

Chariho School Committee Meeting
Regular Session Minutes – May 24, 2022

Committee Members Attendance: Chair Linda Lyall, George Abbott, Ryan Callahan, Donna Chambers, William Day, Gary Liguori, Lisa Macaruso, Linda McAllister, Karen Reynolds and endawnis Spears. Absent: Vice Chair Catherine Giusti and Craig Louzon.

Administrators and Others Attendance: Superintendent Gina Picard, Assistant Superintendent Michael Comella, Director of Administration and Finance Ned Draper, High School Principal Andrea Spas, High School Assistant Principal Jean Bradanini, CALA Director Brian Tetreault, Development Officer Katie Kirakosian, CALA Special Educator Danielle Bruneau, NEA ESP President Tom Pirnie, 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 6:10 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by a moment of silent meditation.

II. Motion/Vote to go into Executive Session

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori 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)(1) for the purpose of discussion and/or action pertaining to an individual's job performance or character or physical or mental health of a person or persons (1. Pre-deprivation Hearings/Non-Renewal of Teacher Contracts and 2. Superintendent's Contract); 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. NEA ESP Grievance Hearing; 2. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of May 10, 2022 - NEA ESP Negotiation Update; 3. NEA ESP Negotiation Update; and 4. NEA Certified Staff Negotiation Update); 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 Home Instruction Requests and 2. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of May 10, 2022 – Approval of Home Instruction Requests); any persons to be discussed have been so notified. In favor: Unanimous.

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

The Committee returned to open session at 6:47 PM and Chair Lyall reconvened the meeting at 7:00 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 noted that the item pertaining to collective bargaining (NEA ESP Grievance) was tabled so there are no minutes to close/seal.

2. Superintendent Picard recommended that minutes pertaining to an individual's job performance or character or physical or mental health of a person or persons (Pre-deprivation Hearings/Non-Renewal of Teacher Contracts) remain sealed.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: That minutes pertaining to an individual's job performance or character or physical or mental health of a person or persons (Pre-deprivation Hearings/Non-Renewal of Teacher Contracts) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

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

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was VOTED: That minutes relating to the privacy of students and their records (Approval of Home Instruction Requests) remain sealed. In favor: Unanimous.

4. 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 Gary Liguori 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: Unanimous.

5. 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 Gary Liguori 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: Unanimous.

V. Disclosure of Executive Session Votes

Ryan Callahan disclosed that the first vote taken in executive session, to table a grievance hearing, passed unanimously with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor.

The second vote, approval of the non-renewal of teacher contracts, passed with 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor.

The third vote, approval of executive session minutes of May 10, 2022 – Home Instruction Requests, passed with 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor.

The fourth vote, approval of Home Instruction Requests, passed with 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor.

The fifth vote, approval of executive session minutes of May 10, 2022 – NEA ESP Negotiation Update, passed with 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Day, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor.

The final vote, to return to close executive session and return to open session, was approved by a vote of 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 recusals with Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears voting in favor.

VI. Recognition – The following were congratulated:

1. Class of 2022 Valedictorian Bridget Fox and Salutatorian Hannah Jackson.
2. Ian Clark took first place in both the 100 and the 200 in the Southern Division Track and Field Championship on May 14th. He was named the Track MVP of the Championship. Ian broke the Class B meet record in the 200 (meet-record time of 22.77); was 1st in the 100 and was part of a record-setting 1st place relay team (meet-record time of 44.55) with Nekoda Thompson, Collin Fitts and Eli Sposato at the Class B Championships last Saturday.
3. Eli Sposato finished first in the 400 and the high jump at the Southern Division Track and Field Championship and was part of the record-setting 1st place relay team at the Class B Championships.

4. Weeko Thompson took 1st place and improved her school record in discus and also placed 1st in the shot put at the Southern Division Track and Field Championship. She won the shot put and finished second in the discus at the Class B Girls' Track and Field Championship last Saturday.
5. Erin Von Housen won the 1,500 and improved her record at the Southern Division Track and Field Championship. She finished second in the 3,000 at the Class B Championship.

VII. Public Forum

Chair Lyall noted that this is the time if anyone wishing to speak on items not on this evening's agenda can do so by coming to the mic and stating your name and place of residence. Elaine Ricci from Charlestown, parent of two students, noted that the Chariho Middle School softball team was 1st in the Southern Division. She wanted to recognize them. She spoke at the March meeting about bullying and it was supposed to be discussed again at a May meeting but it is not on the agenda. There is a video going around about an altercation with an eighth-grade student and Mr. Zenion. It hasn't gotten better and she wants this addressed – don't push it aside.

VIII. Policy

A. Public Forum Policy Revision – This item was requested by Bill Day as this policy was in conflict with the Committee's Rules of Conduct pertaining to the amount of time provided for speakers during Public Forum. Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the revisions to this policy. Ryan made a motion, which was seconded by Gary, to approve the revised Public Forum Policy. Bill asked that they go over what will change. Chair Lyall stated they will ask people to sign in if they want to speak as this could affect the time allotted for each individual. If there is something that the School Committee would like to discuss in more detail, this can be requested during School Committee Requests for Future Agenda Items. Ryan noted he was in favor of the revisions but wanted to ensure that if someone arrives late to the meeting and hasn't signed in, if time allows, that they not be precluded from speaking if their name is not on the list. Chair Lyall noted that she will not deny anyone the opportunity to speak if time permits. Ryan replied that he is on board and understands the need for time constraints. Lisa stated that she would like copies of the policy available along with the sign-in sheet so people can refer to the policy. This needs to be communicated so we can implement it in good faith. She questioned how they could ensure that each person presenting is presenting accurate information, not rumors. She needs to understand how they will vet items #1, 2 and 3. She does agree that the extension of time should be voted on by the School Committee. Ryan responded that the way he interprets it, it is the responsibility of those who tend to engage to put this on as a future agenda item as a way to challenge misinformation. Chair Lyall noted that they took the two policies and melded them. She agrees with Ryan. Lisa felt they needed some professional development for the School Committee on how to thoughtfully engage with our citizens if we feel #1, 2 and 3 are being questioned. She will support this as long as they continue to discuss it; maybe through Jon. Bill noted that they have trusted individuals to follow #1, 2 and 3; this has been done for years. Nothing has changed. If we feel it isn't the truth, we can ask the Chair to rule them out of order and shut them down. Chair Lyall thanked all for the helpful information.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was
VOTED: To approve the revised Public Forum Policy. In favor: Unanimous.

B. Secondary Grading Policy Revision – Superintendent Picard recommended tabling this item.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was
VOTED: To table action on the revised Secondary Grading Policy to a later date. In favor: Unanimous.

C. Home Instruction Policy Revision – Superintendent Picard recommended tabling the revised Home Instruction Policy.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was VOTED: To table action on the revised Home Instruction Policy to a later date. In favor: Unanimous.

IX. Business

A. Field Trip Request(s) – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the request of FFA Advisors Stacie Pepperd and Christine Haberek for 1 student and 2 chaperones to travel to the FFA National Convention in Indianapolis, IN from Tuesday, October 25 through Friday, October 28, 2022. contingent upon compliance with policy. Ryan made a motion, which was seconded by Gary, to approve this field trip request. Donna asked if Stacie was in attendance as she had some concerns. The first was why one student with two chaperones to which the Superintendent explained if one adult were to get sick, there would be another in attendance. Also for liability reasons. Donna's second concern was the student will have graduated when this trip occurs. Gina explained that the individual was a student when she earned this opportunity. Gary noted a concern that the advisors will be chaperoning an adult. Donna added that she wanted the Superintendent to look deeper into this. She is a little concerned about paying two individuals to chaperone along with an adult/child. It was noted that FFA will fundraise to pay for this. Bill commented that FFA has a long-standing tradition; this individual was chosen to represent the State of Rhode Island and Chariho. He doesn't really understand why they need to postpone action on this. She deserves the recognition. Both Gary and Donna stated that they support the activity. Lisa noted that she will not vote to approve this tonight. Will FFA allow the student to compete without Chariho representatives present? Will the student have her own room or will all three room together? Gary added that he is uncomfortable with the word "chaperone". Ryan withdrew his motion and Gary withdrew his second.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was VOTED: To table this item to allow the Superintendent to gather more information. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears. Opposed: Day. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 opposed.

B. Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) Grant – CALA – Superintendent Picard noted that CALA Director Brian Tetreault, Teacher Danielle Bruneau and Katie Kirakosian will provide an overview. She recommended approval to submit the Comprehensive School Improvement Grant for CALA to RIDE's Office of School Improvement in the amount of \$109,821.38 for the period October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023. Ryan made a motion, seconded by Gary, to approve submission of the CSIP Grant for CALA. Director Tetreault began the presentation and noted how very proud they are of the recognition they received from RIDE. He explained the two programs encompassed by CALA: the ALP or Alternative Learning Program and the Clinical Day Program (the elementary CDP is located at Ashaway School) and program highlights. Ms. Bruneau noted the multiple interventions used and project-based/community-based learning they incorporate in their programs. Katie Kirakosian, Program Manager of the CSIP Grant, spoke on their three main goals (Increase the four-year graduation rate, improve students' English Language Arts (ELA) and Math achievement and growth, and ensure students feel connected, respected and valued) and the five interventions from the three goals. George questioned if funds are needed for these positions to which Katie replied that this is federally-funded with the request going to RIDE. Bill noted the grant was for one year. What will the District's requirement for funding be in future years? Will we be obligated to carry this in future budgets? Katie responded that there are stipends for staff but once the grant goes away, she does not see any direct impact on the budget for support as they go forward. Bill noted that he does not want to see forever funding to which the Superintendent explained that this is ongoing grant work to develop and enhance the program. Lisa noted that she appreciated the tone used by Ms. Bruneau when speaking about the students and the program. She gave the impression that it is a privilege to teach and that failure was an expected outcome – part of the benchmark of life. She appreciates where the school is now because of the staff. Ms. Bruneau spoke about students with respect and dignity. It was a great presentation and she is in total support of this. She questioned how goal #3 could be measured to which Katie replied that this, too, is quantifiable when looking at School Works panorama results – they reflect this with CALA being one

of the highest in the District. endawnis thanked all three and noted her appreciation; she is proud of the work they do. She would like to learn more about the professional learning community. Ms. Bruneau explained that the first year they realized that they didn't have any contacts with schools that matched theirs so they blanket emailed ten top schools in the country and seven replied. They now have a very close connection to three schools and are trying to get everyone together – project-based learning. endawnis again noted her appreciation; you are doing great work. Chair Lyall stated that she works on the CALA CAB (Advisory Board) and has enjoyed every minute of it. The teachers are amazing and the school is thriving. They have all worked so hard.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: To approve submission of the Comprehensive School Improvement Grant for CALA to RIDE's Office of School Improvement in the amount of \$109,821.38 for the period October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023. In favor: Unanimous.

C. School Lunch Program Contract – Chartwells – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the School Lunch Program Contract with Chartwells per the attached memo from Ned Draper. She concurred with Ned that Chartwells staff have done an outstanding job during extremely challenging years.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was

VOTED: To approve the School Lunch Program Contract with Chartwells per the memo from Ned Draper. In favor: Unanimous.

D. High School Graduation Project – Superintendent Picard introduced Principal Andrea Spas and Assistant Principal Jean Bradanini, who worked with student representatives Kaden Kelly, Alexis Cole, Reagan Tremblay, Autumn Liguori-Bills, Ryann Denecour, Nate Ballard, Maisie Datson and Anna Lacroix, on the High School Graduation Project which will replace the Graduation Portfolio. She recommended approval of the High School Graduation Project. Andrea and Jean noted they were honored to be presenting this with the students explaining how they arrived at this and why they want to make the shift. Autumn stated they felt students would be more engaged as they can choose their own topic; something that inspires them and they are proud of. There will be more creative work and more hands-on with a mentor. Jean explained the process, which started at the beginning of the year. Chariho already has learner qualities and is way ahead of other schools. We were the model for others. They looked at five senior project handbooks with the Student Advisory Board and School Improvement Team reviewing all of them. They customized Chariho's handbook. Reagan explained that the student will submit for approval a one-page letter of intent on the topic they choose. The presentation must be at least fifteen minutes and include learner qualities. Kaden added that of the 113 responses received, 70% supported the change with 26% unsure. It was noted that all students will present on the same day in May. Andrea commented that feedback from students is what prompted them to begin this work. This will be more meaningful for them and the staff will find ways for student to accommodate the required field work (i.e. transportation - 15 field work hours; 10 hours with a mentor). Next steps are to receive approval from the Committee and updating the Academic Requirements for Graduation for incoming freshman. This will not affect students already enrolled in High School. They want the project to be something students are passionate about. Ryan made a motion, seconded by Gary, to approve the High School Graduation Project. Bill questioned checklist and timelines; will this be tied to a Google site? Andrea responded that students will be doing everything electronically as this is what they are used to. Bill replied that he would like them to be required to write something down and then type it on the Google site. He wants kids to write and not rely on electronics as he does not feel electronics require too much thinking. This is his personal opinion. Students need to learn to spell and write. Andrea noted the predominant way will be through their MacBooks to which Reagan added that she agrees it is important to read, write and spell and they did do this in elementary school. They still have to write out essays by hand but this is a new world and this is what will happen in their future careers. Donna put in a plug for a Google site as it is so easy to share, comment, edit. This is a huge undertaking

and she thanked all involved. She asked that when they do get some models, they come back and present to the Committee. Linda McAllister noted she is in favor of this as she feels it will help students in their life path. She asked why some replied “no” or “unsure” to the survey to which Andrea responded that they had to go through the handbook before responding and those who did not do this, just checked no or unsure. There were only one or two no’s. endawnis applauded all the work that was done on this and the thoughtfulness of the students who are modeling for our community. She was humbled and honored by their work to which Andrea added that endawnis is correct. None of these students will benefit from this. She thanked endawnis for recognizing these students who are paying it forward.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was
VOTED: To approve the High School Graduation Project. In favor: Unanimous.

E. Agreement with Rhode Island Student Assistant Services (RISAS) – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the agreement with RISAS for the Student Assistance Program (Project SUCCESS - Substance Abuse Prevention) from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was
VOTED: To approve the agreement with RISAS for the Student Assistance Program (Project SUCCESS - Substance Abuse Prevention) from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. In favor: Unanimous.

F. Memorandum of Understanding Between the Chariho Regional School District and the Town of Richmond Pertaining to the Funding for a School Resource Officer – Superintendent Picard recommended approval of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Chariho Regional School District and the Town of Richmond pertaining to the funding for a School Resource Officer for the 2022-2023 school year. Ryan made a motion, which was seconded by Gary, to approve the MOU. Bill commented that according to the agreement, an evaluation is supposed to be performed yet the School Committee did not receive a copy of it. Gina noted that an evaluation was done and she will look into it. Ryan asked if there was anything critical in the evaluation to which Gina replied “no”. There is insurance of attendance and arrival and departure times noted (15 minutes before and 15 minutes after school).

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was
VOTED: To approve the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Chariho Regional School District and the Town of Richmond pertaining to the funding for a School Resource Officer for the 2022-2023 school year. In favor: Abbott, Callahan, Chambers, Liguori, Lyall, Macaruso, McAllister, Reynolds and Spears. Opposed: Day. The motion carried by a vote of 9 in favor with 1 opposed.

G. Superintendent’s Contract – Chair Lyall recommended approval of Superintendent Gina Picard’s contract. Ryan made a motion, seconded by Gary, to approve Superintendent Gina Picard’s contract. Ryan wanted to provide some context. There are 36 districts in the State; three have part-time superintendents and the rest are full-time. He found 24 districts that listed salaries for their superintendents. Providence was the highest, which is expected, at \$210,000 with the average across the State being \$172,000. Does anyone want to guess where our Superintendent landed? She is the lowest paid with many having less experience than her. Other districts also lack the complexity of Chariho. All of the other superintendents have three-year contracts. We are getting a steal. He fully supports Gina’s contract from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025 at an annual salary of \$159,013 for the 2022-2023 school year.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was
VOTED: To approve Superintendent Gina Picard’s contract from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025 at an annual salary of \$159,013 for the 2022-2023 school year. In favor: Unanimous.

H. Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) – Ned provided an overview of the DWSRF and alternative funding options for drinking water-related projects. We had to present through engineers' evaluations that the projects are needed. Northeast Water Solutions conducted a survey which is suitable for the application so we submitted the paperwork. We are only on a list approved to apply for funding at this point. Any actual funding has more steps to go through so no action is needed at this time. We can pursue housing aid if we complete Stage II. He noted his thanks to both Colliers and Northeast towards this first step. Bill questioned if there is priority noted for any of our projects or do we pick and choose. Ned explained that Rhode Island Department of Health prioritizes the list based on need assuming we meet all the requirements. Bill noted that he gets a little nervous when people upstate want to help us. Ned noted that the revolving fund could be twenty years if we do not choose to use housing aid; this could be layered into our budget.

X. Consent Agenda Items

Chair Lyall requested items to be pulled; nothing was pulled. Donna, in Craig's absence, acknowledged the donations and thanked the donors.

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was
VOTED: To accept the Consent Agenda items. In favor: Unanimous.

A. Minutes – Approved the following:

1. Executive Session Minutes of May 10, 2022 – Approval of Executive Session Minutes April 12, 2022 (minutes not sealed).
2. Regular Session Minutes of May 10, 2022.

B. Transfers – Approved.

C. Bill Review – Accepted.

D. Budget Summary – As per enclosed.

E. Balance Sheet – As per enclosed.

F. Personnel Actions

1. Rescinded the non-renewal of the contracts for the following:

First Name	Last Name	FTE as of 9/1/21
Jacob	Desmarais	1.0
Joshua	Noury	1.0
Ellen	Tiexiera	1.0

G. Permission to Issue Bids/Request Quote – Approved issuance of the following:

1. Custodial Supplies Dispenser Items Bid

2. Floral Cooler 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. Donation from Scott Amaral, Carolina, RI, of four (4) Stage Monitors, valued at \$400.00, to the Drama Program.

2. Donation from Gotham Greens, Providence, RI of 144 Hydroponic Seedlings, valued at \$2.50 each for a total value of \$360.00, to the Richmond School Greenhouse Project.

XI. Reports

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) met on May 19, 2022. A copy of their approved minutes of January 20, 2022 was included in the packet.

B. Superintendent's Report

1. Kindergarten Registration Update – Superintendent Picard stated that at this time we have 14 at Ashaway, 22 at Charlestown, 25 at Hope Valley and 44 at Richmond.
2. First-Ever AP Commitment Recognition – Superintendent Picard noted that we were one of five districts recognized at the State House.
3. Green Power Electric Car Performance Race – The Superintendent reported that students designed, raced, partnered (with EWG) and challenged others in this race. Bill commented that he had the pleasure to watch this last Friday with about 30 students involved. It was well attended. Students got to drive around the track and he really enjoyed it.
4. District Yard Sale - The Annual Yard Sale will be held on Friday, June 24th with district-wide government agencies and non-profits given first option. A list of items for sale will be included in your June packet.

C. Coming Events were highlighted.

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

George requested that Gina contact the Hopkinton Town Council to inquire about the status of the 1904 building which presents a danger to Ashaway School students. What is their plan for this building as it has dragged on for too long now. It is a safety hazard.

Lisa requested, after hearing from the community member again, that they deeply discuss bullying in June. Reach out to determine what we should be investigating.

Bill noted a long-time complaint of his and asked the Superintendent to please draft a letter to *The Westerly Sun* to find out why they do not include unified schedules in their list of upcoming sporting events. He has never seen them listed and they should be. There are 28 schools in the State that participate in unified sports.

XIII. Adjournment

Ryan Callahan made a motion, seconded by Gary Liguori and it was VOTED: To adjourn at 8:35 PM. In favor: Unanimous.

Donna Sieczkiewicz, District Clerk