MINUTES
WEST WARWICK SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 12, 2026
WEST WARWICK HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER
1 WEBSTER KNIGHT DRIVE
WEST WARWICK, RI 02893
5:00 P.M.

This meeting was called to order by Rene Coutu, Vice-Chairperson.

Members Present:	Rene Coutu, Vice-Chairperson Angela Coburn Glen Terilli Dennis Peacock
Member Absent:	Luis Colon, Chairperson
School Committee Attorney Present:	Aubrey Lombardo
Administrators Present:	Karen Tarasevich, Superintendent of Schools Leah Bessette, Director of Secondary Schools Cheryl Langevin, Director of Financial Operations Jeffrey Langlais, Assistant Director of Facilities and Transportation Christopher Mann, Director of Facilities and Transportation Frank Mealy, Director of Information Technology Keith Remillard, Director of Achievement & Accountability Data Philip Solomon, Director of Human Resources Michael Whaley, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Recording Secretary:	Michelle Colozzo

1. Open Session

Open Session

Mr. Coutu opened the meeting at 5:00 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present: Mr. Coutu, Mrs. Coburn, Mr. Peacock, and Mr. Terilli.
Mr. Colon was absent.

3. Motion to Go Into Executive Session

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

a) Discussion: RIGL §42-46-5 (a)(1)- Job Performance (All persons have been notified of their right for this to be heard in open session)

1) Coordinator of Development, Strategic Initiatives & Community Engagement
2) Director of Facilities & Transportation

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY DENNIS PEACOCK THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION ACCORDING TO RI GENERAL LAWS §42-46-5, Subsection (a),

a) Discussion: RIGL §42-46-5 (a)(1)- Job Performance (All persons have been notified of their right for this to be heard in open session)

1) Coordinator of Development, Strategic Initiatives & Community Engagement
2) Director of Facilities & Transportation

Motion seconded by Glen Terilli. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Glen Terilli, Dennis Peacock, and Rene Coutu
Motion passed 4 to 0.

4. Motion to Close Executive Session

Motion to Close Executive Session

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY ANGELA COUTU THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION. Motion seconded by Glen Terilli. The following members voted in the

affirmative: Dennis Peacock, Glen Terilli, Angela Coburn, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

5. Open Session - 5:30 P.M.

Open Session - 5:30 P.M.

Mr. Coutu opened this portion of the meeting at 5:32 P.M.

6. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present: Mr. Coutu, Mrs. Coburn, Mr. Peacock, and Mr. Terilli.
Mr. Colon was absent.

7. Reading of Mission Statement

Reading of Mission Statement

Mrs. Coburn 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. Terilli led the Pledge of Allegiance.

9. Motion to Seal Executive Session Minutes

Motion to Seal Executive Session Minutes

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY DENNIS PEACOCK THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE SEAL THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES. Motion seconded by Glen Terilli. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Glen Terilli, Dennis Peacock, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

10. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Report:

a) Opening of School Dates Review
b) District Staffing Review

Mrs. Tarasevich said the school building project is coming along wonderfully under budget and on time. Every week we do site visits and walk-throughs, and JPAL looks beautiful. The ribbon cutting will be held on August 23rd, and the teachers come in on August 24th. It's everything we thought it would be–the perfect setting for that program.

The next big piece of this will be redistricting; we are working with a company called Cropper. They study the demographics and boundaries in town. They also work with Transpar who collect their own data, and then those two bodies will combine and help us determine the bus routes.

We will have two public forums; the first on September 23rd is going to be an overview for the public to listen and provide feedback. We will then take that and study it. October 30th will be the second public forum when we will basically lay out the plan. We will bring it to the school committee in December for review, and ultimately the school committee will vote on it in January.

The ground breaking for Quinn will be September 26th. We have a great team; she is very confident in the team working with us–the architect and project manager and the people they have been pulling in to do work. Mrs. Tarasevich gave a shout out to Read's Landscaping–the backyard was not on track to be done for the ribbon cutting, but John Read made a few calls and made things happen; it looks like a different space. There will be a six foot walking path, and the whole backyard will be sodded. The town is really stepping up. School opens in a week and a half; thanks to everyone here doing their part, and thanks to everybody in Property Services. Teaching and learning used to have the summer off, but not anymore. We will be ready; the bus routes will be published next week.

11. Discussion/Approval: Consent Agenda

Discussion/Approval: Consent Agenda

a) School Committee Open Session Minutes: July 8, 2026
b) School Committee Executive Session Minutes: July 8, 2026
c) Contracts
  1) C3Wellbeing Student Assistance Services
  2) Edia Learning, Inc.
d) Resignations:
  1) Director of Facilities and Transportation - Effective 10/1/26
  2) Social Studies Teacher - West Warwick High School - Effective 8/10/26
  3) Softball Coach - John F. Deering Middle School - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
  4) Assistant Indoor/Outdoor Coach - West Warwick High School - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
  5) Head Cheerleading Coach - West Warwick High School - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
e) Payment of Bills
f) Home Instruction Plans

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the Consent Agenda Items a.-f.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY DENNIS PEACOCK THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS a-f. Motion seconded by Angela Coburn. The following members voted in the affirmative: Glen Terilli, Angela Coburn, Dennis Peacock, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

Mrs. Tarasevich noted that in the consent agenda is the resignation of the Direcctor of Facilities and Transportation that we regretfully accepted. Mrs. Tarasevich said Chris, you are a key member of the team and you have always done whatever we needed–you made it happen; we hate to see you go and we wish you the best. Mrs. Tarasevich and the school committee thanked Chris Mann.

12. Financial Update

Financial Update:

a) Financial Report for FY 26

b) Disbursements Detail Listings

Cheryl Langevin, Director of Financial Operations, gave a financial update. Mrs. Langevin said everyone should have received the update in their packets including the financial report for FY 26. The budget surplus is $520,000, but that is very preliminary.

Mrs. Langevin said she also included the detail disbursements listings since the last time you received them–May, June, July, until now.

13. Discussion/Approval: Budget Transfer

Discussion/Approval: Budget Transfer

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the budget transfer of $20,000 from the technology software account to the general supplies account.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY GLEN TERILLI THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE BUDGET TRANSFER OF $20,000 FROM THE TECHNOLOGY SOFTWARE ACCOUNT TO THE GENERAL SUPPLIES ACCOUNT. Motion seconded by Dennis Peacock. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Dennis Peacock, Glen Terilli, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

14. Discussion: School Building Committee Update

Discussion: School Building Committee Update:

a) Redistricting Public Meeting Dates
b) Ground Breaking for Quinn Project Date
c) Ribbon Cutting for JPAL Date

Mrs. Tarasevich said that she had covered these items in her Superintendent's Report.

15. Presentation: West Warwick Public Schools Strategic Plan 2027-2029

Presentation: West Warwick Public Schools Strategic Plan 2027-2029 - Strategic Targets and Key Initiatives

Mrs. Tarasevich welcomed Dr. Michael Whaley to give a presentation on the strategic plan. She said Mike did a lot of work on this, and most of the people in this room worked on it; it's a lot, so she wanted to acknowledge everyone's work on this.

Dr. Whaley said he sent out a survey, and it came back pretty positive and encouraging us to continue our work; we received about 150 responses to the survey.

Dr. Whaley gave a presentation on the West Warwick Public Schools Strategic Plan 2027-2029 - Strategic Targets and Key Initiatives including the following:

Goal 1: Improve ELA Proficiency
Goal 2: Improve Math Proficiency
Goal 3: Reduce Chronic Absenteeism
Goal 4: College & Career Readiness
Goal 5: Social & Emotional Learning
Goal 6: Provide Safe & Healthy Learning Environments
Goal 7: Improve District Communications
Goal 8: MTSS
Goal 9: Improve MLL Proficiency
Goal 10: Improve Science Proficiency

16. Discussion/Approval: West Warwick Public Schools Strategic Plan FY 27 - FY 29

Discussion/Approval: West Warwick Public Schools Strategic Plan FY 27 - FY 29

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the West Warwick Public Schools Strategic Plan FY 27 - FY 29.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY ANGELA COBURN THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE WEST WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN FY 27 - FY 29. Motion seconded by Glen Terilli. The following members voted in the affirmative: Dennis Peacock, Glen Terilli, Angela Coburn, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

17. Discussion/Approval: West Warwick Public Schools Literacy Plan FY 27 - FY 29

Discussion/Approval: West Warwick Public Schools Literacy Plan FY 27 - FY 29

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the West Warwick Public Schools Literacy Plan FY 27 - FY 29.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY DENNIS PEACOCK THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE WEST WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS LITERACY PLAN FY 27 - FY 29. Motion seconded by Glen Terilli. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Glen Terilli, Dennis Peacock, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

18. Discussion/Approval: First Reading: Student use of Personal Electronic Devices Policy

Discussion/Approval: First Reading: Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices Policy

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the school committee approve the first reading of the Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices Policy.

Mrs. Tarsevich said this is in alignment with Rhode Island General law. This is Year 2 at the middle

school and Year 1 at the high school for Yondr pouches; we are already doing it, so we had to update our policy.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY GLEN TERILLI THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF THE STUDENT USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY. Motion seconded by Angela Coburn. The following members voted in the affirmative: Dennis Peacock, Angela Coburn, Glen Terilli, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

19. Discussion/Approval: First Reading: Removal of IV.D.8. Bring Your Own Device Policy

Discussion/Approval: First Reading: Removal of IV.D.8. Bring Your Own Device Policy

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the first reading of the removal of IV.D.8. Bring Your Own Device Policy. She said the policy you just approved replaces this one.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY DENNIS PEACOCK THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF THE REMOVAL OF IV.D.8. BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE POLICY. Motion seconded by Glen Terilli. The following members voted in the affirmative: Angela Coburn, Glen Terilli, Dennis Peacock, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

20. Announcement of New Hires

Announcement of New Hires

Mrs. Tarasevich announced the names of people who are new to the district.

WWTA New Hires, Transfers, and Awarded Positions

1. Chemistry Teacher - West Warwick High School - **David Barr** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
2. School Psychologist - Jason M. Pisano Academy for Learning - **Natalie Fleming** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year

3. School Nurse Teacher - Jason M. Pisano Academy for Learning - **Amy Mead** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
4. School Psychologist - John F. Horgan Elementary School - **Melissa Quill** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
5. School Library Media Specialist - West Warwick High School - **Kristen Mitchell** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
6. School Psychologist - District - **Christopher Torem** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
7. Jumpstart to K Program - John F. Horgan Elementary School - **Jessica Selby** - Effective 8/11/26
8. Elementary LEA - District - **Erica Szostek** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
9. Grade 7 Social Studies - John F. Deering Middle School - **Victoria LeBlanc** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
10. Library Media Specialist - Greenbush Elementary School - **Shannon Lanoie** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
11. Science Teacher - Jason M. Pisano Academy for Learning - **Laura Stiles** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
12. Special Education Self Contained Teacher - West Warwick High School - **Jade Illum** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
13. K-2 Therapeutic Classroom Teacher - Wakefield Hills Elementary School - **Alexandra Phillips** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
14. Grade 6 Teacher - John F. Deering Middle School - **Christina Frisone** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
15. Physical Education Teacher - Wakefield Hills Elementary School - **Kyle Gibbins** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
16. Summit X Adventure Camp - John F. Deering Middle School - **Matthew Silva** - Effective 7/27/26
17. Summit X Adventure Camp - John F. Deering Middle School - **Kate Arruda** - Effective 7/27/26

18. Summit X Adventure Camp - John F. Deering Middle School - **Cathy Boutin** - Effective 7/27/26
19. High School Horizon Camp - West Warwick School - **Shane Lagor** - Effective 7/27/26
20. High School Horizon Camp - West Warwick School - **Eugene Gallo** - Effective 7/27/26
21. Science Teacher - John F. Deering Middle School - **Molly Mullen** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
22. LTS Grade 6 Teacher - John F. Deering Middle School - **Kaitlyn Parenteau** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
23. Grade 5 Teacher - John F. Deering Middle School - **Macie Botello** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
24. Grade 5 Teacher - John F. Deering Middle School - **McKayla Colucci** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
25. Grade 7 Teacher - John F. Deering Middle School - **Marlene Gundel** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year

Council 94 New Hires, Transfers, and Awarded Positions

1. Teacher Assistant - Wakefield Hills Elementary School - **Jenifer DeGrace** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
2. Teacher Assistant - John F. Horgan Elementary School - **Nancy Goldfarb** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
3. Teacher Assistant - West Warwick High School - **Ariane Walters** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
4. Teacher Assistant - Maisie Quinn Elementary School - **Naffisatou Koulibaly** - Effective 2026-2027 School Year
5. 2nd Shift Custodian - John F. Horgan Elementary School - **Joshua McDowell** - Effective 8/17/2026

21. Discussion/Approval: Administrative Contract

Discussion/Approval: Administrative Contract: Coordinator of Development, Strategic Initiatives & Community Engagement

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that there be a discussion/approval of the administrative contract for Philip Solomon, Coordinator of Development, Strategic Initiatives & Community Engagement.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY DENNIS PEACOCK THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACT OF PHILIP SOLOMON, COORDINATOR OF DEVELOPMENT, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. Motion seconded by Angela Coburn. The following members voted in the affirmative: Glen Terilli, Angela Coburn, Dennis Peacock, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

22. Audience of Citizens

Audience of Citizens

Dr. Michael Whaley, Assistant Superintendent, noted that we were able to find positions for all of the people who were laid off. He said working with Paul, Phil, and Karen, everyone has a job next year–we worked really hard on that. Mrs. Tarasevich said she is glad he mentioned our partnership with the Teachers' Alliance; it's a tough time of year when we have to make those decisions, and we are lucky it worked out and everyone has a position.

23. Adjournment

Adjournment

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY ANGELA COBURN THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE MEETING. Motion seconded by Glen Terilli. The following members voted in the affirmative: Dennis Peacock, Glen Terilli, Angela Coburn, and Rene Coutu. Motion passed 4 to 0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:06 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Coutu, Vice-Chairperson

Michelle Colozzo, Recorder