



## MINUTES

### Providence School Board Regular Meeting

Pursuant to Executive Order 20-25 issued by the Governor of Rhode Island, the Providence School Board held this meeting remotely. A recording is available on the Providence School Board YouTube channel at [bit.ly/pvdschoolboard](https://bit.ly/pvdschoolboard)

June 17, 2020

#### CONVENE MEETING

1. Call to Order – Acting Chair, Vice President Pande called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Roll Call--Board Members Present: Nina Pande, Muyideen Ibiyemi, Travis Escobar, Diagneris Garcia, Mark Santow and Kinzel Thomas.

President Nicholas Hemond was not in attendance.

2. Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Peters stated that tomorrow, June 18<sup>th</sup> is the last day of school, and it has been a challenging year for everyone. He congratulated the heroic class of 2020, and he is sending his admiration and compassion to them. There was a Zoom videoconference which included Commissioner Infante-Green, Mayor Elorza, Council President Matos, and class valedictorians to honor and celebrate.

There are a number of ways the district has shown appreciation to seniors, and to congratulate them, including mobile billboards on RIPTA buses, online streaming of their graduations for families and friends to celebrate. Every student will have an opportunity to be recognized individually for their accomplishments in a public and safe virtual graduation.

Superintendent Peters announced that Susan Chin is the new Elementary Network Superintendent, and that Dr. Olayinka Alege is Secondary Network Superintendent. He also announced that Dr. Kevin Gallick will be serving in the role of secondary transformation officer.

Superintendent Peters also remarked on racial equality, and addressing the long-overdue issues of racism. Racist behavior by any member of the PPSD community is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

#### APPROVE AGENDA

3. Approve Agenda

**A motion was made to remove item 14 from the Agenda to discuss on a later date.**

**MSV – Santow, Thomas (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**

**A motion was made to approve the agenda as amended.**

**MSV – Santow, Thomas (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

4. Public Comment-Right to Be Heard

Lars Carlson- parent of PPSD student, addressed concerns relative to grades for 4th quarter that were not considered at Classical High School.

Ashley Rodriguez Lantigua, community member, urged schools to educate students about the true history of colonialism. Rodriguez recommended that Columbus Day be changed to Indigenous People's Day.

Angela Marandola- sent written comment addressing racial equality, in support of the Resolution Urging the Providence City Council to Rename Esek Hopkins.

Cynthia Jones- 4th grade teacher at Anthony Carnevale Elementary sent written comment on a personnel matter, reiterating the findings of the Johns Hopkins Report, and that more professional development is needed.

Christina Costa – community member, sent written comment in support of the Resolution Urging the Providence City Council to Rename Esek Hopkins Middle School.

Robert Randall- worked as a community partner in Providence schools, sent written comment in support of the Resolution Urging the Providence City Council to Rename Esek Hopkins Middle School.

**SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS**

5. School Board Comments

Santow–inquired on changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day.

Pande – inquired with School Attorney, Charles Ruggiero on matter

Ruggiero – for the purpose of recognition on the school calendar, the district has the authority to change after appropriate notice and discussion on a resolution.

Pande- referred to the policy committee for a resolution pertaining to school calendar changes.

Pande- stated that President Hemond sent his written comments and asked the following to be read into the record regarding the three resolutions being introduced tonight: "I am sorry that I cannot be there today (virtually of course) but I wanted to have some comments read into the record tonight regarding the three resolutions that we are taking up. This Board made a decision initially under then President Keith Oliviera to stand up against institutional racism and bias in our school district. Since then, we have dedicated our efforts to making this a district grounded in equity for all our students, family and employees. Racial bias has no place in Providence Schools and should not be tolerated at any level in any area in American society. I have been proud to have worked with all the Board members, past and present, on improving our sensitivity and recognition to the problem of institutional racism in our school system and making changes that call out these biases and route them out of our school district. Tonight, the Board will rededicate itself to this work with three statements of direction. The resolutions the Board will consider today aim to make this school district that has zero

toleration of racism and the pain it causes in an effort to make our schools as safe and welcoming to our community as any district in the country. While I have a professional conflict that causes me to recuse on the issue of SROs I want to commend Board Members Santow, Thomas, Garcia and Escobar for their work on this issue. I know Mr. Santow will lead this effort over the next several months and I am sure he will produce recommendations and policy changes that keep our schools physically and emotionally safe places for all Providence families. As to the other resolutions, I hope you will support them tonight and I am proud to work with such a dedicated group of community leaders in being productive cogs in the wheel of change during this historic time in our country.”

Pande - stated that President Hemond also communicated his official appointment of School Board Member Diagneris Garcia as the new Health & Wellness Chair, and Pande asked Ms. Garcia whether or not she has been communicating with President Hemond regarding the appointment.

Garcia- both she and President Hemond have communicated on the appointment.

Pande- congratulated Ms. Garcia and thanked her for accepting this leadership role.

#### REPORT ON CONTRACTS

6. City Year Providence Summary
7. American Reading Company (ARC)
8. 2020-21 Materials & Services Contracts  
**A motion was made to approve items six to eight as one vote**  
**MSV – Ibiyemi, Thomas (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**
9. Staffing and Recruitment RFP  
**A motion was made to approve item nine**  
**MSV – Ibiyemi, Thomas (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**
10. Vector Media contract for RIPTA advertising
11. Herff Jones/Marching Order contract for virtual graduations  
**A motion was made to approve item 10 and 11 as one vote**  
**MSV – Ibiyemi, Thomas (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**
12. K12 Insight  
**A motion was made to approve item 12**  
**MSV – Ibiyemi, Thomas (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**

#### ACTION ITEMS

13. Resolution Urging the Providence City Council to Rename Esek Hopkins Middle School.  
**A motion was made to approve item 13**  
**MSV – Ibiyemi, Santow (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**
14. Resolution of the Providence School Board in Support of Safe, Just, and Equitable Schools  
**Item 14 was removed**
15. Resolution of the Providence School Board to Combat Institutional Racism  
**A motion was made to approve item 15**  
**MSV – Santow, Thomas (6-0) MOTION APPROVED**

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

16. Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(9) Level B Grievances

**A motion was made to enter into Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(9) Level B Grievances**

**MSV – Ibiyemi, Thomas - MOTION APPROVED (6-0) on a roll call vote: Escobar, Garcia, Santow, Pande, Ibiyemi and Thomas**

*Mr. Ibiyemi subsequently left the meeting*

#### **REPORT ON EXECUTIVE SESSION**

17. **Report on Executive Session** -There were three votes taken

1) **A motion was made to continue the grievance.**  
**MSV – Thomas, Santow - MOTION APPROVED (5-0)**

2) **A motion was made to seal the minutes**  
**MSV – Thomas, Santow - MOTION APPROVED (5-0)**

3) **A motion was made to come out of Executive Session**  
**MSV- Thomas, Santow (5-0) MOTION APPROVED**

**A motion was made to seal the minutes in public session**  
**MSV – Thomas, Santow (5-0) MOTION APPROVED**

#### **ADJOURN**

18. **Adjourn Meeting**

**A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 p.m.**  
**MSV- Thomas, Santow (5-0) MOTION APPROVED**