

**Warwick Community Outreach Educational Committee**  
**Minutes for March 2, 2016**

Members Present: Karen Bachus (co-chair), Sarah Callahan, Nathan Cornell (co-chair), June Marchant, Darlene Netcoh (clerk), Michael Pierce, Anthony Sinapi (not yet officially appointed)

- I. Call to Order:** Nathan Cornell officially called the meeting to order at 6:20 pm.
- II. Vote to Approve Minutes:** The committee voted to approve the minutes of January 6, 2016. There had been no February meeting because the school committee had scheduled a special meeting for February 3, 2016.
- III. Discussion: Review of Topics Discussed at Previous Meeting**
  - A.** There was a brief discussion about exploratory classes, city-school relations, and bonding for the schools.
  - B.** Karen Bachus said that the school committee passed the bonding agreement with a vote of 5-2, so now it is up to the city council to pass it.
- IV. Discussion about Consolidation**
  - A.** Michael Pierce said that he thought that this school department was engaging in “scare tactics” by threatening to close down Vets because of the heating system and by creating double sessions with Vets at Toll Gate. He said that the “emergency plan” is a political move. He said that even suggesting this plan was irresponsible. He said that people are concerned about consolidation.
  - B.** Ms. Bachus said they were trying to get rid of Reading Recovery.
  - C.** Mr. Pierce said that they were planning to get rid of the autism program, and a program for emotionally fragile students had been cut. He said that the Vets Junior High was going to be a very large building with many more students than the current junior highs have.
  - D.** There was further discussion about the elimination of resource. Darlene Netcoh mentioned that the special services department is using STAR testing to remove IEPs. She discussed issues with the STAR test itself and the use of the students’ STAR test scores to evaluate English, math, and elementary school teachers
  - E.** June Marchant said that she had one student get 37% on STAR. She told him to retake it, and he scored 94%. She said that suddenly she went from being a bad teacher to being a good teacher.
  - F.** Mr. Pierce said that in some cases they were eliminating IEPs and replacing them with 504s. The 504s don’t count in weighting.
  - G.** There was further discussion about the elimination of intensive education classes and central administrators from special services who are purposefully giving poor evaluations to special education teachers.
  - H.** Ms. Netcoh mentioned that the District Evaluation Committee (DEC) has not met. When the R.I. Model evaluation started, both teachers and administrators were on the same page about the evaluation system and made decisions together. Now the district is doing whatever it wants.
  - I.** Ms. Netcoh mentioned that the high school scheduling for next year is a mess and reminded everyone about what happened at Vets a number of years ago when a new principal wanted to schedule his way. Hundreds of students were without schedules.
  - J.** There was a discussion about the problems with STAR and PARCC.

- K. There was further discussion about the boiler. Ms. Bachus said that the city council was going to vote on Monday. Then she said that also at the city council meeting Anthony Sinapi and she are going to be appointed to the Charter Review Commission.
- L. Mr. Sinapi said that he had spoken to Superintendent Thornton and that the superintendent thinks that the school committee should have at least one more member.
- M. Nathan Cornell said that he does not think that school committee members should be appointed.
- N. Mr. Sinapi said that it could be mixture.
- V. **Update on Warwick Students' Advisory Committee**
  - A. Mr. Cornell has a freshman and a sophomore interested in being on the committee. He has received no response from the Pilgrim principal.
  - B. Sarah Callahan said that she had spoken to a junior at Vets. The student had wanted to know more about the committee.
- VI. **Discussion about 2006 Bond Issue:** Ms. Bachus said that many people thought that the city should be paying all of the interest on the bond.
- VII. **Discussion of Superintendent's Blueprint**
  - A. Mr. Pierce said that he attended the superintendent's presentation at the Shield's American Legion Post in February. He said that he videotaped the superintendent, who said he would follow the contract. Mr. Pierce said that the superintendent did not know about the technology in the district. He did not accurately portray the number of SmartBoards or the amount of other technology.
  - B. Ms. Netcoh said that he did not know about the Early Enrollment Program with RIC or the Running Start program at CCRI. When a member of the audience at Shield's asked a question about high school students receiving college credit, the superintendent only mentioned the proposed virtual high school classes, which, if implemented, would only apply to a handful of students.
  - C. Mr. Pierce said that he could not answer questions about afterschool care and did not know about the Boys' and Girls' Clubs.
  - D. Ms. Netcoh mentioned that the school committee had hired a firm to study the administration structure. She said that they should get rid of the elementary and secondary directors and just have one assistant superintendent.
  - E. There was a discussion about Reading Recovery and the proposed reduction of the number of reading specialists. Ms. Netcoh said that the ELA director, who is an expert, should give a presentation about reading instruction and literacy to the school committee so they understand the issue.
- VIII. **Information and Proposals from Committee Members**
  - A. Anthony Sinapi said that he had spoken to the superintendent about the legal committee, but the superintendent said that there was no need for it.
  - B. There was a discussion about observations. Ms. Netcoh explained both the R.I. Model Evaluation System and the contractual language governing evaluations.
  - C. Ms. Marchant said the system is supposed to help someone who is a "1" or a "2," which is something else the DEC was supposed to do, but the DEC has not met.
- IX. **Next Meeting:** April 6, 2016
- X. **Adjournment:** 8:15 pm