

Providence School Department
797 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903

Regular School Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 17, 2023 (6:00pm)

1.0 Convene Meeting

1.1 Call to Order- Meeting Called to Order by President Erlin Rogel called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

1.3 Roll Call: George Matouk, Toni Akin, Muyideen Ibiyemi, Mark Santow, Erlin Rogel, Travis Escobar, Ty'Relle Stephens, Night Jean Muhingabo, (Carolina Roberts-Santana arrived 6:45p.m.)

In Attendance: Salvador Pellerano, Zachary Scott, Christopher Petisce, Brian Lemay

1.4 Superintendent's Comments:

Superintendent started his comments off with recognizing all the good things that the district is doing and also recognize one board member and congratulate (Muyideen Ibiyemi) for completing the RIASC Rhode Island Association of School Committee Leadership program. The district awarded 164 seals of Biliteracy to seniors in 10 different languages, including four seals of Trilingual proficiency languages other than Spanish. They received a seal with a certificate in trilingual, with anticipation that the numbers will increase. In addition, there has been 15 PCTA students earned the gold medal for Skills USA RI competition, these students moved on to the national level of Skills USA conference in Atlanta, Georgia this June. PCTA also hosted a competition on that was sponsored by the Nuclear Submarine builders General Dynamic (Electric Boat) High school welders raced the clock to build a Submarine that was air tight, pressure tested and with the collaboration of Project MFG RI merit time welding competition. Created to get students excited about careers in the shipping building trade, in a combination of three organizations. Which had one student from PCTA and two students from Chariho high school; these students placed first, second and third and will go to the next level of competition.

New appointees appointed to several positions within the district, Carina Pinto-DeChacon to the Family and Community Engagement Office (FACE) she has been employed at PPSD for 22 years, previously she a Supervisor of Multi Lingual Learners Instructional Service, former Assistant Principal at Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex, Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School, Dean of Students at Gilbert Stuart Middle School, Teacher Leader @ Mount Pleasant High School and teacher at various providence schools. Her educational certificate includes school leadership, English as a second language, bilingual education, Spanish and social studies. She came from Guatemala at the age of 14; she is an immigrant, Mount Pleasant graduate and multi-lingual learner. She holds a master's of Arts in education administration from Providence College; Bachelors of Arts in secondary education from RI College majored in Spanish an endorsement in English as a second language and Bilingual Bicultural Education.

Suzanne Ouellette, Chief of Support in Communications in the district, previously she was the Deputy Director of External Affairs. She has served as a Communication Administrator in nonprofit educational sectors in the greater Boston areas for 8 years before coming to PPSD in 2019. She holds a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership from Wheelock College, Bachelors in Journalism from Boston University, certificate in Web and Graphic Design and Digital Images in Arts from Boston University.

Ty'Relle Stephens motioned to change the order of the agenda. He motioned to move the 9.3 presentation of Legal presentation on school board authority under the Crowley Act to go 9.1

Motioned to move item by Ty'Relle Stephens and seconded by Travis Escobar

2.0 Approve Agenda

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Recommendation to approve agenda as presented

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Ty'Relle Stephens (-) Motion Approved

3.0 Public Comment

3.1 Public Comment- Right to be heard

Jeremy Sencer (PTU) wanted to begin with thanking the board for having a place to have public comment. He wanted to initiate a conversation with the board about the agenda item having to do with the authority of the board under the Crowley Act. He was a member on the John Hoskins team that reviewed the district, there were some themes brought up, this is the fourth school year since being under the state takeover, there is a routine narrative that one of the main goals was to eliminate layers of "bureaucracy". What is seen that there is no layers of accountability of oversight, things end up being bedded through nontraditional ways sort of news being shared through social media as an example. You can't get to some of the positive things that are happening in the district, and not hear directly from the people that we are all here to serve ultimately the students and families, I give clear examples of this you have all heard from families of ASF @Broad Street families about what it was like to their school shut down without any input, any opportunity to be heard and that was largely because this board at the time had no statutory authority or really had no role as a results. So what is the role of this school board? Why you giving up so many hours and time to make this a better district, to help us create a better school district that our students deserve. Legislation and advisory capacity Senator Zurier introduced language through Legislation that would codify the ideas that this board would not only advise but also approve. One of the three pillars of the TAP is to engage community. School board is where the community is heard and should be able to approve in the hiring process.

Katelyn Crudale, ASF@Broad Parent. Ms. Crudale attended a PAC meeting and she and other parents were promised a meeting as a school with Superintendent and Commissioner no one has reached out to her in regards to coming together.

She asked the question "why are they hiding"? She stated that she is blocked from calls, emails, social media, Commissioner, PPSD, and Governor but later was unblocked from Governor. She wondered why parents being blocked instead of being engaged.)

Ariana Packard, MPHS Teacher Spoke on behalf of Mount Please High School is worth saving. Remarked that about all the amazing things that are going on within the school, however she remained to speak on the capital expenditure budget being cut, keeping the school in the same existing place, strange talks of building another building in the back yard of the school and cutting the freshmen class in half.

4.0 School Board Member Comments- Open floor for all board members

4.1 School Board Comments

Ty'Relle Stephens was pleased with the hiring of Ms. Carina Pinto-Dechacon and Suzanne Ouelette. He mentioned that she is a good fit for the families and she is a strong fit for the job of heading the FACE office.

Mark Santow was pleased with the hiring and remarked about how important it is to introduce and acknowledge new appointees, it helps to build community, transparency within the community.

Travis Escobar remarked on absenteeism and mental health. He spoke on how he did a panel with students and most of the students asked questions dealing with mental health. Mental health needs to be part of the focus on how does the board take care of the young people, especially with social media and other stresses that go on within their homes. So, when having the conversation(s) regarding absenteeism think of it being broadly, of what is going on at their homes instead of just looking to penalize.

Toni Akin remarked on May being Mental Illness month, reminded all to take some time to take care of yourself and that there is always a professional to call and talk to (988) for confidential inquiries on how to get the needed help.

George Matouk wanted to thank Mr. Jeremy Sencer for his story on how this school board would be a great comeback story on returning to full power. George stressed that being a new school board member has been kind of disorienting to come and watch previous board meetings, to see some of the constituencies that need to work together to have a successful school system have often to seem to be at odds with each other, main constituencies are the school board, central office, RIDE, PTU and parent community and Mayor's office. He took the time to meet with different constituencies and found that everyone wants the same thing in the long that is to invest in the children and professionals at PPSD now and in the future. He expressed in finding the commonality to be able to work together in the end.

Erlin Rogel echoed from the Superintendent on congratulating Muyideen Ibiyemi on his completion of his coursework. Applauded Teacher's past and present to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week.

5.0 School Board Committee Updates- Updates from all board committees

5.1 Policy Committee chair Mark Santow referenced that the policy committee has passed two policies at the last policy committee meeting for first read Racial Equity and Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Policies. Policies are system wide, more than just statements of mission value. Both policies implemented in the way; they should have the possibility of being transformative in the education of students and practice of the district. Two members of the team spoke in regards to both policies. Both presenters shared about policies and what they represent and how they will change things, Dr. Onye represented for the Racial Equity Policy. Travis Escobar referenced that Dr. Onye has received an award from the Arise Organization that she has watched and followed for many years. She remarked about the Organization and at the end of the day, it is all about the kids; whether it in this building or in schools we are unified for the fact that we are fighting for students and young people so they can lead us, well adjusted, great citizens of this country and do good work. Policy was wrote in 2017 and felt the need to revisit the policy since some much has changed, thought of ways to make it more robust and access for parents, students, educators and community leaders. Equity Advisor Council created in December, which is a cross section of individuals from all sectors; meetings held monthly. Policy went on for a first read on the agenda. Will go on to the agenda for a second read on the next school board meeting.

Julie Lombardi represented the Multi-Tiered of Support Team Policy (MTSS) MTSS Leadership team was developed at the district level having one person from each department; looked at the old policy and decided to that new language and the policy should be revamped. The goal was to develop all the framework, implement supports and interventions for students to succeed. The framework puts procedures and systems in place for support of students; process in place and streamline across the district. Policy went on for a first read on the agenda. Will go on to the agenda for a second read on the next school board meeting.

5.2 Finance Committee

Muyideen Ibiyemi referenced there were seventeen contracts that are up for final approval of the board. He also brought up that the contracts need to be accurate and if they ask for a revision of a contract, it be completed before the school board meeting in order to be passed. He had asked for the revision of two contracts revision before the meeting and he noted that at the time of his update corrections not corrected. Communication told at the Finance meeting and he brought it to the attention that it should be accurate before it becomes a bigger problem in the end. Mr. Ibiyemi asked for the contracts revised and sent to him and Ms. Akin before the end of the meeting.

Motion to pass contracts with the corrections

5.3 Health & Wellness Committee

Night Jean Muhingabo spoke in regards to the Health and Wellness Committee that last met on April 26, 2023. Reviewed the Health Curriculum revision updates for elementary and secondary schools. Changes that need revision would need to have parents aware of decisions, curriculum accurate on the websites. Presentation on Social Emotional Learning for the fall, screening report and reviewed screening and assistance report for social and emotional

learning. He is pleased that the teachers have the tools that help identify students struggling and are able to help these students to succeed. Dorcus Place and RYPM have officially joined the committee. Dorcus Place collaborated with the district to create afterschool programs for middle school refugees. (Gilbert Stuart Middle School) An additional program has been set up in Central High School to help refugee students that are struggling. He encouraged other board members to visit.

Toni Akin remarked on the presentation presented last meeting on the BIMAS study data used to do the activities to help identify students that are struggling for improvement of the grades, and recreational activities.

6.0 Consent Agenda

6.1 Approval of Consent Agenda

Recommendation: Approve consent agenda as presented

Moved by

6.2 Approval of Minutes – April 19, 2023

Recommendation to approve minutes as presented

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.3 Equity Policy (First Read)- Motion passed for the Racial Equity Policy for a second read

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.4 Multi –Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Policy (First Read)- Motion passed for the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for a second read by the school board

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.5 TNTP

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.6 District Management Group (DMG)

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.7 Harvard Graduate School of Education

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.8 McGraw Hill

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.9 Vista Higher Learning

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.10 Power School/Naviance

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.11 McGraw Hill (Study Sync)

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.12 American Reading Company

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.13 AP Summer Institute Bridgewater

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.14 AP Summer Institute George Walton

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.15 Newela

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.16 Amplify Science

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.17 Savvas Learning Company

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.18 Kendall Hunt

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.19 Great Minds

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.20 East Bay Collaborative

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

6.21 Effectiff, LLC

Recommendation: Recommend an approval

Moved Travis Escobar, Seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo, (9-0-) Motion approved

7.0 Action Items- Approval of Homeschool Candidates

7.1 Review of Homeschool Candidates

Moved Ty'Relle Stephens, Seconded by Travis Escobar, (9-0) Motion approved

8.0 Items Pulled from Consent Agenda- No items pulled from consent agenda

9.0 Presentation(s) Motion to move items 9.3 to 9.1

9.1 Legal Presentation on school board authority under the Crowley Act –
Charles Ruggiero presented a slide deck and provided handouts to the board in reference to the school board having authority. Questions asked from the board members

9.2 Budget Presentation -Zachary Scott, Christopher Petisce presented the budget presentation Slide deck shown to discuss the expenditures of the district. Budget for the upcoming year and explanation of how the budget uses expenses.

9.3 Integrated Facilities Management Presentation- Salvador Pellerano, Brian Lemay presented for facilities management presentation on a slide deck shown and discussed with committee members. Facilities Management went over the upkeep of the school buildings and process of RFP contracts.

10.0 Adjourn

10.1 Adjourn Meeting- Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Moved Night Jean Muhingabo, Seconded by Mark Santow, (7-0) Motion Approved

Next Health & Wellness Committee May 24, 2023