



## East Greenwich School Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 5, 2023  
6:00 pm

Hybrid Meeting: Cole Middle School & Via Zoom

### Minutes

#### Those in attendance

**School Committee:** Ms. Alyson Powell, Chair; Ms. Nicole Bucka, Vice-Chair; Ms. Clare Cecil-Karb; Mr. Kevin Murphy; Mr. Tim Munoz; Dr. Eugene Quinn

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

Recess Open Session and Convene Executive Session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under RIGL 42-26-4 and

1. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) - Collective Bargaining, EGEA-ESP

*At 6:05 pm, Mr. Murphy made a motion to Recess Open Session and Convene Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Dr. Quinn and approved 6-0.*

*At 6:24 pm, on a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene Open Session.*

#### **I. Call to Order**

Ms. Powell called the meeting to order at 6:26 pm.

#### **II. Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **III. Seal Executive Session Minutes of September 5, 2023 and disclosure of Executive Session votes.**

*On a motion by Ms. Cecil-Karb, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to Seal the Executive Session minutes of September 5, 2023.*

Ms. Powell disclosed that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

#### **V. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings**

- A. August 22, 2023 - Executive Session Minutes
- B. August 22, 2023 - Regular Meeting Minutes

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve both sets of minutes from August 22, 2023.*

#### **VI. Action Items**

- A. SC Approval of Homeschool Requests

Ms. Bucka asked about the family who is seeing services for their student with an IEP. Mr. Podraza replied that the District will work with the parents to line up needed services.

*On a motion by Ms. Cecil-Karb, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the homeschool requests.*

- B. SC Approval of SEAC Budget

Ms. Powell explained that other districts have a budget for their SEACs. As a statutorily mandated subcommittee, she said that she felt that a budget, similar to the School Committee's, would be appropriate. The budget would be intended for training and professional development. Ms. Powell suggested that \$1000 be added to the budget for SEAC.

Ms. Cecil-Karb spoke in favor of this proposal and noted that it is appropriate to compensate people who come to give training to SEAC.

*Ms. Bucka made a motion to add a \$1000 line item to the SY 23-24 budget for SEAC. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion which passed 6-0.*

SEAC Chair Mr. Matthew Murray spoke in favor of the budget for SEAC.

- C. SC Approval of Re-Filing of RIDE Stage 1

Mr. Derek Osterman, of Colliers, explained that Stage 1 was filed a year ago. With the decision to move Stage 2 to February 2024, the recommendation from RIDE was to re-file Stage 1 and re-start the clock.

*On a motion by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the re-filing of the Stage 1 application.*

## **VII. Superintendent & Staff Report**

### **A. Financial Report - Mrs. Maggie Baker**

Ms. Baker reported:

- Revenue projections are up by \$30,000 due to medicare reimbursements and interest income from the Town.
- Expenses, which are still under auditing, have an anticipated \$200,000 swing. Stipends, substitutes and benefit costs have increased.
- Grant spending is stabilized
- Capital reserve has a little more money
- There have been some expenses from the \$5 million bond.

### **B. EGPS Annual Report**

Dr. Ricca shared two examples of an annual report for a 6 educational unit district. He explained that he will continue to have discussions about the development of an annual report with Ms. Powell and Mr. Munoz and will seek input from other Committee members. When a proposal is ready, Dr. Ricca will bring an action item to the Committee for a vote.

Mr. Munoz said that this would be a terrific tool to present to the Town when the budget is presented. It will also demonstrate accountability with the Strategic Plan.

Ms. Bucka pointed out that in a District such as East Greenwich, which is funded 90% by taxpayers, this report would demonstrate where people's tax dollars are going.

## **VIII. Discussion**

### **A. Student Participation in EG School Committee**

Ms. Powell explained that Mr. Munoz has long encouraged that student voices be brought into School Committee matters.

Mr. Munoz asked for consensus on having a greater student voice. The SC Bylaws include language regarding a student representative. Many policies needing revision concern student life.

#### Benefits of having consistent student input into the work of the School Committee.

- Delivering on the Mission of our Strategic Plan, "All Means All"
- Including the voice of students in policy and practice discussions to better understand the impact of our work and spot new opportunities
- Providing a check and balance mechanism so that parents can see that students are being heard
- Offering leadership opportunities to EGPS students

### Options for Discussion:

- Add a student representative(s) to the School Committee; one that is ineligible to vote or participate in Executive Session
- Appoint a student representative to each sub-committee
- Ask for regular reports from a designated Student Representative as part of the School Committee agenda
- Hold 1-2 joint sessions each year with Student Government to exchange ideas, identify potential resources needed and align needs for annual operating plans.
- Other

### Timing

The Committee will vote on the preferred option at the next meeting with implementation of the approved option in October 2023.

Mr. Podraza left the first option to the School Committee. He cautioned mandating student membership on sub-committee. Mr. Podraza said that he really liked option 3. He suggested starting with one option with the opportunity to expand as needed.

Dr. Page suggested a working group that is topic based.

Dr. Ricca spoke of the importance of including students with wide ranging abilities.

Ms. Bucka spoke in favor of student voices which are authentic and purposeful. She said that there would need to be evidence of diversity in any student group. She said that she would not support regular reports and students being pulled away from class.

Mr. Munoz said that his vision is for a rotating group of student representatives. He also raised the idea of including students from Cole.

Mr. Murphy spoke in favor of including student voices. He said that after school hours might work best for students.

Ms. Cecil-Karb agreed that student representation on the Health & Wellness Sub-Committee has been very positive. She asked how to go about including underrepresented students. Ms. Cecil-Karb stressed the importance of actions once students have shared their input; and the setting of clear expectations.

Mr. Murray, SEAC Chair, suggested that students be permitted to ask questions of the School Committee.

Ms. Powell suggested that the School Committee come up with topics for discussion and reach out to students to form a working group.

Dr. Ricca suggested that Mr. Munoz work with Dr. Page to come up with next steps to bring an action item back to the Committee in the next month or so.

**X. Adjournment**

*At 7:32 pm, on a motion by Dr. Quinn, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn.*

Respectfully submitted,

Amy J. Healey  
School Committee Clerk

*Approved 9-19-23*