or mental health) (2) (legal advice and litigation/collective bargaining) of the General Laws of the State of R. I. for the purpose of discussing and/or acting upon: 4. non-renewals/teacher terminations and 5. to seal executive session minutes.**

**Mr. Noonan moved to recess to executive session for the purpose of**

discussing item no. 4 only at this time—non-renewals/teacher terminations and 5. seal executive session minutes—the rest of the executive agenda to be discussed later on this evening. Mr. Coughlin seconded.

Ms. Nordquist: I don't see why we have to go in and only discuss number four when it's here again under new business.

Mr. Spooner: We only want to go in and discuss number four so we can come back out and go on with the meeting for the public and go back in later and finish the rest.

Ms. Nordquist: Right, but how are we going to do new business number five if we don't discuss it in executive session first?

Mr. Tenreiro: The second executive session will occur prior to number five.

Ms. Nordquist: Okay. Thank you for the clarification.

Roll call:

Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Mr. Noonan-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes

Motion carried unanimously.

The Committee recessed to executive session at 6:11 PM to 6:32 PM.

IV. Reconvene Open session-Roll call:

The Chairperson reconvened to open session at 6:37 PM.

Roll call:

Mr. Araujo-here; Ms. Bonollo-here; Mr. Coughlin-here; Mr. Noonan-here; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here; Mr.

**Spooner-here**

**V. Report out vote(s) of executive session of 02/15/11, if applicable:**

**The Chairperson asked the Clerk if there were any votes to report out of executive session. The Clerk reported that the Committee voted unanimously to seal the executive session minutes.**

**VI. Acceptance of previous meetings' minutes 01/11/11 and 01/18/11:**

**Ms. Bonollo moved to accept the previous meetings' minutes; 01/11/11 and 01/18/11. Mr. Coughlin seconded.**

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Mr. Noonan-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**VII. Recognition/Celebration:**

**Mrs. Cylke: I'd like to introduce Mrs. Jean Friend who is the Principal at Curtis Elementary School and we welcome Jean. She is aware that we have a new celebration/recognition portion to our committee meeting each month and she has a very special guest she would like to introduce to us and share some information.**

**Ms. Friend: Good evening Superintendent Cylke and Members of the School Committee. This evening I would like to present for recognition Marie Asselin. We know her as Nana Peg. Nana Peg began volunteering almost ten years ago when her granddaughters were students at Curtis. And she comes to us as a participant in the foster grandparent program which supplies volunteers as mentors in our school system. Right now she serves our students in six classrooms. She sits with them and reads and helps supports**

teachers during their reading and math instruction. When I moved to Curtis, Jack McCabe said to me don't worry, everything you need to know, Nana Peg knows and she's around all summer and anything you need to know she'll let you know. He told me she would be invaluable to me in my transition from Agnes Little to Curtis School and that certainly proved to be true. I think my entire staff would join me in saying that. We can't imagine Curtis without our Nana Peg.

Nana Peg: Thank you, thank you so much. I really appreciate this. I really appreciate the fact that Mrs. Friend keeps me around because at my age I have to keep working otherwise I'd vegetate and I don't want to vegetate. I also still take care of my grandkids and still pick them up from school and cook for them every day and their here with me and I love that too.

Mrs. Cylke presented Nana Peg with a certificate.

#### **VIII. Public Participation:**

##### **Student Representatives:**

**Shea:**

Melitzi T: I'd like to apologize for not being able to come to the last meeting. Luckson and I were both busy and my car had broken down. We are seniors at Shea and we are the voices at Shea and make the announcements each morning and promote the school spirit.

Luckson O.: I want to talk about some things that are going on at school. Our winter sports started a couple of weeks ago. Both our boys' and girls' basketball teams made it to the playoffs this year.

The seniors had their portfolio reviews which were due today. That

was hectic but we had to turn that in. We have a fashion show that is going to be in May, but I'm not sure about the date yet. Dr. Lord is holding an art contest in our school to display team spirit so they are going to draw a mural that depicts their point of view and they are going to pick a winner. We have project peace which is an afterschool program where we have parents come to our school to help organize a music video that displays Shea school spirit. We have the student council which I am a part of which has project unity at Shea. The student council goes through a rule school which is where this year we are going to Portsmouth High School and we spend a day there and they come to our school and see the differences and similarities that both schools share and we have a discussion on what experiences are different or the same and that will be going down in March.

**Melitzi:** Shea was one of the two schools to show that they were consistently improving in the NECAP scores so we're very proud of all of our classes despite the slight decline in some of our test scores. We are getting ready for our NEASC visit and I went to the NEASC conference in October and I'm excited for that. We've been working very closely with the China bound and Puerto Rico bound students this year to help fund raise. I'm very excited about the Zumba classes, you pay a couple of dollars and go to the Zumba class, dance with Mr. Escobar and have fun and it's a great way to help the Puerto Rico bound students. The China bound students are having this really great contest where you buy a calendar and they raffle off a really great prize. It's funny that Mr. McGee got the nail

and the manicure. Our school was chosen for the Hot 106 contest special performer at our school so we are really excited. Hopefully we'll introduce him. We're looking forward to the fashion show and the portfolio reviews and keeping up with senior year. Have a great night. Thank you.

Ms. Bonollo: Before you sit down I'd like to tell everyone about your Zydeco dancing fundraiser for the China bound students. Mr. Coughlin over here is a pro at it.

Mr. Coughlin: It's my understanding that there is a fund raiser coming up on March 12th by a band called Slippery Sneakers with Zydeco dancing that is for the China bound program. Is that the correct name of the band? I just thought I would mention it.

Melitzi: I think that's part of Mr. Pimentel's part of the fund raising and he took a lot of the teachers to Foxboro and which I was very excited about but I couldn't go. As far as that, they keep a lot of things under wraps from us. But I know the students were selling a lot of chocolate and carnations for Valentine's Day to keep up fund raising and as a group we try to help them go to China. It's very exciting because when they come here we go out to eat with them and they came to our prom last year.

Mr. Joseph Knight: Thank you for your time. We just had a celebration/recognition of a worthy volunteer and I think one of things we didn't recognize that we should recognize is the courage that it took for the Superintendent to close the buildings. I don't think anybody thanked you for what you did but it was a great show of leadership and fortunately nothing happened. But if something had

**happened and you hadn't acted, they would have stood there and blamed you. Great job Debbie!**

## **IX. New Business:**

### **1. Appointments:**

**Mrs. Cylke: This evening we're asking the Committee to approve the appointment of a mathematics teacher at William E. Tolman High School and also a physical education teacher at Potter Burns Elementary School. Those two new employees we're asking you to approve are:**

**Lauren Estrada, 126 Martingale Drive, Warwick RI 02886**

**Salary: Step 1 Tolman Math**

**Gregory Clark, 64 Orms Street, Pawtucket RI 02861**

**Salary: Step 1 Potter Burns Physical Education**

**Ms. Nordquist moved to approve the appointments of Lauren Estrada, Tolman Mathematics Teacher, Step 1 and Gregory Clark, Potter Burns Physical Education Teacher, Step 1. Ms. Bonollo seconded.**

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Mr. Noonan-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **2. Non Renewals/Teacher Terminations:**

**Mrs. Cylke: This evening we're asking the school committee approve the non renewals/terminations as presented to you on your list but before we take the vote I just want to take a moment to share with the audience of just what a difficult task this is. March madness to me is NCAA basketball but this is the Rhode Island version of March**

madness. I think we're all aware of that there is a statute that requires we officially notify employees by March 1st each year and certainly this is an early date compared to what I'm use to and it's also my understanding that this spring ritually that teachers expect and seem to certainly understand. The madness is simply this: a family planning a budget and thinks it's a great idea and we don't know how much money we have and so to make a promise of employment without knowing what are revenues will be makes it an impossible task. This year when I sat with the Deputy Superintendent, I asked her to go deep. We are looking at a potential deficit of \$6,000,000.00 going into FY12. When I say potential I mean there are a lot of if's that I shared in our last board meeting that I shared with you that is on our web site. Thank you for suggesting that, Mr. Tenreiro. There is a usual number of teachers we are notifying and again that list is presented to you today and there is a total of one hundred and fifty four.

Mr. Tenreiro moved to adopt the Superintendent's recommendation to terminations non renewals or otherwise in accordance with the written notification and the list provided to the committee. Ms. Bonollo seconded. (Attachment A; List of 153 Names)

Ms. Nordquist: I just wanted to verify that the list has one hundred and fifty three names.

Mrs. Cylke: That is correct, one hundred and fifty three.

Mr. Spooner: I just want to add that being on this committee before and coming back this is one of the toughest things we have to do. I just want you to know we have one of the greatest work forces here in

**Pawtucket. I've always praised it and I'll never understand why our state why the cart is always ahead of the horse it seems. I hope one day the people up on Smith Hill try to catch up with the real world and I want people to know that this is always a difficult vote for this committee.**

**Mr. Noonan: What date would you propose instead of March 1st; do you have some other date that you think would be better?**

**Mrs. Cylke: April 15th makes more sense. That's six weeks out so hopefully we would have a better idea of our financial picture. I also think for those people who have been laid off and are not going to be recalled, it gives them adequate opportunity to seek positions in another area.**

**Mr. Noonan: I ask that because I wonder if anybody has ever written letters or have the legislatures ever considered that.**

**Mrs. Cylke: Actually this afternoon the Rhode Island Association of School Superintendents has proposed legislation that would change the date and there was testimony on that at 4:00 PM. They see the need for notification but March 1st is not a good date.**

**Mr. Tenreiro: I do know how it impacts school culture and how it involves school environment and how it makes people feel about themselves, the morale. When you look at this list you see good teachers, you see experienced teachers and teachers I've come to know not only them, but their families and their children. It's always a very difficult thing. I always continue to support the RIASC position to moving that date to June 1st in the legislation. It's annual legislation and it continues to fail each year. Partly, I think it's**

because they want to know how much money it is that we don't have before they tell how much money it is they are not going to give us. They want us to develop our budgets. The Superintendent was on the low end of that budget situation on FY12 at \$6.3 million but I know we could be talking if we incorporate that \$3.8 upwards to close to \$9,000,000.00. So it's a very serious situation but one, I think, sadly needs to be done.

Ms. Nordquist: This is really tough for me. This is the seventh year in a row for me and this year is the toughest because of the extensive list, but do you anticipate recalling as early as next month or how early do you anticipate recalling? Because I feel that there are probably positions on here that we know that we'll need probably right now even though we know right now that we are eliminating them right now. How long do you anticipate?

Mrs. Cylke: I think what will drive us is when we know what our budget is and unfortunately, the legislature last year made some very late decisions and it was right when I arrived. If we don't recall teachers right within a certain time period following the close of school then the employee is eligible for unemployment. So we hate to have them go through that process and then recall them. Last July we actually recalled teachers, when in fact we were going to have a budget deficit so it's a good question, but difficult to answer because the legislature is a pretty decisive piece of this.

Mr. Conlon: Especially this year because what I heard on the news is the Governor asked that he be allowed to present his budget on March 7th ; which is six days after the layoff notice dead line. We

won't even know from now when he not only presents it on March 7th, but when the legislature gets a hold of it and does all their maneuvering with it. So we won't even know minimum then end of March or the middle of April what they intend to do to start with. It's worse than ever this year.

**Mr. Spooner:** This just totally stinks. I don't think it's the right thing to do, but maybe this is the wrong thing to say, but maybe Smith Street doesn't have their priorities straight up there.

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Mr. Noonan-yes; Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

### **3. Award of Bid-Dental Services:**

**Mrs. Cylke:** This evening we're asking the Committee to award the School Department's dental services to the lowest bidder Philip Calabro, DMD, 500 Newport Avenue, Pawtucket, RI 02861, \$10,000.00.

**Mr. Tenreiro** moved to approve the award of the Pawtucket School Department's dental services proposal to Philip Calabro, DMD, 500 Newport Avenue, Pawtucket, RI 02860 for the total amount of \$10,000.00. **Mr. Coughlin** seconded.

**Ms. Bonollo:** How many submitted proposals?

**Mrs. Cylke:** We received two bids back. It was advertised.

**Ms. Nordquist:** Is this out of the local budget?

**Mrs. Cylke:** Yes.

**Ms. Nordquist:** But it's required, right?

**Mrs. Cylke:** Right.

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Mr. Noonan-yes;  
Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **4. NECAP Scores:**

**Mrs. Cylke: This evening in your packet we have provided the NECAP scores and we're going to take a few minutes to share some general information. These have been made public and are available on line and we simply wanted to get them to you and get them to you ASAP. I think it's premature to draw deep conclusions what we want to do is go school by school and look at district and look at trends and have Mr. Cristino who has been extremely helpful and took the data and put them into scattergrams which will show us two variables. I really want to look at poverty and percent proficient and that kind of diagram will show us outliers who are doing extremely well and those schools who are not doing well when you think that they should be. The other data map is a box and whiskers. Today is the basic data. It's my intent to clearly identify struggling schools and have a very strategic plan and to intervene and provide support when necessary. There are other schools that will be on a trajectory that indicates improvement so this concept of managed performance and empowerment is what I wish to move forward with and basically what that means is those schools that are on trajectory of improvement are basically there to be supportive and to assist and those schools that are under performing will be managed much more closely.**

**Ms. Bonollo: One put in a bar graph that shows state averages**

because I'd like to be able to see where we are. The other thing I would like to know is when I was looking through I noticed a lot of times where grade three would be at a fifty percentile or sixty percentile, but when they went to grade four they went down to thirty.

I'd like to know about the transiency that is happening in there. I think what is happening is that you have one group of kids in there and then you get another group of kids in there and I believe transiency has a lot to do with how we are teaching our students and if we have three hundred kids come in from Providence and Central Falls, that's going to impact our report. So I think the transiency factor needs to at least be looked at to a degree to see where it is impacting us.

Ms. Mercer: As the Superintendent said we did have our NECAP data released this week. The results of this data you have in front of you is the tests the students took in October. The first packet we have the gray and there are two columns and the first column saying testing year and the second one saying teacher year. These are actually the same students for the most part. If you look at grade three the testing year means these are all the students, the scores of the students who were sitting in that third grade classroom in October. If you go over to teacher year, these are still almost all the same students but it includes those scores of the students that actually in our second grade the year before. They still took it in October, but the teaching year score were the students in our schools the year before. Those scores are used for accountability. So when I come back in another month or two and talk about AYP it will be about those students only.

The testing year is what we use for programs because that is for students who are physically in our schools. Last year they could have been somewhere else. I've given you this in the past. This is the historically data. I caution you please do not compare this year to the past. They are different students. When you look there might be a dip in the score. We'd like to see it improve, but you can't say its Johnny this year and Johnny last year. It's a different cohort of students. This packet contains information on all of the schools. The other packet that we gave was produced by Mr. Cristino. This contains mostly testing year data. These are the students that were physically in our building and took the test. These are proficiency scores in both sets of documents. They are the number of students proficient in each grade level and in the subject area. The first page we have mathematics and that shows you the elementary schools and that shows you the bar graph and as you go on three pages in we show you the individual schools. The first one represented is Baldwin. What Mr. Cristino has shown on the bar graph is he represents both bar graphs and we put two line graphs to represent the district's reading and math average. On the next page you'll see some small graphs and you'll see these on every school that's in the packet. What these are, are cohorts of students. These are the same students now going from grade to grade. Grade six in seven and eight, 09; 10; 11; these are the same students, but in different grade levels. In 09-10 they were the fifth graders when they were tested so you can see that you have more data for some students. We only started administering the NECAP testing in 2005. In this packet you

can look at each individual school and we also compared it to a district and compared it to the state average and added it in.

Mr. Tenreiro: Just to summarize for some folks to show the bright spot in one of those areas of concern and I don't know if you've had time to sit down and have those discussions yet.

Ms. Mercer: We haven't really gone into depth looking at this, but I can say at first glance and going through some schools had significant gain and some schools took a bit of a back slide. But overall we saw progress in most schools. Reading again seems to be an area we're doing well at. Mathematics is an area that we need to improve in and focus on.

Mr. Tenreiro: Math and reading you saw gains in the district, correct?

Ms. Mercer: In the district, yes.

### **III. Possible Recess to Executive Session:**

The Chairperson commented that the committee would recess to executive session in accordance with provisions under Title 42, Chapter 46, Subsection 5(a) (1) (job performance/character/physical or mental health) (2) (legal advice and litigation/collective bargaining) of the General Laws of the State of RI for the purpose of discussing and/or acting upon: 1. Discussion of Superintendent's job performance; 2. Negotiations with Pawtucket Administrators' Association; 3. Re-opening of teachers' contract and 5. Seal executive session minutes.

Mr. Coughlin moved to recess to executive session for discussion of agenda items no. 1, 2, 3 and 5. Mr. Noonan seconded.

Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Mr. Noonan-yes;

**Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**The Committee recessed to executive session at 7:18 to 9:07 PM.**

**IV. Reconvene to Open Session-Roll call:**

**The Chairperson reconvened the open session at 9:11 PM.**

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-here; Ms. Bonollo-here; Mr. Coughlin-here; Mr. Noonan-here; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here; Mr. Spooner-here**

**V. Report out vote(s) of executive session of 02/15/11, if applicable:**

**The Chairperson asked the Clerk if there were any votes to report out of executive session. The Clerk reported that the Committee voted unanimously to seal the executive session minutes and to adjourn the executive session.**

**IX. New Business:**

**5. Consideration of Superintendent Job Extension:**

**Mr. Coughlin moved that in conjunction with the renewal of the provision of the Superintendent's contract that the board express it's satisfaction with the performance from Superintendent Deborah Cylke. Mr. Noonan seconded.**

**Ms. Nordquist: I just want to say for the record that I will be voting no on the extension because I don't think that it is appropriate in the fiscal situation that we are in. This contract ends now in 2014 and we have a lot of unsettled contracts in the district and I just don't feel comfortable and we would have had the option to extend this contract at a later date and we are choosing to do it tonight with less than six**

months on the job in the school year and I just don't think at this point and that is why I am voting no on the extension. Because I don't think that after such a short time, that there is a need to extend a contract to 2014 when we are asking other unions to open up their contracts and we have other unions in the district who don't have a settled contract and I just don't think it's appropriate and I can't in good conscious do that.

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin- most emphatically, yes; Mr. Noonan-with pride, yes; Ms. Nordquist-no; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes**

**Motion passed six in favor; one opposed.**

**X. Special Report of the Superintendent of Schools:**

**Mrs. Cylke: I wanted to report that we received the bill for the clearing of the roofs and it really came out to about \$1.10 per student.**

**I was expecting it to be more and we were very pleased with that and that the crews could get out as quickly as they could and check the situation and that the City Engineer could check the snow depth and recalculate. I don't have the exact bill in front of me but it was under \$10,000. We have 8,500 students, so that was a very good investment. I do want you to know that I did ask Dave Abbott at RIDE if we could waive the two days at school to deal with the excessive snow load and we have prepared a letter for the Committee Chair to sign for the Board of Regents to ask that those two days be waived. I do believe that the letter we have from the engineer is very clear and will help us out and these are days that the teachers would not have**

to make up nor the students. Keep in mind we still would have five snow days.

Also we are looking at some creative ways, we had an initial meeting with our union representatives on how to make up those snow days and we'll have one more meeting. There was an agreed upon meeting at the beginning of the year to make up those days at the end, there's also two professional days built into that schedule and the Deputy has a good idea on how to do that in an online fashion where the teachers could do those two days at home so we're investigating the best way to do that.

I think a number of you were able to attend the healthy schools celebration. Last year Curvin and Cunningham were recognized and this year it's just amazing our other eight elementary schools all earned the healthy school designation and we'll certainly have some more time to recognize Solange Morrissette's contribution to this and certainly I want to thank Ms. Bonollo for her leadership on the Wellness Committee and earning Pawtucket the recognition. Less than one percent of the school districts in America are in this designation so it was certainly a great day for Pawtucket.

I had an opportunity to meet with the representatives from the Bristol County Savings Bank and shared with them my strong desire to re-establish performing music programs in Pawtucket schools. As you know we currently allocate about \$1.3 million for music teachers yet we don't have performing music programs that are elementary, middle and high school and by that I mean beginning band, chorus, dance band, jazz band, marching band. This will be a process and it

**will take time, but when I did share that goal I was very pleased and I was on the spot and they were going to award us with \$10,000.00 to begin that process with purchasing instruments, repairing instruments that we do have and we do have some great ideas with the music teachers when we met with them. We were thinking what can we do with \$10,000.00 on EBay?**

**We also had a visit with Providence Philharmonic executive director and Hasbro has a \$30,000.00 contribution to Music Care Rhode Island and how our school district will benefit. All of our fourth and fifth graders have been invited to a Providence Philharmonic concert and that will be in April and it's to get kids interested in that kind of music.**

**It's an educational fun experience. We're very happy to accept that offer from the Providence Philharmonic.**

**Last but not least I'm going to have some air quality studies done at a couple of our schools and we're meeting with a couple of our union representatives and individual teachers. There is some concern, so I'm looking into that process of how we have those tests done and I want to have those tests done and be responsive to complaints we've had from those employees.**

**Today at the NRIC meeting I was told that North Providence and Pawtucket would be the recipients of a \$222,000.00 grant for science education. So this is good news because that's an area where we want to most definitely beef up. I'll have more details later. So really, some really good news to share with you tonight. Thank you.**

**XI. Special Report of School Committee Members:**

**This item was passed.**

**XII. Adjournment:**

**Ms. Bonollo moved to adjourn. Mr. Coughlin seconded.**

**Roll call:**

**Mr. Araujo-yes; Ms. Bonollo-yes; Mr. Coughlin-yes; Mr. Noonan-yes;**

**Ms. Nordquist-yes; Mr. Tenreiro-yes; Mr. Spooner-yes**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**The Chairperson adjourned the February 15, 2011 regular meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee at 9:20 PM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Clerk**

**Approved 3/15/11**