

Chariho School Committee Meeting
Regular Session Minutes – October 11, 2022

Committee Members Attendance: Chair Linda Lyall, Vice Chair Catherine Giusti, Ryan Callahan, Donna Chambers, William Day (arrived at 7:00 PM), Gary Liguori, Craig Louzon, Lisa Macaruso, Andrew McQuaide and Karen Reynolds. Absent: George Abbott and endawnis Spears.

Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, Development Officer Katie Kirakosian, Systems Administrator Eric O'Brien and School Committee Clerk Donna Sieczkiewicz.

I. Meeting Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Silent Meditation

Chair Lyall called the meeting of the Chariho School Committee, held in the Chariho High School Library, to order at 6:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silent meditation.

II. Motion/Vote to go into Executive Session

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: That the School Committee go into executive session and close the meeting to the public under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for the purpose of discussion and/or action pertaining to collective bargaining (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2022 - NEA ESP Staff Negotiation Update, 2. NEA ESP Negotiation Update. 3. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2022 – NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update, and 4) NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update); under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(2) for the purpose of discussion pertaining to litigation/legal update (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2022 - The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474 and 2. Update on The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474) and under the authority of R.I. General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(8) for the purpose of reviewing and/or approving matters which relate to the privacy of students and their records (1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2022 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests and 2. Approval of Home Instruction Requests); any persons to be discussed have been so notified. In favor: Unanimous (Day was not in attendance for the vote).

III. Reconvene Open Session/Pledge of Allegiance/Silent Meditation

The Committee returned to open session at 7:02 PM and Chair Lyall reconvened the meeting at 7:04 PM. She asked all to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent meditation.

IV. Closing/Sealing of Executive Session Minutes

1. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes relating to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: That minutes relating to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed. In favor: Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds. Abstained: Day. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

2. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474) remain sealed.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: That minutes pertaining to litigation/legal update (The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation v. Chariho Regional School District, through its Chair, Linda Lyall – C.A. No. PC-2021-06474) remain sealed. In favor: Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds. Abstained: Day. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 abstention.

3. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA ESP Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Catherine Giusti and it was VOTED: That minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA ESP Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached. In favor: Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds. Abstained: Day and McQuaide. Recused: Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 2 abstentions and 1 recusal.

4. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Catherine Giusti and it was VOTED: That minutes pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update) remain sealed until such time as an agreement has been reached. In favor: Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds. Abstained: Day and McQuaide. Recused: Louzon. The motion carried by a vote of 7 in favor with 2 abstentions and 1 recusal.

V. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Vice Chair Giusti reported that the first vote, approval of executive session minutes of September 27, 2022, Approval of Home Instruction Requests, was approved by Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds.

The next vote, approval of home instruction requests for tonight, was approved by Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of September 27, 2022 – RGB Update, was approved by Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of September 27, 2022 – NEA ESP Negotiation Update, was approved by Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds.

The next vote, approval of executive session minutes of September 27, 2022, NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update, was approved by Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds.

The last vote, to return to open session, was approved by Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso and Reynolds.

VI. Recognition – The following were congratulated/thanked:

1. Sophomore Kody Poplaski – The Providence Journal Boys' Soccer Player of the Week.
2. Junior Lexi Cole (Girls' Volleyball) – The Westerly Sun Athlete of the Week.
3. High School students, Julianne Manlove, Abigail O'Brien and Dylan Fisher for their assistance with lighting and technology during the Curriculum Town Hall on October 6, 2022.
4. High School Junior Erin von Housen won the Varsity A Race at the Manhattan College Invitational Girls' Cross Country Meet last Saturday in Van Courtlandt Park, New York. She is the first Chariho girl to win a varsity race at this event.

VII. Public Forum

Chair Lyall noted that this is the time if anyone would like to speak on an item that is not on this evening's agenda. Goldie Williams from Richmond spoke about the Curriculum Town Hall and a comment made by the Superintendent that CALA and/or Special Needs students do not need to do all their work so long as they know the work. It doesn't work that way in college. Her son, Tommy, flunked out. She then asked what was being done about bullying in CALA and the Middle School. Mr. Zenion says he needs help. How about punishing the student. Why was a 14-year-old arrested just because he was having an autism meltdown? The Superintendent responded that she never said that kids did not need to complete their assignments. It is about the standards being addressed; not about the number of assignments. Goldie stated her son did three to which the Superintendent questioned when her son attended Chariho. Goldie replied that he graduated in 2017 to which the Superintendent responded that she cannot answer what happened in 2017 as she was not here.

VIII. Business

A. Project Aware Grant – Superintendent Picard recommended approval to submit the Project Aware (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) Grant to RIDE effective December 31, 2022 through December 30, 2023 (length of project is up to four years) in the amount of \$300,000 for the purpose of developing a sustainable infrastructure for school-based mental health programs and services. Katie is here to answer any questions. Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Ryan, to approve the Superintendent's recommendation. Donna thanked Katie; she is worth her weight in gold. She asked if the \$300,000 was per year for four years to which Katie replied "yes, the total is \$1.2 million." Gina noted that this funding is to enhance what we are already doing. Karen asked what the effective schools were to which Gina replied that one was approved for the High School and one for the Middle School. Craig wondered if there were a number of schools competing or was it a slam-dunk. Katie responded that it was not a slam-dunk. There are no guarantees but RIDE has a good track record and there are 20 to be given nationwide. Bill asked what the coordinator would be doing for \$75,000; he would like a detailed explanation. Gina noted that this individual will be required to meet with RIDE. RIDE has stated that we must allocate a full-time coordinator. It is imperative that the work is aligned across the District. Katie added that they have not yet identified a person. There is a lot of data that needs to be collected and shared along with heavy reports to be written. Bill stated that it sounds like RIDE is trying to create a full-time person; this is a waste of money. Gina noted that this person will be the liaison. These are federal funds that need to be coordinated across the districts. Chair Lyall asked if the District would have to apply every year to which Katie responded "no but we have to meet their requirements each year." Polly Hopkins from Hopkinton asked who the community-based provider was to which Katie replied Wood River Health. We will collaborate with them. Polly asked about the Olean Center; can't you collaborate with others. Katie explained that there is specific language for a care-based provider. Polly asked if this was over and above what is being done now to which Gina noted that this is to extend and enhance what we are doing. Polly asked if she could look at the data that gives life to the enhanced need. Not that she doesn't believe it. Gina replied that the data is not public at this point. We had to submit data for the grant. It is day-to-day data that we have to collect. A lot comes from the Middle and High Schools. Survey Works is the place to go to see data on how students are feeling about the community and supports offered. Polly asked for the percentage of people who participate in the survey to which Gina replied that a majority of our students participate. Polly stated that she reads this as setting up another position, get it established and then in a few years it becomes necessary. Will this person evaluate students? Gina replied, "No, we use our staff (school psychologists, social workers, etc.)." Polly commented that she did not see in this grant anything about suicide. Gina responded that at the last meeting, the grant we submitted was for this purpose; we will train 16 people in District. Polly stated she would like to see exercise and nutrition in there as well. Gina noted that the Health and Wellness Subcommittee meets quarterly to discuss goals. Polly asked how many positions will this cover to which Katie responded "one". She then asked how the data would be collected. You have students with mental health issues. She feels a little creeped out that their issues are being used to collect data to feed a machine to get results back. Katie noted that an outside evaluator will be working on this to insure there is no bias in how the data is collected. Polly felt this would be questionable. Ryan asked if they will be in need of a project coordinator after the grant goes out to which Kate replied that she is hopeful this person is not needed. Our staff should be trained. Goldie asked why there isn't

more autism involved to which Andrew called for a point of order as this has nothing to do with the grant. Bill stated that he has been involved with emergency services and it is unbelievable the number of individuals requiring emergency services for mental health issues in the Chariho community. This money is not coming out of local taxpayer's pocket; it is federal money. We need to do this and we need more. His only concern is about the coordinator. Mental health is a big issue and he is very supportive of this. Donna added that when the League of Women Voters interviewed them, all agreed that mental health was the biggest challenge. She thanked Katie and noted that she fully supports this.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To approve submission of the Project Aware (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) Grant to RIDE effective December 31, 2022 through December 30, 2023 (length of project is up to four years) in the amount of \$300,000 per year for the purpose of developing a sustainable infrastructure for school-based mental health programs and services. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Approval of Superintendent's Goals – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of her goals. There are several priorities but these are the three largest: 1) Creation of a new District Strategic Plan. She will work with District Leaders, Educators and stakeholders to create a team that will meet on an ongoing basis. She will continue to increase student proficiency on all district and state assessments, support robust professional development for educators and staff aligned to district goals and state requirements, ensure continued accelerated support for students who struggle, support schools to ensure targeted professional development, support the development of and continuously improve upon Teaching and Learning guidelines and expectations for instruction, continue to focus on equity, diversity and cultural competence with curriculum and professional development and develop and support professional learning for school administrators that provides them with the strategies to lead highly effective schools and develop robust school improvement plans. 2) Continue to increase communication and engagement opportunities for our families to reengage them as partners in our work. She will work with school leaders to ensure school improvement teams are consistently reviewing data, budgets, and instructional goals developed to increase outcomes for students and ensure consistent support and monitoring of all goals, implement town halls that provide our school community with information on important topics, continue to enhance student voice through the Superintendent Student Education Advisory Panel (SSEAP), continue to implement the Superintendent Education Advisory Panel (SEAP), continue to implement weekly leadership updates and continue to promote important district initiatives to the community through the Annual Report, E updates, social media, community forums and other means as appropriate based on ongoing feedback. Artessy is coming back this year. 3) Continue to enhance the budgeting process to develop an FY24 budget that meets the learning needs of the district and school communities. Plan the use of ESSER II, ESSER III and grant funds to ensure alignment with the State plan and district need as it relates to initiatives necessary for student success and support, continue to develop and provide school administrators with guidance documents and tolls on how to better manage their school budgets, design administrator supports within the budget process to align budgets to school improvement plans, revise and update the Back to School Plan as needed at least quarterly to ensure expenditure of funds and allocation for student support, create budgeting documents that support the understanding of our process, needs, and expenses, and enhance communication regarding the budget and the budget process for all stakeholders. Linda made a motion, which was seconded by Craig, to approve the Superintendent's Goals. Donna noted that these were very lofty goals and every now and then the Superintendent should toot her own horn. She is meeting these goals every day. She walks the walk not just talks the talk. Craig was impressed last week as he was ready for a rumble that did not happen. Barry lived this place and Gina is doing that as well. People think your job is 7 hrs a day; it is not. Actually this goes for all administrators. Andrew stated the accolades are all well-deserving and he thoroughly enjoyed the Curriculum Town Hall. He requested an amendment to #2 – Continue to increase communication and engagement opportunities for our families to reengage them as partners in our work. He noted that Gina's actions are reflective of more than just family. He would like the amendment to read: Continue to increase communications and engagement opportunities for our *students, families, and community members* to reengage them as partners in our work.

Lisa Macaruso made an amendment to the motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To amend the goal to read: Continue to increase communications and engagement opportunities for our *students, families, and community members* to reengage them as partners in our work. In favor: Unanimous.

Linda Lyall made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was VOTED: To approve the Superintendent's Goals as amended. In favor: Unanimous.

C. Virtual Learning Day Plan – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the Virtual Learning/Distance Learning Plan for 2022-2023 that will be submitted to RIDE for its approval. Administrators, STEM & Humanities Specialists, our two District Math Specialists, Academic ELA Fellow and Teacher Induction Coach have reviewed this plan. The Plan is not much different from last year with the exception that RIDE is requiring three hours of live instruction which we did do last year. Andrew made a motion, seconded by Craig, to approve the Virtual Learning Day Plan. Andrew questioned the likelihood that this will get through to which Gina replied they did not ask that anything be fixed last year but this year the plan will need to be approved by the Board of Regents. We can only go up to five (5) days. Catherine asked if there would be any opportunity for the main campus to be in person and elementary students DL. Gina noted that they had this discussion but some staff are split between schools. It is also not five days per school but five days per district. Gary questioned the timing if the Board of Regents does not approve this until sometime in November. Gina commented that they asked last spring but did not receive RIDE's protocol until September. It would have been nice to get it sooner. Gary noted another concern with the messaging as he feels it is too confusing. Instead of "No School-Distance Learning" maybe only say "Distance Learning" because there is school. Gina replied that there is a drop down menu offered that schools across the State adopted but our text messaging can say something different. Andrew noted that the drop downs can be changed. Kathryn Colasante asked what the purpose was to limit it to only five days to which the Superintendent responded that this is a question for the Commissioner as RIDE has set the limit.

Andrew McQuaide made a motion, seconded by Craig Louzon and it was VOTED: To approve the Virtual Learning Day Plan. In favor: Unanimous.

IX. Consent Agenda Items

Chair Lyall asked if there were any items to be pulled. Craig pulled A-1 and A-2; Bill pulled B. Craig then acknowledged the donations and thanked the donors.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To move the remainder of the Consent Agenda Items. In favor: Unanimous.

- C. Bill Review – Accepted.
- D. Budget Summary – None at this time.
- E. Balance Sheet – None at this time.
- F. Personnel Actions
- G. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quote – Permission granted to issue the following:
 - 1. Grounds Maintenance Bid
- H. Permission to Award Contracts – None at this time.
- I. Home Instruction – Action taken in executive session.
- J. Grants – None at this time.
- K. Donations – Accepted the following:
 - 1. Anonymous donation of 80 student chairs and 12 teacher desk chairs to the Middle School.
 - 2. Donation of \$250.00 from Special Olympics Rhode Island to the Middle School.
 - 3. Donation of \$500.00 from Community 2000 Education Foundation to the CTC Culinary Arts Program for the community Thanksgiving Dinner.
 - 4. Donation from Gotham Greens, Providence, RI of 144 hydroponic seedlings, valued at \$2.50 each for a total donation value of \$360.00, to the Richmond School Greenhouse Project.

A-1. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2022 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes of September 13, 2022 (minutes not sealed). In favor: Unanimous.

A-2. Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Regular Session Minutes of September 27, 2022. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Transfers – Craig made a motion, which was seconded by Ryan, to approve the transfers. Bill pulled this because he had a question regarding the transfer of \$8,000 for SAF Parking which is money received by students for parking on the campus. Why is this in an SAF account; he believes it is in the wrong place. He hasn't received the SAF paperwork he requested and he hopes to get it before he leaves the Committee. He is not sure why they are taking money from this account. Ned explained that the District took action a few months ago to pave the bowl with part of the money taken from the student parking account. We then resurfaced the senior parking lot and that represents this transfer. Bill asked why this money is in an SAF account and not the school budget as the School Committee has no control over SAF accounts. Ned noted that this is the money collected from students for the privilege to park. Gina added that it has always been this way. Andrew stated that he agreed with Bill; clarity is needed. Does it fall under SAF? This should be a future agenda item for clarification that it falls under the purview of SAF. Ned asked if they wanted the money to go to the District and then transfer it to which Bill replied that the Committee has no control over this disbursement. It was noted that the School Committee has, in the past, approved transfers from SAF accounts. Gina asked if they thought this was a function of administration. Ned noted that reports will be coming next month and he can also propose alternatives if that is what Bill and Andrew would like.

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was VOTED: To approve the Transfers. In favor: Callahan, Chambers, Giusti, Liguori, Louzon, Lyall, Macaruso, McQuaide and Reynolds. Opposed: Day. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 opposed.

X. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports – There were no reports.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Curriculum Town Hall Follow-Up – The Curriculum Town Hall Meeting went well. The slides will be posted on the website along with Frequently Asked Questions. We will continue to collect questions and posted them on the website as well. We discussed volunteer service and opportunities for community involvement.

2. Flu Clinics: Ashaway School – Tuesday, October 11th from 4-7 PM; Richmond School – Tuesday, October 18th from 4-7 PM; High School/CTC – Thursday, October 20th from 8:00-10:30 AM (Staff and Students only); Charlestown School – Tuesday, November 1st from 4-7 PM.

C. Coming Events were highlighted.

XI. School Committee Requests for Future Agenda Items or Legal Opinions

There were no requests.

XII. Adjournment

Craig Louzon made a motion, seconded by Ryan Callahan and it was

VOTED: To adjourn at 7:53 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Donna J. Sieczkiewicz, Clerk