

Regular Meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee

Tuesday, December 13, 2011, 6:00 PM

Jenks/JMW Complex for the Performing and Visual Arts Media Center

350 Division Street, Pawtucket RI 02860

I Meeting will come to order

The Deputy Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

a. Roll call

Mr. Araujo-here; Ms. Bonollo-here; Mr. Coughlin-here; Mr. Noonan-I am present and if you would be so kind I wish to be counted; Ms. Nordquist-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here

The Deputy Chairman announced that the Chairman regrets he could not be here this evening due to a dental procedure earlier that day and is unable to speak.

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

b. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Deputy Chairman.

II Recognition/Celebration

Mrs. Cylke: The people we are going to celebrate and are responsible for this evening feel they don't have to be here because you have already met them. Bristol Community Bank made a donation this week of \$20,000. That's to match the \$22, 000 they gave us last year.

Last year they donated the money to go specifically to the music program and this year they said to use the money as we would see fit. I'd like to get some input from staff and we'll let you know.

When I met with them it was quite a surprise. It was a luncheon meeting and they feel very positively about our School Department and want to continue their contributions. I think they felt that looking at academic achievement that some have of the successes that the School District has had in the past and knowing that the budget has been very tight and that music had to be cut due to budget cuts a number of years ago I think they feel positively about the School Department in general and weren't specific about people and wanted to express their support.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my staff, my Deputy and her staff, our Business Department and the School Committee for working through the budget last year.

It's a nice gift and they were complimentary of all of the people I've met and really wanted to say please put this to good use.

III Student Representatives

a. Charles E. Shea:

Anton: Hello everybody. We have lots of things going on in the schools right now. One thing that is really exciting is the "candy gram." You give a dollar to give you a candy cane and you write a little message to a crush or somebody you are already with or a friend or somebody you just appreciate.

Liana: Also I'm president of the Key Club and we're a student run organization and we do community service all over with the

International Club meaning we are all over the world. This Saturday we were at the Winter Wonderland at Slater Park near the Carousel and we did face painting and I was there personally and we gave out popcorn to the little kids, things to cheer them up.

Anton: Also with the winter season comes the new sports season which is always exciting. We have track starting. They already starting doing competition and they won a few. They are very optimistic this season with the people they have on the team this year. Also, there's basketball which is one of my favorite sports. They haven't played any league games, but they played an injury fund game. The first league game is this Friday and we would like to invite all of you to come.

Liana: Next Wednesday before we leave on Christmas break, we will be going down to our local nursing home and we are going to sing Christmas Carols. We are going to start building a close bond with them and also going to have "Adopt a Grandparent." So anytime after school and you want to go see this elderly person and talk to them, you receive community service hours and get to spend time with them and build a relationship with somebody.

I'm also going to be attending the New York trip which is on February vacation. It's a weeklong trip sponsored by the Drama Club which I'm a part of. We're going to see four Broadway shows and workshops and be able to work with actors and learn about acting skills.

Our fundraising is at an all time high. I'm selling scarves, hats, chocolate. We're selling everything and fundraising is going pretty good. Each one of us has about \$300/\$400 which is a lot for having at

least twenty people go and there's at least 1,000 people at our school.

So you have a lot of kids competing toward getting the next sale.

Anton: The deadlines are coming for seniors for applying to colleges.

Everyone is really stressed out, but everyone is helping one another and we have the college guidance night to go to and everyone is really excited.

Tonight we are having an all night ice skating at the downtown ice rink and that's where we are heading right after this.

Mr. Coughlin: Who are you going to be playing Friday night?

Anton: Lincoln JV Friday night at Shea and Tolman next week.

Mr. Coughlin: Shea ran a Zydeco fund raiser last year. Are you going to do it again this year?

Anton: We don't know that yet, but we did hear Dr. Lord talking about that so that is a possibility.

b. William E. Tolman High School:

None

c. Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts:

Destiny: Hi, I'm Destiny Bonollo and I represent JMW and I apologize if this is out of order but it was a really busy day today.

The cabaret we had November 17 and 18 was very successful—a record making profit and it was sponsored by the JMW Travel Club.

The Mousetrap, the play that we had where I, myself jumped in as the lead role, we actually did very well surprisingly because we were have some difficulties before that. We made a good profit and that was split between the Theater Department and the Senior Class because it was by one of the senior class members themselves.

The chorus actually went out today to the State House to sing in front of the holiday tree. We were at Winter Wonderland on December 4th and we are going to be performing at the holiday show coming up on December 20th at 7:00 PM and we hope to see you there.

Tomorrow we have Richard III in the gym and that is run by Trinity Rep Collaborative and it's between the graduates and Brown Students so it should be interesting. It's a Shakespeare play.

This week we have the Mr. and Mrs. JMW Pageant. We have a competition of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors competing against one another as well as individually to see who are Mr. JMW and Mrs. JMW. We had nominations and this is going to be the finals. There will be competition by the individuals and also by the class. This is a collaboration to try to bring the school together and show support for each individual class. That is also open to you and it is \$5.00 per guest.

The Masquerade Ball is coming up this Friday 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM. That is run by the sophomore class.

The Travel Club will be having their bon voyage dinner on January 3rd. The travel club is going to Europe to visit Milan, Paris and Rome and that is coming up in February.

As you walked in you may have noticed signs for “Loves, Labor’s Lost” another Shakespeare play. Auditions are coming up for that and the performance should be sometime in March. We hope to see you there.

Lastly, for theater is the Poetry Out Loud competition. One of our students, a fellow senior of mine, competed last year and won for the

school. We hope to see another one of our students compete in February.

That's pretty much what is happening at JMW. I hope to see you at the upcoming events and Happy Holidays.

IV Public Participation

Mr. Joseph Knight: Good evening. I was kind of interested in the agenda today in that you're going to report out votes of executive session of tonight as well as 4/12 and 9/27, 2011. Because you take a vote in executive session doesn't mean that you don't report that vote out. All votes are supposed to be reported out once the need for secrecy is passed. It's absolutely a travesty that it takes an Open Meeting Complaint to get the votes reported out as required by the Open Meeting Law and by Titles 16 and Title 42. So please, let's stop hiding things and lets be open and on board like we're supposed to be. Thank you.

V Possible Recess to Executive Session

The Deputy Chairman commented that the Committee would possibly recess to executive session in accordance with provisions under Title 42, Chapter 46, Subsection 5(a) (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: non certified contract negotiations update; legal advice on due process procedures and to seal executive session minutes.

Ms. Nordquist moved to recess to executive session. Ms. Bonollo seconded.

Roll call

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

Motion carried unanimously.

The Committee recessed to executive session at 6:21 PM to 6:45 PM.

VI Reconvene Open Session

a. Roll call

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

VII Report Out Vote(s) of Executive Session of 12/13/11, if applicable and previous executive session(s), 4/12/11 and 9/27/11

The Deputy Chairman asked the Clerk if there were any votes to report out.

The Clerk reported that the Committee unanimously voted to seal the executive session minutes and adjourn the executive session of December 13, 2011. The Clerk also reported that the Committee voted five in favor; one opposed on April 12, 2011 to approve the Pawtucket Teachers Alliance Contract. Mr. Coughlin was opposed and Mr. Noonan left the meeting before the vote was taken. The Clerk also reported that the Committee voted unanimously on September 27, 2011 to rescind the termination of a member of the Pawtucket Teachers Alliance and approve the agreement. Mr. Coughlin did not attend this meeting.

IV Public Participation

Mrs. Michelle Catarino de Jesus: I just wanted to come to express my concern what I feel is lack of supervision at elementary schools in Pawtucket. My daughter is a student at Nathanael Greene and I see

buses dropping off students twenty minutes before 8:00 AM, quarter to eight and there is no one outside to watch them. There is no one out there to supervise. I have spoken to Superintendent Cylke and with Principal Luffborough and he has explained to me that he has working on it and I'm really happy to hear some of the creative ideas that he is coming up with and trying to put into place so that we can have some sort of supervision in the mornings at Nathanael Greene. But I'm hearing from other parents and other individuals in Pawtucket that this is not specific to Nathanael Greene. This is all the elementary schools in Pawtucket and this concerns me greatly. You're talking about 15-20 minutes of students being left completely unsupervised and personally I work for an agency and if a parent did that they would be in some serious trouble. I'm concerned what this means for our children's safety. Secondly, what does this mean if something happens? Who is responsible? Are we looking at possible lawsuits against us when it's unnecessary? I think we need to proactive instead of being reactive.

Mr. Tenreiro: Is this happening just outside of school in the morning or inside as well?

Mrs. Catarino de Jesus: I see the buses dropping off students who go to the back of the building outside and I've heard it's also an issue in the afternoon.

Mr. Noonan: I live three blocks away, is this your observation, is it just the students dropped off by the buses or by the parents also?

Mrs. Catarino de Jesus: I see it also with parents, but I'm specifically saying it with the buses because how do you control a parent

dropping off without speaking to that parent. But if we're not setting a good example, the bus is dropping off kids in the front of the school and they walk to the back. The kindergarten kids stay in the front of the school unsupervised.

Mrs. Cylke: The essence of the issue is this and I became aware my first week here. I was at Potter Burns and I was out front with the Principal as parents were arriving and I said to Mrs. McWilliams, "who is watching the kids?" Because it was just her and she said I'm the only person. That's when I became aware of the fact that the start time for the children is the start time for the adults. So if the school starts at 8:30 AM and the children have to be in their seats in their classrooms at 8:30 AM, the adults by contract do not have to be there until 8:30 AM. This was quite a shock to me because in most systems there are adults supervising and it's usually a line of sight down the building. The adult could see if a child was hurt or a fight was starting; if an adult came on the campus that maybe shouldn't be. So there is visual supervision about fifteen minutes before school starts.

Because that's when all the students are arriving and likewise when school is dismissed at the end of the day, there's supervision when kids disperse and leave the school. We've had a number of conversations, Mr. Luffborough and I and have a number of ideas and I've shared some and it is a concern. The Deputy and I spoke about it really when I arrived and she said knock on wood we haven't had anybody get hurt, but it's still a concern. We need to work the problem in another way, but this parent has a very legitimate concern.

I know this is not on the agenda, but I did want to acknowledge that

she has been in contact and that is the root problem. We cannot ask people to be there prior to the time that is in the agreement. We can bring this back when we have some solutions because we are going to continue to work the problem. Thank you very much.

VIII Acceptance of Previous Meeting's minutes: 11/15/11

Ms. Nordquist moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, November 15, 2011. Mr. Araujo seconded.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

IX Presentation(s) – Discussion Items

a. Pension Reform

Mr. Conlon: Briefly before pension reform that was recently enacted we were looking at increasing our pension expense next year by 60%, \$3.5M. After pension reform it goes in the opposite direction and we would be looking to decrease next year's pension expense by \$740,000. This is just for informational purposes, there is no action required.

Mr. Araujo: This \$740,000 could this be possibly earmarked for the medical reserves?

Mr. Conlon: We really budget everything together because there's so much involved in both revenues and expenditures it's difficult to earmark certain expenditures for certain revenues. Because you don't know where else you're going to have a shortfall.

X New Business – Action Items

a. Appointments

- 1. Certified**
- 2. Coaching**

3. Non-Certified

Mrs. Cylke: This evening we are asking that you approve the following certified, coaching and non-certified appointments:

Certified:

Leigh Sutherland Library/Curtis Step 1 + Masters

Patricia McChrystal Library/Baldwin Step 1 + Masters + 30

Mary J. Kao Science/Shea Step 2 One Year Position

Coaching:

Michael Marques Head Coach Girls Basketball/Goff

Maureen Toth Assistant Coach Girls Basketball/Goff

Thomas Bilodeau Head Coach Boys Basketball/Goff

Leo A. Choiniere, Jr. Assistant Freshman Baseball Coach/Tolman

Maurice Jackson Head Coach Girls' Track/Shea

Jennifer McCaughey Head Cheerleading Coach/Shea

Non Certified Appointment

Paul O'Neil Tolman Custodian 2 PM – 10 PM

Ms. Nordquist moved to approve the certified, coaching and non-certified appointments as recommended by the Superintendent, Mrs. Cylke. Ms. Bonollo seconded.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

b. FY12 Budget Adjustments to Actual

Mr. Conlon: This is also good news. A few of you may or may not recall, but in the spring you folks were presented with a color coded list of cuts to a potential \$7 M shortfall. We have implemented those cuts and the folks that unfortunately, worked for us, no longer work

for us. We've taken those cuts and put them into the budget document proper as well as any other information that has come down the pike and final insurance rates and final costs for different items and it results in a balanced budget. We're very pleased to present this to you and ask you for your approval of it so we can now input it into our system and it becomes our official document by which we live from now until June 30th.

Mrs. Cylke: I just want to say it was a great relief to get this report. As you know, these unidentified cuts, you have estimates and you have hopes and sometimes they are there and sometimes they are not. I want to thank our assistant Business Director and Assistant Business Director. I think we have to be very prudent as the school year progresses and keep you up to date on any changes and we are starting our FY13 budget process early.

Mr. Tenreiro: I think the three areas are really unspecified cuts, medical reserves and special education out placements.

Mr. Conlon: We did meet with the State and they are very happy with not only this but with our FY11 results. In fact we got a little bit of applause. Of course they are comparing us to several other districts that have been in the news lately. So we compare very favorably and they were happy to hear it.

Mr. Coughlin: When will the audit be done?

Mr. Conlon: By law it has to be done by December 31st and the \$10,000 surplus that we projected is \$13,000.

Mr. Noonan moved to approve the FY12 Budget Adjustments to Actual. Ms. Bonollo seconded.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

XI Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Cylke: As Mr. Conlon just alluded to we had a meeting with the Director of the Department of Revenue, Rosemary Booth Gallogly, Dennis Hoyle, the Auditor General, the Mayor was there and Tony Pires. The meeting was called by the Director to monitor Pawtucket to see where we were and to see what next year looked like. Last year when we asked for a budget deficit reduction plan it was rejected. It was the first time it was rejected because the Auditor General didn't feel that The City of Pawtucket nor the School District had its financial house in order. You all participated in that work last year and came up with a balanced budget. The Director of the Department of Revenue was very grateful. I think we are going to stay on that monitoring, checking in and I think you all know that Tony Pires is highly respected and she has great confidence that the Mayor will continue to make progress with his budget. It was a pleasure to be there and announce that our budget was balanced. I think the City still has a deficit and they now work with Dennis Hoyle to address it and have a plan. That was a very positive meeting.

Today we received a check for \$15,000 from the Alice Sullivan Foundation and that's your annual contribution from the Collette Foundation to support our middle school athletics. So we'll be sure that the foundation and that the Kelly and Sullivan families are properly thanked again.

Today we also received a check for \$2,500 and that was a CVS Grant so congratulations to Ms. Joan DiOrio at Baldwin and that will go into

the Baldwin account.

I want to congratulate both the JMW and the Agnes Little Choir. They were both invited to the State House. The Agnes Little Choir will be here for our January celebration/recognition. They've done a phenomenal job, they're young and the program is going to nicely feed into the JMW. I wanted to compliment their choir directors and we'll get to have the Agnes Little crew here in January.

Last Friday we submitted to Commissioner Gist our request that she approve our transformation model for Shea and for Tolman. She has ten days to get back to us with her approval of that transformation plan and we will then have 120 days to come up with a plan. We'll be sure to bring that plan to you so that you can see that. When we did have our transformation meeting we did ask for more representation. I wanted more teachers on the committee, a few more administrators, more community people.

Ms. Nordquist: I know you don't have to advertise those meetings but could you be sure to email the rest of the Committee because I don't always check the Secretary of State's website.

Mrs. Cylke: Absolutely. We're about ready to send out an RFP for Stage II Necessity of Construction. Mr. Conlon and Ms. Baker, Mr. Rebelo and I met with Mr. DaSilva from RIDE and as you recall last year we finished Stage I when we did the assessment of our facilities. This RFP has two parts. Part I is the one we are putting out right now. It's to address health and safety issues. We want that report back as soon as possible. As you know the State has a moratorium on reimbursing school departments for renovations and for new schools

and upgrades. But when it's a health and safety issue and I believe we have a number here in Pawtucket. They will respond to that.

The other part is really for architects to then take our educational specifications and begin some redesign. The MGT Group will be back to Pawtucket the second two weeks of January and they will have multiple focus groups: teachers of all grade levels; administrators, librarians; nurses; music teachers; art teachers to really get those ideas on the educational facility that would really be appropriate for our children. We will also have a number of community focus groups including parents and find out what their needs are. We need lots and lots of input from our employees, our clerks, office staff. We're on a tight timeline but we're making good progress.

MGT will definitely send out an invitation to our School Committee Members. So if you would like to share with them your ideas be it elementary, middle or high school we would certainly welcome your input.

This Saturday I attended along with a number of you the Rhode Island Association of School Committees meeting. I wasn't there for the entire meeting, but I was there for the agenda item of interest which was the State's plan to submit NCLB waivers. Ms. Mercer attended last night with a number of her team members the same presentation by the Commissioner and Dave Abbott. My understanding is that in January they will actually have a final plan and once we have that it's a new game. There will be new guidelines and it's going to take a while for everyone to digest those but we will keep you informed along the way.

I also wanted to share with the Committee with Federal Grants we had PLC training through Ms. Mercer's office organized this for Shea High School and Tolman High School teachers. It was excellent and it was such a positive day to really understand the role of working collaboratively with colleagues with their school leaders. This is something we would definitely want to offer to every employee.

For Professional Development for the Central Office we traveled as a group to Connecticut last week to hear a speaker from the University of Washington. She's done a research project on how urban school districts should be reorganizing their central offices a bit differently to build strong partnerships with principals and impact student learning. It was interesting but I do not have an interest to implement her recommendations at this time. It was time well spent.

XII Special Reports of the School Committee Members

Mr. Araujo: Tomorrow night we are having a Wellness Committee meeting over at the School Administration Building and we're looking to see if we have any other people who would be interested in joining so that's at 6:00 PM tomorrow night.

I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season.

Thank you.

Ms. Bonollo: Seeing as Mr. Araujo stole my opening line, I'd like to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season.

Mr. Coughlin: Since tonight seems to be the night for using the name William Shakespeare, Mr. Noonan and I will be attending Hamlet tomorrow noon time at Slater. This will be Ms. Doyle's presentation of Hamlet and I'm looking forward to that. Other than that, Merry

Christmas and have a great New Year.

Mr. Noonan: I attended the RIASC seminar with Mr. Coughlin and one of my problems is as I see myself as fulfilling my role as School Committee Member is that I'm not an educator and I'm not on the front line. I'm not in the schools which is tough for me to grasp sometimes. I can tell you this. When David Abbott gets up in front of a RIASC seminar and says that we are driving our school principals crazy or something like that, something is wrong. In that sense, I don't know what we can do to free these people up. I don't know how much time they're spending answering questions for RIASC but I would ask that as a School Committee that we look into this and see how much time is being spent by our administrators on actual ministerial duties that could be performed that maybe we could find money for. This is just me saying it because I don't work in the schools. Maybe the Superintendent could look into this with the support of the Committee.

Secondly, Dr. Ash, David Coughlin and I will be coming tomorrow but she knows that so it's not a surprise visit.

Third, I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

Ms. Nordquist: I don't know if people noticed or not but there are people who usually come tonight but they're not here and that's because of parent teacher conferences at the elementary schools and that's probably something we should look at before we approve the next school calendar so that it's not on the same night as a School Committee meeting. Just to make sure that doesn't happen again

because of how horribly that was scheduled and we wouldn't want people to miss out on our meetings.

On a personal note when we come back in January we won't just have one certified teacher who can teach Social Studies on the School Committee, we'll now have two. I'm finally done with school and hopefully will be starting my career as an educator. I wanted to share that good news with you because I've been sharing my experiences about school along the way.

I just want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. Tenreiro: Congratulations Nicole. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

XIII Adjournment

Ms. Bonollo moved to adjourn. Mr. Noonan seconded.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Deputy Chairman adjourned the regular meeting of the Pawtucket School Committee on December 13, 2011 at 7:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clerk

Approved 1/10/2012