

Providence School Department
797 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903
Regular School Board Meeting
Wednesday, December 15, 2023 (6:00PM)

1.0 Convene Meeting

- 1.1 Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Vice President Travis Escobar at 6:00 PM
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance: Recited
- 1.3 Roll Call: President Erlin Rogel, Carolina Roberts-Santana were absent. There was a quorum
- 1.4 Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Montanez thanked the students, teachers, staff and families for their hard work and commitment(s) for striving for attendance. There has been a double digit decrease in chronic absenteeism in almost all schools. He thanked the students who are a part of the Student Advisory Council for joining him and his team to listen and hear their stories; representation of 17 students from various schools came together to express their differences, differences in areas that they would like to work together such as mental health; school safety; racism; bullying; scholarships and leadership opportunities.

Ribbon cutting ceremony was held at Spaziano Elementary School with various staff, students and board members in attendance. City Council voted and approved on the PPSD construction application that can lead to a bonding \$400 million for next year to create more 21st century schools that are new or like new buildings. He also spoke at Nathaniel Greene Middle School to honor their first quarter honor roll students and families.

Superintendent met with six and seventh grade families at Gilbert Stuart Middle School to discuss the accelerating of the closing of the school. He referenced that the closing was to happen in 2025 as part of the plan for the investment of \$600 million in school facilities and place the students and teachers in new or like schools; after feedback it has been determined that the school will close at the end of the school year 2024; with no effect to the eighth grade students. The plan for students and teachers are as follows students in their dual language program will go to Roger Williams Middle School. Newcomer students and teachers will go to Esek Hopkins Middle School; remaining students and teachers will go to DelSesto Middle School. Those students going to Delsesto and parents feel they don't want their child there will have preference to another school that has availability. Teachers going to Delsesto will have the opportunity to apply to any open positions within the district.

Alvarez High School has been in the news lately due to the school being built on an old manufacturing plant property, there has been continuous monitoring of the building being checked for toxic chemicals and continuous monitors with updates

will be provided to school and school communities for the testing results. Last updates were shared on November 28th with faculty, another round of testing updates will be by the end of the week. Samples collected from certain rooms have indicated that there were no exceeding contaminants stated in the 2009 RI DEM levels, however at this time according to Dept. Health there isn't at this point anything to be thinking that the building isn't safe for students and staff to be there. School Choice Forms and Career and Technical Education (CTE) applications will be going out in January for decisions for the 2024 year.

Meeting livestreamed on Youtube.com Providence School Board Regular Board Meeting 12-13-2023 6PM

2.0 Approve Agenda

2.1 Approval of Agenda

Moved Ty'Relle Stephens, seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (6-0) Motion Approved

3.0 Consent Agenda

3.1 Approval of Consent Agenda

3.2 Approval of Minutes- November 15, 2023

Moved Ty'Relle Stephens, seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo (6-0) Motion Approved

4.0 Recognitions: Presented by Superintendent Montanez; Sandra Stuart; Delia Rodriguez-Masjoan; Carina Pinto-Chacon; Janet Pichardo

4.1 Retirement Presentation

Presentation of Citations from the Governor's Office, City Council and certificate from the School Board, who recently retired from the district with many years of service

Susan Chin was in attendance

Donna O'Connor was not in attendance

4.2 PPSD Recognition Awards

Presentation of Parent Leadership Academy Awards for parents that have completed the program. Graduation Certificates will be presented at a separate ceremony at a later date. Presentation of the Mount pleasant High School Boys Soccer Team Awards will be presented to the students at the school at a later time.

5.0 Public Comment(s) Pilar McCloud; Raymond Watson; Cayden Arana; Favour Bello; Angel Eliza; Joshua Franco (Joseph Buchanan)

5.1 Public Comment- Right to be heard

Pilar McCloud, Parent, Community Leader Activist, Ms. McCloud spoke at the last board meeting, she stated that she will be back to every meeting until issues were address and resolved. She submitted emails from various community

leaders and organizations. Ms. McCloud referenced a conversation on zoom with President Rogel, Superintendent Montanez and Chairs in regards to voicing comments, concerns, suggestions and recommendations would be addressed and as of yet there haven't been any responses. Her main concern(s) were the air quality at Alvarez High School and how the lack of importance of the situation at Alvarez hasn't been at the top of any board agenda or lists at previous school board meetings. **(Copies of her letters were given to the clerk per her request and emailed all copies of letters to all board members)**

Raymond Watson, Providence resident, He echoed the previous speaker regarding how there has been no follow up information as of yet. He referenced how the board lacks professionalism. Mr. Watson also referenced the public speaking policy, he was not allowed his public comment last month because he didn't sign up prior to the meeting. Referring to the middle school incident at DelSesto last month, he had questions and didn't get a chance to speak upon the because the went into Executive Session, and it was never addressed to the public as to what was the outcome. As he stated that he will be back at the next school board meeting in hopes of hearing productive news from the board.

Cayden Arana, Classical High School Senior spoke on the campaign to implement Ethnic Studies into schools. Vice President Escobar came to show support at the OSPVD (Our Schools Providence) event.

Favour Bello, Classical High School Senior spoke on the campaign to implement Ethnic Studies within the district as well.

Angel Eliza, Classical High School Senior spoke on the campaign to implement Ethnic Studies within the district as well.

Joshua Franco (Joseph Buchanan) Community Activist represented on behalf of Mr. Buchanan who was absent; spoke on Ethnic Studies, supporting, uplifting the community.

6.0 School Board Member Comments

6.1 School Board Comments

Night Jean Muhingabo thanked everyone for speaking at tonight's meeting. He also expressed concern for the students and staff health at Alvarez High School.

Muyideen Ibiyemi referenced the comment from one of the students who spoke tonight regarding how the school board doesn't have any power when they make comments, because the school board is in an advisory capacity. He echoed that the Superintendent is listening and taking notes; not to be discouraged because school board doesn't have any power as of now.

Ty'Relle Stephens thanked all the students that came out to speak on the Ethnic Studies, he thinks it is very important and he will reach out to help advocate. Congratulated all the parents that were acknowledged and retirees on their accomplishments. He will come to January meeting with a more thought out response to the situation at Alvarez High School.

Vice President Escobar shared that he attended the Ethnic Studies Festival (OSPVD) Our Schools Providence and he stated to students that by the first quarter of next school year, he will be looking into pass a resolution to at least create a plan of implementation of Ethnic Studies in the schools with fellow colleagues.

7.0 School Board Committee Updates

7.1 Policy Committee

Chairwoman Roberts-Santana was absent; updates on the upcoming policies to pass School Board Code of Conduct (First Read) CTE Admissions, CTE Work Based Learning Policy and Student Incident Communication Policy all for the Final Read and Adoption tonight

7.2 Finance Committee

Chairman Ibiyemi updated on the meeting held last week. Report of two contracts that are on for tonight to have full board votes.

7.3 Health & Wellness Committee

Chairman Muhingabo reported on the November 29th meeting subcommittee set up the goals of planning next year; students from Classical and Central joined the committee in preparation to help plan the Mental Health Fair. Separate application was created to help with the recruiting of more students and teachers. Sub Committee created a working group to create and update the Comprehensive Health Curriculum with the district. Smart Clinics are starting next month. (January)

7.4 Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Vice President Escobar reported on some successes of students that have completed various fields of studies within CTE programs. Online application process for CTE (eighth graders) will open on January 2nd and will close on January 12th.

7.5 School Building Committee Updates

George Matouk reported on the updates that the district is on track of 50% of students in the new or like new facilities by 2028 and with the new proposed \$400 million bond to get 100% of students in new or like new facilities by 2030.

8.0 Action Items

8.1 Review of Homeschool Candidates- Presented by Marc Catone

Moved Ty'Relle Stephens, seconded by Toni Akin (6-0) Motion Approved

9.0 Policy and Planning

9.1 CTE Admissions (Final Read & Adoption)

Move George Matouk, seconded by Ty'Relle Stephens (6-0) Motion Approved

9.2 CTE Work Based Learning Policy (Final Read & Adoption)

Move Night Jean Muhingabo, seconded by Toni Akin (-0) Motion Approved

9.3 Student Incident Communication Policy (Final Read & Adoption)

Move Night Jean Muhingabo, seconded by Toni Akin (6-0) Motion Approved

9.4 School Board Code of Conduct (First Read)

Move Toni Akin, seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo (6-0) Motion Approved

10.0 Report on Contracts

10.1 Instructure- Migration hours for assessments

Moved Ty'Relle Stephens, seconded by Toni Akin (6-0) Motion Approved

10.2 Partners Technology-Clocks, bells and intercom services

Moved Muyideen Ibiyemi, second Toni Akin (6-0) Motion Approved

11.0 Presentation(s)

11.1 FY 25 Budget Process Update

Zachary Scott, Christopher Petisce presented on the FY Budget Report. This presentation was presented last month at the Finance Committee where similar information was shared and a few updates.

Questions asked from board members

12.0 Executive Session: Executive Session was postponed

12.1 Executive Session Pursuant to Rhode Island General Law Sec. §§ 42-46-4 and 42-46-5(a)(1) Teacher Termination

13.0 Report on Executive Session Votes: Executive Session was postponed

13.1 Report on Executive Session Votes

14.0 Adjourn

14.1 Adjourn Meeting adjourned by Vice President Travis Escobar at 7:42 PM

Move Ty'Relle Stephens, seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo (6-0) Motion Approved

Next Career and Technical Committee Meeting is December 18, 2023

