

Providence Schools

SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES

PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
797 WESTMINSTER STREET, PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
Wednesday, December 15, 2021 (6:30 PM)

ROLL CALL

Diagneris Garcia
Kinzel Thomas
Travis Escobar
Mark Santow
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi
Elizabeth Goldberg
TyRelle Stephens

Jaime Audette, Marc Catone, Molly Hannon, Andrew Henneous, Joan Jackson, Alan Kushner, Jason Menard, Rachel Palumbo, Zach Scott, Gina Silvia, Sandra Stuart,

Convene Meeting

1. Call to Order

Call to Order

Recommendation: Call the meeting to order

President Thomas called the meeting to order at 6:41 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Roll Call

Recommendation: Roll Call

The Clerk called the roll. A quorum was present.

4. Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent's Comments

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

Providence Schools

Superintendent gave comments on vaccination. PPSD will host vaccine clinics at certain schools and have test kits available. The District is taking steps to hire more staff with recent Job Fair.

Approve Agenda

5. Approval of the Agenda

Approve agenda as presented

Recommendation: Approve agenda as presented.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**TyRelle Stephens**) Moved, Member (**Mark Santow**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Approve agenda as presented'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes
TyRelle Stephens	Yes

Recognitions

6. PPSD Cares Awards

Presentation of PPSD Cares Awards.

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

PPSD Cares winner goes to team at DelSesto Middle School Faculty and Staff for their work with vaccinations for their extended family and students.

Public Comments

7. Public Comment - Right to Be Heard

Public Comment: Members of the community who wish to address the School Board must sign-up by 4 p.m. the day of the School Board meeting. Instructions to sign-up for public comment during virtual meetings are available on the Providence School Board website: <https://www.providenceschools.org/domain/118>. An individual may speak for up to three minutes. Comments may also be submitted in writing. Groups or organizations are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson. PLEASE NOTE: The School Board welcomes comments from the public but does not engage in dialogue with the public during school board meetings.

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

Providence Schools

Six persons submitted written comments that students gave verbal comments and will be added to the minutes.

My name is Rayya Frayn and I go to Classical High School. I believe we need to make a change in the way we deal with active shooters and that change is ALICE. Earlier this year, I had a field hockey game that took place on campus after school. I was at school with many of my teammates getting ready for the game, when suddenly, our coach and some other teachers came running in screaming, "Active shooter! Get inside!" We all rushed inside the cafeteria, which is full of windows, and tried our best to stay out of sight. It was terrifying because we had no idea what was going on. All we could do was sit there worrying. In the end, it turned out there was never an active shooter, but the fear was real. I never want to feel that again. I want to feel like I can do something. I want to feel empowered, and that is what ALICE can do for me.

My name is Gabriella Bautista Bolvito. I am a freshman at Classical High School and a member of the Providence Student Union. I have gone to Providence Public Schools since kindergarten and since then we have been following the same lockdown procedures. The current lockdown procedure, from what I've been taught, is to sit in a corner or beside a wall and stay quiet until administration announces we can resume class. I had an experience in the eighth grade where my school was under a lockdown drill. My class huddled up in a corner and we waited quietly for the regular announcement. However, this time we heard a knock on the door. Then banging and someone wiggling the door handle. It was a teacher trying to open the door but it sounded like it could be an intruder. This lasted about five seconds. I had never felt so unprepared and scared. I was immediately thinking that there would be no way out of this situation, that the only result would be my death. This is not right. I should be taught ways to counter and to evacuate and this is what ALICE protocol enforces. If the ALICE protocol is implemented in schools, I will be more prepared to face dangerous situations with school shooters in the future. With so many school shootings that have been happening over the last years, it is very important that we update our lockdown protocol and use the ALICE protocol.

To whom it may concern, Providence schools need to rethink their lockdown procedure as new concerns have been spotlighted. My name is Eva Matos and I am a member of the Providence Student Union and a senior at Classical High School. School shootings have become more frequent in the U.S. Following the recent tragedy at Oxford High School in Oakland County, Michigan, we cannot afford to take our chances on an outdated lockdown procedure. On the second day of my freshman year in 2018, a shooting occurred just outside of my school building. As a result, we went into a lockdown only to be taught how to hide. Away from the door, we huddled under lab stations in my biology class. Our current lockdown procedure does not effectively protect students, creating an environment of vulnerability instead of proactivity.

Providence Schools

Currently, the best option to keep students safe in school is through the ALICE procedure. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. This training devises a plan to ensure that students will enter active shooter situations with confidence. We are asking that the Providence School Board support the youth of Providence in making the switch to ALICE procedure.

My name is Isamar Perez. I am a member of the Providence Student Union, a youth-led organization that fights for educational and social justice issues here in Providence. I am currently a senior at the Providence Career and Technical Academy. I believe ALICE training should be implemented in schools because we should have a set procedure that works to keep both students and teachers safe. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. I believe the lockdown procedure we have now benefits no one because the students are just hiding in a corner while the teachers are to sacrifice themselves to protect the students if it gets to that point. With ALICE training, we as a department and community can help students and teachers raise their awareness skills and street smarts so that they know what to do in the case of a lockdown because not every scenario is the same. Because of the school shooting that happened in Michigan, I believe we need to implement this training in Providence schools as soon as possible so that we can be better prepared for such cases. I hope to see this procedure implemented in such a way that students and teachers benefit from learning how to protect and defend themselves as well as learning how to reduce conflict in schools. In order for us to continue being in a safe environment, we need to update our procedures to better care for our students and staff. We are asking for the Providence School Board to support the youth of Providence in calling on PPSD to make the switch to the ALICE procedure.

Good Evening, My name is Cheylsea Federle, I am a Masters of Social Work student at Rhode Island College, the Well-Being Advocate at The Providence Student Union, and most importantly a community member that is concerned about the safety and success of our city's youth. The truth is unsettling at the very least, senseless mass shootings are an epidemic in our country. Until federal and state policymakers implement procedures and practices that will keep guns out of the hands of mentally unstable people, we need to have the means to prepare our youth for the worst. Because unfortunately, the odds that youth will come into contact with an active threat situation in their community are too high to ignore. It is imperative that the school department acts proactively, and updates Providence Public Schools response protocols so that students feel prepared. Feeling prepared to face a threatening situation can help students feel less anxious being in school and when a dangerous incident occurs. Our youth are well aware that there is a risk of violence in their schools and we, as the adults in this community, have the ability to help them feel more empowered than vulnerable. As an individual studying to become a clinical therapist and someone with a background in teaching from a trauma-informed perspective, I am well aware of the

Providence Schools

concerns that an active shooter training may feel traumatizing or re-traumatizing for students and staff. I am glad that these concerns are being discussed. Most students have not experienced a situation where there was an active shooter in their school, however, they have seen the aftermath on the news. They have empathized with students around the nation who have lost friends, family, classmates, and teachers in a place they were told they were safe. We, as a nation, have had to cope with this collective trauma. We hold that trauma and it gets reignited every time we see the headlines of another senseless act of gun violence. As much as we would like to, we cannot protect our youth from this trauma, with the amount of media they consume it is unavoidable. What we can do is make them feel prepared, and do so in a way that is trauma-informed. Providence Public School students are urgently asking for ALICE(Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) Training in their schools and I support this ask! ALICE is widely considered the best practice for taking a proactive approach to violent threats at schools and workplaces. ALICE Training educators recognize that the information and training they share can be difficult and sometimes traumatizing for anyone to hear. They have outlined a few guidelines on how to stay trauma-informed while leading a training, more information about this can be found [HERE](#). Furthermore, there are resources available in our community to help reduce feelings of re-traumatization as well as provide support for those who are traumatized by the content. In addition to the guidelines provided by ALICE Training, Providence Public Schools can have additional supports. Including social workers or other staff trained in mental health and trauma to support students and staff during the training can help with the effects of trauma. Social work interns, such as myself could even provide this support. Now, at this moment, Providence Public School Department has the power to support the students and staff in our schools by providing them the knowledge and skills on how to respond to an emergency in their schools. I wish we lived in a world where this training wasn't needed, but the reality is that students need these skills both inside and outside of school. Educational institutions are places of learning, growing skills, and uncovering our strengths and weaknesses. Providence's schools deserve this education, they deserve to feel prepared, empowered, and safe in their classrooms. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out. Thank you for your time. Kindly, Cheylsea Federle

School Board Member Comments

8. School Board Comments

School Board Comments

Recommendation: No recommendation required

Comments were made by Mr. Stephens and President Thomas. Mr. Escobar commented on the effort made to keep schools open during difficult health challenges.

Providence Schools

Dr. Goldberg commented on the hard work done by Solight Sou, Laura Hart, and Rachel Palumbo during this public health crisis.

School Board Committee Updates

9. Policy Committee

Policy Committee updates and highlights.

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

Dr. Santow and Mr. Escobar gave details on Policy Committee meetings concerning Home Schooling Policy and revising Board ByLaws, as well as Student Government in schools.

10. Finance Committee

Finance Committee updates and highlights.

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

Mr. Ibeyemi gave update on Finance Committee plans and contracts, as well as looking into the preparation of the District Budget and plans to acquire additional funding.

11. Health & Wellness Committee

Health & Wellness Committee updates and highlights.

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

Vice President Garcia gave details on the Health and Wellness Committee workings including SMART Clinics and Sodexo. Dr. Goldberg explained the workings of SMART Clinics as well.

Consent Agenda

12. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Items listed under Consent Agenda are considered routine and will be approved by a single motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items; however, any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda upon the request of any member of the Board and action upon separately.

Recommendation: Approve consent agenda as presented.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Travis Escobar**) Moved, Member (**Elizabeth Goldberg**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Approve consent agenda as presented'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes

Providence Schools

TyRelle Stephens Yes

13. Approval of Minutes - November 10, 2021

Approval of Minutes - November 10, 2021

Recommendation: Approve minutes as presented

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member **(Travis Escobar)** Moved, Member **(Elizabeth Goldberg)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Approve minutes as presented'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia Yes
Kinzel Thomas Yes
Travis Escobar Yes
Mark Santow Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg Yes
TyRelle Stephens Yes

14. The College Crusade of Rhode Island Extension

The College Crusade of Rhode Island Extension

The College Crusade will provide the following: 1. Actively recruit youth for the Accelerate Program and coordinate the recruitment plans with the school leadership and faculty; 2. Facilitate acquisition of documentation regarding intended student participation in the Accelerate Program to PPSD leadership. 3. Facilitate a process by which prior approval from each school's guidance department for Accelerate Students enrolling in any college course is secured. 4. Ensure that College Crusade Director of Postsecondary Success and Accelerate Coach meet regularly with lead counselors and CCRI and RIC Accelerate staff to align strategies and coordinate services. 5. Ensure that Accelerate Students are offered ample opportunity to receive services related to common application, FAFSA, college essay writing, and CSS profile completion opportunities. 6. Provide informational sessions on the college search process and URI Talent Development Program admission. 7. Conduct periodic surveys to continually assess student program satisfaction and level of engagement. Survey results will be shared with PPSD and used to further enhance program effectiveness. 8. Ensure that College Crusade Accelerate Coach: o provides direct, career and academic advising to Accelerate students as they pursue their postsecondary education, o assists students with course registration (predominately for the spring semester) and understanding general education requirements, and academic policies and procedures. o collaborates with the High School and Postsecondary teams to provide educational workshops on college transition, enrollment, and success, and direct Accelerate students to these events as appropriate. o communicates with families as needed to encourage student success. o develop and deliver supplemental programming to address specific needs identified among Accelerate students. o discuss and help to clarify each student's education objectives and assist with degree planning. o collaborate with the High School and Postsecondary teams to provide educational workshops on college transition, enrollment, and success, and direct Accelerate students to these events as

Providence Schools

appropriate. Provide an end of year report to PPSD and participating schools on program goals and impact; If the aforementioned deliverables of the contract are executed successfully, this endeavor will prepare and inspire the Accelerate Students to become the first in their families to attend and complete college.

Recommendation: Administration recommends School Board Approval

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member **(Travis Escobar)** Moved, Member **(Elizabeth Goldberg)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Administration recommends School Board Approval'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes
TyRelle Stephens	Yes

15. Voyager Sopris Learning - LETRS Contract

Review and approval of Voyager Sopris Learning - LETRS Contract.

Recommendation: Administration recommends approval.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member **(Travis Escobar)** Moved, Member **(Elizabeth Goldberg)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Administration recommends approval'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes
TyRelle Stephens	Yes

16. Language Translation Policy (2nd Read and Approval)

Review and approval of Language Translation Policy (2nd read).

Recommendation: Administration recommends approval.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member **(Travis Escobar)** Moved, Member **(Elizabeth Goldberg)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Administration recommends approval'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes

Providence Schools

Mark Santow Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg Yes
TyRelle Stephens Yes

17. Use of Students in Media (1st read)

The Use of Students in Media policy was amended to reflect current district procedures. Supplemental forms FERPA Form C and the updated Media Waiver are attached to demonstrate this policy in practice.

Recommendation: Administration recommends approval.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Travis Escobar**) Moved, Member (**Elizabeth Goldberg**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Administration recommends approval'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia Yes
Kinzel Thomas Yes
Travis Escobar Yes
Mark Santow Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg Yes
TyRelle Stephens Yes

Action Items

18. Review of Homeschool Application(s)

We'll review complete homeschool application(s) to be approved by the School Board. Accompanying documentation is not available publicly to protect student-identifying information.

Recommendation: Administration recommends approval.

Mr. Rugeirio explained the workings and requirements of Home Schooling. Mr. Marc Catone gave specifics on those candidates for Home Schooling.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Mark Santow**) Moved, Member (**TyRelle Stephens**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Administration recommends approval'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia Yes
Kinzel Thomas Yes
Travis Escobar Yes
Mark Santow Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg Yes
TyRelle Stephens Yes

Providence Schools

Presentations

19. Capital Planning and Facilities Presentation

Capital Planning and Facilities Presentation

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

Mr. Scott gave detailed presentation on condition of facilities and planning to correct deficiencies and answered many questions from the Board Members.

20. MLL Presentation

MLL Presentation

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

Not given tonight due to conflict with presenter.

Executive Session

21. Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel Action

The School Board must vote on the stated purposes in public to enter into Executive Session.

Recommendation: Seek to convene in Executive Session R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member **(Mark Santow)** Moved, Member **(TyRelle Stephens)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Seek to convene in Executive Session R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes
TyRelle Stephens	Yes

22. Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel Action

The School Board must vote on the stated purposes in public to enter into Executive Session.

Recommendation: Seek to convene in Executive Session R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel

Discussion was held on personnel matters concerning two individuals. Representation by the School Union was present for one individual.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Providence Schools

Member (**Travis Escobar**) Moved, Member (**TyRelle Stephens**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Seek to convene in Executive Session R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes
TyRelle Stephens	Yes

23. Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel Action

The School Board must vote on the stated purposes in public to enter into Executive Session.

Recommendation: Seek to convene in Executive Session R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Travis Escobar**) Moved, Member (**Elizabeth Goldberg**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Seek to convene in Executive Session R.I. Gen. Laws. Sec. 42-46-5(a)(1) – Personnel'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes
TyRelle Stephens	Yes

Report on Executive Session Votes

24. Report on Executive Session Votes

Report on Executive Session Votes

Recommendation: No recommendation required.

The School Board Unanimously agreed to the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the Personnel Issues in the Executive Session.

Adjourn

25. Adjourn Meeting

Providence Schools

Adjourn Meeting

Recommendation: No recommendation required

President Thomas adjourned the meeting at 9:02 PM.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member (**Travis Escobar**) Moved, Member (**TyRelle Stephens**) Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'No recommendation required'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **7** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 7 - 0**

Diagneris Garcia	Yes
Kinzel Thomas	Yes
Travis Escobar	Yes
Mark Santow	Yes
Muyideen A. Ibiyemi	Yes
Elizabeth Goldberg	Yes
TyRelle Stephens	Yes