



## East Greenwich School Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 22, 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 (arrived at 6:27 pm); 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; Mr. Neil Marcaccio, Director of Student Services; Mrs. Amy Healey, Confidential Administrative Assistant; Attorney Aubrey Lombardo

**Absent:** Mr. William Hangan

#### I. Call to Order

Ms. Powell called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the Committee voted 5-0 to Recess Open Session and Convene Executive Session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under RIGL 42-26-4 and*

- 1. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1) - Job Performance - Individual has been notified, including his right to have any discussion held in open session*
- 2. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(4) - Investigations*
- 3. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) - Collective Bargaining, EGEA-ESP*
- 4. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) - Potential Litigation - Special Education Matter*

Open session resumed at 6:42pm.

#### II. Pledge of Allegiance

#### III. Public Comment

#### IV. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

- A. July 18, 2023 - Executive Session Minutes
- B. July 18, 2023 - Regular Meeting Minutes

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Ms. Cecil-Karb, the Committee voted 5-0-1 to approve the Executive and Regular minutes of July 18, 2023. Dr. Quinn abstained from the vote.*

- C. July 26, 2023 - Joint Meeting Minutes

*On a motion by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 4-0-2 to approve the Joint Meeting minutes of July 26, 2023. Ms. Bucka and Ms. Cecil-Karb abstained from the vote.*

## **V. Action Items**

- A. Revised SY 2023-2024 School Calendar

Dr. Ricca explained that this revised calendar eliminates early release days, designates “Right to Read” days and moves the professional development from April 23 to April 2 due to the change of date for Rhode Island’s Presidential Primary.

*On a motion by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the revised SY 2023-2024 School Calendar.*

- B. SC Approval of Hanaford Principal Contract

Ms. Powell explained that in anticipation of tonight’s policy revision, Policy 5310: Administrator Contracts, after this evening, the School Committee will no longer approve individual contracts.

Dr. Ricca recommended the contract approval for Ms. Coleen Smith as Principal of Hanaford Elementary School. He noted that Ms. Smith is a high quality candidate who will be a wonderful addition to the leadership team

*On a motion by Dr. Quinn, seconded by Ms. Bucka, the Committee voted 5-0-1 to approve Ms. Smith’s contract. Mr. Munoz abstained from the vote.*

- C. SC Approval of Athletic Trainer Contract - Mr. Salvatore Palermo

Ms. Bucka asked whether this position was a change in the budget and suggested that a vote of the School Committee was necessary.

Dr. Ricca replied that the athletic trainer duties went unfilled last year due to the contracted company’s inability to provide personnel and the subsequent cancellation of the contract. The District was unsuccessful in securing another vendor for these services. Funding for this position does not take funds away from somewhere else. Attorney Lombardo added that the Rhode Island Interscholastic League strongly advises that districts have an athletic trainer.

Ms. Powell inquired whether this position will add to the budget. Mrs. Baker replied that it will not. Attorney Lomardo said that this type of change does not require a vote of the School Committee.

Ms. Bucka stated that while the District is not fully funded, funds should be prioritized for school day and teaching and learning needs.

Mr. Munoz pointed out the importance of the budget process clearly identifying what positions are intended to be filled.

*On a motion by Dr. Quinn, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the Committee voted 4-1-1 to approve Mr. Palermo's. Ms. Bucka voted against the motion. Mr. Munoz abstained from the vote.*

D. SC Approval of EGEA MOA - Pre-School Coordinator/Department Head

*On a motion by Dr. Quinn, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the EGEA MOA - Pre-School Coordinator/Department Head.*

Mr. Marcaccio explained that the job description of the pre-school coordinator was adapted to cover additional responsibilities. This position will be filled by one of the District's pre-school teachers, Mary Sullivan

E. SC Approval of Building Security Modifications - Martone, Inc.

*On a motion by Dr. Quinn, seconded by Ms. Bucka, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the Building Security Modifications - Martone*

F. SC Approval of Homeschool Requests

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

Mr. Munoz requested a yearly status updated on homeschool students. Attorney Lombardo explained the complication of RI law which limits the information that has to be provided to districts about homeschool students. No details of the homeschool plan are required to be shared and the State and RIDE can only get involved if a DCFY matter develops.

G. SC Approval of Out of State Field Trip - EGHS Cross Country Team, Belfast, Maine

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

H. SC Approval of Employee Termination Recommendation - Non Certified Custodian

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Ms. Cecil-Karb, the Committee voted 6-0 to remove this item from the agenda.*

**VI. Superintendent & Staff Report**

A. Special Education Audit Report Update - Mr. Neil Marcaccio

An independent audit of EGPS Student Services was conducted over the past year by Place, LLC. The audit report was received a month ago and shared with the School Committee. In October the audit committee will present a more detailed report.

- Share out of findings - Timeline
  - Ongoing - monthly updates to School Committee, families and staff outlining priorities, progress and barriers related to audit findings and positive change.
  
- Audit Questions
  1. Child find
  2. K-5 Math instruction - MTSS Framework, alignment of student services to provide the next levels of support
  3. MTSS
  4. IEP - development and implementation fidelity (appropriate & well delivered?) - includes staffing
  5. Staffing
  
- High Level Findings and Recommendations
  - Focus Area # 1 - "IEP Development"
    - Process - "IEP Development"
    - Findings - "IEP Development"
    - Recommendations - "IEP Development"
  - Focus Area # 2 - "IEP Implementation"
    - Process - "IEP Implementation"
    - Findings - "IEP Implementation"
    - Findings 2 - "IEP Implementation:
    - Recommendations - "IEP Implementation"
  - Focus Area # 3 - "Child Find"
    - Process - "Child Find"
    - Findings - "Child Find"
    - Recommendations - "Child Find"
  - Focus Area #4 - Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

- Process - MTSS
    - Findings 1 - MTSS
    - Findings 2 - MTSS
    - Recommendations - MTSS
  - Focus Area # 5 - K-5 Mathematics Instruction
    - Process - K-5 Math Instruction
    - Findings - K-5 Math Instruction
    - Recommendations - K-5 Math Instruction
- Final Summary of Audit
  - EG community committed to inclusion (parents, staff, students)
  - Strategic investment in personnel & service delivery
  - Need for PD
  - System level work
  - Embrace “All Means All”
- What’s Next?
  - Well articulated analysis of findings and recommendations with stakeholder groups
  - Mesh audit with known strengths and opportunities
  - Clarify inconsistencies between audit and day to day
  - Determine priority order for improvement elements

Mr. Munoz asked what changes are taking place at this time. Mr. Marcaccio replied that procedural changes are being implemented now. One example is that parents are provided with a copy of an IEP 48 hours in advance of an IEP meeting.

Ms. Bucka asked that the audit report be looked at through the lens of each subcommittee. She pointed out that the RFP specified personnel adequacy as a primary focus and asserted that that area was not adequately addressed in the audit. Ms. Powell also said that she expected a more detailed review and suggestions on personnel.

Mr. Munoz asked for a breakdown and details of the survey sample size.

Dr. Quinn said that personnel and staffing needs are often questioned by town officials.

#### B. Update on New EGSD Website - Dr. Steven Arnoff

Dr. Arnoff announced that the new website is up and running, [www.egsd.net](http://www.egsd.net). He thanked Mr. Chris Scheib for his countless hours of work in developing the new site. The website is still in a work in progress, especially the school pages. The mobile app is expected to launch in a couple of weeks.

Ms. Powell thanked everyone who worked on developing the new website and said she was excited to see how it evolves.

#### C. Update on Security Projects - Mr. Robert Wilmarth

Ms. Powell inquired about the timeline for reimbursements for security projects. Mr. Wilmarth replied that everything is in place to secure reimbursements.

Mr. Wilmarth provided an update on the suite of projects approved last year. This has all been coordinated for years by Mr. Colby Anderson.

- Window film installation - delayed due to supply and labor shortages. The front entryways will be completed by the start of school. Work will continue into the Fall.
- Exterior security cameras - 90% installed; some are up and running
- Alarm - installation is beginning next week
- Visitor Management Software - expected to be operational at the start of the school year.
- Emergency Reunification Software - still being worked on and the plan will be operational after school starts
- Portable radios - should be delivered by mid to late October.

### **VII. Policies - Second Read**

#### A. Policy 5310: Administrator Contracts

Ms. Powell explained that no changes have been made since the first read. The revised would have the School Committee approve template contracts and removes the Committee from approving personnel.

*On a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the policy revision.*

### **VIII. Subcommittee Reports**

#### A. Building

Ms. Powell announced that the Town Council voted to authorize up to \$150 million in bonds for the master plan building project. The language does not have any restrictions and permits moving on to Stage II. Ms. Powell said that the public needs to be informed about the scope of the project and encouraged to vote on the bond referendum on November 7th, 2023.

Dr. Quinn pointed out that most taxpayers will not see a tax increase as high as what has been predicted.

Dr. Ricca announced that RIDE's School Building Authority toured the District's schools last Friday. Town Council President Schwager and Town Manager Nota have been supportive of the project. The Stage II deadline has been moved to February 2024.

B. Policy

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

5. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1) - Job Performance - Superintendent, Individual has been notified, including his right to have any discussion held in open session

*At 8:32 pm, on a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to recess Open Session and reconvene Executive Session.*

*At 9:32 pm, on a motion by Ms. Cecil-Karb, seconded by Mr. Murphy, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene Open Session.*

**IX. Seal Executive Session Minutes of August 22, 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 August 22, 2023.*

Ms. Powell disclosed that the School Committee voted to approve a settlement agreement on a special education matter.

**X. Adjournment**

*At 9:34 pm, on a motion by Ms. Bucka, seconded by Dr. Quinn, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn.*

Respectfully submitted,

Amy J. Healey  
School Committee Clerk

*Approved 9-5-23*