
EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – April 9, 2024

I. Call to Order - Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in Open Session on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium at East Providence High School. Present: Jenni Furtado, Chair, Jessica Beauchaine, Vice Chair, Max Brandle, Clerk, Anthony Ferreira and Ryan Queenan. Superintendent Dr. Forand and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Bowler were also present. Ms. Furtado called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

II. Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried unanimously to move into Executive Session in the main office conference room for the purpose of: Legal advice regarding pending cases pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(2); and consider & vote on motion to adjourn and convene into public session.

III. Reconvene in Open Session (Regular Meeting)

Ms. Furtado called the meeting to order at 7:17 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. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to seal the minutes.

IV. Student Liaisons

EPHS - Nathan Tavares reported that the theatre program put on an amazing performance of Les Miserables from April 4-6, guest star Principal Black. Mrs. Kortney Braga was announced as the EPHS Teacher of the Year. The senior merch shop is now open and all purchases need to be made before April 12th. Mr. Anderson was the recipient of the EP Youth Council Impact Award for impacting students in the most meaningful way. An award dinner will be held on May 2 to honor him. EP Herd is hosting a Spirit Week to unite the student body. The Vaccinate Before You Graduate program is being held on April 11 at EPHS. The summer job fair is scheduled for April 24th. The annual Empty Bowls fundraiser will be held on Thursday, April 25th from 5-7:30 pm in the student commons. The NHS will be participating in the Imagine Walk for autism awareness on April 28th. The CTC had a few big updates this past month – 510 applications were received for students in grades 8-10 for the 11 technical programs. There is only space for 260 students so many applications will be placed on the waitlist. The construction program made a playhouse for the Rosemary's Wish Kid's organization and was showcased at the RI Home Show last weekend where it was then given to the young recipient. EPHS students were very successful in this year's SkillsUSA competition. Spring sports are starting to pick up this year.

Martin Middle School – Megan Pita was unable to attend the meeting this evening.

Olivia McMahon – Riverside Middle School 7th grader shared events that happened in the third quarter and events coming up in the fourth quarter. The Unified Champion School Plunge to benefit Special Olympics RI was held on Saturday, March 23rd at Roger Wheeler State Beach. The Riverside team raised \$1,047. April 1st was community clean up where students cleaned up litter around the fields at Riverside trying to promote a clean environment. It gave students some community service hours that they need for NJHS. April 4th was the end of the 3rd quarter. Spring sports season has just started bringing students an opportunity to try something new. The Boys and Girls Club of EP has partnered with Riverside and all EP schools to bring events and activities for the students. This spring they brought volleyball and flag football to Riverside. Students completed the ELA portions of RICAS testing and will be completing the math portions the end of April, beginning of May. They will be honoring Arbor Day and planting trees around the school to support healthy plant life for the earth and promoting a healthy and green future.

V. Consent Agenda

1. **Communications** – Enrollment numbers and technology data.
2. **Home School Requests** – There were five requests to homeschool students this month.
3. **Approval of Minutes:**

March 12, 2024 Executive & Open School Committee Meeting
March 19, 2024 Special Open School Committee Meeting
April 1, 2024 Special School Committee Meeting
February 12, 2024 Building Committee Meeting (EPHS)
March 11, 2024 Building Committee Meeting (MMS/Wadd/RMS)

4. Personnel

Appointments – Cameron Farias, Lunch/Recess Attendant at Whiteknact, effective 3/12/2024; and Cynthia Dumas, Paraprofessional at Myron J. Francis, effective 3/18/2024.

Resignations – Lorraine Russell, Lunch/Recess Attendant at Whiteknact, effective 3/14/2024; and Richard Bianco, Electrician in Administration, effective 3/30/2024.

There were no retirements, leaves of absence, non-renewals or recalls.

5. Bill List

- Voucher No. 1020 dated 3/20/24 – \$600.00
- Voucher No. 1021 dated 3/27/24 - \$152,607.72
- Voucher No. 1023 dated 4/1/24 - \$25.00
- Voucher No. 1024 dated 4/4/24 - \$2,419,998.86

6. Construction Invoices - EPHS for March 2024

- Ai3 Architects Extra Services – \$3,466.00

Construction Total – \$3,466.00

Stage III Invoices - MMS/Waddington Projects for March 2024

- Ai3 Basic Services MMS - \$46,713.27

- Ai3 Supplemental Services MMS - \$32,282.36
- Peregrine Group - \$62,920.00
- Shawmut MMS (February) - \$2,315,986.50
- Shawmut MMS - \$803,115.03
- Shawmut Waddington - \$114,000.00
- Stephen Turner, Inc. Waddington - \$105.00
- Willscot - \$2,038.75

Stage III Total - \$3,377,160.91

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to table the approval of the April 1, 2024 minutes until the May meeting.

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the consent agenda as submitted. There were no comments or questions by the Committee.

VI. PTO/PTA/EPLAC Reports – Tori Jessop Crowley reported that the last EPLAC meeting was on March 27th and had a large attendance. They have an area of the meeting called “Tell us something good”; Carl Sweeney from Hope & Faith was able to work with Silver Spring School to do their kindness bags which included handwritten notes by the students. The Unified basketball game was great against Hope High School. The lacrosse team thanked the EPHS administration for their support of unified students. The Special Olympics polar plunge was held on Saturday, March 23rd and the EP Unified team also raised money. Thank you for support of the EP hockey game. Townie News Network offers inclusion, as well as, a new art club. EPHS is offering a study hall on Tuesday and Thursdays. The upcoming annual recognition night will be held on May 1st. All nominations and honorees have been notified.

Ms. Beauchaine reported that the Riverside PTA raised a lot of funds this year and were able to help out the high school and other schools. They will be working with Whiteknact next year. They had such a great fanbase on Saturdays and were able to do a lot with the money and will do a great end of the year for the students at Riverside.

VII. Superintendent’s Report

1. Whiteknact and Silver Spring Principals’ Reports

Principal Kelly Guglietti highlighted some of the work they are doing around PBIS at Whiteknact. PBIS stands for positive behavior intervention support. It is a model where they teach students what to do rather than telling students what not to do. They recommend at least five positive comments made to one negative comment. They chose PBIS to promote and warm and welcoming school climate. They believe that a warm, welcoming, safe and inclusive school climate where every student feels they belong and can be their authentic selves is key to increasing academic learning and success. Their school improvement plan measurable goal is to increase the percentage of students feeling respected by peers at school from 52% in spring 2023 to 60% in spring 2024. Their action steps are to launch newly established school core values and embed core values teaching what it means to be respectful, responsible and proud throughout the school and across settings.

Silver Spring Principal Allison Amodie created a school improvement goal to increase family and community engagement. According to Surveyworks data from previous years, their families' perception of the degree to which families become involved with and interact with their child's school is 17%. The school improvement goal is to increase families' engagement perception on Survey Works from 17% to 22% by the end of the 2023 school year. They held many family engagement events and they provided family support resources. They also had many community engagement events from the start of school for the benefit of the community. The Kindness Club is a partnership with Mr. Sweeney from Hope & Faith that meets with 4th and 5th graders bi-weekly and engages in projects to better the community.

2. Facilities Update – The major construction taking place at Martin Middle School is proceeding in an overall positive manner. They were forced to deal with some contaminated soil that was discovered there and are working with RIDEM and the construction management team to address that issue. The window replacement at Riverside Middle School is progressing very well. The science classroom reconfiguration hit a snag when unknown asbestos was discovered and had to be mitigated. The new freezer/fridge is on track for installation this summer. Current boiler at Myron J. Francis is on track for summer replacement. The spring break district wide facilities projects for April 15 through 19 include: Orlo playground fence replacement; Orlo courtyard refurbishment; Silver Spring comprehensive vent cleaning; Myron J. Francis gym ceiling-mounted AHU vent cleaning; Riverside gym divider curtain installation; Riverside new water heater installation; Whiteknact uninvent swap; Alternative Learning classroom construction in administration building; and Waddington phase 1 electrical installation. The Pawtucket Avenue paving project for water main replacement (non-EPSD project) starting on 4/15/24.
3. Finance Update – Mr. Enos reported that year-to-date FY24 remains on target.

VIII. Policy Committee Report

1. Student Behavior Policy – 1st read. Ms. Beauchaine stated that this policy is a general student behavior policy not outlining anything particular. She read the policy. Students need to be aware of their behaviors and parents need to be aware of consequences. The Administration shall develop Codes of Conduct included in student handbooks for the purpose of identifying unacceptable student conduct, approved annually by the School Committee. These Codes of Conduct shall be distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year. Parents and students are required to acknowledge the Codes of Conduct with a signature and date and returned to school by the end of September. The Code of Conduct is being revised. Mr. Queenan inquired as to who would be tracking the signature page to ensure that it was signed and returned. It would have to be someone at the school level. Dr. Forand stated that there is a committee working to update the code of conduct, same as the dress code committee. Data is reviewed annually and will be shared with the Committee. Handbooks will be completed by July 30th so students will have them in September. At the end of September a report will be provided to the School Committee on how many students haven't returned their signed form.

2. Student Representative to the School Committee Policy – 1st read. Currently there is no policy. This policy aims to establish the position of a student representative to the East Providence School Committee. The student representative may not make any motions or vote. They shall provide reports to the School Committee that include student activities, topics and concerns and propose future agenda items for consideration. They will not attend executive sessions of the meetings. The student will be any member of the junior class who is a student in good standing and meets the eligibility requirements for extracurricular activities as detailed in the EPHS handbook and serve as the student representative during their senior year. The selection process is being worked on. The student could be credited with community service hours. A sentence will be added to the policy that states that the student would be able to step down at any time if it wasn't a good fit for them.
3. Policy Review Cycle
Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to table this until the next meeting.
4. Discussion regarding Incident Reporting Policy – Ms. Beauchaine expressed that it is important that any incident that has happened in any school that requires a suspension in school, the School Committee needs to be notified within a certain time frame. That would be any incident that involves threats, fights, assaults, weapons and threats made to teachers. Currently, the Committee does receive a chart of incidents from the Superintendent. The chart should be updated to include different types of incidents that include police and fire involvement. It is important that the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent or another designee should be informed within 24 hours of a serious incident that resulted in a suspension or should be informed within 48 hours for a lesser offense. Mr. Ferreira stated that Principals need to be notified of what is expected of them regarding notifying of incidents.

Dr. Forand stated that there is already a protocol in place. Incidents are being reported to central office.

IX. Building Committee Report

1. Building Project Update – Mr. Monteiro gave a brief report from the Building Committee. Funds are still being reconciled for the high school project and they are looking to utilize the funds on items needed. Coordinating on the Mast Arm on Pawtucket Avenue with RIDOT. Anne DaSilva from Peregrine reported on Martin Middle School. Building permit has been received. Currently on track to meet M/WBE participation. Open items include contaminated soil that was found. A public meeting is scheduled on Monday, April 15th. The groundbreaking ceremony was held today at 11 am. They will continue to work within the building. Abatement and demo will be complete this month. After the public meeting, they will be proceeding with the rest of the site work. Construction photos were shown. Waddington scope of electrical work will be done after spring break. M/WBE participation is at 13%. They are working with Shawmut to increase participation. Riverside Middle School received building permit. Started excavation of science classrooms on the first floor. Underneath the slabs of concrete, additional abatement needs to be done which is in the process now. Pouring concrete at end of the month. Photos of demo and trenching in science classrooms were shown.

Mr. Ferreira asked about money left over at the high school. He requested a list of what the Building Committee is looking at to spend the money on. Mr. Monteiro stated they are working with the City while the project is still open to utilize the funds on items such as vinyl wall coverings, an IT upgrade/camera and security systems at the high school and administration building and maintenance for the fields. The money has to go back to the City or be used for the high school.

Mr. Queenan asked what the deadline was for spending the money. The money can be spent while the project is still open and it's still open with the Mast Arm project.

The public meeting on Monday is a DEM required notification meeting to let the public know what levels of contamination were actually found in the soil. A consultant will be present to answer any questions. Work is still going on while waiting on DEM report.

X. Discussion Items

1. Convert Dean Positions to Assistant Principal Positions at the Elementary Schools – Dr. Forand is proposing to convert Deans to Assistant Principals beginning with the start of next school year. The reason is to give the Deans an expanded leadership role and when there are vacancies in the District, they will have administrative roles to fill them. There is an increase in need at the school level. They can help with evaluations, curriculum, supervise school-sponsored events. Administration is working with staff in those positions to take classes to get certified. Dr. Forand looked at salaries around the state for assistant principals and they are currently being paid \$90,000 – \$107,000. Deans are being paid \$104,000 so there would be no additional cost. It would provide additional support to our Principals. For deans not interested in becoming assistant principals, they would have the opportunity to go into other positions. They would have the option over the next three years to get certified. A salary and contract would need to be approved by the School Committee.

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by unanimous consent to move the Facilities Report before Public Comments.

Mr. Ferreira asked why they were working on fence removal today at Orlo when it was scheduled for spring break next week. Mr. Ferreira received many messages that the fence was down and had slices in it. Mr. Murphy explained that the District saved \$7,500 to remove the fence today rather than have the fence company do it. The Superintendent will look at the fence tomorrow and report back to the Committee.

Superintendent stated that two of the lanes on Pawtucket Avenue from Shaw's to PCD will be closed down to pave during April vacation.

XI. Public Comments – Chrissy Rossi said she attended the Building Committee meeting on Monday evening and she couldn't hear what was being said. She thought she heard that \$89,000 was being spent to paint eight-nine doors at Waddington and would that include

procurement of doors or is that in another budget. There are two painters on staff who can do that and save the District money. She would like to know if she was misunderstood. Ms. Furtado gently reminded Ms. Rossi that this time was for public comments only for the public to express whatever concerns or questions they may have. A School Committee member will follow up with her with accurate information.

Tori Jessop Crowley asked for transparency on policies if there could be a hyperlink in pdf form when agenda is submitted to the Secretary of State Office so parents can view and ask questions. The City is willing to work with the District to cross post on their calendar since EPLAC's website isn't working properly. She also asked in the Behavior Policy and Code of Conduct, that consequences be universal at all schools. With regard to student representatives, confer with two middle school councils to get full representation of student population. She asked if the Superintendent is keeping the Deans at every school or replacing with an Assistant Principal. She stated there are two bills in the senate that require free breakfast and lunch to all elementary and secondary students attending public schools and would like written support if possible.

XII. Action Items

1. Convert Dean Positions to Assistant Principal Positions at Elementary Schools

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by a vote of 4-1 to approve the conversion of Dean positions to Assistant Principal positions at the elementary schools as submitted with discussion. Mr. Ferreira voted nay.

1. Award Riverside Middle School FF&E RFP

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to award Riverside Middle School Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment RFP for the new science room and library furniture as part of the facility equity initiative with RIDE as submitted.

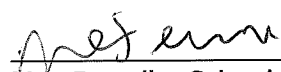
XIII. Announcements – Dr. Bowler has secured 242 spots for Camp Invention on June 24-28 and July 8-12 from 8:30 am – 2:30 pm and will be held at Myon J. Francis School. Registration information will be coming out soon.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant


Max Brandle, School Committee Clerk