
EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – June 10, 2025

I. Call to Order - Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in open session on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 6:00 pm in the auditorium at East Providence High School. Members Present: David Luiz, Chair, Antonio deSimas, Vice Chair, Anthony Ferreira, Clerk, Jessica Beauchaine and Ryan Queenan. Superintendent Forand and Assistant Superintendent Lisa Benedetti-Ramzi were also present. Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence were observed.

II. Student Liaison – Hope Moran, the new liaison from East Providence High School introduced herself and gave a brief update on the end of the school year. It was finals week this week. All state testing and retakes are complete. The last day of school is Monday, June 16th. All senior activities have come to an end. Graduation was held last Friday at Pierce Field and was a huge success. Girls lacrosse went undefeated and won the state championship. Unified basketball made it to the Division II championship but lost. The softball team made it to the final 6 in Division I. Boys tennis made it to the semifinals. They had one player qualify for golf states. Baseball finished the regular season 12-6 and made it to the second round of playoffs. Both the boys and girls track teams had a successful season including a stand out performance from Jack Pawlik, winning the state 100 championship.

III. Health & Wellness Presentation

Some members of the District Health and Wellness Committee gave a presentation on Hennessey's Students Take Charge Program, as well as, an overview of the work done by the committee during the school year. Mr. Queenan shared an infographic created by a student representative on the committee, noting that it outlines the key components of the District Health and Wellness Policy adopted in October. Karin Wetherill, Director of the Healthy Schools Coalition, shared resources and evaluation tools that can be utilized when reviewing the policy and its effectiveness. Stephanie Carlile from URI SNAP-Ed discussed how the Take Charge Program was implemented at Hennessey Elementary School in collaboration with the District's Food Service Organization, Chartwells. Hennessey students' Giovanna and Jolie, along with Principal Napolitano, shared how the program has benefited them and why they enjoyed it. Mr. Queenan ended the presentation with explaining what Discovery Kitchen is and how it is incorporated into the schools. Chef Bill went above and beyond connecting with students. He is very supportive and able to go out to all the schools doing cooking demonstrations highlighting farm to school products.

The policy was revised and will be shared in the fall with all incoming and current families. The main initiative is to increase family engagement and communication. Much of the work is lead by Stacey Messier.

IV. Consent Agenda

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

May 13, 2025 Executive & Open Session School Committee Meeting
May 19, 2025 Special Executive & Open Session School Committee Meeting
May 12, 2025 Building Committee Meeting

4. **Personnel Report**

Appointments – Jennifer Sparks, Resource Teacher at EPHS, effective 2025-2026 school year; Amy Lee, Life Skills Teacher at EPHS, effective 2025-2026 school year; and Olivia Patalano, Library Media Specialist at Whiteknact/Orlo, effective 2025-2026 school year.

Resignations – Tara Calandra, Paraprofessional at Myron J. Francis, effective 5/27/2025; Corilynn Durfee, Paraprofessional at EPHS, effective 5/27/2025; and Kristen Coutoulakis, Physical Education Teacher at EPHS, effective end of the 2024-2025 school year.

Retirements – Patricia Levesque, Paraprofessional at Myron J. Francis, effective end of the 2024-2025 school year.

Leaves of Absence – None

Recalls – Jillian Woods, Special Education Teacher, S/C grades 3-5 at Orlo, effective 2025-2026 school year; Katherine DiRago, Special Education Teacher S/C grades K-2 at Waddington, effective 2025-2026 school year; Jasmine LaCross, Gr. 1-6 Teacher – TBD, effective 2025-2026 school year.

5. **Bill List**

- Voucher No. 1030 dated 5/15/2025 - \$13.00
- Voucher No. 1031 dated 5/23/2025 - \$85.00
- Voucher No. 1032 dated 5/28/25 - \$250,437.28
- Voucher No. 1033 dated 5/30/2025 - \$6,835.00
- Voucher No. 1035 dated 6/04/25 - \$310.00
- Voucher No. 1036 dated 6/05/25 - \$1,880,659.54

6. **Stage III Invoices - MMS/Waddington Projects for May 2025**

- Ai3 Basic Services MMS - \$46,713.27
- Ai3 Supplemental Services MMS - \$14,021.84
- Ai3 Basic Services Wadd - \$18,792.28
- Ai3 Supplemental Services Wadd April - \$13,216.50
- Peregrine Group - \$62,920.00
- Shawmut MMS - \$4,731,184.60
- Shawmut Wadd – \$57,782.58
- Stephen Turner, Inc. MMS - \$4,687.75
- Stephen Turner, Inc. Wadd - \$4,154.50
- Thielsch Engineering – \$3,221.92
- East Providence School Department – \$4,788.00

Stage III Total - \$4,961,483.24

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

V. PTO/PTA/EPLAC Reports – There were no reports.

VI. Superintendent's Report

1. Administrative Salary Ranges – The District went out and did an APRA request throughout the state for district administrative salary ranges. The School Committee does approve salary ranges. A folder was given to the Committee with 2024 and 2025 salary ranges, along with contract templates. Dr. Forand thanked Lynn Fontaine and the HR staff for putting the charts together.

2. Pre-K Literacy Coach Position – Dr. Forand announced the District received a four-year grant from RIDE which is fully funded. The coach will be working exclusively at Pre-K. The grant was written specifically for the Pre-K. The job description was included in the packet.

3. Safety Upgrades – On July 1st the District become eligible for security upgrades. This year requesting preliminary work for Kent Heights playground repaving, Orlo Avenue playground and parking lot paving and underground pipe repair, Myron J. Francis sidewalk repair, Hennessey playground and parking lot and Riverside Middle parking lot for a total cost of \$421,163.

Dr. Forand stated that the City went out to bid on many of these projects on the state bid list. Orlo parking lot and Hennessey playground are the two priorities. Looking for approval to submit to RIDE by July 1. Projects will begin sometime in July, as soon as approval from RIDE is received. Riverside Middle School sidewalks are not included but are included in stage II.

Mr. Ferreira requested that any add-ons be sent to the Committee.

4. Facilities Update – Dan Carpenter

EPHS – The District took delivery of the new composting bathroom on May 21. The bid has come back for the installation of the steel building. There was only one bidder, Duarte Corporation at \$49,083. The award of Duarte is on the agenda for approval. Wayne Electric has agreed to phase their scope of work around the installation process. Start date is set for June 9 through August 25 for substantial completion. Award this evening is for bid cost and contract.

Waddington – Summer preparations are in full swing to get construction project going. Furniture and items are being moved once school ends. Renovations of classrooms, new HVAC, fire alarm systems and sprinklers and classroom cabinetry will be worked on.

Orlo – The new sign at Orlo Elementary School has been installed.

District – At the last Facilities Committee meeting, AirMasters HVAC explained the intent and installation process for the new proposed HVAC building management systems throughout the District. The costs for these needed upgrades is \$701,840. Financing of the project will be 0%

for five years through the electric bill. Contracts for each school building for these upgrades are on the agenda for approval.

Summer Projects

Orlo – Window gap repair, pipe drainage repairs and paving of parking lots, playgrounds and sidewalks.

Hennessey – Paving of playgrounds, parking lot and alley way.

Kent Heights – Addition of shade sail formerly at MMS pre-k to the kindergarten playground.

Paving of the playground area, dependent on time. If time allows, will be done either fall or the following spring to meet the June 30, 2026 deadline. This will include asphalt sidewalks at Myron J. Francis and the teachers' parking lot at Riverside.

Replacement of door locks and addition of convex mirrors around the District that are funded by the Trust Safety Grants.

New dishwashers at Orlo, Whiteknact and Hennessey.

Replacement of kitchen cabinets at Silver Spring teachers' lounge.

Dr. Forand thanked Dan's team for the great setup at graduation on Friday.

Mr. Ferreira requested a compilation of start and end dates of construction project walkthroughs at Martin and Waddington.

Dr. Forand thanked the City for the work at Orlo and for their teamwork with the school district.

Ms. Beauchaine inquired about getting mulch for the playgrounds this year. Mr. Carpenter will look into it.

Mr. Ferreira asked about getting the playgrounds certified. Mr. Carpenter responded that they will be done during the summer by a certified Playground Safety Instructor.

5. Finance Update – Alexandra Gonzalez is the new Director of Finance and has been with the District a few weeks. She gave a brief update. They are holding out on supplies for the remainder of the year. The District received \$200,000 from the sale of the East Bay Educational Collaborative. Ms. Beauchaine inquired if the money was put in the general fund. She is concerned the district will hit the \$2M mark for substitutes. Superintendent Forand stated it has been put aside for now.

There was some discussion on the transportation line item. Dr. Forand stated that all expenses haven't been included yet. The RFP for bus transportation, which is on the agenda for approval, will be further reviewed. Mr. Ferreira requested someone from the bus company attend the next meeting.

VII. Policy Committee Report

1. Medication Policy – 2nd read

Mr. Queenan asked how families will have access to the medication consent form. Ms. Beauchaine stated that in the past, the form is part of the opening packet that students get at the beginning of the school year. The form will then go to the nurse's office. Dr. Forand stated that parents can reach out to the nurse. Policies are online as well.

2. Field Trip Policy – 2nd read

Ms. Beauchaine inquired if there were any changes from the first reading. Dr. Forand stated that no feedback was received and there are no changes from the first read. Field trips offer wonderful opportunities for our students.

VIII. Building Committee Report – Dan Carpenter

Building Project Update

Martin – Ceilings, floors, paint and millwork are continuing daily. Permanent power has now been brought into the building to feed the new HVAC units. Lighting is being installed. Exterior façade is being wrapped up. Work continues on the gym and auditorium, as well as, the chorus and band rooms. Preparation for curbing and roadways is being done. The North field has been graded to final height. This summer will be a big push to get everything in place for the November change over.

Waddington – Final preparations are being made for movement of all school items. Work continues daily and weekends. Packing has begun. The former boiler room is now the new electrical room. This work was able to be completed earlier without disruption to education. The construction is set to kick off on the 17th of June, starting with removal of ceilings and work to the rear of the building curtain wall. We have just been approved by RIDEM for the water mitigation work.

Mr. Ferreira inquired as to when the project gets closer and if there is extra money, can items be added from the wish list. He would like to purchase a one-man lift if there is money left over.

IX. Public Comments

1. June Coan addressed the Committee regarding a sexual assault allegation that happened during the 2001-2002 school year when she was on the wrestling team. She stated that she was sexually harassed by coaches in her last two years in high school. She encouraged the District to get Senate Bill 2648 passed which makes all sexual abuse or exploitation of a child causes of action not subject to statute of limitations.
2. Renee Ignatio addressed the Committee regarding the delay in getting bus cameras on the District's buses. She was happy that the cameras were on the agenda for discussion but disappointed that this issue has dragged on.

X. Discussion/Action Items

1. Update on when Summer Facilities Projects will Start and Finish

Mr. Ferreira requested an itemized list of projects being done during the summer be sent to the Committee.

2. Bus Camera Update – Mr. Luiz stated that administrators are involved with getting bus cameras on all buses. The School Committee is ready to go. Negotiations are currently going on and the Committee met with Bus Patrol. Mr. Luiz read a letter from Mayor Roberto DaSilva that he received today.

"Dear School Committee Chairman Luiz,

I am aware that there is interest among some members of the School Committee to enter into a contract for a bus public safety enforcement program. It is my understanding and my belief that you will see changes to the state-enabling legislation that allows for bus stop enforcement cameras. I strongly urge you and the School Committee to postpone approving any contracts until the General Assembly passes a new bill. (H5421a and S0568) Additionally, any contract which requires law enforcement activities and dedicating man hours by the East Providence Police Department needs to be fully vetted by the Police Chief, his staff and the Administration before we enter into any agreement."

Dr. Forand stated that we do have ten cameras on buses through a different vendor. The District put out an RFP for bus transportation. The current plan is to have cameras on all buses. There are steps to be taken first. The school department doesn't get any funds from the cameras. Mr. Luiz to follow up.

3. Pre-K Literacy Coach Position

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Pre-K Literacy Coach position as submitted. The position will be posted internally first.

4. Medication Policy – 2nd read

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the 2nd read of the Medication Policy as submitted.

5. Field Trip Policy – 2nd read

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the 2nd read of the Field Trip Policy as submitted.

6. RFP for Ventilation System Cleaning Services

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve the RFP for ventilation system cleaning services as submitted. The projected award date is July 15th.

7. EPHS Field Trip to New York

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the high school field trip to New York in December, 2025 as submitted.

8. Chartwells Food Service Contract for 2025-2026

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to table this item until the next meeting.

9. Administrative Salary Ranges

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve the administrative salary ranges as submitted.

10. Bus Transportation RFP Award

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to table this item until the next meeting.

11. Award of Steel Building Installation - EPHS

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the award for steel building installation at East Providence High School to Duarte Corporation for \$49,830.00 as submitted. It was mentioned that there was a typo at top of document.

12. Contract for Steel Building Installation - EPHS

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Duarte Corporation contract for steel building installation at East Providence High School as submitted.

13. Energy Management System Upgrade

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the energy management system upgrade as submitted.

14. Contract for Energy Management System Upgrade

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the AirMasters, Inc. contract for energy management system upgrade as submitted.

15. Request for Safety Upgrades to RIDE

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the request for safety upgrades to RIDE as submitted.

16. Updated Building Committee Membership

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the updated Building Committee membership as submitted. Alexandra Gonzalez is the new Director of Finance, replacing Craig Enos who resigned in May.

XI. Announcements – Superintendent Forand congratulated the girls lacrosse team who won the Division III state championship on Sunday. There was a celebration afterwards and the team received a police escort. Ms. Beauchaine gave a huge shoutout to the East Providence community, teachers and city officials that were there. Townie Pride.

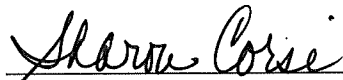
Ms. Beauchaine followed up on the recent cancellation of a school committee meeting in May. She read the following message: "It has come to my attention that I alone canceled the second school committee meeting in May. The decision to cancel the meeting was made based on a consensus among the majority of the committee members, as per Sub-section 9 under Article 2, meetings which falls under school committee By-laws. Any regular meeting may be postponed or canceled by the majority vote of the entire committee, as well as referencing Article 2, Section 2. Individual committee members have no authority to act on behalf of the Committee. Therefore, after a discussion of current priorities, it was determined that there were no urgent matters requiring immediate action that week. Please know that this decision was made in good faith, with respect for everyone's time. We remain committed to transparency, accountability and the best interest of our students, staff and community." Three school committee members were unable to attend the meeting.

Ms. Beauchaine announced that there was a Multi-lingual learners celebration at 5:30pm prior to the school committee meeting at 6pm. Dilara, a former MLL student from the East Providence class of 2022 was amazing. She is currently a rising senior at Providence College studying math, data science and studio art. Kudos to Yanaiza Gallant for the great work she has done.

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant



Anthony Ferreira, School Committee Clerk