
EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – January 15, 2026

I. Call to Order - Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in Open Session on Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the cafeteria at Martin Middle School. Present: Davd Luiz, Chair, Antonio deSimas, Vice Chair, Anthony Ferreira, Clerk, Ryan Queenan and Jessica Beauchaine. Superintendent Forand, Assistant Superintendent Lisa Benedetti-Ramzi and Attorney Andrew Henneous were also present. Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

II. Executive Session

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried unanimously to move into the main office conference room for the purpose of: Discussion regarding Superintendent's Annual Performance Evaluation pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(1); Discussion regarding Paraprofessionals' 2025-2028 Agreement pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(2); 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)

Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 7:10 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. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to seal the minutes.

IV. Student Liaison – Hope Moran highlighted events at the high school over the past few weeks. The high school hosted the annual Mayoral Cup in both girls and boys basketball. Academics remain a strong focus as students prepare for mid-term exams next week. The high school is hosting an 8th grade open house this evening and they welcome new families. The Career & Tech students are preparing for education month in February. There was a successful flapper fundraiser and meat raffle, Wingstop and Chipotle fundraisers all supporting school programs and initiatives. East Providence High School was recognized as one of the top thirty high schools in Rhode Island by Money, Inc. A pathway assembly was held to prepare students for real world experiences through pathway-based learning.

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to move up the 2026-2027 EPHS Program of Studies.

Mr. Black presented the program of studies for next year and stated that there were not many changes. There were some new course additions. In the English department, with the addition of a reading specialist, a Literacy Course has been added. In Science, a Pre-AP Biology course,

similar to their Pre-US History course) has been added. In Social Studies, an Honors Financial Literacy class has been added. Math has the biggest upgrade. In Math: Advanced Math Topics with Applications; Mathematical Modeling – Finances for Life & Finances for Investing and Retirement; and SAT Math Lab – this would be a non-graduation credit, elective course. In Fine Arts, a Music in Film course will be added. The CTC will be adding an option for Level IV Health Occupations students to take an Exercise Science as an alternative to the CNA course. An update to Creating an EMT Pathway each year, they will add another course. This year the level I course will be a semester of the PE course CPR/First Aid and the semester PE Course Sports Medicine.

Mr. Queenan inquired if any courses were removed. Mr. Black stated that they add courses and once program of studies is approved, the guidance counselors will go into the classrooms to see if there is an interest.

V. District Recognition – Monthly School Highlights for January.

Students at Martin Middle School stated what they like the most at the new middle School. Oldham celebrated the season of giving and holiday spirit. Waddington highlighted events, holiday spirit and book club. Winter wonderland was showcased at Silver Spring. Whiteknact students shared the spirit of giving. Myron J. Francis shared their December events. Martin had a battle of the classes and the high school/CTC highlighted programs available at the CTC, 8th grade visits, 2026 National Merit Scholarship program and a blood drive with 85 donors.

VI. Consent Agenda

1. **Communications** – Enrollment numbers and monthly technology data were included in the school committee packet.

2. **Home School Requests** – There were seventeen homeschooling requests.

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

- December 9, 2025 Open Session School Committee Meeting
- December 8, 2025 Building Committee Meeting

4. **Personnel Report**

Appointments – Maria Jimenez, Paraprofessional at Waddington, effective 12/15/25; Carmen Pina, Lunch/Recess Attendant at Myron J. Francis, effective 1/13/26; Molly Dube, Lunch/Recess Attendant at Myron J. Francis, effective 1/13/26; Mason Pierce, Paraprofessional at Waddington, effective 1/26/26; and Maya Bastanzi, Paraprofessional at Waddington, effective 1/20/26.

Resignations – Nataly Pimentel, Lunch/Recess Attendant at Myron J. Francis, effective 12/20/25; Deborah Martins, Lunch/Recess Attendant at Myron J. Francis, effective 12/20/25; Yunkyung Choi, Paraprofessional at Waddington, effective 12/24/25; Lea DeVargas, Paraprofessional at Waddington, effective 1/7/26; Jon Flamand, Paraprofessional at EPHS ALP, effective 1/17/26; and Mario Purro, Event Tech Coordinator, effective 12/12/25.

Retirements – David Axelson, Science/Chemistry Teacher at EPHS, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Janet Pietruszka, Paraprofessional at EPHS, effective 1/8/26; Deborah Summers, Grade 4 Teacher at Waddington, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Mary Teixeira, Grade 3 Teacher at Silver Spring, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Deborah Brun, Grade 3 Teacher at Myron J. Francis, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Linda Crocker, Grade 5 Teacher at Myron J. Francis, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year;

Marissa Moran, Math Teacher at EPHS, effective 12/30 /25; Joanne Wall, Paraprofessional at Oldham, effective 2/20/26; Patrick O'Brien, Guidance Counselor at EPHS, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Laurie Albanese, Math Teacher at EPHS, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Margarida Saunders, Pre-K Teacher at Oldham, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; and Michelle MacDonald, Grade 1 Teacher at Myron J. Francis, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year.

Recalls – None

Leaves of Absence – None

5. Bill List

- Voucher No. 1058 dated 10/31/25 – \$100,383.50
- Voucher No. 1059 dated 10/31/25 - \$597,036.42
- Voucher No. 1004 dated 12/23/25 - \$137,125.72
- Voucher No. 1006 dated 01/09/26 - \$1,827,817.33

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

- Ai3 Basic Services MMS - \$46,713.27
- Ai3 Supplemental Services MMS - \$46,852.32
- Ai3 Basic Services Wadd - \$1,384.17
- Ai3 Supplemental Services Wadd - \$5,181.75
- Peregrine Group – MMS - \$50,600.00
- Peregrine Group – Wadd - \$21,780.00
- Stephen Turner Inc. – MMS - \$11,778.75
- Stephen Turner Inc. – Wadd - \$10,924.25
- Shawmut MMS - \$2,291,088.59
- Thielsch Engineering - MMS - \$7,898.94
- B&H Photo – MMS - \$1,942.03
- Tailscale – MMS - \$5,880.00
- Willscot - MMS – \$2,900.46
- PODS MMS - \$233.20
- DataPivot – MMS - \$3,542.90
- WB Mason MMS - \$260.00
- Monitor Equipment Co. – MMS - \$55,382.00
- Monitor Equipment Co. – MMS - \$26,023.20
- Monitor Equipment Co. – MMS - \$18,610.00
- Monitor Equipment Co. – MMS - \$69,392.00
- Fisher Science Education – MMS - \$7,012.79
- G&G Fitness Equipment – MMS - \$55,726.00
- Hertz Furniture Systems – MMS - \$22,899.10
- Lakeshore Learning Materials – MMS - \$421.36
- WB Mason – MMS - \$521,945.00
- Sheehans Office – MMS - \$158,884.20

Total - \$3,445,256.28

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

VII. PTO/PTA/EPLCA Reports

Ms. Beauchaine announced that there will be a fundraiser at Contenders on Saturday. The Riverside Middle School PTSA will be hosting a meat and lobster raffle and donating the funds to the girls hockey team the following Saturday.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

1. EPHS 2026-2027 Program of Studies – This was moved up on the agenda.

2. Facilities/Building Committee Update – Dan Carpenter reported the following:

- RMS parking lot painting has to be postponed due to the weather / salt on the pavement. Looking to be rescheduled to a day weather allows. Weather has to align with warmth and precipitation. We may look to the spring.
- Warranty work at Waddington took place over Christmas break. Faulty toilet valves were replaced. The wheelchair lift has been finalized and inspected for use for the gym to 3rd grade stairway. They are currently waiting on a part on back order for the small lower lift to the 2nd grade hallway. Once installed, it will be also inspected.
- MMS has started to be taken down. Vinagro is working through the old pre-k and middle school areas with demolition. Abatement continues on the outside of the building with Site-con. We were able to remove and save the existing generator, a newer hot water tank and tons of furniture that were in the existing building. I will try to sell this to gain money for the project like I was able to with the chiller from Waddington or attempt to utilize it at another building if possible. We also were able to salvage many items that can be used throughout the district to save thousands of dollars in repairs.
- The Building Management system is up and running in all schools. Riverside is currently in the phase of electrical wiring and control installation. They will be working there throughout the coming weeks to complete the system. Airmasters is currently in the building doing electrical work and controls. They are on track to meet their goal of January 30th with RI Energy. I have control over the system for the first time in my ten plus years. Deficiencies with some units have been addressed and some rooms with radiant heat only are being looked at. Some required system flush/purge to allow flow through the loops. Units now have full control, which means they work differently than previously. Staff are not used to this and are now adjusting to the new way of heating. Adjustments are being made to units where anyone feels that their heat is insufficient or overwhelming. With the system being new, and the units being old, along with piping, adjustments are necessary to get everything running correctly. Current settings are 68-72 degrees for efficiency settings.
- Framing for the WON DOOR project began over Christmas break. Framing of the door openings took place along with electrical work. Sheetrock and finishes have been started. Installation will be scheduled with WON DOOR once complete. Programming and low voltage with Synet will follow, to be completed by the end of February.
- We need to look into purchasing a new sander box for one of the trucks. The 3 older ones we have are obsolete. The manufacturer does not exist anymore and they do not

supply parts. We currently have two working salt spreaders. A third would be beneficial. I would also like to purchase another Kubota RTV1100x setup, the same as we currently use to allow two machines to be at the high school and one at MMS. We may get better pricing through the MPA list.

- We have received the results of our Stage 2 submission and will be working through prioritization of the projects with the facilities sub committee.

KUBOTA RTV1100x -\$ 32k-\$45k outfitted with plow/ cab/ heat. sander/etc.

Fisher 1.5 yd sander- \$7-\$8 k

Mr. Ferreira inquired about the price of the Kubota do they have to wait til end of the project. SF will go to bid. Sell the generator to offset the cost. Will they have to vote. DC worked with peregrine and Shawmut. A vote on the next agenda.

Building Committee Update January 2026

Martin Middle School

- Demolition is ongoing of the old building. Site work is also being done in preparation for underground utilities and foundation work. Auditorium work continues with ceilings, MEP work, and ATR treehouse to begin sound and lighting at the end of January / early February. In the coming months footings will be set in place in preparation for the pre-k steel skeleton expected around April.

Waddington

- The ADA lifts have been installed. One has been inspected and ready for use from the gym common area up to 3rd grade. The other from the gym commons down to 2nd grade needed a part that will be in hand on Friday January 16th. Installation is set to take place along with inspection on January 21st. Pressure reducing valves were installed along with sediment filters on the main water line into the building to help relieve the issues we were seeing with flush valves. Shawmut will be providing replacements at no charge to the district. Installation has been ongoing.

3. Finance Update – Ms. Gonzalez reported that in the 5000 series there was a small note of change; 51404 and 51406 are actually flipped and she does not expect to go over budget at this time. In 52000 series they are keeping an eye on the health and dental which includes retirees. Nothing to note at this time. In 53000 series, line item 53303 UCOA will change to 53403. Those expenses are better suited there per RIDE guidance. For 53406 there was a small change for a part-time position that has been requested to be paid as a contractor. This is a cost savings to the district for this change regarding payroll taxes. In 54000 series there is no significant change at this time, some credits for expenses related to the Bond project for telephone, internet etc. In 54902 line item there is an increase due to it previously charged in 54321. Nothing to note in 56000 and 57000 series. There was an increase due to some change in classification coding for 58000.

There are no significant changes for FY25. The last invoices were received. They are preparing for audit and will have final numbers for FY25 soon. FY24 is in quality control and will get an

audit soon which will be presented in March. FY25 audit is a very long process and will probably be presented in the summer.

Ms. Gonzalez will be preparing a statement for the next meeting regarding the capital improvement fund.

IX. Policy Committee Report

1. School Committee By-laws – 2nd read

There were no changes made except to correct a typo on page 9.

2. Building Access Policy – 2nd read

There were no changes made. It was noted that the school committee must undergo a valid background check which is kept in Human Resources.

3. Admission Requirements for Registration of School Aged Children – 1st read

Ms. Beauchaine inquired if a student would have a delay in registering if they are placed in a foster home. Ms. Benedetti-Ramzi stated that foster students shouldn't have a delay in registering.

X. Public Comments

Chrissy Rossi stated that a month ago she attended a meeting to ask if students that are behind could be caught up. She asked if there was any update. Superintendent Forand stated that here are intervention blocks at every school. Students get reading and math instruction if they need it. They catch up in intervention blocks from a specialist or classroom teacher which addresses the skill gap. Ms. Rossi also inquired about the residency policy, page 1 number 4 exemption for medical reasons – is it crossed out to be eliminated? Mr. deSimas stated it is not eliminated and will need to be documented in the policy.

XI. Discussion / Action Items

1. Facilities Meeting Update – Mr. deSimas stated that the facilities committee talked about the building management systems as heating issues arise. They are actively being addressed as needed. They are looking at the possibility of moving the fence at Silver Spring and will be coming to the Committee for future consideration.

2. School Committee By-laws – 2nd read

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve the second reading of the School Committee By-laws as submitted.

3. Building Access Policy – 2nd read

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and passed by a 4-1 vote to approve the second reading of the Building Access Policy as submitted. Mr. Ferreira voted nay.

4. Paraprofessionals' Three-Year Collective Bargaining Agreement

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Paraprofessionals' 2025-2028 Collective Bargaining Agreement as submitted. The Agreement will go before the City Council for approval on January 20th.

5. EPHS 2026-2027 Program of Studies

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve the East Providence High School 2026-2027 Program of Studies as submitted. Ms. Beauchaine stated that once it is approved, it should be up on the website.

6. Naming of Weight Room at EPHS

Mr. Queenan stated that "For nearly a century of combined years, Manny and Stephanie Vinhateiro have dedicated not only their careers, but much of their lives, to creating a positive impact for both our school district and our community. From in-class instruction and administrative leadership to countless hours of volunteer service through such things as the Building Committee responsible for both of our new schools and projects and Friends of Townie Athletics. I can't imagine more deserving members of our community to have our high school weight room named after. For those reasons and more, I propose to our Committee that we consider naming the high school weight room in their honor."

Mr. Queenan also stated that per the district's policies, in order to do so, the Committee will need to have an open session for public comment, a second discussion and a Committee vote, all of which can be a part of next month's agenda.

Mr. Luiz stated that it is well deserved and long overdue. Ms. Beauchaine stated that she supports this 100%. Mr. Ferreira and Mr. deSimas stated they also support this proposal 100%.

XII Announcements – Mr. Ferreira stated that he is looking into an issue where RIDE didn't approve Oldham in Stage II. The Pre-K project at Martin is on track for 2027. Superintendent Forand requested a meeting with RIDE to discuss. Dr. Forand is planning a public discussion on using that building.

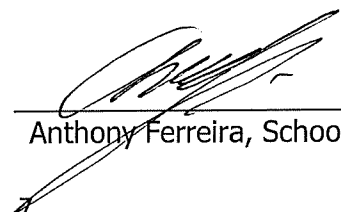
Mr. Queenan stated that he will have more information at the next meeting regarding the Health & Wellness Committee meeting from last week. The Students Take Charge program was funded by URI. The funds have dried up. A teacher at Riverside Middle School will try to move that program forward for students at the middle school.

XIII. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant


Anthony Ferreira, School Committee Clerk