
**EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OPEN SESSION – October 13, 2020**

Call to Order Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met virtually in Open Session on Tuesday, October 13, 2020. Mr. Tsonos called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. Members present were Charles Tsonos, Chair, Jessica Beauchaine, Vice Chair, Karen Oliveira, Clerk, Joel Monteiro and Anthony Ferreira. Also present were Superintendent Kathryn Crowley, Assistant Superintendent Sandra Forand, Ben Russell, Tony Feola, Leslie Anderson, Julian MacDonnell, Diana Clarkin, Cheryl Mammone, Craig Enos, Yanaiza Gallant, Tabitha Watjen and Amy Almada.

Executive Session

Mr. Tsonos announced it was no longer necessary to have an Executive Session portion of this meeting.

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to move Public Comments I – Agenda Items closer to 7 p.m. due to cancelation of executive session.

Consent Agenda

1. Communications – Superintendent Crowley spoke about two fire marshal's reports; a waiver for the high school and an extension for Martin Middle School.

Mr. Ferreira asked about maximum number of students in each school vs. maximum number of people in the building on the report. Mr. Feola will get clarification on the maximum number of people inside a building.

An enrollment report for distance learning and in-person learning was submitted to the Committee.

Appointments: Shannon Dos Santos, Paraprofessional at Hennessey Elementary, effective 9/16/2020; Marisa Braga, Paraprofessional at Martin Middle School, effective 9/21/2020; Katerina Andrews, Social Studies Teacher at Martin Middle School, effective 9/22/2020; Stacy Brown, Paraprofessional at Whiteknact Elementary, effective 1/4/2021; Nanci Potemri, Special Education Resource Teacher at EPHS, effective TBD; Kaitlyn Villucci, MTSS Coordinator at Riverside Middle School, effective 10/6/2020; and Jordan Murphy, Speech/Language Pathologist at Oldham Pre-K, effective TBD.

3. Homeschool Requests: There were 25 requests to homeschool.

4. Approval of Minutes: September 10, 2020 School Committee Meeting and September 14, 2020 Building Committee Meeting.

Motion by Mr. Monteiro seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the consent agenda.

Public Comments I – Agenda Items

This item was moved back on the agenda so anyone who has questions or comments will have time to submit them due to cancelation of executive session.

Superintendent's Report

1. Retirement Incentive – Discussion to extend early retirement incentives to the custodians and maintenance department. An MOA will be developed with the union and reviewed by the School Committee members. The Chair will poll members in next few days. An MOA was developed for the teachers, administrative assistants and paraprofessionals. Mr. Enos will have a financial breakdown at the next meeting.

2. World Teacher Day/Life Changer of the Year Award – Amy Almada, 5th grade teacher at Whiteknact ,was nominated on the Today Show along with several other participants across the country for World Teacher Day. She received over \$200 for classroom supplies. Several days later Ms. Almada was nominated for Life Changer of the Year award. Superintendent Crowley would like to send out the nomination to vote to the entire school district. Ms. Almada was very honored and excited about what winning could do for the school and the community.

3. School Improvement Teams – Members on the School Improvement Teams and District School Improvement Team have been submitted to the Committee.

4. Social Emotional Coordinator – Tabitha Watjen has taken over this new role. She described all that she does in the district which includes; the Taking Care of You weekly Newsletter which focuses on adult SEL as well as student SEL, Bookshelves, Virtual Calming Room, professional development opportunities for staff; and a virtual coaching support system for any staff member in the district.

5. COVID-19 RIDOH Testing Procedures – Superintendent Crowley explained the process on what has been happening in the district with regard to COVID-19 testing. The RIDOH is in charge of investigations and placing quarantines on staff or students. If a student or staff member goes to a testing site and if a rapid test is positive, the results go to the RIDOH. The person will report it to their principal and the Superintendent. The RIDOH calls the Superintendent to verify a positive result. Once quarantined, three letters are sent out. RIDOH contacts each teacher and student by phone. Principals have available a classroom and bus seating plan, classes the teacher taught and phone numbers. A report is sent to the Superintendent after finishing their contact study. There are 31 new cases in East Providence for a total 943 cases. Schools are being cleaned and the district is taking all precautions keeping staff and students safe. Ms. Oliveira announced that the Superintendent has kept the Committee well informed daily.

6. Update on Re-entry Plan – Dr. Forand reported that there is a 50/50 split with distance learning and in-person learning students. Not allowing any more in-person students into the elementary classes except new registrations. There is a PD day on Monday, October 19 which will be a distance learning day for students. Teachers will put out work on google classrooms for students and the teachers will be focusing on grade and team level planning. There is one PD day a month on the state calendar which is a. Lunches will be available and can be picked up at any school.

Superintendent Crowley gave a shout out to Ben Russell and his technology team. They closed out 1,100 tickets this month which is 4 times the monthly average for a standard month. They have all been working very hard to keep staff and students operational and getting hotspots for families during a time when technology is more important than ever. Alfred Villeneuve accepted a job offer at Raytheon. He was an amazing asset to the district and will be missed by staff and students.

7. Transportation Update – Diana Clarkin stated we are transporting all students who are eligible for transportation. Bus charts are available, windows are kept open, sanitizing the buses and providing transportation to the Boys/Girls club. At this time appeals are not being allowed.

8. Free Lunch Count by Site – Diana Clarkin reported meals have increased by the numbers in the schools. A weekly update can be provided.

Public Comments I – Agenda Items – No public comments were received.

Director of Human Services Report

Resignations – Ms. Mammone announced the resignations as follows: Russell Levendusky, Social Studies Teacher at Martin Middle School; effective 9/21/2020; Tiffany Killeen, Teacher – Laid Off, effective 9/1/2020; Colby Major, Teacher – Laid Off, effective 10/5/2020; Jamie Krause, Teacher – Laid Off, effective 10/2/2020; Ann Piper, Paraprofessional – Laid Off, effective 9/10/20; Luis A. Olmo, Staff Accountant, effective 10/14/2020; and Alfred Villeneuve, Information Systems Manager, 10/19/2020.

Motion by Mr. Monteiro seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the resignations as submitted.

Retirements – Ms. Mammone announced the retirements as follows: David Jarvais, Technology Ed Teacher at Martin Middle School, effective 10/2/2020.

Motion by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to accept the retirement as submitted.

Leave of Absences - Ms. Mammone announced the Leave of Absences as follows: Heather Cote, Grade 2 Teacher at Kent Heights Elementary School, effective 11/9/2020.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the leave of absence as submitted.

Non-Renewals – None

Recalls – Ms. Mammone announced the Recalls as follows: Victoria Sidebotham, Paraprofessional, Building-based at Martin Middle School Pre-K, effective 9/16/2020; Jaclyn Quaine, Paraprofessional at EPHS, effective 10/5/2020; Valerie Beatrice, Paraprofessional at Oldham Pre-K, effective 9/14/2020.

Motion by Ms. Oliveira, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the recalls as submitted.

Terminations – Ms. Mammone announced the Termination as follows: A Paraprofessional at EPHS, effective 9/11/2020.

Motion by Ms. Oliveira, seconded by Mr. Monteiro and carried by unanimous consent to approve the termination as submitted.

Director of Finance Report – Mr. Enos presented his monthly financial report and highlighted a few line items. There were numerous fraudulent unemployment claims and districts will start to see credits on accounts. The Fiscal Year will be ending on October 30th. Mr. Enos reported on the FEMA reimbursement which was denied but he will re-submit for reimbursements. The School Department submitted \$350,000, \$240,000 was for school bus transportation from March to June and \$110,000 was for custodial cleaning supplies. The district will be getting back \$11,000 on the custodial cleaning supplies. The district needs to continue to submit lunch forms which have been online. RIDE is forming an internal work group which will help the districts. Mr. Ferreira requested gas and electric bills for all schools for the last three years.

Policy Committee Report – Two policies for a 1st read: Mask Policy and Crowdfunding Policy

The Mask Policy was updated again and will be on the agenda next month for approval. Ms. Beauchaine asked that signs be placed at each school building saying that masks must be worn.

The Crowdfunding Policy will allow staff to go back and use online funding. There are projects that could not be provided for due to lack of technology software. The only

fundraising site that is allowed is DonorsChoose. Every week Dr. Forand gets an update on fundraising and can share it with the Committee.

Building Committee Report – Mr. Monteiro gave an update on the high school building project and shared the OPM's report from the October 12th Building Committee meeting. The DOT permitting has to do with the main entrance to the high school and has been approved. Monthly meetings are being held with building officials and the next meeting will be on October 14. There have been five field site visits and reviews. The project milestones have been window glazing which began in September. Furniture fixtures and equipment meetings with staff are continuing. Rooftop unit startup in January 2021. Millwork/casework will start in February 2021. COVID related expense report is starting to come in. The project is still under budget with contingencies. Mr. Monteiro will report on type of heat in the building. A walkthrough of the building will be set up. The Building Committee membership list has been updated to add the new high school Principal, Toby Gibbons, who replaced Shani Wallace.

Discussion Items

1. State Testing – Superintendent Crowley stated that state testing is going on right now and is scheduled as usual in all districts in the State of RI.

2. Teacher Evaluations – Three plans have been put out by RIDE. The district would like to push back on evaluations for a year except for non-tenured teachers. The NEA is supporting this choice for next year.

3. Availability of Walkie Talkies District-Wide – Mr. Feola reported that there are 228 working walkie talkies and 4 are being serviced. Every school has an ample supply of radios.

4. Special Needs and MLL Status – Leslie Anderson gave an update on Special Education services in the district:

958 students need services, 407 students on distance learning – 43%.

Approximately 70 students at pre-k level:

- 35 at Oldham
- 6 at MartinPreK (virtual)
- 24 Walk-in (virtual)
- Head Starts, Willette and Turner Ave (virtual).
- 81 IEP students placed out of district.
- 16 students placed residentially by DCYF (EP responsible LEA)
- DCYF Foster (OOD) 4 students (3 are non EP residents)
- CRAFT 15-16 students
 - 5 OOD
 - 2 in person
 - 2 DL EP
 - 3 DL with sending district
 - 1 hospitalized
 - 2 quarantine

- 1 homebound tutoring
- Private school services (private and parochial in EP)
 - 13 non-residents students are being serviced.
- This year there are 9 homeschooling students requesting services and are being delivered virtually.

Focus for the beginning of the year is to tie up loose ends from last year, evaluations, in particular. This is going well. There are two unfilled positions – preschool special educator and high school special educator.

EPLAC workshop was September 30th and was recorded and posted to the website. Next EPLAC meeting is October 28. Well attended “Helping children Cope: Anxiety Related to Return to School”

Child Outreach is being done in a different format.

There was discussion on issues of not meeting the needs of special education students who are distance learning.

- Providers are making services available.
- What are some needs you could identify.
- Looking to expand inclusion models and extend professional development to support expansion of programs.
- Supt. Crowley mentioned that there are many accommodations being made for distance learning, there are many options, in some cases there are nurses/paras who could be going into student’s homes for services.
- If any parents want to send their student back into the classroom they can contact Ms. Anderson. No students have been refused when there is a request to return to schools.

Ms. Gallant gave an update on the status of multi-lingual learners.

- This summer, 48 families were tested in person to identify any new incoming MLL students into the district
- RIDE does not allow for them to identify any student without doing an in-person 1 on 1 language assessment.
- MLL teachers worked very hard in reaching out to all families to check in, set up testing appointments, and support students as they transitioned back.
- For the first time, the district is implementing a universal summative assessment called WIDA Model Online. This assessment will allow them to compare any gains/losses of language that may have happened since the close on March 13th. They will be able to compare results with WIDA 2020 and be able to set language goals for each MLL student to best meet their language needs.
- The current Level 1-2 students make up 24% of our MLL population. MLL teachers have been asked to ensure that they are serviced in person as much as possible (other than in the middle school where there is a virtual sharing of RMS and MMS Level 1-2 students)

- 61% of MLL students have elected to learn in a Distance Learning model which has impacted MLL scheduling and providing needs. Once assessments have been completed, MLL teachers will submit caseload schedules/service times (by Oct. 23)

5. How is Morale in the District? – Mr. Tsonos stated that everyone in the district is working very hard and feeling frustrated. He is concerned about the well-being of our staff. Supt. Crowley said everything is different for teaching this year and they are doing mental health activities with the staff and professional development activities with the teachers. The Governor ordered grades pre-k through 5 to do in-person learning. The Superintendent will be setting up negotiation meetings with the unions.

6. Are we Auditing Workloads in each School? – Mr. Tsonos – Dr. Forand reported that staffing is being looked at in all schools.

7. Does each Principal Determine Traffic Patterns in their own Building or is it Mandated? – Mr. Tsonos – Dr. Forand reported that each Principal worked with their staff on traffic patterns for their buildings. They are free to make changes if it doesn't work out.

8. Status of all PPE and How Long will Supplies Last – Ms. Oliveira – Mr. Feola reported that there is enough PPE in the district with multiple vendors on hand if stock runs low. The State did send the district cloth masks and thermometers. There are 450 air purifiers being delivered and some on hand.

9. Status of Air Conditioners and has this been added to the District's Facilities Plan, primarily for Elementary Schools – Ms. Oliveira – Air purifiers have been ordered for the district. The Facilities Sub-Committee will change the plan and update the Strategic Plan. The District School Improvement Team is meeting on Friday, October 30 at 9 am.

10. Staffing in Case of School Closures due to COVID-19 – Ms. Beauchaine – If schools had to close for any length of time staff members such as paraprofessionals could be moved to another school. Teachers would do distance learning.

11. District Grades, Assessments & Reporting Protocols – Dr. Forand said they are still discussing and looking at grading for itinerants. Principals are talking to their staff on how to assign online grades to distance learning. The only changes would be pass/fail with itinerants grading. Modification in the grading would come before the Committee. There will be no grading system changes at the high school.

12. School Committee Group Email – Ms. Beauchaine tabled this item.

Action Items

1. Bill List:

Motion by Ms. Oliveira seconded by Mr. Monteiro and carried by unanimous consent to approve the following warrants as submitted.

Voucher No. 1037 for \$95,055.97
Voucher No. 1039 for \$423,985.89
Voucher No. 1040 for \$1,060,409.27
Voucher No. 1041 for \$14,603.50

2. Updated Building Committee Membership List

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the updated Building Committee membership list as submitted.

Mr. Monteiro reported that the following invoices which total \$10,155,035.48 have been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Building Committee.

3. Invoice for City Reimbursement to EPSD

Motion by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the City reimbursement invoice of \$2,432.75 to the East Providence School District for legal fees related to the EPHS building project as submitted.

4. Ai3 Invoices for Services

Motion by Mr. Monteiro seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Ai3 September 2020 Invoice for Basic Services in the amount of \$122,474.84, Extra Services invoice in the amount of \$1,193.60 and Reimbursable Expenses in the amount of \$634.27 as submitted.

5. Peregrine Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Peregrine Group September 2020 Invoice for services in the amount of \$59,000.00 as submitted.

6. Gilbane Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Gilbane Construction Co. September 2020 invoice for services in the amount of \$9,956,457.59 as submitted.

7. Stephen Turner, Inc. Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Stephen Turner, Inc. September 2020 invoice for services in the amount of \$2,967.50 as submitted.

8. Thielsch Engineering Invoice for Services

Motion by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Ms. Oliveira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Thielsch Engineering September 2020 invoice for services in the amount of \$9,875.00 as submitted.

9. Technology Equipment to Retire/E-Recycle

Motion by Mr. Monteiro, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the list of technology equipment to be retired/e-recycled as submitted. The list of equipment is being phased out by the District.

Public Comments II – Non-Agenda Items – No public comments received.

Announcements – Superintendent Crowley announced that RIDOH reported there are 12 students in quarantine at the high school and they are contacting them. No staff members. Seniors have their SATs tomorrow. Ms. Beauchaine made a suggestion to move the link on our website for lunch applications.

Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Oliviera , seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 10:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Corsi, Administrative Assistant

Karen Oliveira, Clerk