
EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – August 12, 2025

I. Call to Order - Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in Open Session on Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 6:00 pm in council chambers at East Providence City Hall. Present: Davd Luiz, Chair, Antonio deSimas, Vice Chair, Anthony Ferreira, Clerk, Ryan Queenan and Jessica Beauchaine. Superintendent Forand was also present. Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

II. Executive Session

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried unanimously to move into the conference room for the purpose of: Discussion regarding Superintendent's contract pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(1); and consider & vote on motion to adjourn and convene into public session.

III. Reconvene in Open Session (Regular Meeting)

Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. 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. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to seal the minutes. 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.

IV. Consent Agenda

1. **Communications** – Enrollment numbers, monthly technology data and sub-committee agendas and minutes.

2. **Home School Requests** – Fifty-one students requested homeschooling.

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

July 7 and July 24, 2025 Open Session School Committee Meetings

July 7 and July 21, 2025 Building Committee Meetings

4. **Personnel Report**

Appointments – Edward St. Michel, Math Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective 8/25/2025; Michele Laurent, Connections Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective 8/25/2025; Mileena Delgado, Controller in Administration, effective 8/11/2025; Madison Dulude, Staff Accountant in Administration, effective 8/18/2025; Cailey Williams, Library Teacher at Orlo/Whiteknact, effective 8/25/2025; Ashley Connolly, Speech Pathologist, 3/5 at Waddington, effective 8/25/2025; Chelsea Cipriano, Special Educator at Kent Heights, effective 8/25/2025; Kerry Walker, Life Skills Teacher at EPHS, effective 8/25/2025; and Alex Hauter, Speech Pathologist for District, effective 8/25/2025.

Resignations – Sarah Young, Special Educator at Kent Heights, effective 8/1/2025; Jennifer McKinnon, School Nurse at Hennessey, effective 8/15/2025; Carson Cambre, Math Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective 8/1/2025; Laura Certo, Resource Teacher at Myron J. Francis, effective 8/4/2025; Susana Augusto, Paraprofessional at Oldham, effective 8/4/2025; Caroline Whitaker, Art Teacher at Orlo/Whiteknact, effective 8/6/2025; Raquel Medeiros, Paraprofessional at Hennessey, effective 8/4/2025; Jordan Murphy, Speech Pathologist at Oldham, effective 8/25/2025; Briana Grelinski, Paraprofessional at Silver Spring, effective 8/11/2025; Nicole Silva, Paraprofessional at Hennessey, effective 8/11/2025; Brittany Roy, Paraprofessional at Myron J. Francis, effective 8/8/2025; and Rebecca Paniccia, Dental Assistant Teacher at CTC, effective 8/14/2025.

Retirements – None

Leaves of Absence – None

Recalls – None

5. Bill List

- Voucher No. 1041 dated 7/11/25 – \$1,933.00
- Voucher No. 1043 dated 7/29/25 - \$105,785.91
- Voucher No. 1044 dated 8/6/25 - \$1,975,165.49

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

- Ai3 Basic Services MMS - \$59,078.54
- Ai3 Supplemental Services MMS - \$8,646.97
- Ai3 Basic Services – Wadd - \$46,980.70
- Ai3 Supplemental Services Wadd - \$1,379.40
- Peregrine Group - \$62,920.00
- Shawmut MMS - \$2,970,709.91
- Shawmut Wadd - \$1,565,020.09
- Stephen Turner, Inc. MMS - \$4,257.11
- Stephen Turner, Inc. Wadd - \$4,271.00
- Thielsch Engineering MMS- \$11,741.22
- PODS – June - \$274.20
- PODS – July - \$233.20
- Willscot – \$2,973.95

Stage III Total - \$4,738,486.29

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

Mr. Queenan asked the Superintendent to go over the current enrollment numbers and asked if there are any additional increases before the start of school. Dr. Forand stated that they are still moving students around to get students into their home schools. She will keep the Committee aware if any parents are having an issue with the transfer to a different school. The next two weeks will be monitored closely.

Mr. deSimas inquired about the resignations. Dr. Forand stated that employees who resign are provided with a form to fill out voluntarily. The exit interview forms are shared with the Committee.

V. Superintendent's Report

1. Safety/Behavior Matrix Presentation

Assistant Superintendent Lisa Benedetti-Ramzi presented on the creation of a guidance tool that was built around the East Providence Code of Conduct. It was a year-long process. The collaborative committee consisted of administrators, teachers at all levels, deans and central office administrators. They worked and met with the union and teachers throughout the district to discuss safety in the district many times throughout the year. The working groups were broken up by level PK-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12. They looked at varying models throughout the country and chose the best from each of them in this creation. The first process has been shared with principals. This Matrix will be going out in the staff newsletter this week and will be rolled out to faculty on PD day. Families will get them with the student handbooks at the beginning of the year and it will be posted on the District's website.

The Behavior Matrix is a student-centered framework that supports the overall development of each child. Its main goal is to help students grow into responsible, respectful and productive members of society by teaching life skills and core values like respect, responsibility, integrity and empathy.

It addresses the diverse needs and strengths of students, providing a supportive environment where educators mentor and guide students both academically and behaviorally. A key focus is on building social and emotional skills, helping students manage their behavior, solve problems and positively engage in their communities.

Educators model and teach appropriate behavior while offering support to students facing challenges. The plan also includes consistent and fair consequences for behaviors that go against the school's expectations, helping students learn from their mistakes.

Family involvement is essential, promoting consistency between home and school and offering additional support for students. The EPSD Behavior Matrix is a living tool that promotes personal growth, academic success and citizenship through collaboration between students, educators and families.

Each infraction must be addressed using the established consequence matrix, ensuring proper documentation and the inclusion of a restorative practice to support student learning and growth.

Superintendent Forand stated that it was a huge document to produce for grades K-12 and align. They had a great group of volunteers and received good input from the District.

2. Paraprofessional Apprenticeship Program – Dr. Forand stated that there is an opportunity in partnership with Building Futures, the Institute for Labor Studies, Rhode Island College, NEA and the Department of Education to offer current NEA paraprofessionals who are interested to pursue a career in teaching to apply for the first-of-its-kind Pathway to Teaching Apprenticeship program supported by the United States Department of Labor's ABA 2 Grant. East Providence is one of five school districts in the state to participate, becoming a teaching apprentice (while working in your current position). Selected paraprofessionals can earn while they learn, gain valuable experience and knowledge that can be applied to their course work at RIC and eventually obtain a teaching certificate with the Rhode Island Department of Education.

Dr. Forand met with the para union multiple times and would like to start the program in January. It would be opportunity to grow the district.

3. Facilities Structure – Dr. Forand stated they are looking to create a district event manager/technical director position. The position would be funded through outside events. The cost would be figured into the rental cost. Presently, there's a burden on the assistant facilities director and IT staff especially with weekend events. It will be a by the hour position. Renters will have an additional pay rate. There will be time sheets to track the work. No benefits are included. It will be posted on School Spring and internally. Anyone can apply.

4. Facilities Update – Dan Carpenter

Waddington – Work continues, custodial cleaning started on August 8th and 9th and will continue until teachers are to report back. Finishes to the new windows, doorways, HVAC systems, electrical and millwork throughout the school are being done. Masonry on the exterior of the building is taking place to fill in the old vent areas from the former univents. The new carpenter installed the storage cabinets in the phase 1 sections the week of July 14-18. The order for the phase 2 storage cabinets arrived on July 28 and will be installed once construction work allows access to the phase 2 areas.

Martin – Work continues with interior finishes, A-V equipment, kitchen equipment, interior work and HVAC units. The exterior is continuing with cementitious panels, roofing and landscaping preparation for sidewalks and paving work. The outside brick is being washed and graffiti removal is taking place on the existing gym and auditorium brick. Temporary parking is now being formed on the Brown Street hill.

EPHS – The steel building project is nearing completion. Assembly and electrical have been finished. Installation of the three garage doors and side door is the final piece left to complete. Parma Door quoted \$11,572 and Garage Headquarters quoted \$10,585. Appropriate signage for public use of the tennis courts has been installed. Dave Laughlin from the City DPW was thanked for providing the signs. The set of courts closest to the administration building is now open from dawn to dusk.

Francis – Two new univent heaters were installed in both kindergarten classrooms.

Whiteknact – Two new univent heaters were installed in rooms 1 and 2 completing that school with all new units.

Orlo – The drainage pipe under the parking lot was repaired by Chris Grant Excavating. The old clay drainage pipe had collapsed and 45 feet of new piping was installed with cleanouts. Pricing came in lower than originally quoted which was \$17k. The final cost was \$11,935 and is partially reimbursed through RIDE.

Hennessey – Two new electrical lines were installed to help combat overload and breaker tripping in the kindergarten classrooms. Three new dishwashers were installed at Hennessey, Orlo and Whiteknact and will be up and running for the start of school.

Playground inspections took place mid July. Rhode Island Trust found no issues and the reports have been received by the District. New mulch will be provided for the playgrounds and will be installed in-house. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent have been looking into a grant to supplement the cost.

Kent Heights – Two shade sails in the kindergarten playground that were previously in the old Martin Pre-K playground area will be installed.

A grant was received through the RI Trust which provided funding for mirrors. Mirrors have been installed by the maintenance team throughout the rest of the district to help combat any hallway related issues as a line of sight around corners.

At Whiteknact and Francis, in-house electrician replaced outside lights with new LED units above exterior entry doors.

In-house painters have made repairs to the high school bathrooms that were vandalized. The painters will also be giving Silver Spring's teacher lounge a facelift, along with some decals and painting in the main office at Riverside Middle School.

Paving projects are set to begin starting with Orlo. A RIDOT project in conjunction with City DPW has arisen at Hennessey. Both schools have been DIGSAFED and are still set to be finished with paving before the start of school.

All annual inspections are to be completed this month; fire alarm, sprinkler, boilers and life safety/building inspections for the start of the school year.

The new district wide Building Management system for HVAC is set to begin being installed by AirMasters and will taking place throughout the school year. The new HR offices at administration have been completed and staff has been moved in.

Quotes have been requested for six trees to be removed at Waddington and for full exterior window cleaning of the high school. Quotes have been received from AA Window Cleaning for \$9,975 to do all exterior windows at EPHS and Northeastern Tree for front three trees at Waddington for \$6,280. Three trees at the back of the property for \$3,880 which includes removal of trees and stump grinding.

Summer cleaning continues throughout the district. Everyone has made great progress and has worked hard on some very hot days.

Mr. Ferreira requested a list of schools that are already cleaned. There was some discussion regarding the sidewalks and curbing at Orlo. Mr. Carpenter stated that the city will provide concrete instead of asphalt for the sidewalks. Dr. Forand stated that the price is included in the original scope of work. Mr. Ferreira inquired as to how they arrived at paving the city sidewalks. He supports curbing. Dr. Forand stated it's right around the playground. Mr. Ferreira requested the engineering specs be sent to all school committee members. The city will pave ADA ramps. Mr. Ferreira would like a follow-up about cleaning vents in the school.

5. Finance Update – Ms. Gonzalez gave a brief overview of the budget as of August 8th. She is concerned where the District is at and stated that there may be a potential to run a deficit in the salaries line. Substitutes line may go over budget. They have paused spending until November. Supplies were ordered in June to start school. Principals have what they need. They need to watch spending for the next 2 ½ months.

Ms. Beauchaine requested that money spent be sent to the school committee every Friday. She also requested Human Resources to send how many FMLAs there are. Mr. Ferreira requested electric bills be sent to the school committee.

VI. Building Committee Report – Dan Carpenter

Waddington project continues with ceiling, HVAC testing, flooring, painting and millwork. Progress is being made day to day. The new water service has been hooked up, masonry continues where the old uninvent intakes were, curtain wall in the rear of the building has been installed, along with all new windows. Full cleaning will begin on August 11th and move in is scheduled for the 14th and 15th. Turnover is set for the 18th. The water mitigation drainage work is set to start on Monday, August 18th and projected to be finished by the end of September. They will be working to ensure a safe pathway for staff and students while the work is commencing.

Martin Middle School is moving along nicely and the project is at 64% completion. Kitchen equipment is being installed, rooftop HVAC has been set, finish work, flooring, doors and paint continues on the interior. Exterior sidewalks, curbing, siding panels and existing brick graffiti removal is taking place. Low voltage work and security is ongoing, along with fire protection. HVAC units have been started up and are operational. The project is still on track for the November turnover, with logistics being prepared for the phase II construction outlook.

Superintendent Forand stated that they will open Martin the day after Thanksgiving. Mr. Ferreira requested the punch lists sent to the committee members. August 18th is the walkthrough at Waddington.

VII. Public Comments

1. Chrissy Rossi inquired if the school committee receives the back-up documents for the line items in the budget. She stated that every position and line item has back-up documentation with details. She also inquired about any new strategies to combat bullying this year.

Dr. Forand stated that the behavior matrix will be released at the beginning of the year. This is a team and community effort and the adults should support each other and the district, in addition to what is being done in schools. She pleaded with families to treat each other with respect.

2. Kim Lee, teacher and resident of Ward 4 and parent of elementary students. She is part of E.P.I.C. (East Providence in Community) and she stated that the committee was sent a letter to continue to protect the rights of all students, transgender students and students impacted by ICE and immigration. She also stated that the behavior matrix sounds fantastic and thanked everybody who spent so much time creating it. Restorative conversations are important and restorative practices are the way to go. She inquired as to what the SEL curriculum will be and what type of PD will teachers get to support the matrix. She also stated that teachers are getting money for supplies through PTAs and donations from families. Maybe that's happening in EP schools as well.

VIII. Discussion / Action Items

1. Construction of an Updated Website and Easier Access to School Policies

Ms. Beauchaine stated that she has asked for an updated website because the District website is not user friendly and impossible to navigate. The District can develop a website with the great IT department, CTC students and interns that we have. She asked the Superintendent to come up with a new website that works by November 1st. Mr. Queenan agreed that it's difficult finding phone numbers. It also takes time and money to redesign a website.

2. Facilities Meeting Update – Mr. Ferreira stated that Mr. Carpenter did an excellent job on the presentation tonight. The district is in really good shape and staying on track for the start of school.

3. Appointments of School Committee Members to Paraprofessionals Contract Negotiations Team

Mr. Luiz stated that he and Mr. Queenan will be the committee members on the paraprofessionals contract negotiations team.

4. Stage II Submission to RIDE Approval

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Stage II submission to RIDE as submitted.

5. District Manager / Technical Director Approval

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by a 4-1 vote to approve the creation of a District Manager / Technical Director position, pending a job description. Mr. Ferreira voted nay.

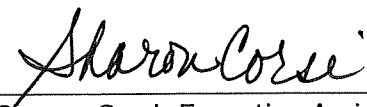
IX. Announcements – This Saturday, August 16th, is BridgePointe's annual back to school fair at EPHS from 9-11 am for elementary students. Families can reach out to their principals and

central office if they're having a difficult time and need school supplies. No child will go without. Our community is very generous and supportive.

X. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant



Anthony Ferreira, School Committee Clerk