

Providence School Department
797 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903

Regular School Board Meeting

Wednesday September 20, 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 **6:03 p.m.**

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

1.3 Roll Call: George Matouk; Muyideen Ibiyemi; Erlin Rogel; Travis Escobar; Ty'Relle Stephens There was a quorum

Toni Akin (Absent); Carolina Roberts-Santana; Night Jean Muhingabo were absent during roll call. Carolina Roberts-Santana (6:05PM); Night Jean Muhingabo (6:11PM) arrived.

1.4 Superintendent's Comments:

Superintendent Montanez shared that the district has achieved a milestone, with the opening of three new or like new schools for the first time in a decade since the opening of PCTA. William D'Abate Elementary, Frank Spaziano Elementary and Narducci Learning Center (Formerly known as Windmill) Expressed gratitude to the school board, Governor McGee, Mayor Smiley, Commissioner Infante-Green for the support in joining together for the first day of school tours. Ribbon cutting service was held two weeks ago for the opening of the Narducci Learning Center which is now going to serve as a swing space for Pleasant View Elementary School during the renovation of their school. Special thank you to all that have worked with the Buildings Committee and Operations teams that that continue to work hard to bring a 21st century learning environment to our students. The commitment to provide quality education continues to grow stronger every day, continue to work together with administrators building leaders, and teachers to meet the goals of our turnaround action plan. It truly takes a village to achieve these goals, it isn't unnoticed that everyone takes a part in our success. Parental involvement and community support is vital to student success. Looking for a successful academic year, attendance is crucial for academic success for our students as attendance heroes. PPSD has launched an Attendance Hero Campaign to help on attendance policies. PPSD central office is encouraging families to ensure students are present every day, calendar magnets and dry erasers have been provided to encourage students to track their attendance throughout the year. We encourage parents to take time to do this with their children so they can understand the importance of attendance and the consequence of being chronically absent. Asking for parents to stay informed with upcoming events, important dates by checking the website, emails, texts from the schools and district as well. He addressed the incident in Kennedy Plaza. Providence public schools and other area schools were involved in a serious altercation. Providence Police responded and detained several individuals including juveniles and adults. PPSD Administration promptly reported to the scene to offer support, safety of students is the utmost priority and violence is absolutely not acceptable. Students should not engage in aggressive or violent

behavior no matter in school or public places such as Kennedy Plaza. Working collaborations with Providence Police and city to set up a system of support for students at the plaza for a safe journey home. Registration problem is being addressed regarding many complaints about the length of time to register students for this school year. PPSD is assisting to help with the high volume of registration and some of the delays may have been attributed new spots for Pre K that have opened up and or student packages not fully completed

2.0 Approve Agenda

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Recommendation to approve agenda as presented

**Moved by Carolina Roberts-Santana, seconded by Travis Escobar (7-0)
Motion Approved**

3.0 Consent Agenda

3.1 Approval of Minutes – August 2, 2023

Recommendation to approve minutes as presented

**Moved, Travis Escobar seconded by Carolina Roberts-Santana (7-0) Motion
Approved**

4.0 Recognitions

4.1 PPSD Recognition Awards

Presentation of PPSD Recognition Awards presented by the Office of Equity and Belong.

Dr. Nkoli Onye presented students and teachers Citations for completing the RESPECT Student Equity Summer Leadership Academy

Equity Leadership Team Ambassadors (Teacher Cohort)

5.0 Public Comment

5.1 Public Comment- Right to be heard

Lindsay Paiva (PPSD Teacher) is a teacher for PPSD, spoke in regards to elementary school students not receiving recess.

Andrew Grover (Providence Resident Ward 5) is a Providence resident, spoke in regards to Mount Pleasant High School renovation. Congratulated the district on the renovations of three schools, he would like to see the same for Mount Pleasant.

Katelyn Crudale (Parent) voiced her concern(s) over the amount of traffic it is to get children to school on time and home in a timely manner. Her child has a permanent substitute for a teacher's teachers not having a job in certain certifications; no organization when it came to shutting down these schools; no crossing guards for children to cross streets.

Anna Kupperman (PPSD Teacher) is a teacher for PPSD, spoke in regards to schools not having recess and the importance of time to play and socialize.

Adriana Hazelton (Providence Preservation Society) spoke in regards to Mount Pleasant with the lack of transparency around the numbers demolition, accreditation partial demo and full demolition.

Catherine Anderson (PPSD Teacher/Parent) she spoke in regards to recess and the importance of having recess. She used her son "Sam" to tell a story about how he turned papers into airplanes and flew them outside during recess, and established healthy relationships with other students during recess.

Nya Isom-Agazie (PPSD Student) is a student, who spoke of the incident involving students fighting in Kennedy Plaza and the addition of another school being added to PCTA. She was concerned for other students that were afraid to travel through the city to get to school, by having all these groups of students all in the same place was not a good idea. Having different timings for buses would make a difference. Having more students in the school is causing them to have to rearrange classes, having them to not be able to concentrate and the removal of the Arts.

Joseph Buchanan (Community Activist) referenced that the School Board has authority to speak with the Governor and Commissioner about city taking back the schools; he wants to make sure that the Commissioner knows what we want and not what we need. What we want for our students and parents want. Urging board members to take on the Commissioner and Governor to stand up to get what the student need in the schools. He spoke in regards to the Kennedy Plaza fights, how he heard that the police let the kids fight until they hurt each other, then Police intervened. He suggested that some parents of students from the schools be downtown to monitor with a badge, so students are aware of who they are. Why is there a mistreatment of black and brown teachers and administrators?

Written Statements provided on behalf of Judith Dixon; Deborah Muther; Katherine Strayer

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

6.1 School Board Comments

President Erlin Rogel congratulated board member Muyideen Ibiyemi with the resignation of Dr. Mark Santow has become the acting school board secretary. Congratulated Dr. Carolina Roberts-Santana after the resignation of Dr. Mark Santow has assumed the role of policy committee chair.

Policy revision of School Building Closure Policy hasn't been updated since 1991. Reminded everyone who is interested in serving on the School Board that applications are being excepted and all are encouraged to apply on the website; must be a providence resident.

Night Jean Muhingabo announced that there is a meeting to take place with the Providence Police Department on Thursday. He wants to have committee meetings to be held inside the schools to make sure that students get involved starting in October. He went on to thank the Superintendent and staff for the amazing start of the school year. He and colleague board member went to schools; spoke with students, teachers and parents. He expressed he was disappointed with the commissioner telling him that he cannot visit schools. It was

unacceptable and shameful by the commissioner and school district. He expressed the concern over the high volume of students not placed, he asked to have an increase in staff to help.

Carolina Roberts-Santana thanked all that came to speak about policy related issues especially recess. It is very important to know and understand that recess is crucial as a parent of a children with special needs. She discussed that there is a policy (801) Wellness Policy. Both Policy and Wellness Committee will touch base with regulations.

Ty'Relle Stephens commented on various topics of interest. He asked a question regarding the bylaws on school board members having a limit on their comment(s)? He begins with thanking the student for speaking up about the Kennedy Plaza incident. In hopes that the district will look into staggering different times for students to get out of school to avoid this incident from reoccurring. Thanked Superintendent and team for an amazing first day of school and the opportunity to visit schools. Thanked Dr. Onye and her Equity Team for the hard work that students and teachers receiving awards given tonight. He then spoke on his remarks made on Twitter regarding his colleagues on being called "Rubber Stampers" he also referenced the comment taken from the Mayor. He addressed President Rogel on the blocking of parent and community members on Twitter to being highly unacceptable to blocking different individuals.

Addressed the following concern(s) over why was the Alan Shawn Feinstein school closed for students but still have people operating in the building if it was a crumbling building. Teachers that lost their jobs being offered a job and or being displaced. Congratulations to Chairwoman Roberts-Santana and Secretary Ibiyemi on the new appointments.

Carolina Roberts-Santana asked to speak again in reference to the Question that Mr. Stephens asked relating to the bylaws of school board member's comments. She followed it up with the bylaws pertaining to school board comments for what school board comments are for. An exchange of words was exchanged between the two members.

7.0 School Board Committee Updates-Updates from all board members

7.1 Policy Committee-

Carolina Roberts-Santana requested that all board members be present at policy committee meetings, policies aren't implemented and no regulations. Policies to be focused on is school closure, school openings, special education policies and policy related to recess.

1st reading of Grading Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy. 2nd Reading and Adoption of Attendance Policy

7.2 Finance Committee

Muyideen Ibiyemi gave a report on contracts for the Finance Committee. An additional contract was submitted late and he stated that it is on the agenda for review.

7.3 Health & Wellness

Night Jean Muhingabo gave a report on the Health & Wellness Committee is taking place on September 27th. He will be meeting with the district to discuss and approve the agenda for meeting.

7.4 CTE Committee

Travis Escobar gave report on the next CTE Committee Meeting on September 28th. He spoke in regards to recess as well.

8.0 Policy and Planning- Voting on 2nd Read and Adoption of Attendance Policy; 1st Read Grading Policy; 1st Read Bullying and Harassment Policy

8.1 Attendance Policy (2nd Read and Adoption)- Moved by Ty'Relle Stephens 7-0, seconded by Night Jean Muhingabo 7-0

8.2 Grading Policy 1st Read- Moved by Ty'Relle Stephens, seconded by Travis Escobar 7-0

8.3 Bullying and Harassment Policy 1st Read- Moved by Travis Escobar, Seconded by Ty'Relle Stephens 7-0

Motion to approve as presented

Moved by Ty'Relle Stephens, seconded by Travis Escobar 7-0

9.0 Report on contracts

9.1 Bloom Board- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.2 Rice Education- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.3 Presence Learning- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.4 Sheehans Office Interiors-Motion to continue 9.4 pending additional information

9.5 Dragonfly Forward- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.6 School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA)- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.7 School of Neuropsychology Institute- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.8 Performance Resource Partners- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.9 Sonitrol Security Systems- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.10 District Management Group (DMG)- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.11 Center for Learning for Education Equity- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.12 Cyber Communications, Inc.- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

9.13 Pearson Digital Assessment Library for Schools (DALs)- Moved by Ty'relle Stephens, seconded by Muyideen Ibiyemi 7-0

10.0 Executive Session

10.1 Motion to reject Superintendent's recommendation

Moved by Night Jean Muhingabo, seconded by Erlin Rogel passed 5-2

Motion to request the Superintendent or his Office to include a letter in the Teacher's file for future reference

Moved by Travis Escobar, seconded by Ty'Relle Stephens passed 7-0

Motion to seal the minutes.

Moved by Travis Escobar, seconded by Ty'Relle Stephens passed 7-0

Motion to come out of Executive Session.

Moved by Travis Escobar. seconded by Ty'Relle Stephens 7-0

11.0 Adjourn

11.1 **Adjourn Meeting adjourned at 9:15PM**

Moved by Travis Escobar, seconded by Ty'Relle Stephens, (7-0) Motion Approved

Next Health & Wellness Committee Meeting is September 27, 2023