



## East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, September 6, 2022

Hybrid Meeting: Cole Middle School & Via Zoom

### Minutes

#### Those in attendance for Executive Session and Open Session

**School Committee:** Ms. Anne Musella, Chair; Ms. Nicole Bucka; Mr. William Hangan; Mr. Tim Munoz; Mr. Kevin Murphy; Dr. Eugene Quinn

**Absent:** Ms. Alyson Powell, Vice Chair

**Additional Attendees:** Dr. Brian G. Ricca, Superintendent; Mr. Michael Podraza, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Neil Marcaccio, Director of MTSS; Mrs. Maggie Baker, Director of Administration; Mrs. Amy Healey, Confidential Administrative Assistant; Attorney Aubrey Lombardo

6:01 pm Executive Session - Mr. Murphy made a motion to recess Open Session and Convene Executive Session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1) and 42-46-5(a)(2) - Pending Special Education litigation. Ms. Bucka seconded the motion which passed 5-0. Mr. Hangan arrived after the vote.

7:00 pm Open Session

- I. Call to Order - Ms. Musella called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Seal Executive Session Minutes of September 6, 2022 and Disclosure of Executive Session Votes of September 6, 2022.

*On a motion by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to Seal the Executive Session Minutes of September 6, 2022.*

Ms. Musella reported that no votes were taken during Executive Session.

- IV. Public Comment

V. Recognition of 2022-2023 District Teacher of the Year - Mrs. Dana Doucette

Dr. Ricca shared remarks from Frenchtown Principal Maryann Crudale about Mrs. Doucette's career in education and work as a leader, teacher and coach.

VI. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

A. August 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the School Committee minutes of August 16, 2022.*

B. August 23, 2022 Executive Session Minutes

Ms. Musella proposed a revision to the August 23, 2022 Executive Session minutes.

C. August 23, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Musella proposed an amendment to the August 23, 2022 Regular meeting minutes. "Ms. Musella noted that Ms. Bucka was absent due to her conflict with this matter, and Mr. Murphy was absent due to travel."

*On a motion by Mr. Hangan, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 4-0-2 to approve the School Committee Executive Session and Regular meeting minutes of August 23, 2023 as revised. Ms. Bucka and Mr. Murphy abstained from the vote.*

VII. Action Items

A. Homeschool Request - Grades 1, 8, 9,10 SY 22-23

On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the homeschool requests.

B. Director of Student Services Contract - Mr. Neil Marcaccio

Dr. Ricca announced that after a thoughtful search, Mr. Neil Marcaccio has been appointed as the Director of Student Services beginning Monday, September 12, 2022. Dr. Ricca spoke of how Mr. Marcaccio comes to this office with new ideas and engagement in the work. He will continue to balance his new duties with some of the pressing responsibilities from his MTSS position. Dr. Ricca noted that this is a senior level administrative position, at the same level as the Assistant Superintendent.

Ms. Bucka praised Mr. Marcaccio's selection and said that his background in special education makes him a great hire for the position. She added that he can hit the ground running and already has established relationships throughout the District.

Mr. Munoz said that he believes Mr. Marcaccio is an outstanding choice for this position.

Ms. Musella suggested that the School Committee should approve the District's organizational chart on a yearly basis.

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve Mr. Marcaccio's contract.*

#### C. Approval of Employee Assistance Program Vendor

Ms. Baker reported that an RFP was sent out for proposals for the District's Employee Assistance Program. The current vendor, *Coastline* and *One Health Resources* both submitted bids. Mrs. Baker made a recommendation that *One Health Resources* be selected for the contract. A contract will come to the School Committee at a later meeting for a one year agreement with the option of two additional roll over years. *One Health Resources* is a partner of the District's insurer, The Rhode Island Interlocal Trust.

Mr. Munoz inquired about the privacy of employees' data. Attorney Lombardo assured Mr. Munoz that the contract will be reviewed and will contain solid confidentiality language.

*On a motion by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Ms. Bucka, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the selection of One Health Resources as the District's Employee Assistance Program vendor.*

#### D. Authorize Policy Subcommittee to draft mid-year budget reallocation policy

Attorney Lombardo explained that a process needs to be in place to move money among line items in the budget. Some districts do not require authorization for smaller amounts of money under a set threshold. Above that threshold would require School Committee approval. To move money from fund balance, School Committee approval would be needed. A policy would clarify the process.

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 5-1 to authorize the Policy Subcommittee to draft a mid-year budget reallocation policy. Mr. Munoz voted against the motion.*

### VIII. Superintendent and Staff Reports

#### A. SY 22-23 Start of School

Dr. Ricca spoke of the first days of school and its impact on students. He reported on the positions that are unfilled and his disappointment that there are still vacancies. Dr. Ricca thanked EGEA President Donna McPhee for her assistance in securing people for difficult to fill positions.

Dr. Ricca reported that plans are underway for Mr. Marcaccio's transition from MTSS to Student Services.

Dr. Ricca said that it is important to recognize the people who work in the departments that are not school facing such as Central Office, Facilities and Information Technology.

Ms. Bucka inquired how the District provides services to students with IEPs when there are staff vacancies. Mr. Marcaccio replied that the District is close to hiring a social worker and is working on securing candidates for the school psychologist positions. Mental health professionals throughout the District have stepped up to fill in the staffing gaps for the time being. Mr. Marcaccio noted that there is high demand for individuals in these professions.

Ms. Bucka asked whether parents have been notified that there are missing staff members. Mr. Marcaccio replied that there have been no instances of services to students not being provided.

Ms. Musella observed that this is a competitive environment. The need to fully staff these positions at a competitive rate of pay will have budget implications for next year.

Dr. Ricca reported that offers were made to candidates who have turned them down due to the ability to earn more money in another district. Overall, we have to build programs that meet the needs of our students and potentially need to expand staff to reach these needs.

Ms. Musella said that this has implications on FY 24 and the pending supplemental appropriation request.

B. Personnel

C. Fund Balance

Mrs. Baker provided an analysis of the District's Fund Balance. She noted that the audit has not been completed and the numbers presented are subject to change.

- FY 22 - Fund balance used for Turf Field and additional expenses
- FY 23 - Fund balance to be used to cover cuts in State aid and a reduction in allocation from the Town as well as the negotiated stipends for teachers
- FY 24 and FY 25 - stipends with benefits

Mr. Munoz asked when the books will close for FY 22. Mrs. Baker replied that the books will close at the beginning of October and that the audit will be in draft form until later December.

Mr. Munoz asked for a financial calendar. Mrs. Baker replied that there is an internal one that she will share.

Mr. Munoz pointed out that once books have closed for FY 22, more facts will be known for the supplemental appropriation request. Additionally, the School Committee can vote to commit funds to certain capital accounts such as IT and special education services. He added that it is important to have 3 and 5 year financial forecasts.

Ms. Musella said that the policy subcommittee will review the fund balance policy and seek the Town's input. She also noted that the current fund balance amount is unprecedented and from the WB money.

Dr. Quinn noted that there never has been a large, unanticipated transfer of fund balance.

Ms. Bucka cautioned against the practice of kicking the can down the road to address capital needs.

IX. School Committee Suggestions for Future Agenda Items

Ms. Musella - Report on School Improvement Teams

X. Adjournment

*On a motion by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Amy J. Healey  
School Committee Clerk

*Approved 9-20-22*