
EAST PROVIDENCE SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – February 27, 2024

I. Call to Order Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in Open Session on Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 6:00 pm in the auditorium at East Providence High School. Ms. Furtado called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Present: Jenni Furtado, Chair, Jessica Beauchaine, Vice-Chair, Max Brandle, Clerk and Anthony Ferreira. Ryan Queenan was absent. Also present were Superintendent Dr. Forand and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Bowler.

II. Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried unanimously to move into Executive Session in the main office conference room for the purpose of: Discussion regarding Personnel Pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(1); Discussion regarding School Security & Safety Pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(3); and Consider & Vote on Motion to Adjourn and Convene into Public Session. Appropriate disclosure was made by the Chair concerning compliance with RIGL §42-46-5(a)(1) indicating that any person to be discussed had been appropriately notified in advance in writing and given the opportunity to have the discussion held in public session. No request had been made.

III. Reconvene in Open Session (Regular Meeting)

Ms. Furtado called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence were observed. The Chair reported that no votes were taken in executive session except to reconvene in open session. Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to seal the minutes.

IV. Student Liaisons

Nathan Tavares reported on the second semester at the high school. This year students have advocated for two separate junior and senior proms. The junior prom will be held on Friday, May 10th at the Valley Country Club and the senior prom will be held on Friday, May 17th at the Newport Marriott. The prom dress giveaway is continuing this year and is looking for donations of new or gently used prom dresses, shoes or suits for students. Yearbooks need to be purchased by this Thursday. Cap and gown orders for seniors are due Sunday, March 3rd. The CTC application process for current eighth graders and current freshmen is open until March 15th. The Scholarship Foundation of East Providence is offering a generous scholarship to EP seniors. Applications must be submitted by March 15th. The class of 2025 has been busy fundraising over the past month. There have been many students interested in parking at the high school and the parking lot is reaching capacity. EPHS is now offering students the opportunity to park at the Agawam Fields parking lot with bus transportation to and from the school. The annual band/chorus collaboration concert will be held on Thursday, March 7th with eighth graders from both middle schools. The EPHS National Honor Society has been extremely successful with their fundraising efforts. The championship banquet for the girls volleyball team was held on January 21st. This year East Providence is participating in three athletic co-ops

during the winter season. Spring sports will begin March 18th and registration is currently in progress.

Megan Pita shared highlights from Martin Middle School. Thank you to Ms. Beauchaine and the MMS PTA for putting together a meat raffle on January 27th at Contenders in East Providence. The event raised \$748 for MMS PTA. The NJHS is planning a BINGO Night on March 22nd at East Providence High School. Martin had 99 students that made summa cum laude and 175 students made magna cum laude. The wrestling team had a fabulous season and three students made it to the states. Congratulations to Violet Jessop who participated in the first ever, history making, sanctioned girls middle and high school wrestling tournament. She placed first in her weight class bringing home GOLD to both MMS and Townie Nation. The boys basketball team had an amazing season and won the divisional championship. This is the first year for a middle school swim team and Martin has six swimmers participating. Many events took place like the Soup-ER Cereal Bowl competition with Riverside, the NJHS Lolli Luvs sale and the dance/sports night on February 9th. On February 7th the administrative team and the EP Police department presented to students the new ALICE protocols which is a presentation to inform students what to do should a situation happen.

Tyler Melmed spoke about recent events at Riverside Middle School. To kick off the new year, they had their Middle of the Year Viking Spirit Assemblies to review expectations, things to work on and what has been going well. There are incentives for good behavior. Eighth graders had the opportunity to plan their schedules for 9th grade and apply to the CTC. From January 26 to February 9, Riverside collaborated with Martin Middle School and Carl Sweeney of the Hope and Faith Drive and collected soup cans and cereal boxes to benefit residents of East Providence. On January 30, Riverside hosted a skate night which is always popular. On February 1, they had a Pink Zone fundraiser. Riverside raised \$1,000 for Breast Cancer Awareness. The boys won the basketball game and the girls demonstrated excellent teamwork. School Counselors week was held recently. Thank you to Mrs. Albanese, Ms. Hamel, Mrs. Lombardo and Mrs. Mignanelli for spreading kindness through fun school activities. The winter dance was great. The week before vacation was the Quarter 2 Honors Bingo for all students who made the honor roll. There is an attendance incentive for students to earn Viking Spirit water bottles filled with candy for students with no more than two absences this school year. Riverside has been getting new windows over the past few months.

V. Consent Agenda

1. Personnel Report

Appointments – Angela Flynn, Math Teacher at EPHS, effective 12/18/23; Catarina Grilo, Administrative Assistant at Martin Middle School, effective 1/29/2024; Saige Snavelly, Paraprofessional at Kent Heights, effective 1/29/2024; Melinda Germano, Paraprofessional at Whiteknact, effective 2/5/2024; Brittany Crevier, Paraprofessional at Whiteknact, effective 1/22/2024; and Katherine Cardoso, School Nurse at Waddington, effective 2/26/2024.

Resignations – Sheila Oliver, Paraprofessional at Kent Heights, effective 1/2/2024; Caterina Grilo, Paraprofessional at Whiteknact, effective 1/27/2024; Claudine Glaude, Paraprofessional at Pre-K, effective 1/23/2024; Steven Ribeiro, Custodian at Silver Spring, effective 1/19/2024; Abigail LaDue, Paraprofessional at EPHS, effective 1/3/2024; Amoy Williams, Lunch/Recess

Attendant at Waddington, effective 2/1/2024; Tracy Mollock, Grade 1 Teacher at Kent Heights, effective 2/9/2024; Brittany Crevier, Lunch/Recess Attendant at Whiteknact, effective 1/22/2024; Telmena Forte, Paraprofessional at Waddington, effective 2/10/2024; Elissa Carr, School Nurse at Waddington, effective 2/28/2024; Christina Coleman, Pre-K Teacher at Oldham, effective 2/16/2024; and Ryan Fish, Social Worker at Waddington, effective 3/9/2024.

Retirements – Dr. Celeste Bowler, Assistant Superintendent, effective 6/30/2024; Kelly Vasey, Instructional Coach, effective end of the 2023-2024 school year; and Nancy Anthony, Grade 1 Teacher at Orlo, effective end of the 2023-2024 school year.

Non-Renewals – There were three non-renewals, effective end of the 2023-2024 school year.

Release of Employment – There was one release of employment pursuant to RIGL §28-33-47, effective 2/1/2024.

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the consent agenda as submitted. Ms. Furtado recognized Dr. Bowler on her retirement. All retirees will be recognized at the end of the school year. Ms. Beauchaine stated that Dr. Bowler has left an indelible mark in East Providence.

VI. PTO/PTA/EPLAC Reports – Ms. Beauchaine represented the East Providence Local Advisory Committee. There is a new EPLAC Chair, Logan Moniz. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 28th at 6 pmth at Kent Heights Elementary School. They are currently working on some workshops for March. The Extended School Year (ESY) program will run from July 1 to August 1st. EPLAC is looking for volunteers and a Co-Chair to work with Logan.

VII. Superintendent's Report

1. Waddington and Orlo Principals' Report

Principal Moore and Principal Pita did a power point presentation collectively on their equity teams. They discussed the Survey Works data from 2022-2023. Their goal is to create the best place for children to learn and for families, staff and students to feel welcomed. Their equity teams started in September 2022. Orlo believes in providing all community members with opportunities and resources needed for success. Waddington is committed to providing a safe environment so each student receive what they need to meet their full potential. They will use data to provide resources and support to all students to ensure they achieve academic and social success. The equity principles are: everyone is grounded in a common purpose; everyone gets what they need; and everyone has open access to resources. The equity teams meet on a monthly basis.

2. Army JROTC – In 2017 the District applied for the JROTC program and have been on a wait list ever since. This February they received a letter saying they were approved for a Chapter of the JROTC program. It's a character development program too and could also be a pathway at the CTC. More opportunities are needed for students. The cost to the District is \$93,000 per

year for the instructor and the Army will pay for the rest of the program. Once the program is RIDE approved, there may be other funding opportunities. Students can be enrolled for four years in the program and scholarship money is available if a student is interested in going into the military. They do a week-long summer program and after school programs. Instructors work for the school department but are approved by the Army. \$46,000 would come out of this year's budget. A preliminary survey went out to students. Two hundred students took the survey and sixty-five students are interested.

3. Alternate Learning Program – Dr. Forand is working on creating an alternate learning program for next year at the administration building utilizing two classrooms with a maximum of 40 students for half day classes. The nine students who are placed out of district can be serviced back into the district, as well as, other students who are struggling to fit in at the high school. Four teachers will be working with these students and the District is looking to hire a paraprofessional and someone to oversee the program. Ms. Beauchaine requested that the School Committee be informed about the program.

4. Facilities Update

Riverside Middle School window replacement project is going as planned. Science room rehab started last week and is progressing as expected. The media center is slated to start in early summer. The walk-in freezer/refrigerator replacement to start in summer 2024. Demo for gymnasium divider replacement was on Thursday, February 22 and done on February 23. Installation will be on April 15-19. Martin Middle School exterior site work and interior demolition has begun. Interior demo for phase I has completed. Exterior demo began last week and will be wrapping up in the next two weeks. Silver Spring window replacement project punch list is still in progress. Orlo Elementary courtyard renovation project to start in the spring of 2024. Window replacement project punch list is still in progress. Playground fence replacement scheduled for April vacation 2024. Myron J. Francis boiler replacement slated for summer 2024. Contract was awarded a few months ago to Nex-Gen Services. Waddington three-phase construction renovation project; Phase I to commence summer of 2024; Phase II in summer of 2025; and Phase III in summer of 2026. The High School has three open items that remain on the punch list. Looking at the addition of doors for selected bathrooms within the school. The facilities team is working with the athletic department to prepare for the start of spring sports. The administration building LED light replacement project was completed in mid-January and passed the RI Energy visual inspection in early February. The District is now waiting on RI Energy rebate. The build out of large offices into smaller classrooms, conference rooms and offices are slated for proposal to City building inspector and fire marshal on or about March 4.

Mr. Ferreira would like an update on the window projects at Silver Spring and Orlo. He requested all the paperwork on the project. He would like a set of drawings for the classrooms being built at the administration building. Dr. Forand has updated the Committee weekly on the window projects. Legal counsel will be present to discuss it further. Ms. Beauchaine would like to do a walk through at Silver Spring and Martin.

5. Finance Update – The FY22 Audit is on the agenda for approval. District practices and policies are all good. The single audit has not been completed yet and will come before the

Committee. The District received the \$1.6 million from the City of East Providence in July 2023. Lunch applications are still being accepted.

VIII. Discussion Items

1. Update on Student Residency Confirmation in EPSD – Student verification has been followed through. An attendance officer was hired to go out and check residency. Residency tips have been received on the website. New students and Pre-K students provide residency forms during the registration process. The District is looking to automate forms for next year and will also be part of the registration packet. A draft policy will be worked on.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to move up item #3 of the Discussion Items - Update on Bridge Construction and its Effect on the School District (Channel 6 was present and recorded this portion of the meeting)

Dr. Forand reported that buses that cross Pawtucket, Broadway and Warren where the highway ramps are, are getting stuck in traffic making students late for school. Mondays and Fridays there is less traffic. Some buses have to cross the City for specialized programs. Some students were moved off those routes. She worked with the bus company and Ms. Clarkin to change some routes. To date, the bridge issue has cost the District approximately \$10,000. The Superintendent has been in touch with the Governor, Mayor and Director of DOT about delays. Government officials have worked to change the times of the traffic lights. Principals will inform administration if buses are late. Elementary schools really feel the effect with buses being delayed. Attendance hasn't had a big impact. Students are given time to get in especially if there is traffic. It is having an impact on the commute for staff. The situation is continually being monitored. Mr. Ferreira asked if the District is logging in time lost in education. Additional expenses are being tracked and will be submitted to the City. At the beginning the police department helped the District with getting the buses to schools. Additional changes will be made to change some routes for students to get to school on time. Missing the morning routine has an impact on their day. The bridge situation may have an impact on hiring.

2. Update on Special Education Program Review Report – Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Leslie Anderson, reported that the East Providence School District contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to conduct a comprehensive special education program review. The purpose of the review was to examine the quality and efficiencies of special education services and identify program need. AIR conducted this review over an 8-month period, between April 2023 and December 2023. Ms. Anderson went through the summary report which included the District's strengths and AIR's recommendations.

3. Update on Bridge Construction and its Effect on the School District – This item was moved up on the agenda.

IX. Public Comments – Chrissy Rossi read an email she received from a family regarding their child being bullied at Riverside Middle School. She asked the District to please check the bullying policy. If there is any extra money to consider mechanicals for the high school.

X. Action Items

1. 2023-2024 EPLAC Members

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the members of the 2023-2024 East Providence Local Advisory Committee for Special Education as submitted.

2. Fiscal Year 2022 Audit Report

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the FY22 Audit Report as submitted.

3. Army JROTC Program

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Army Junior ROTC Program as submitted.

4. Alternate Learning Program

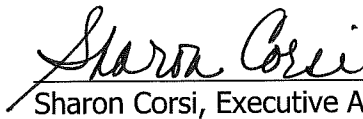
Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the alternate learning program as submitted.

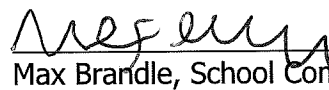
XI. Announcements – The girls hockey playoff is Friday at 7 pm.

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant


Max Brandle, School Committee Clerk