
**EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OPEN SESSION – April 14, 2026**

I. Call to Order - Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in Open Session on Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the auditorium at East Providence High School. Present: Davd Luiz, Chair, Antonio deSimas, Vice Chair, Anthony Ferreira, Clerk, Ryan Queenan and Jessica Beauchaine. Superintendent Forand and Assistant Superintendent Lisa Benedetti-Ramzi were also present. Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

II. Public Comments

Mr. Luiz notified the group of educators that no negotiations have begun nor has a proposal been presented to the School Committee.

1. Donna Fernandes stated that she has been a teacher for 36 years in East Providence and has been in 2nd grade at Hennessey since 2010. She left Oldham when district moved to a one track school. She stated that research states that class sizes of 25 are too large in elementary school. They have a full range of needs and there are behavioral challenges. It's not equitable to stretch one teacher for all these needs. Students need meaningful inclusion time with their peers. Teachers working without a teaching partner, no one to collaborate with. Classes are overcrowded and under supported. Displacing students from their home school takes the opportunity for them to learn with their peers goes away. Bus costs are being spent rather than have the classes in the school. Educators need to be more aware of how district decisions are made and how they affect students.

2. Shana Walsh, a 5th grade teacher at Whiteknact, stated that teaching is not an isolated position – need to align curriculum, look at data and much more and it should not be done in isolation, should be done is collaboration. They need common planning time with other teachers to share strategies, support one another and ensure consistency for all students. CPT is more meaningful when driven by a teacher. Work with coaches, etc. when it is at the right time and not over done. Closing classes in elementary schools directly impacts teachers to benefit from CPT and also to meet the SEL needs of the students. Single classes isolates teachers and weakens support systems. Departmentalized teachers are able to deliver explicit instructions as an expert. Having one teacher for each content area benefits student learning. Closing classrooms forces class sizes up and that is not good for students and their learning. Students who are in life skills classrooms cannot join their age appropriate peers. We need to value the conditions that allow for strong teaching practices.

3. John Turbitt stated that he has been a teacher for 42 years and a proud Townie and Kent Heights graduate. He has had many amazing teachers over the years who were fairly treated

and fairly compensated. Those teachers inspired him because it was sustainable for life. Without certain conditions being met, that will not continue in East Providence. Teaching is hard. Teachers need an environment where they can thrive. They deserve to be safe – over the years this has not been the case. There's been an uptick in behavior and policy needs to be implemented for behavior. Codify the behavior matrix into the contract. Teachers are stretched thin. IEP/504 majority of students in the class without the support which is not fair to the students. Additional support is needed and needs to be included in the contract. Together, working hard, we can ensure that we have the ability to deliver the same quality education that he received.

Mr. Ferreira stated that teachers should keep showing up for every single meeting if they don't want that to happen. It is all about money. We need to work within our means and work with the City Council to ask for more money.

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to move up Action Item #1 Stop Arm Camera Update.

Chief Raposa stated that they are not up and running yet and not giving out tickets yet. The District is good on our side and EPPD is ready but are waiting for Gatekeeper.

Mr. Luiz inquired if they were provided with the proper training yet. Chief Raposa stated that they do not need that much training. Internal cameras are just the school department. No School Committee members had any question for Chief Raposa. The Chief wants this to get done like everyone else, waiting on the company.

Mr. Ferreira stated that he voted against this company. It's not right that we are going on eight months because we were persuaded to go with a company that was nowhere near able to do this work. This is not about money and students are not safer. The district is not being told the truth. This company is not capable of dealing with a district this size. If there are no answers by the end of the month, legal counsel needs to be consulted. It is not the fault of the police department.

Ms. Beauchaine stated that they can have the company come to public session. They need to come and be accountable and see what the problem is. Mr. Luiz stated that he has communicated with the company through email and said we need this done.

III. Executive Session

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried unanimously to move into the main office conference room for the purpose of: Receive legal advice regarding Cardin litigation 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.

IV. Reconvene in Open Session (Regular Meeting)

Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 7:02 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.

V. Student Liaison – Hope Moran reported that there is a strong sense of momentum and positivity throughout East Providence High School entering the fourth quarter of the school year. With April break beginning next week, students and staff alike are looking forward to a well-deserved pause before finishing the year strong. Spring sports are officially underway and already off to a very successful start, bringing energy and school spirit to the community. They are proud to have two students nominated for Providence Journal High School Athletes of the Week – Trinity Preventure for softball and Ben “Lefty” Helene for baseball. Additionally, Kira Mullen, one of their standout volleyball players, was recognized with the Kindness Award from Carl Sweeney, highlighting the character and leadership of their student athletes. Unified Plunge was another major success, reflecting the continued strength of inclusion and school unity. SkillsUSA chapter had an exceptional showing, with 36 students placing in the top three at their competitions – an impressive accomplishment that speaks to their hard work and dedication. DECA members will be traveling to Atlanta next week to compete on the international stage, representing both East Providence and Rhode Island with pride. In addition, three students were recognized by the East Providence Boys & Girls Club as Youth of the Year finalists, with senior Caden Vaughn earning the top distinction and advancing to compete at the state level. These accomplishments reflect how EPHS students continue to excel both in and out of the classroom. Student involvement remains strong across the board. They’ve seen the growth of new clubs, including a Christian Bible study group, as well as, creative initiatives like Townie Cares’ “Shred Your Stress” activity, which provided students with a meaningful and engaging outlet to manage stress during the school day. Overall, morale is high as they approach the final stretch of the school year. A great deal of credit goes to their staff who have done an outstanding job keeping energy and morale high for students through their support, creativity and continued dedication in the classroom and beyond. With warmer weather, increased student engagement and continued achievements across academics, athletics and extracurriculars, East Providence High School is in a strong and positive place.

Superintendent Forand announced that Hope will be going to James Madison College in the fall.

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to move up the Finance Report.

- Auditor Presentation – David Hansen, CPA

Ms. Gonzalez indicated that the auditor, David Hansen, CPA, from CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, was here to present the FY24 audit results. This is an audit of the financial statements for the year ended October 31, 2024. The financial statements do not show any unmodified opinions. The internal control finding shows significant deficiency over financial reporting. Timeliness of year end close. There are no instances of non-compliance. There were operational deficits but they were corrected. Operating fund was over-budget by \$2M due to overspending of some grant funds. There were no difficulties encountered or disagreements with management. There has always been a difference between the state funds and have to wait for the next fiscal year, but

the state has gotten better. There are also delays due to the turnover and delay in getting trial balances.

VI. District Recognition – Ms. Beauchaine asked some of the principals present to speak about good things happening in their schools. Principal Black stated that KyleCares Foundation is a new organization that the high school worked with last year. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting open and honest communication about the mental health challenges experienced by teens and young adults in today's society. Kyle Johnson took his life and his father goes to schools around New England speaking. He is so passionate about looking out for each other and caring for each other. Dan Cabral has taken over the unofficial roll as advisory. There is a core group of about twelve students. Students can take their feelings and put them in a shredder. The high school chapter is TownieCares which received a \$1000 grant to go directly into the chapter. Principal Rebello stated that KyleCares is great and she would not have known about it. She stated there are amazing things happening in Pre-K. They had the CTC students come and speak to the students. There is nothing like talking to a high schooler. They had a dentist come in but high school students are more impactful.

VII. Consent Agenda

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

2. **Home School Requests** – There were six homeschool requests.

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

- February 10, 2026 Executive & Open Session School Committee Meeting
- February 9, 2026 Building Committee Meeting

4. **Personnel Report**

Appointments – Lisa DaSilva, Paraprofessional at Hennessey, effective 3/16/26.

Resignations – Carissa Jandrositz, Guidance Counselor at EPHS, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Marissa Babbitt, Resource Teacher at Waddington, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Lindsey Reilly, Director of Teaching and Learning, effective 4/13/26; and Lian Furtado, Resource Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year.

Retirements – Dr. Sandra Forand, Superintendent of Schools, effective 6/30/26; Karen Greene, Paraprofessional at Martin Middle School, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; Robert Motta, Maintenance B, effective 6/25/26; and Maryanne O'Rourke, Administrative Assistant in HR, effective 7/7/26.

Recalls – Elementary Teacher at TBD, effective 2026-2027 school year.

Leaves of Absence – Grade 5 Teacher at Silver Spring, effective 2026-2027 school year; and Science Teacher at Martin Middle School, effective 2026-2027 school year.

Non-Renewal Rescindment – Teacher at ELC – Oldham.

5. **Bill List**

- Voucher No. 1017 dated 3/18/26 - \$1,028.77
- Voucher No. 1019 dated 3/26/26 - \$133,138.00
- Voucher No. 1020 dated 3/31/26 - \$5,000.00
- Voucher No. 1023 dated 4/9/26 - \$1,907,497.14

6. Stage III Invoices - MMS/Waddington Projects for March 2026

- Ai3 Basic Services MMS - \$46,713.27
- Ai3 Supplemental Services MMS - \$167,369.13
- Peregrine Group – MMS - \$50,600.00
- Peregrine Group – Wadd - \$21,780.00
- Stephen Turner Inc. – MMS - \$2,528.75
- Stephen Turner Inc. – Wadd - \$3,340.00
- Shawmut - MMS - \$2,797.442.30
- Willscot - MMS – \$2,944.62
- PODS - MMS - \$233.20
- Thielsch Engineering – MMS - \$19,530.50
- Thielsch Engineering – MMS - \$11,366.50
- Mosyle Corporation – MMS - \$14,850.00
- Johnson Scientific – MMS - \$16,443.00

Total \$3,155,141.27

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

VIII. PTO/PTA/EPLAC Reports – No news to report.

IX. Superintendent's Report

1. Facilities/Building Committee Update – Dan Carpenter reported that the dishwasher for Waddington has been delivered and prepped for installation over April Vacation. The drain line repair work at Riverside Middle School has been ongoing in the teachers' lounge. Pipes within the building area are full of sediment and are in need of replacement in the near future. 60+ years of water/grime is clogging the drains like concrete. The drain lines have been replaced along with the cabinets in the teacher's lounge.

Mr. Carpenter has been researching options for salt spreader boxes. He came upon a grant that awards up to \$25k toward municipal equipment/capital project funding. RIHEBC is providing a capital improvement/municipal equipment grant that he is applying for. This could be used to cover some needed new items for our maintenance crew. The allotted money from the previous meeting could be put toward the salt spreader box, or re-allocated towards another item not covered by the grant. The application was sent in on Thursday April 9th, with award decisions to be made May 26-27th.

- Replacement bobcat snowblower (8-9k)
- Salt Spreader box (8-11k)
- Hot water pressure washer (5k)
- SNO WAY stainless steel box - \$8012 (will have to be ordered/ and shipping) RDL equipment
- Sno way electric/ plastic box - \$7700- (1 in stock) RDL
- Fisher tempest 300C- \$10,700 Wright trailer (order)
- Repairs around the district are ongoing from blizzard plow damages with asphalt, grass, signs and fences etc. The landscaping crew is working around the district.

- The Silver Spring School sign has been repaired and repainted and was put back up with new poles and vinyl coverings.
- Mr. Carpenter is setting up spring paving projects to start back up the week of April vacation with Kent Heights playground and painting of the teachers' parking lot at RMS. He has been in touch with PHMA and Schultz painting to continue the projects. Remaining projects left are Myron J. Francis sidewalks around the building, and curbing installation at Orlo in conjunction with the City DPW.
- He has compiled a list of equipment that will be going on GOV-DEALS auction site to try to help the district accumulate some funds to go towards needed maintenance equipment. He will be researching appropriate sale prices for each item and setting reserves.
- Tarco salt spreaders (2) (chains and drive rotted and frozen) (Cannot get replacement parts)
- Torwel salt spreader (motor and transmission junk, also chains rotted)
- 2007 Ford F 250, with 3 plug snowplow (old HS truck) (frame rotted, no brake lines)
- 2011 Ford Crown Victoria (old police car/mailman)
- 2005 Ford Crown Victoria (old director vehicle)
- Generac Generator (old MMS)
- Caterpillar Generator (old EPHS)
- Hobart Dishwasher conveyor style , with hot water booster (old MMS)
- Stainless 3 bay sink (old MMS)
- Old Viewsonic TVs (IT)
- 2-way cameras (IT)
- Network equipment (IT)
- He is looking into the cost of 120V hand dryers to be installed in bathrooms throughout the schools to curb the high cost of paper towels along with them being flushed down toilets. This would involve running wiring to power the units. There is plenty of space on the panels to accommodate this.
- The finance director and Mr. Carpenter have been looking into a program with ENEL energy, through RI Energy, that uses our new building management system to combat high energy usage during peak hours which they consider 2pm-5pm daily. This would be to reduce the energy consumption and give us incentive money back on what energy usage we can curb or eliminate.
- Yearly backflow inspections have been scheduled for April vacation week with Fleet Plumbing.
- A list of spring/summer projects is being put together to see what funds will be available to accomplish each.

Potential projects around the district that need to be funded:

EPHS asphalt crack sealing

RMS sidewalk expansion joint repairs

Curbing and sidewalks at Pre-K (City?)
Concrete and railing repairs at Kent Heights
Concrete and railing repairs at Hennessey
Concrete retaining wall repair/replacement at Waddington
Sections of concrete curbing at Francis
Adding FRP panels to all bathrooms at EPHS to replace wall paper (in progress 3rd floor south boys' room)
Replacement of windows back hallway at Hennessey

Mr. Carpenter gave a brief update on a few items. The WON doors are working just fine and the one issue has been resolved. With regard to aging infrastructure, the pipes at Riverside Middle School are a major project and will be discussed at the subcommittee meeting. The remaining spring projects have to be finished by June 30th according to RIDE emergency funds. Kent Heights will be done over vacation week, then Myron J. Francis and Orlo Avenue. One school this month one school in May and one school in June. The RFP for panels has already been done. The back-flow prevention roughly costs \$1900 and there is a list of approved companies. Regarding the track repair, Mr. Carpenter has been in contact with the saw cutting folks. They need to follow up with a power washer to pick up the slag. This will be a summer project.

Moving forward, a list of potential district projects and projects approved by RIDE will be sent to the Committee.

Building Committee Update April 2026

Martin Middle School

At Martin Middle school steel has been going up daily. Masonry prep work to the existing building for tie-in has been completed. Raising of the last beam took place once again with everyone's signatures who came to sign it. Site work continues with parking lot preparation. Work will continue with slab on grade pouring, clip preparation for steel stud exterior walls and steel decking. Raising of the last steel Pre-K beam that was signed was installed on Thursday, April 9th. Auditorium work continues with painting, carpet, seat re-installation, new railings, and ACT ceilings in the stairwells. ATR Treehouse is installing the audio and stage lighting equipment.

Waddington

Devices were installed into the concrete slab to monitor the moisture levels. The slab is presenting that it contains high levels of moisture. This is due to years and years of exposure, and high water levels at the property. In turn, these reports will continue to be monitored throughout the wet season, and decisions will be made as to what direction the concrete slab floor sealant will be installed. Aid 4 Mobility has also worked through the issue that they had with the handicap lift, and now has it fully operational and inspected for daily use.

2. Finance Update – Ms. Gonzalez reported that

Ms. Gonzalez reported that the financial report for the month of April has no major changes for FY26. There have been some changes but not in a finalized place. FY26 has no concerns other than benefits issue that were previously reported and working on with the Trust. It's a close year for benefits and new health insurance rates are produced July 1st. They project for a rate

increase from July 1st and did get an estimate of a 15% increase in benefits. It was not expected and they did not budget for that, however, they have a budget for unexpected expenses/assumptions. The 15% equates to about \$1.5M. Central office is looking at demand response for about \$90,000 and other areas for revenue. 80% of the budget is contracted so there is not much room. The budget process has been revised with more budget detail. Principals and directors to work collectively.

- Auditor Presentation – David Hansen, CPA – Moved up on the agenda.

Motion by Mr. Ferreira, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to move up Action Item #2, Capital Improvement Account Update

Mr. Ferreira requested how much is in the capital account. Ms. Gonzalez responded that there is \$2M. Mr. Ferreira asked if it was all paid. Ms. Gonzalez stated yes but that money is encumbered at \$3M and they have not gotten reimbursements yet. Dr. Forand stated that this is fluid. Ms. Gonzalez stated that they have to make a formal request for reimbursements from the City. For the Riverside parking lot, the bill paid to the vendor but the reimbursement has not been received. The district is contracted up to \$3M for other projects. Mr. Ferreira stated that if the Committee approved Oldham/Meadowcrest, they need to have the City release the money. As a sitting body, if we choose to keep it as a school, we have the right to vote on it even if the City does not want it.

X. Policy Committee Report

1. Child Abuse & Neglect Policy – 1st read

Mr. deSimas reported that the outdated language in the policy was updated. Dr. Forand stated that the policy was also aligned to current protocols. The principals reviewed it as well.

2. Communication to Parents/Guardians – Retention Notification Policy – 1st read

Dr. Forand stated that this policy had an extensive rewrite from 2001. The policy is now in line with how the district communicates and the supports we provide and when. There are multiple forms of communication through parent square. Parents are always a part of the communication process; sometimes they recommend it.

XI. Public Comments

1. Renee Ignacio requested an update on the sander. She asked if there was \$1M for Meadowcrest. Mr. Ferreira responded that there was but it was used on another important project. It went to asbestos removal at the high school. The high school had a ten year project and they had to get it done before it could open. She wanted the public to know where the money went.

2. Maria Barrett, a parent in East Providence for many years, stated that it breaks her heart where we are right now as a school district. Teachers are burnt out and they go above and beyond, are overworked, underpaid and without resources. Classrooms are so overcrowded that her grandson cannot pay attention because of being over stimulated. She is looking into homeschooling. Teachers are unable to retire. They need help and the district needs to have their back.

Mr. Ferreira stated that they had a strong showing tonight and they have to look at this and stated that there is no blame on anyone. We all try to do the best we can. Scores are great and teachers are doing a great job. There is a lot of friction because everyone is looking at the dollar. We need to take a look at this with very little money and work with the Superintendent and City Council.

XII. Discussion / Action Items

1. Stop Arm Camera Update – Mr. Luiz

This was moved up on the agenda.

2. Capital Improvement Account Update – Mr. Ferreira

This was moved up on the agenda.

3. Discussion regarding Rental of Riverside Middle School Soccer Field – Mr. Ferreira

Steve Souza, from the EPYSA, stated that they have been using the field for about twelve years. They would like to repair the field if they get assurance that it would not have to pay field use fees moving forward. Mr. Luiz stated that he is in favor of it. Dr. Forand stated the association can reach out to Diana Clarkin. Mr. deSimas stated that they did reach out to Ms. Clarkin, who said they have to pay the fees. Superintendent Forand will look into it.

4. Discussion regarding Naming Martin Middle School Stage after Judy De Perla –

Mr. Luiz stated that there is no theatre program without Judy De Perla. She needs to be honored by naming the stage in her honor. She was a positive influence. Mr. Luiz can supply as much information as needed. This will be on the next agenda for a vote.

5. Discussion regarding follow-up on Meadowcrest School Forum – Mr. Ferreira

inquired as to where the Committee stands on keeping it a school. Riverside is growing and it's an up and coming area. Mr. Luiz stated that he would like to keep Meadowcrest a school but needs more information; needs a cost to get it up to code and how much to staff it. Superintendent Forand said they still have a full year before Pre-K moves out. Kindergarten enrollment is going on right now; if a classroom is full, the practice is that they go to the next school. The district went out for a feasibility study. There needs to be a comprehensive plan for the whole district. The center of the city enrollment is decreasing. Maybe look to redistrict and look at the lines and demographics. They need a plan for what the building will be used for before RIDE will reimburse for any repairs. The feasibility study will provide this information

6. Updated ALP Job Description

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by a vote of 4-1 to approve the updated ALP job description as submitted. Ms. Beauchaine voted nay. Assistant Superintendent Benedetti-Ramzi, Principal Black and Assistant Principal Messier presented the key differences for the ALP lead teacher position with stipend. There is a shift in the structure of the program including a leadership role on the part of the educators. There is also a reduction of one paraprofessional, making it one lead teacher, one teacher and one para. There is a \$1500 stipend added to the ALP teacher lead position. The lead teacher is accountable for attendance, behavior intervention and general oversight.

7. EPHS/CTC Trip to Devens, MA in June 2026

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the high school/CTC trip to Devens Reserve Forces Area in Devens, MA on April 15 to April 19, 2026 as submitted.

8. EPHS Trip to Orlando, FL in February 2027

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve the high school trip to Orlando, FL on February 24 to April 28, 2027 as submitted.

9. EPHS Trip to Philadelphia, PA in April 2026

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve the high school trip to Penn Relays in Philadelphia, PA on April 23 to April 25, 2026 as submitted.

10. Board Certified Behavior Analyst Position

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BDBA) position as submitted.

11. Proposed Cardin Settlement

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve the proposed Cardin settlement as discussed in executive session.

12. RIDE's Waiver of Two Snow Days

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried by unanimous consent to approve Rhode Island Department of Education's waiver of two snow days as submitted. The last day of school will be June 17, 2026.

13. Updated 2026-2027 School Calendar

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the updated 2026-2027 school calendar as submitted. The State of RI changed the date of the statewide primaries from September 8th to September 9th, 2026.

14. Superintendent's Evaluation Tool – Mr. deSimas

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to approve the Superintendent's evaluation tool as submitted.

15. BridgePointe's Building Use Contract

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by a vote of 4-1 to approve the contract for BridgePointe's building use as submitted with discussion. The building use money will be going into the capital fund. Mr. Queenan voted nay.

16. RFP for Food Service Management Company

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried by unanimous consent to approve the RFP for food service management company as submitted. Ms. Gonzalez stated that we are on the state contract and it ends 6-30-26. RIDE is going out to RFP but will not make a decision on time. This RFP is for us so we have options. If RIDE makes an award, we can go with that or not and we can do our own.

17. Enter into Demand Response Ageement with Enel X North America

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried by unanimous consent to approve to enter into Demand Response Agreement with Enel X North America as submitted. Dr. Forand stated that this is the energy reduction plan.

XIII Announcements – No news.

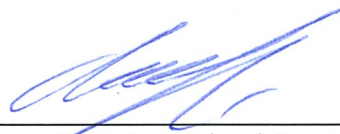
XIV. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant



Anthony Ferreira, School Committee Clerk