
EAST PROVIDENCE SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OPEN SESSION – September 29, 2026

I. Call to Order Open Session

The East Providence School Committee met in open session on Tuesday, September 29, 2026 at 5:00 pm in the auditorium at East Providence High School for a special meeting. Mr. Luiz called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Members present: David Luiz, Chair, Antonio deSimas, Vice Chair, Anthony Ferreira, Clerk and Ryan Queenan. Jessica Beauchaine was absent. Superintendent Perry and Assistant Superintendent Benedetti-Ramzi were also present. The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence were observed.

II. Discussion / Action Items

1. Contract for Assistant Principal at Riverside Middle School
Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried unanimously to approve the contract for the Assistant Principal at Riverside Middle School as submitted with some discussion. Mr. Luiz stated that this position was discussed at the last meeting and this position was budgeted for previously. Dr. Perry provided information as to why several positions were needed. He was happy to put forth the name of Michael Kirkutis for Assistant Principal at Riverside Middle School.

III. Policy Committee Report

1. Personal Electronic Devices & Cell Phone Policy – 1st read
Mr. Hanlon, Principal Black, Mr. Gilmore, Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Messier, Mr. deSimas, Mr. Luiz, Ms. Benedetti-Ramzi and Mr. Turbitt were committee members who worked on this policy.

Mr. Ferreira requested data from last year on how the current cell phone policy is working and he would like to receive data quarterly. At the next meeting he would also like data from the two middle schools. He inquired if there were any issues in the elementary schools. He stated that he would like the phone pouches eliminated and he would support the next read of the policy, but would like to review the data.

Assistant Superintendent Benedetti-Ramzi will provide a disaggregated number of offences and will share it with the Committee. She confirmed that there were only a few violations with cell phones at the middle school level. Mr. Hanlon stated that the high school does have a spreadsheet with data that is kept with the Deans. He will share that information.

Mr. Hanlon explained that when cell phones first came out, they were not allowed from 7am to dismissal time. Over time the policy became hard to enforce. Two years ago a policy was instituted to put cell phones in folders in the classroom. Now students take their phones and put in a pouch on the wall. At the middle schools, the phone is kept in a locker or backpack with no physical access. The idea was to protect instructional time.

Mr. Queenan stated that this policy is taking a step back from a month ago. Students can keep their cell phones with them or put them in a classroom pocket during classes. On page two under the General Requirement in this policy, he suggested adding language that states this policy is defined by the Rhode Island Department of Education and as per the school's specific handbook expectations.

Mr. Luiz stated that teachers have not reached out against this policy and he has received positive feedback. The administrators will enforce this policy.

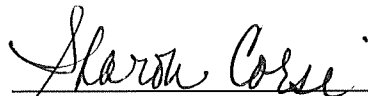
Mr. Queenan asked if the \$70K grant money that was spent on the pouches can be returned to the district. Assistant Superintendent Benedetti-Ramzi responded yes that the pouches can be returned and the district can be refunded. There is a restocking fee. The district will be keeping some of the pouches. She stated that the committee took a hard look at the law and the district can allow students to show their level of responsibility. Everyone's feedback was taken when working on this policy and it meets RIDE legislation and matches the intent of the committee. This policy was vetted by legal counsel as well. There are consequences for students who don't adhere to the policy.

Mr. Luiz stated that the committee did a great job on the disciplinary measures.

IV. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Queenan, seconded by Mr. deSimas and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Corsi, Executive Assistant



Anthony Ferreira, School Committee Clerk