
EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – December 10, 2024

I. Call to Order - Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in open session on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at 6:00 pm 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 Forand and Assistant Superintendent Lisa Benedetti-Ramzi were also present. Ms. Furtado called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence were observed.

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to move up Public Comments and also have it at the end of the agenda.

Mayor Roberto DaSilva congratulated Jenni Furtado and Max Brandle for their public service and presented them with a proclamation. He also congratulated the School Committee members who were newly elected. Ms. Furtado will be moving up to becoming a state representative for Pawtucket and East Providence. Mr. Brandle will be taking a break from public service for now.

II. Student Liaisons – Ty Messier from East Providence High School was excited to share that the Townie Bazaar held on November 23 was an incredible success. They had an outstanding turnout and raised thousands of dollars to support various committees, clubs, sports teams and local businesses. On December 5th EPHS hosted their band and chorus concert which was a wonderful celebration of talented Townies performing for the community. The annual Winter Ball will take place on December 13. Another blood drive will be held on December 20th. There were some incredible achievements during the fall sports season. The football team made history by defeating LaSalle 27-26 in their annual Thanksgiving game, marking their first victory over them in seven years. Winter sports are now underway.

III. Consent Agenda

1. **Communications** – Enrollment numbers and monthly technology data.

2. **Home School Requests** – There were four requests to homeschool students.

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

November 12, 2024 Executive & Open Session School Committee Meeting

November 4, 2024 Building Committee Meeting (MMS/Wadd/RMS)

November 11, 2024 Building Committee Meeting (EPHS)

4. **Personnel Report**

Appointments – Allison Creighton, Grade 3 Teacher at Hennessey, effective 11/12/2024; Kristen Burke, Speech Pathologist at Waddington, effective 11/1/2024; Rosemary Carvalho,

Paraprofessional at Martin Middle School, effective 11/18/2024; Kehinde Vaz, Social Worker at Oldham, effective 12/10/2024; Andrew Perry, Paraprofessional at Oldham, effective 12/9/2024; Kristine Ribeiro, Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Principal at Riverside Middle School, effective 12/9/2024; and Catarina Perry, Director of Human Resources, effective 1/2/25.

Resignations – Evita Hernaez, Speech Pathologist at Oldham, effective 11/21/2024.

Retirements – Lisa Orsini, Kindergarten Teacher at Hennessey, effective end of the 2024-2025 school year.

Leaves of Absence – None

Non-renewals – None

Recalls – None

5. Bill List

- Voucher No. 1003 dated 11/22/24 – \$30,000.00
- Voucher No. 1005 dated 11/26/24 - \$8,046.43
- Voucher No. 1006 dated 12/5/24 - \$875,268.91
- Voucher No. 1058 dated 10/31/24 – \$385.00
- Voucher No. 1059 dated 10/31/24 - \$100,391.01
- Voucher No. 1060 dated 10/31/24 - \$999,049.86

6. Stage III Invoices - MMS/Waddington Projects for November 2024

- Ai3 Basic Services MMS - \$46,713.27
- Ai3 Supplemental Services MMS - \$36,120.70
- Ai3 Basic Services – Wadd - \$5,181.75
- Ai3 Reimbursable Services – Wadd - \$377.44
- Peregrine Group - \$72,380.00
- Shawmut MMS - \$6,128,799.47
- Stephen Turner, Inc. MMS - \$5,725.53
- Thielsch Engineering – \$5,463.50
- Willscot – December 2024 - \$2,069.33

Stage III Total - \$6,302,830.99

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the consent agenda as submitted.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to move PTO/PTA/EPLAC Reports between the Building Committee Report and Public Comments on the agenda.

IV. PTO/PTA/EPLAC Reports – Ms. Beauchaine reported that there will be no EPLAC meeting in December. At the last meeting on November 26th there was a presentation/workshop on Break Spaces by Special Educator, Megan Black. The workshop is designed for parents, educators and community members who want to create supportive environments for individuals needing structured breaks. They went through the importance of

breaks, creating calming; safe spaces, essential items for sensory-friendly break spaces, using visual supports to encourage breaks and teaching and practicing break routines.

Riverside Middle School has a fundraiser at Contenders Sports Bar and Grill every Saturday. Funds go directly to the schools. There will be a fundraiser on February 1st to raise funds for the Riverside Middle School 8th grade trip.

V. Superintendent's Report

1. EPHS 2025-2026 Program of Studies – Principal Black presented the program of studies for next school year. They are continuing to revise their program of studies to meet the new RIDE requirements. There is a change in the graduation requirements for the class of 2028. There were some changes made to the department course offerings. Connections and ALP are two programs that have been added to the program of studies. Department Chairs revised their Pathway programs. There are no longer L2 classes, which are now named College Prep. The plagiarism section was updated to include AI and lists consequences. An Academic Integrity team was also formed. East Providence High School was one of only three schools in the State of Rhode Island that earned both Platinum and Access Recognition by the College Board. Additional courses were outlined and include Literature of Latin Cultures for grades 10-12. Additional courses in social studies include AP Psychology and some other changes. No additional courses in science but some changes. No additional courses, only course changes in math. In physical education/health there is an additional course, Introduction to Sports Medicine/Athletic Training, and some other changes. In Life Skills, ALP and Connections are additional courses in Special Education and some changes. In Fine Arts (music, art) there are additional courses; Unified Classes and Digital Art and other changes. World Language/MLL has some course changes. JROTC is the newest program under development at the EPHS/CTC and will be launching in September 2025. The Nursing CNA course will be split into a semester course rather than a full year course. All L2 courses are now labeled as College Prep because they don't do levels anymore. The list of AP courses was updated. The RI Honor Society no longer exists so a new Academic Recognition program was created called Townie Scholar and has the same criteria as RI Honor Society. The Commissioner's Seal description was added. Parent/Teacher Conferences description now references Parent Square. The Academic Integrity/Plagiarism procedure was updated.

There was some discussion on the strategy that was put forth in developing these programs. There was much collaboration with the middle school. There is a lot of flexibility in class choice. Many new opportunities, not requirements with classes. There are many AP classes being offered.

There was a training over the summer for teachers to get a better understanding of AI and ChatGPT. There was a lot of talk from staff seeing work being done by students through these tools. The Academic Integrity Committee to review these incidents. The academic/plagiarism

procedure will be made part of the student handbook and program of studies and parents/students will be required to sign off on.

Dr. Forand stated that the Dental Assistant and Fashion Design programs have been approved by RIDE.

There was some discussion on the pathways programs. They are based on students' interest. Last year there were 500 applicants for the CTC. East Providence students are given first choice.

Mr. Ferreira requested a list of students who are working cooperative internships during the school day. A list will be sent to the Committee.

Ms. Furtado inquired as to when students get to pick their classes. Mr. Black responded that between mid-January and mid-February. There is communication letting the parents know that students are scheduling classes. Schedules are sent out to families so parents can see what their students have picked.

2. Security Funding Update – The District has been awarded capital improvement project funds to address security upgrades at four of the elementary schools. With these funds, the District is proposing to do intercom replacements at Whiteknact, Orlo Avenue, Silver Spring and Myron J. Francis elementary schools. The projected cost for all four schools is \$552,100. The amount authorized for reimbursement is \$500,000. Reimbursement amount via Housing Aid (47.4%) is \$237,000. The amount funded by Capital Revolving Fund is \$315,100. This work will be completed by Synet, a vendor that has been used regularly in the past for security upgrades. Synet is an approved vendor on the State of Rhode Island Master Price Agreement listing. The work is required to be completed by September 30, 2025. Dr. Forand stated that now central office will have the ability to communicate to all schools through the PA system.

Mr. McDonald stated that after these four schools are completed, they will start implementing at other schools. The long-term plan is to replace all the intercom systems. Currently going through all schools to see what the needs are. Mr. Ferreira requested a timeline on the project. Mr. McDonald stated that work will be starting during the holiday week and during February and April breaks. Speakers will be hung during the summer.

3. Facilities Update – Danny Carpenter **Riverside Middle School**

The Walk in Freezer install is ongoing with HVAC startup and interior finish in the old freezer areas. The electrical line has been trenched, piped and run by O'Neil Electric on Monday Dec 2nd. The HVAC units and all lighting has been wired outside and inside the unit. Some of the

issues that have come up with concern have been addressed with the installation contractor, and they are coming to remediate them on the 23rd.

The roadway/parking lot lights are temporarily out due to a broken electrical line that runs underneath the entry roadway along the left-hand side of the building. A new line is to be sent through underground to reconnect the power to the pole lighting. O'Neil Electric will be handling the repairs. Repair timeline is estimated at two to three days.

Orlo

Looking to install a new school sign at Orlo that was purchased by the PTA previously. The required installation of footings and concrete for the sign are being priced out.

Martin Middle School

The school is progressing rapidly. Exterior sheathing is now up, window frames and glass are going in. The interior framing of walls, windows, and doorways are happening daily. They also have completed the roofing portions of the building. Some fireproofing work is to be finished, along with closing in the middle section of the building to retain heat from outside elements to ensure that the fireproofing is able to cure at the correct temperatures. Staging for masonry is being set up to start the facade brickwork and flashings. The new media center curtain wall windows are to start being installed the week of December 16th, along with the setting of initial HVAC RTU's on the roof. The electrical switchgear will be arriving for installation after Christmas. Waterproofing continues on the exterior of the building along with ABV. Overall, the project is progressing rapidly, but without sacrifice of quality or lost time.

Waddington

Initial electrical work is being done inside the former boiler room to run new switchgear necessary for phase 2 of the project. All of the old unit vent intake grates on the outside of the building have been temporarily sealed off to prevent any cold air coming in. The openings are to be filled in this summer with masonry.

EPHS

The exterior facade lighting that illuminates the lettering of the school is to be replaced. The lights are still warrantied for this replacement, but will be expiring soon. O'Neil Electric will be doing the repairs.

Mr. Carpenter took a moment to thank the outgoing School Committee members for their time and wished them the best in their future endeavors.

4. Finance Update – Mr. Enos stated that the budget reflects the beginning of FY25 and the ending of FY24 as of December. There are still some outstanding transactions. Continue to remain cautious. In January will have the final number for last year. Mr. Queenan inquired on the FY24 budget vs. the 25 budget which looks like a deficit. Mr. Enos stated there is still

revenue that hasn't been recorded yet such as rental income that hasn't come in and also waiting on compensation audit and numbers from DCYF.

VI. Building Committee Report

1. Building Project Update – Dan Carpenter reported that project milestones for Martin Middle School include fireproofing, interior framing, roofing, exterior façade and window and door frames. Due to unforeseen soil and environmental challenges, the project is being brought back into finish projection range by roughly three months, and is progressing quickly but without sacrificing quality. As of May 2024, with no design change meant a rough order of magnitude estimate upwards of 4.8M dollars to remove and dispose of the rejected soils. In July 2024 after approval from the Building Committee to redesign, the rough order estimate was between 2.2 and 2.8M. Since July, Peregrine, Shawmut, Ai3, Building Committee and the District team have worked tirelessly to bring that estimate submitted to RIDEM all the way down to \$121,000. This is a huge milestone accomplishment for the overall project in savings.

A look ahead for the phase 2 project this coming summer at Waddington includes three different designs for water mitigation in the rear section of the building, bringing the library up to code compliance for space requirements and the wheelchair lift procurement. Exploratory work has been taking place to get measurements and plans in place for the next phase.

The Riverside Middle School punch list has been completed for the science room and media center project. Currently awaiting issuance of a letter of completion for the Building Department. Once these items are received, the release of the retainage and project closeout will take place. Six-month and eleven-month warranty walkthroughs will be conducted. Riverside was finished under \$200,000 and the funds will go back into the capital fund.

VII. Public Comments – Tony deSimas addressed the Committee as a parent and advocate for special education students.

VIII. Action Items

1. Resolution Authorizing Sale of 317 Market Street, Warren, RI
Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Brandle and carried by a vote of 3-2 to approve the resolution authorizing the sale of 317 Market Street, Warren, RI pursuant to R.I. Gen Laws 16-3. 1-10 as submitted. Mr. Queenan and Mr. Ferreira voted nay. Motion passed.

Dr. Forand stated that East Providence School Department is one of eight districts that is a member of the East Bay Collaborative which is dissolving. EBEC is no longer providing any services to East Providence. Once the sale is finalized, all remaining funds will be divided between the districts.

2. EPHS 2025-2026 Program of Studies

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the East Providence High School 2025-2026 Program of Studies as submitted.

3. RFPs related to Steel Building at EPHS

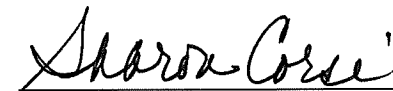
Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by a vote of 4-1 to approve the RFPs related to steel building at East Providence High School as submitted. Mr. Ferreira voted nay. Motion passed.

IX. Announcements – The 9th annual Christmas dinner will be held on December 25th at Bridgepointe Christian Church. Families are welcome. A notice will go out to parents.

X. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Brandle, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant



Anthony Ferreira, School Committee Clerk