
EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – March 22, 2023

I. Call to Order Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in Open Session on Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium at East Providence High School. Ms. Azanero called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Present: Jenni Azanero, Chair, Jessica Beauchaine, Vice-Chair, Max Brandle, Clerk, Anthony Ferreira, Ryan Queenan and Superintendent Forand.

II. Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried unanimously to move into Executive Session in the main office conference room for the purpose of: Discussion regarding Potential Litigation Pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(2) and Legal Advice Related Thereto; and Consider & Vote on Motion to Adjourn and Convene into Public Session.

III. Reconvene in Open Session (Regular Meeting)

Ms. Azanero called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence were observed. The Chair reported that no votes were taken in executive session. Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to seal the minutes.

IV. Presentation – Green Energy Development

Hannah Aruna, RI Clean Energy in Cranston, presented on wind and solar energy. RI Clean Energy was selected as the chosen vendor and has been a company for twelve years. They are offering a savings program. One year trial program for the City. Allows groups to purchase energy credits. The City and housing have already signed a contract. If District signs, they would get a full 32% discount rate. No expense at all and it would be a way to save money. Would get savings on the bill at end of this calendar year. Savings of six cents on every dollar. \$180,000 savings from renewable energy. The City signed a 25-year contract. They are asking the District for a twenty-five year term with two five-year extensions. 32% discount is fixed rate no matter what. Recommend not going to 100% of what you use. Sell power to districts: Portsmouth, Warwick, Central Falls, West Warwick. Mr. Enos said the program worked well and the contract is in School Committee packet. Dr. Forand and Mr. Enos met with the Mayor. Mr. Ferreira asked if this can be held off until the next meeting. Legal counsel has not reviewed the contract yet. The worst thing that can happen with this contract is that you would pay what you normally would. Ms. Azanero really liked the sound of the project. The contract has been thoroughly vetted. Ms. Beauchaine asked to confirm the accounts in the packet. They are the District's accounts.

V. Student Liaisons – Gayatri Buchta highlighted activities from the high school.

Winter sports finished and spring sports started up on Monday. Unified basketball season has begun. The Townie baseball, softball and track teams are playing on the new fields at the high school and soccer fields in front of the school have been converted to baseball and softball fields. Polar Plunge is occurring this Saturday which raises money for the RI Special Olympics. The high school recently hosted the band and chorus collaboration concert. Student art on display until the end of March at the Weaver Library. The musical "In the Heights" will be next Thursday-Friday at 7 pm. The band recently returned from a field trip to Disney World. The NHS

is planning a field trip to visit art museums in NYC. They have also been raising funds with the International Club for victims of the earthquakes in Turkey. All grades are participating in the SAT math problem of the week raffles as SATs and PSATs are just a few weeks away. Jordyn Brogan and Hailee Manteiga, two computer science students recently won the National Center for Women in IT award. Some seniors have been inducted into the National Technical Honor Society.

Joshua Shanty, 8th grade student and President of the Martin National Junior Honor Society returned to share current events and activities from the middle school. Spring sports started on Monday. Unified basketball season started, as well as, baseball, softball and track and field. Rock our Socks fundraiser for Downs Syndrome was held on March 21st and donations were given to Carl Sweeney with Hope & Faith. On March 9th a collaborative band and chorus concert was held. There will be an all state performance on Sunday at the Veterans Auditorium. Students are participating in the 21st Century after school activities through the Boys & Girls Club.

Aurora Hofstetter, Vice President of the NJHS at Riverside Middle School highlighted activities and events. They celebrated Kindness Week from February 17-22, Pennies for Patience for Leukemia and Lymphoma on February 17th, the plunge on March 25th to support the Riverside unified sports program and Special Olympics and the MMS/RMS Collaborative band concert. An outdoor classroom program for the fall is being discussed with administration.

Ms. Azanero announced a change in the School Committee agenda to make the meetings more efficient. Many items have been included under the consent agenda. School Committee members have the option to take an item out of the consent agenda for a separate vote.

VI. Consent Agenda

1. Communications

2. Home School Requests – There were 10 requests to homeschool.

3. Approval of Minutes:

February 8, 2023 Special School Committee Meeting

February 14, 2023 Executive & Open Session School Committee Meeting

February 13, 2023 Executive and Open Session Building Committee

4. Personnel:

Appointments – Ashley Shirley, Pre-K, Special Education at Oldham, effective 1/30/23; Bora Seng, Paraprofessional at Orlo, effective 3/6/23; Melissa Fortes, Paraprofessional at Myron J. Francis, effective 3/20/23; and Amy Almada, Dean at Whiteknact, effective TBD.

Resignations – Monica Mabe, Psychologist at Silver Spring, effective 2/3/2023.

Retirements – Karen Underwood, Administrative Assistant in Human Resources, 26 ½ year, effective 5/6/2023; Filomena Cunha, Administrative Assistant to the Principal at Martin Middle School, 22 ½ years, effective 4/29/2023; MaryAnne Saunders, Administrative Assistant in Guidance at EPHS, 25 ½ years, effective 2/25/2023; Wayne Branch, English Teacher at EPHS, 24 years, effective end of the 2022-2023 school year; Constance Rogers, Grade 5 at Myron J. Francis, 38 years, effective end of the 2022-2023 school year; and Lloydanne Leddy, Principal at Kent Heights Elementary School, effective 8/15/2023.

Leaves of Absence – Grade 5 Teacher at Whiteknact, effective remainder of the 2022-2023 school year; Reading Teacher at Orlo, effective remainder of the 2022-2023 school year; and Grade 1 Teacher at Orlo, effective remainder of the 2022-2023 school year.

Recalls – None

Non-Renewals - None

5. Bill List

- Voucher No. 1071 dated 10/31/22 - \$95,520.60
- Voucher No. 1072 dated 10/31/22 - \$51,925.00
- Voucher No. 1073 dated 10/31/22 - \$311,978.77
- Voucher No. 1015 dated 3/1/23 - \$222,050.71
- Voucher No. 1017 dated 3/9/23 - \$325.00
- Voucher No. 1018 dated 3/9/23 - \$1,686,497.80

6. 2023-2024 School Calendar

7. Move Martin Pre-K to Oldham School in September

8. Invoices for Services

- Ai3 Architects Extra Services – February 2023 - \$1,440.00
- Peregrine Group, LLC – February 2023 - \$5,937.50

9. Contract for Green Development, LLC

10. RFPs/RFQs

- Award HVAC Multi-Year Preventative Maintenance RFP
- Award Special Education Program Review Audit
- Award RFQ EPSD Technology 2023 Internet Mini Bid

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by unanimous consent to separate the executive session and open session of the February 13, 2023 Building Committee meeting minutes from the consent agenda.

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by a vote of 4-1 to approve the executive session and open session of the February 13, 2023 Building Committee meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Ferreira abstained.

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve all the minutes except the minutes from the February 13, 2023 executive session and open session of the Building Committee meetings as submitted.

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the consent agenda with the proposed revision of #6 – 2023-2024 School Calendar to have August 31st as the first day of school, not September 1, 2023.

VII. Public Comments

1. Chrissy Rossi asked the following questions:
 - Is there a punch list for the high school?
 - How much is the punch list worth?
 - Who created the punch list?
 - Is there a retainage?

- How much is the District holding back from Gilbane?
- Has the City of East Providence inspected the high school for electrical, mechanical and building?

Ms. Azanero clarified that during public comments the School Committee will listen but will not respond during the public comment portion of the meeting. The public can direct their questions or concerns to Superintendent Forand and she will respond.

2. Sarah Hammill from the Orchid Montessori Center in East Providence wanted to introduce their services as a community partner and resource center. They have an inclusive center for education. They have a teacher and speech therapist present for the entire day. To support an inclusive center of education, there will be a zoning board meeting on April 5th.

VIII. PTO/PTA/EPLAC Reports –Mary Nascimento, Co-Chair of EPLAC invited all to attend the EPLAC meeting/workshop at Martin Middle School on March 29th at 6:00 pm. They will be hosting a workshop on “Experience the timeline of School Transitioning beginning with Pre-K to Kindergarten”. Principal Rebello and Ms. Moon will be present to answer any questions. EPLAC is seeking nominations for educators, paraprofessionals, support staff, therapists, programs, students, parents and/or community resources that have provided consistently outstanding services for special education students, especially in the area of inclusion. Once all the nominations have been received and recipients have been chosen, there will be a recognition program reception in May 2023 at the high school.

IX. Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Forand thanked all the retirees for their dedicated services and wished them happy retirements.

1. Facilities Update – They are working on plans for building temporary classrooms at Martin. Nets are going up at the high school to stop the balls from leaving the field. The food pantry to open on April 6th. Stop and Shop donated \$15,000 and We Share Hope received a grant for \$10,000 from Stop & Shop to support the food pantry. The old Oldham School has been cleaned out and is ready to hand over to the City. Mr. Ferreira requested a copy of the contract for the Riverside Middle School windows. Mr. Enos responded that the contract has not been signed yet and will send a copy as soon as it is signed.
2. Finance Update – Dr. Forand reported that the District is in good shape. Line item #53205 is a little high because they are contracting with agencies for psychologists and speech therapists.
3. Pre-K ECERS Accountability – Principal Karen Rebello reported that Pre-K at Martin also has an accountability rating. They have a 5-star rating from BrightStars. She explained the criteria for receiving this rating. They have very highly skilled teachers. The program is also overseen by DCYF and the BEP. They also have to meet all monitoring regulations and CECE regulations which have to update each year. All teachers are required to do 20 hours of professional development.

X. Director of Teaching & Learning Report – Lindsey Reilly

1. EPHS Math Curriculum Update – The District engaged in the five-part process to select high school math materials. The EPHS math team analyzed district-wide data in mathematics, reviewed their instructional vision and set priorities for a successful adoption and launch of materials in alignment to the work previously conducted by the middle school mathematics team. The team reviewed the RIDE approved high school math materials against the priorities set and selected three resources to pilot. At the end of the quarter-long pilot, the secondary math teachers and MLL/special educators at EPHS participated in a facilitated session on March 1st to select a core curriculum. Reveal Math was unanimously selected.

XI. Policy Committee Report – Jessica Beauchaine

1. School Committee By-Laws – 1st read

The School Committee By-laws have not been updated since 2013. Reviewed to make sure they were up to date and looked at other cities and towns. Mr. Queenan asked for the policy book. Mr. Brandle appreciated that suggestions were included. Mr. Queenan asked about video recording. Meetings don't need to be live streamed. Ms. Azanero reported that there are other school committees that have language about elected positions. These By-laws include a lot of language that is redundant.

2. Health and Wellness – Mr. Queenan reported that the Health Committee is touring buildings and seeing classrooms. The goal of the committee is looking at policy, increasing membership and creating policy to impact the whole child not just nutrition. He is happy to report they are approaching the third meeting and currently working on a survey to get feedback on changes and how using policy.

XII. Building Committee Report – Dr. Forand reported on the biggest milestones- An RFP has been put out for a Construction Manager at Risk for Martin and will be interviewing on March 28th. Preliminary plans for Martin were reviewed. Ms. Beauchaine stated that Building Committee meetings are open to the public to attend. Meetings are held in the library at Martin Middle School.

XIII. Discussion Items

1. Update on District's Recruitment Strategies – Dr. Forand posted the first round of openings. Interviews are starting next week and they will probably have to go through several rounds. Opening positions will be at the Department of Education job fair. The District is a couple of months ahead on this than in the past. They will be looking at student teachers and offering them positions before they begin to look outside. The District had a 90% retention rate.
2. Scheduling of Bi-Monthly School Committee Meetings – Ms. Azanero wanted to hear from the school committee members about more than one meeting except when having budget meetings. With the building projects and the many initiatives, the ability to split up topics will have more time and better understanding of hard work. Mr. Brandle is interested

especially when at the meetings until 11:00 pm. Agendas would be restructured. They could split student liaisons, construction projects and get through policies faster. The decision would be up to the members and Superintendent and is open for further discussion. They would want to be mindful and respectful of people's time.

XIV. Action Items

1. EPSD Stage II Resubmission – Ai3 Amendment #2

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Stage II resubmission – Ai3 Amendment #2 as submitted.

2. EPSD FEI – Ai3 Amendment #3

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Facilities Equity Initiative – Ai3 Amendment #3 as submitted.

3. RIDE MOA for Menu for Success Program

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Rhode Island Department of Education's Memorandum of Agreement for Menu for Success Program as submitted. Dr. Forand stated that the MOA is for the food truck and as soon as School Committee approves, RIDE will start production.

4. EPHS Building Committee Representatives from School Committee and City Council

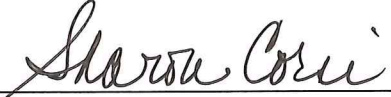
Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve Jenni Azanero and Robert Rodericks as Building Committee representatives from both the School Committee and City Council as submitted. It is a requirement from RIDE to have a member represented from both the School Committee and City Council.

XV. Announcements – Ms. Beauchaine announced that this Saturday is the plunge at Roger Wheeler State Beach at 11:00 am. Everyone is welcome to go and support the schools and they can donate if can't attend. Mr. Brandle designed logo for School Committee meetings that tells about the School Committee and meetings.

XVI. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant


Max Brandle, School Committee Clerk