
**EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OPEN SESSION – June 9, 2026**

I. Call to Order - Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in Open Session on Tuesday, June 9, 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 6:03 pm.

II. Executive Session

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried unanimously to move into the main office conference room for the purpose of: Discussion regarding Certified Employee Settlement pursuant to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(9); 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 6:13 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 unanimously to seal the minutes.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried unanimously to move up XI. Special Public Comments followed by V. Public Comments.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried unanimously to move up IX. 4 Retirement Video to follow both Public Comments.

Motion by Ms. Beauchaine, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried unanimously to move up IX. 4 Retirement Video before XI. Special Public Comments.

Public Comments

1. Renee Ignacio – Inquired if any votes were taken in executive session. She stated she sent Superintendent Forand an email regarding a budget line item number which was reversed. She gave an update on the stop-arm camera violations and passed out the information to the Committee.
2. Nancy Iadeluca, RI Director of Unite Here Local 26 and guests, committee members for the food and beverage employees at the high school and around the city. They are here

because they know the district is considering a food service provider. Right now Chartwells is the food service provider. They are expecting to negotiate a contract with Chartwells which ends on June 30th. Chartwells, Aramark and Sodexo, three companies that have bid, will hire the work force, the breakfast and lunch workers with their pay and benefits. They have no commitment at all from Whitsons and SFE. She is requesting to protect the thirty-nine workers in the school department. Thirty-five of them live in East Providence. Hoping the district doesn't forget about them and chooses a company that will keep this loyal staff that has served East Providence for so long.

Mr. Ferreira requested how many years the thirty-five workers worked in the City.

3. Pat Abrames is an employee working in the lunch program. She worked for 26 years and started with Aramark and now with Chartwells. She is currently a cook at the high school. They are concerned if a new company comes in that doesn't honor their contract and wages. Appreciates the consideration from the School Committee.
4. Esther Wolk, President and Jillian Waugh, Vice President of School Librarians of RI presented the 2026 RI School Librarian of the Year award to Tina Ash. The School Librarian of the Year award recognizes an SLRI member who successfully fills the roles of teacher, instructional partner, leader, information specialist and program administrator while building relationships with students and colleagues. Student Haleigh Shirley nominated Tina for this award. She said Mrs. Ash is more than just a librarian, she is a compassionate team player and a trusted confidante who goes above and beyond because she truly cares, making her a perfect candidate for this recognition.
5. Susan White an East Providence resident who works at Chartwells for twelve years. She asked that before the district chooses a food service company, to choose a provider that will respect the workers.

Special Public Comments – Superintendent Forand

Tabitha Watjen, Instructional Coach; Lisa Benedetti-Ramzi, Assistant Superintendent; Kim Maratto, Reading Teacher; Ben Nascimento, student at EPHS; Laurie Marchand, Principal of Martin Middle School; and Jessica Beauchaine, School Committee Member, shared heartfelt reflections on their experiences working with Dr. Forand, who will retire at the end of this month. Each speaker highlighted her unwavering commitment to education, deep compassion for students and staff, consistent presence at school events, and tireless dedication to supporting every student's success. Their remarks painted a picture of a respected leader whose impact will be felt throughout the school community for years to come.

Amanda Resendes spoke on behalf of her mom, Cathleen Medina, who will be retiring at the end of the year. She is incredibly proud of her mom for making a courageous decision to go back to school to become a teacher.

V. Student Liaison – Hope Moran introduced Amy Gonzalez Cuello, an 11th grader at EPHS who will serve as the School Committee liaison for the 2026-2027 school year. Hope highlighted end of the year events at the high school. Superintendent Forand congratulated her on her outstanding accomplishments and wished her the best.

V. Public Comments – moved up on the agenda.

VI. District Recognition – Highlights from each school were presented.

VII. Consent Agenda

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

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

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

- May 12, 2026 Open Session School Committee Meeting
- May 18, May 28 & June 3, 2026 Executive & Open Session Special School Committee Meetings
- May 11, 2026 Building Committee Meeting

4. **Personnel Report**

Appointments – Mia Jackson, Math Teacher at EPHS, effective 2026-2027 school year; Danielle Lippechar, Math Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective 2026-2027 school year; Jameson Peckham, Math Teacher at EPHS, effective 2026-2027 school year; Sophia Schobel, Science Teacher at EPHS, effective 2026-2027 school year; Mark Medeiros, Science Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective 2026-2027 school year; Caroline Mahon, Resource Teacher at Waddington, effective 2026-2027 school year; Stephen Nystrand, Science Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective 2026-2027 school year; Nicole Perkins, Pre-K Teacher at Oldham, effective 2026-2027 school year; Robert Boyd, Connections Teacher at Riverside Middle School, effective 2026-2027 school year; Allison Mudge, Kindergarten Teacher at Whiteknact, effective 2026-2027 school year; and Caroline Buzzanca, Grade 4 Teacher at Whiteknact, effective 2026-2027 school year.

Resignations – Marc Laurino, Paraprofessional at EPHS, effective 5/11/26; Bethany Barron, Paraprofessional at Oldham, effective 5/12/26; Kathline Levesque, Paraprofessional at EPHS, effective 2025-2026 school year; Nicole Perkins, Paraprofessional at Oldham, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year; and Robert Boyd, Paraprofessional at Riverside Middle School, effective end of the 2025-2026 school year.

Retirements – Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Committee, effective 8/1/26.

Recalls – None

Leaves of Absence – None

Non-Renewals - None

5. **Bill List**

- Voucher No. 1028 dated 05/13/26 - \$599.00
- Voucher No. 1029 dated 05/26/26 - \$82,676.33
- Voucher No. 1030 dated 06/01/26 - \$17,727.00
- Voucher No. 1031 dated 06/03/26 - \$1,752.00
- Voucher No. 1032 dated 06/03/26 - \$210,227.94
- Voucher No. 1035 dated 06/04/26 - \$1,800,238.68

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

- Ai3 Basic Services MMS - \$46,713.27
- Peregrine Group – MMS - \$50,600.00
- Peregrine Group – Wadd - \$21,780.00
- Shawmut – MMS - \$2,773,916.88
- Willscot - MMS – \$2,900.46
- PODS - MMS - \$233.20
- Stephen Turner Inc. – MMS - \$1,233.45
- Stephen Turner Inc. – MMS - \$8,801.50
- K&S Construction – MMS - \$5,985.00
- Thielsch Engineering – MMS - \$18,444.00

Total \$2,930,607.76

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine 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. Apple Lease Agreement – Patrick MacDonald, IT Co-Director, went over details of the lease agreement with Apple that allows us to purchase. The agreement has been reviewed by legal counsel. He shared a few samples of devices with the Committee that would be given to students. Mr. Queenan inquired if the district was moving away from the present set up. Mr. McDonald stated that earlier this year they have been working on sustainability with chromebooks and students. A chromebook committee was set up. Quotes were received that were \$125 less for each device. Student devices can be replaced twice a year at no cost to the district. Accidental damage replacements will no longer have to be family funded. These devices grant a much more robust replacement plan and device insurance for the district. There's a cost savings opportunity for the district and students. The device would be the same size as the chromebooks. Ms. Beauchaine stated that RI still issues standardized testing on computers. However, not all classwork is being done on computers, teachers are still educating students. Mr. Ferreira inquired about the cost savings to the district.
2. Apprenticeship Update – Dr. Forand stated that two paraprofessionals entered the apprenticeship program who will become teachers. Three more paras have been accepted into the program, fully paid to get their teaching certification, and have a commitment to the district. They will do their student teaching in the classroom. The first group will be doing student teaching next year. It's a great program and the district is very lucky to be a part of it.
3. Retirement Video – Moved up on the agenda. There are thirty employees retiring this year.

4. **Facilities/Building Committee Update** – Dan Carpenter

- Paving projects - Orlo and Francis are set to begin on June 18th, for sidewalk replacements. City DPW will be assisting with concrete sidewalk replacement at Orlo.
- MMS stage floor work began Thursday, June 4th by American floors. This includes installation of new hardwood, and refinishing to bring the final piece of the auditorium together to be accessible for full use once again.
- Quotes for parking lot crack filling and EPHS running track have come back, due to our \$8000 limit they will possibly have to go out to RFP unless on the MPA list.

Cracks in parking lots -EPHS/ ADMIN quoted by G Force \$12,800 (future RFP) (Quote Attached)
Track - quoted by Ace Concrete - \$7999 (quote attached)

The district has received the Schoolhouse Facility Assessments for each school that was conducted in 2024 by Bureau Veritas for RIDE. Paired with the feasibility study, this will help determine the course of action in the future, and also help build our 5-year plans.

Mr. Carpenter was pleased to report that he was awarded the \$25,000 grant from RIHEBC to be used to purchase new maintenance equipment. This will help tremendously with replacing some of the worn equipment. He also sold some unused surplus items on GOV Deals and has accumulated \$8,717.

Summer logistics are being finalized as to what projects we will plan to accomplish.

1. EPHS track repairs (Ace concrete cutting \$7999 to cut)
2. RMS sidewalks repairs
3. Water fountains at Francis, Waddington, Silver Spring
4. Paint EPHS stage
5. Paint and graffiti seal back of MMS brick wall section
6. Gym flooring at Waddington (after July 10th start due to camps)
7. Kent Heights grease trap replacement
8. EPHS oven replacement
9. Finalize dishwashing room at Waddington
10. Paving projects at Orlo/Francis
11. Sealing of the exposed aggregate at EPHS
12. Replenish mulch in playgrounds where needed.
13. Wall repairs to a few bathrooms at EPHS from previous wallpaper vandalism issues with FRP.

He offered his congratulations to the class of 2026. Best of luck in the future. He would also like to thank his maintenance team for their efforts. Lastly, he would like to say thank you to Superintendent Forand for all her years and dedication to this district and our facilities department. Through the multiple construction projects, in-house projects, meetings, daily work, a massive blizzard, honestly a few disasters like floods, and squirrels taking out the power in the city on multiple occasions, her leadership has shined through it all. From keeping us fed

during the blizzard, assisting with shoveling us out when we were stuck, and keeping morale on a high note, the behind the scenes operations truly comes from a person with a big heart and an incredible work ethic. From our maintenance and custodial staff, Steve and myself, we wish you the best in retirement and future endeavors. We all say thank you and we will miss you, for everything that you have done for our department.

Building Committee Report - June 2026

Pre-K - Steel framing has begun, the roof is being done along with roof drainage piping. Site work continues with the parking lot, lighting poles and site drainage. Interior fireproofing and waterproofing is ongoing. Exterior sheathing has begun. The temporary upper parking lot will be removed this summer and relocated to the permanent area in front of the new building. This is to be finished in time for use this coming fall.

Waddington - Gym flooring is set to be replaced after July 10th. This is due to ESY and Camp Invention in the building until that time. The floor will be demolished, shot blasted, sealed with a moisture sealant barrier, and Nora Tile Flooring installed giving a fresh new look to the space. Kitchen area will get a new flooring. Shades have been approved and will take 4-6 weeks to install.

5. Finance Update – Ms. Gonzalez reported that in the 51000 series, item 51115 Substitutes is now 80% expended and expects this to be fully expended by the end of the school year, leaving nothing budgeted for those two months in the new school year. In the 52000 series, item 52101 Health Insurance remains to be a concern. However, the final increase starting 7/1/26 is 11.8% for health and 6.8% for dental. A 7% increase has been budgeted. In the 53000 series, item 53202 Speech Therapist, 53203 OT, 53205 Psychologist is not a concern. These are positions that were budgeted in salaries that have remained vacant. Item 53406 Other includes truancy officer that was previously budgeted in Salaries but prefers to be a 1099. This is a cost saving to the district while that line is overspent, it is not affecting the bottom line negatively. Medicaid Expenses line is an increase but that is based on the performance on Medicaid bill for revenue. Those fees are based on the Medicaid Claims that we have. Overspent but it does not have a negative affect on the budget. Nothing to report in the 54000, 55000, 56000 and 57000 series. With regard to revenue, the Governor's proposed budget will increase state aid a projected \$500K. The new Accounts Payable automation has successfully been implemented. This program allows vendors to sign up for ACH/direct deposit payments. Seventy-eight vendors have signed up already. This also reduces the district's liability for fraudulent checks and mail fraud. Five bids have been received for the school lunch RFP. They are significant and require more detail to review and score.

X. Policy Committee Report

1. Staff Acceptable Use & Device Care Policy – 2nd read
There were no changes to this policy.

2. Acceptable Use Policy: Computer, Technology, Internet & Google for Students – 2nd read

First page of policy highlighted with a small change and under repairs/replacing device, the language was changed to match warranties.

3. Homework Policy – 2nd read
There were no changes to this policy.

XI. Special Public Comments – Moved up on the agenda.

XII. Discussion / Action Items

1. Defects at the High School – Mr. Ferreira inquired if there are any issues at the high school that need to be addressed. Mr. Carpenter stated that one of the boilers needed a motor at a cost of \$13K. They run two boilers at a time so they are covered for the time being. The lighting in the auditorium has a five year warranty until August. A sensor was replaced. They are prioritizing items with the tight budget. The motor is included in the maintenance line item in the upcoming budget.

2. ESY Update – Ms. Beauchaine

Dr. Forand stated that all ESY positions are filled and fully staffed. Each classroom will have one teacher and two paraprofessionals. 124 students will be receiving ESY services. Forty parents declined ESY services for their children for the summer. ESY runs three days per week from June 30-July 30 at 9:30-11:30am for grades Pre-K; 8:30-11:45am for grades K-5 and 7:30-10:30am for grades 6-12.

3. Kindergarten Enrollment Numbers Update – Ms. Beauchaine

Dr. Forand stated that kindergarten numbers have decreased from last month. Numbers should be slightly higher. Some students won't get into their home schools based on enrollment numbers. Silver Spring, Waddington and Whiteknact kindergarten classes are full. All self-contained students have been placed. Principals are doing one kindergarten orientation for all schools on Tuesday, June 16th at 6:00 pm in the high school auditorium.

4. Special Education Review K Placement – Ms. Beauchaine inquired if any additional classrooms have been added or taken away. Dr. Forand is monitoring closely and is not sure if there will be new registrations over the summer. The classes are ranging from 5 to 12 students. Working on changing programs to match the needs of students which takes time. They don't want to move students once they're placed in the schools. Additional paras may be needed. K pathways are grades K-2 and will remain in that classroom. They will look at the needs of the students coming in. Also, will keep communicating with parents on status and what the process is and timeline.

5. Staff Acceptable Use & Device Care Policy – 2nd read

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried unanimously to approve the second read of the Staff Acceptable Use & Device Care Policy as submitted.

6. Acceptable Use Policy for Students – 2nd read

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried unanimously to approve the second read of the Acceptable Use Policy: Computer, Technology, Internet & Google for Students as submitted.

7. Homework Policy – 2nd read

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried unanimously to approve the second read of the Homework Policy as submitted.

8. EPHS Wind Ensemble Trip to California in 2027

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried unanimously to approve the East Providence High School wind ensemble class trip to California in 2027 as submitted.

9. Certified Employee's Proposed Settlement

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried unanimously to approve the certified employee's proposed settlement as discussed in executive session.

10. Apple Lease Agreement

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Ferreira and carried unanimously to approve the Apple Lease Agreement as submitted.

11. Sole Source Purchase with Curriculum Associates

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Mr. Queenan and carried unanimously to approve the sole source purchase with Curriculum Associates for Education Software IReady as submitted. IReady is also the math curriculum and additional consumables need to be purchased.

XIII Announcements – No announcements.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. deSimas, seconded by Ms. Beauchaine and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant



Anthony Ferreira, School Committee Clerk