MINUTES
WEST WARWICK SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
WEST WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER
1 WEBSTER KNIGHT DRIVE
WEST WARWICK, RI 02893
6:15 P.M.

This meeting was called to order by Luis Colon, Chairperson.

Members Present:	Luis Colon, Chairperson Rene Coutu,Vice-Chairperson Susan St. Amand, Clerk Joseph DiMartino Angela Coburn
School Committee Attorney Present:	Aubrey Lombardo
Administrators Present:	Karen Tarasevich, Superintendent of Schools Christopher Allen, Principal, Grades 5-6, John F. Deering Middle School Leah Bessette, Principal, Wakefield Hills Elementary School Jennifer Bouchard, Assistant Principal, John F. Horgan Elementary School Jared Calise, Principal/Administrator, Maisie E. Quinn School Gregory Gonsalves, Interim Principal, Grades 7-8, John F. Deering Middle School Jessica Hassell, Principal, West Warwick High School Melissa LeBlanc, Director of Human Resources Michelle Livsey, Principal, Greenbush Elementary School Christopher Mann, Assistant Director of Facilities James Monti, Director of Reform, Compliance, and Technology Jessica Perry, Director of Special Education Services Keith Remillard, Director of Elementary Schools and Federal Funding Joseph Spagna, Director of Financial Operations Kenneth Townsend, Director of Facilities, Project Management, and Transportation Kathleen Winslow, Assistant Principal, Wakefield Hills Elementary School

Recording Secretary: Michelle Colozzo

1. Open Session

Open Session

Mr. Colon opened the meeting at 6:15 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present: Mr. Colon, Mr. Coutu, Mrs. St. Amand, Mr. DiMartino, and Mrs. Coburn.

3. Motion to go into Executive Session

Motion to Go Into Executive Session according to RI General Laws 42-46-4 and 42-46-5, Subsection (a),

a) Sessions Pertaining to Collective Bargaining -- Covid-Related Negotiations RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2)

b) Legal Advice: Legal Issues Related to School Reopening

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY RENE COUTU THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION ACCORDING TO RI GENERAL LAWS 42-46-4 AND 42-46-5, SUBSECTION (a)

a) SESSIONS PERTAINING TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING -- COVID-RELATED NEGOTIATIONS RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2)

b) LEGAL ADVICE: LEGAL ISSUES RELATED TO SCHOOL REOPENING

Motion seconded by Joseph DiMartino. The following members voted in the affirmative: Susan St. Amand, Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, Rene Coutu, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

4. Motion to Close Executive Session

Motion to Close Executive Session

5. Open Session – 6:30 P.M.

Open Session – 6:30 P.M.

Mr. Colon opened this portion of the meeting at 6:34 P.M.

6. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present: Mr. Colon, Mr. Coutu, Mrs. St. Amand, Mr. DiMartino, and Mrs. Coburn.

7. Reading of Mission Statement

Reading of Mission Statement

Mrs. St. Amand read the Mission Statement of the West Warwick Public Schools:

The West Warwick Public Schools, in partnership with the entire community, is dedicated to providing all learners with access and opportunity to a challenging comprehensive education while developing 21st Century Skills in a safe, personalized learning environment.

8. Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. DiMartino led the Pledge of Allegiance.

9. Motion to Seal Executive Session Minutes

Motion to Seal Executive Session Minutes

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH DIMARTINO THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE SEAL THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES.
Motion seconded by Susan St. Amand. The following members voted in the affirmative: Rene Coutu, Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, Susan St. Amand, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

MOTION

10. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson's Report

Mr. Colon said we have a new addition to the school committee, Angela Coburn, and we welcome her. She has been a part of the community for many years; a lot of people may know her.

11. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Report: School Updates

Mrs. Tarasevich welcomed and thanked everyone for being here. She said the first couple of weeks are always busy, so she appreciates even more everyone's presence tonight. The opening of school--she thinks everyone will agree that the best part is we are actually back in school. It was relatively smooth for the most part, all of the typical school stuff, maybe a little heightened--kids and staff haven't all been in the buildings together. We did have some busing issues, but Kenny did a phenomenal job; the beginning of the year, busing is always a challenge, and this year Mr. Townsend went way far above the call of duty to the point of riding the bus with little kids, so she wants to give an extra shout out for Kenny for all of that.
Mr. Townsend said that Larry is also here from First

Student. Mrs. Tarasevich said it's nice to meet Larry and said he has done a great job.

Mrs. Tarasevich said that fall sports are under way; the first Friday Night Lights will be this Friday at 6:30 P.M. She said you can go on the school website or the Rhode Island Interscholastic League for the full schedule.

Mrs. Tarasevich said besides the opening of school, there is lots to do. The literacy grant is already unfolding--thanks to everybody for their work. She said there are several legislative issues we need to address such as suicide prevention for kids and staff. Some of that we will do this year and some next year. There will be ongoing assessments of unfinished learning from the past 18 months or longer, and we have a plan to move forward.

Mrs. Tarasevich said we have had some positive cases; as of Friday, there were 25 positive cases. She said Becky Handy is phenomenal; it is a blessing to have her leading that charge for us.

Mrs. Tarasevich said there were some nerves for everyone getting back; the best part was when we went into each building--the staff was welcoming kids and colleagues with open arms; it was great to see people back in person.

12. Discussion/Approval: Consent Agenda

Discussion/Approval: Consent Agenda

a) **Open Session Minutes: August 17, 2021**
b) **Executive Session Minutes: August 17, 2021**
c) **Special Meeting Open Session Minutes: August 24, 2021**
d) **Special Meeting Executive Session Minutes: August 24, 2021**

e) Payment of Bills: $1,061,397.80
f) Home Instruction Plans

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY SUSAN ST. AMAND THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA. Motion seconded by Rene Coutu. The following members voted in the affirmative: Joseph DiMartino, Angela Coburn, Rene Coutu, Susan St. Amand, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

13. Financial Update

Financial Update

a) Monthly Financial Report for Period 8/1/21 through 8/31/21

Mr. Spagna said as of 8/31/21, we have utilized 3.6% of the budget.

b) Voucher Detail Listings

Vouchers totaling $1,061,397.80 were submitted for approval.

c) School Lunch Deficit

Mr. Spagna said as always, the school lunch deficit is about nil since school lunches have been approved and paid for for the entire school year.

14. Discussion/Approval: FY 22 Budget Journal Transfer Request

Discussion/Approval: FY 22 Budget Journal Transfer Request

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the FY 22 Budget Journal Transfer Request.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH DIMARTINO THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FY 22 BUDGET JOURNAL TRANSFER REQUEST. Motion seconded by Angela Coburn. The following members voted in the affirmative: Rene Coutu, Susan St. Amand, Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

15. Discussion/Approval: Second Reading: Professional Conduct with Students Policy

Discussion/Approval: Professional Conduct with Students Policy

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the second reading of the Professional Conduct with Students Policy.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY SUSAN ST. AMAND THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE SECOND READING OF THE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS POLICY. Motion seconded by Rene Coutu. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, Rene Coutu, Susan St. Amand, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

16. Discussion/Approval: Second Reading: Face Mask Policy

Discussion/Approval: Second Reading: Face Mask Policy

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the second reading of the Face Mask Policy.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH DIMARTINO THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE SECOND READING OF THE

FACE MASK POLICY. Motion seconded by Angela Coburn. The following members voted in the affirmative: Rene Coutu,Susan St. Amand, Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

17. Discussion/Approval: Elementary Handbook

Discussion/Approval: Elementary Handbook

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the elementary handbook.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY RENE COUTU THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK. Motion seconded by Susan St. Amand. The following members voted in the affirmative: Joseph DiMartino, Angela Coburn, Susan St. Amand, Rene Coutu, and Luis Colon Motion unanimously passed.

18. Acceptance of Resignations

Acceptance of Resignations:

a) Part-Time Kindergarten Teacher Assistant - John F. Horgan Elementary School - Effective 8/17/21

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the school committee accept the resignation of Heba Ali, Part-Time Kindergarten Teacher Assistant at John F. Horgan Elementary School, effective August 27, 2021.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY SUSAN ST. AMAND THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF THE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS POLICY. Motion seconded by Joseph DiMartino. The following members voted

in the affirmative: Rene Coutu, Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, Susan St. Amand, Rene Coutu, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

b) Part-Time Bus Monitor - Effective 8/23/21

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended the the school committee accept the resignation of Mariannia Nolan, Part-Time Bus Monitor, effective August 23, 2021.

MOTION **MOTION MADE BY SUSAN ST. AMAND THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF MARIANNIA NOLAN, PART-TIME BUS MONITOR, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 23, 2021**. Motion seconded by Joseph DiMartino. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Rene Coutu, Joseph DiMartino, Susan St. Amand, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

c) Part-Time Bus Monitor - Effective 8/20/21

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the school committee accept the resignation of Kimberly Medeiros, Part-Time Bus Monitor, effective August 20, 2021.

MOTION **MOTION MADE BY RENE COUTU THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF KIMBERLY MEDEIROS, PART-TIME BUS MONITOR, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 20, 2021.** Motion seconded by Joseph DiMartino. The following members voted in the affirmative: Susan St. Amand, Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, Rene Coutu, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

d) School Improvement Team Leader - Greenbush Elementary School - Effective at the Start of the 2021-2022 School Year

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the school committee accept the resignation of Fatima Whitaker, School Improvement Team Leader at Greenbush Elementary School, effective at the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY RENE COUTU THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF FATIMA WHITAKER, SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM LEADER AT GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, EFFECTIVE AT THE START OF THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR. Motion seconded by Joseph DiMartino. The following members voted in the affirmative: Susan St. Amand, Angela Coburn, Joseph DiMartino, Rene Coutu, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

e) S.M.I.L.E. Leader - West Warwick High School - Effective 8/30/21

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the school committee accept the resignation of Eugene Gallo, S.M.I.L.E. Leader at West Warwick High School, effective August 30, 2021.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY SUSAN ST. AMAND THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF EUGENE GALLO, S.M.I.L.E. LEADER AT WEST WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 30, 2021. Motion seconded by Angela Coburn. The following members voted in the affirmative: Rene Coutu, Joseph DiMartino, Angela Coburn, Susan

St. Amand, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

f) Head Boys' Soccer Coach - John F. Deering Middle School - Effective 8/18/21

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the school committee accept the resignation of Tyler Coburn, Head Boys' Soccer Coach at John F. Deering Middle School, effective August 18, 2021.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY RENE COUTU THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF TYLER COBURN, HEAD BOYS' SOCCER COACH AT JOHN F. DEERING MIDDLE SCHOOL, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 18, 2021. Motion seconded by Joseph DiMartino. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Susan St. Amand, Joseph DiMartino, Rene Coutu, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

g) Three (3) Part-Time Outreach Screeners - Effective 9/7/21

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the school committee accept the resignations of Pamela Mills, Joanne Sabbagh, and Kathryn Sundberg, Part-Time Child Outreach Screeners, effective September 7, 2021.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY RENE COUTU THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS OF PAMELA MILLS, JOANNE SABBAGH, AND KATHRYN SUNDBERG, PART-TIME CHILD OUTREACH SCREENERS, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 7, 2021. Motion seconded by

Joseph DiMartino. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Susan St. Amand, Joseph DiMartino, Rene Coutu, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

19. Announcement of New Hires

Announcement of New Hires:

Mrs. Tarasevich announced the following new hires:

- Reading Teacher - Greenbush Elementary School: Heather Cote
- School Psychologist - Maisie E. Quinn School: Kush Shukla
- Long-Term Substitute Special Education Resource Teacher - West Warwick High School: Susan Castellone
- Full-Time Supervising Assistant - West Warwick High School: Vera Lawrence
- Full-Time Special Education Self-Contained Teacher Assistant Floater in the Life Skills Program - West Warwick High School: Ariana Witherspoon
- Part-Time Kindergarten Teacher Assistant Interventionist Floater - Greenbush Elementary School: Chastity Kilkenny
- Part-Time Special Education Preschool Teacher Assistant - Maisie E. Quinn School: Lisa Fratus
- Part-Time Bus Monitor: Nicole Simpanen
- Part-Time Bus Monitor: Stephenie Thibeault

- Part-Time General Clerk - Wakefield Hills Elementary School: Sophy Warren
- Full-Time 2nd Shift Custodian Floater - John F. Horgan & Greenbush Elementary Schools: Joshua McDowell
- Two (2) Assistant Football Coaches - West Warwick High School: Michael Hernandez and Michael Sircello
- Head Co-Ed Soccer Coach - West Warwick High School: Tyler Coburn
- Head Co-Ed & Girls' Combined Cross Country Coach - West Warwick High School: Michael Thibodeau
- Assistant Girls' Volleyball Coach - West Warwick High School: Norman Rajotte
- Grade 5 Transition Program Nurse/Teacher - John F. Deering Middle School: Nurse/Health: Karen Doucette

20. Presentation: School Committee Laws and Regulations

Presentation: School Committee Laws and Regulations

Attorney Aubrey Lombardo gave a presentation on school committee laws and regulations including the following topics:

- The role/general powers and duties of school committee members as defined by state law
- Main responsibility of school committee members

- Chain of Authority
- Due Process
- Dealing with the media
- Social media best practices
- Confidentiality
- Conduct at school committee meetings
- Open Meetings Act
- Responding to the public

21. Audience of Citizens

Audience of Citizens

Mr. Colon said in listening to Aubrey's presentation, a lot of what was said doesn't happen here as in almost every other place as far as the relationship with the town council, the superintendent, and he wanted to thank everyone on behalf of the school committee. He said the school committee relies on Karen to carry the load which she brings to the school committee when things need to be addressed, and the administrators are her eyes and ears, so from the school committee to the unsung heroes, thank you.

22. Adjournment

Adjournment

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH DIMARTINO THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE MEETING. Motion seconded by Susan St. Amand. The following members voted in the affirmative: Rene Coutu, Angela Coburn, Susan St. Amand, Joseph DiMartino, and Luis Colon. Motion unanimously passed.

Meeting adjourned at: 7:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan St. Amand, Clerk

Michelle Colozzo, Recorder