

3.3b

Instructional Materials, and Technologies

RIPTS 5,6,8

Ineffective

Developing

Effective

Highly Effective

Projects, activities and assignments lack challenge, are inappropriate, or do not cognitively engage students.

Projects, activities and assignments are inconsistent in challenging and cognitively engaging students.

Projects, activities and assignments are appropriately challenging for all students, require 21st century skills, and cognitively engage students.

Projects, activities, and assignments are appropriately challenging for all students, require 21st century skills, and cognitively engage student in complex learning.

Instructional materials and technologies are inappropriate for the instructional purpose.

Instructional materials and technologies are partially appropriate for the instructional purpose.

Instructional materials and technologies are appropriate to the instructional purpose, and are differentiated as appropriate.

Instructional materials and technologies are appropriate to the instructional purpose, and are differentiated as appropriate.

Students initiate the choice, adaptation, or creation of materials to enhance their learning and build understanding.

3.4. Using assessment in instruction

- Assessment Criteria
- Monitoring student learning
- Providing Feedback

T - okay I want everyone to look at the rubrics while you practice and make sure you have everything you need

T - I will come around and listen to your rehearsal and help you

2 SS practice in front of the teacher

T - excellent that would be a 5

S - can you go over ours quick?

T - sure, I will listen

SS rehearse

T - Adomani and when he says ciao to you, you say it back okay?

T - that would be a 5

SS perform their skits in front of group while the rest of class rates them

T - what did you think?

S - body language was good

T - what about pronunciation and vocab?

S - they did extra words, I think they did well

T - Jacob and Aedin you are next, who is scoring them?

S - we are

T - okay everyone listen

T - what did you think?

S - they had good pronunciation, and they were a little quiet

S - I thought everything was good except their projection

T - Hannah and Nathan are next, and who is scoring them?

T - everybody face front

T - what did you think?

S - they hit all their points, everything was good. I think they hit all of the areas and they had superb projection

S - their vocab usage was great, I gave them a perfect score

T - okay who is next

2 SS come up and present

S - they did everything well and I gave them a perfect score

S - they used all of the vocab they spoke pretty loudly

Next group comes up and present

S - they did everything that they were supposed to do. I thought projection could have been a little louder

T - do you know why I asked them to sit back here?

S - because the people who were up front it was easier to hear and if they sit back here they will hear what you here

T picks name from the name cup

S reads what they wrote on the exit slip

S - I chose the third one just because it goes hand in hand with our vocabulary

S - I think it was connected to all of the objectives because...

## Elements

### 3.4a

#### Assessment Criteria

RIPTS 5, 6, 9

### 3.4b

#### Monitoring Student Learning

RIPTS 5, 6, 9

### 3.4.c

#### Providing Feedback to Students

RIPTS 5, 6, 9

#### Ineffective

#### Developing

#### Effective

#### Highly Effective

Educator does not convey the criteria by which students' work will be evaluated.

Educator inconsistently conveys the criteria by which student's work will be evaluated.

Educator clearly conveys the criteria by which students' work will be evaluated including providing exemplars to guide student achievement.

Educator clearly conveys the criteria by which students' work will be evaluated and students have contributed to the development of the criteria and/or creation of exemplars to guide student achievement.

Educator does not monitor student learning.

Educator uses formative assessment strategies to monitor student learning for the class as a whole.

Educator uses formative assessment strategies to monitor student learning and uncover misunderstandings for groups of students within the class.

Educator uses formative assessment strategies, including self and/or peer-assessments to monitor student learning and uncover misunderstandings for individual students.

Educator's feedback to students is limited, infrequent and/or irrelevant, resulting in no advancement in learning.

Educator's feedback to students is general and/or infrequent resulting in minimal advancement in learning.

Educator's feedback to students is, timely, frequent, and specific, providing individual students with specific direction and information to help advance learning.

Educator's feedback to students is timely, frequent, and specific, providing individual students with direction and information to help advance learning. Students make use of the feedback in revising and improving their work.

Date of Informal  
Observation 1 :

Informal Observation 1  
Start Time:

Informal Observation 1 End  
Time:

Raw Evidence Informal 1:

Date of Informal  
Observation 2 :

Informal Observation 2  
Start Time:

Informal Observation 2 End  
Time:

Raw Evidence Informal 2:

## 2.1 Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport:

- a. Teacher interaction with students
- b. Students interactions with one another

J. Lancellotta

informal observation Jan. 24, 2019

1:45-2:15 Deering MS

Exploratory Italian

room 11

2.1a

t talking with student

s ask t 2 qts and t answers

t>c ok kids

t talks to s and answers qts

t> group presenting class listen, group nice and loud

t>c let's address 1<sup>st</sup> qt on board

t>c all right

t >c 1 more

t>c ok Emily

t>c anyone?

s>t says no paper

t says did it from memory

t calls on Derrick

s>t says without

t>c remember no talking i'm ready

t>fs I couldn't hear that well

t>c 1 more ... give Jason credit for memory

t>group try to do it we have 3 mins left

t says Rachel and Nathan  
t>c saved by bell  
t>c we will do it tomorrow  
t>ss u in first row were close  
t>c listen up

## 2.1b

2 ss in front of class act say and act out commands  
s gives command and other student does what is commanded  
s>s rispondi alla domanda  
s>s answer the qt  
all groups discussing previous presentation  
ms answers other s with pointer  
ms says accendi il computer  
ms says arrivederci  
s passes paper to s  
s>s gives commands ...accendi il computer  
s>s arrivederci  
s>s ciao

## J. Lancellotta Informal Observation #2

Wed. 2/27/19

Exploratory Spanish

room 11B 12:53-1:25

## 2.1a

t walks through room and observes each group  
t discusses point with 3 student fs  
t discusses point with 3 sf group  
t speaks with f student  
fs raises hand can and asks can i get tissue?  
t goes to 3 student m group while s reads his summary to others  
t>s what is title of article?  
fs1 to t and fs2 asks without notes?  
t>?fs and she answers  
t>c we are missing 1 person in this group  
t>c need a few more minutes?  
s at board asks one on each? t answers  
fs >t asks can i do another one? t >fs you can do another  
s>t asks can i finish?  
t>c you can go back to seat  
ms? wheres my paper? t>ms maybe u left it on my desk  
t>c asks anyone want to draw?  
t>c asks did anyone ask a qt in her group from her article?  
Sebastian asks why close at 12?  
t>c reads line from board asks who did u present to?  
t>alana's group: anyone help her out in group?  
ethan says a little  
ethan?  
t>danny asks can u read it? t says I can't read it

## J. Lancellotta Informal Observation #2

Wed. 2/27/19  
Exploratory Spanish  
room 11B 12:53-1:25

### 2.1b

1 student in each group talks to others  
2 student group 2<sup>nd</sup> student talks to other student  
3 student m group: m student talks to 2 others  
3 student f group: new f student talks to 2 others  
3 group fs new student talks s tells s say it in Spanish  
2 student group s both discussing topic  
cabinet group: m and f students listening to explanation

## 2.2 Establishing a Culture for Learning:

- a. Importance of the content
- b. Expectations for learning and achievement

## 2.3 Managing Classroom Procedures:

- a. Management of instructional groups
- b. Management of transitions
- c. Management of materials and supplies

### 2.3a

t shakes cup with names and pulls out name  
t>c let me call on ...

### 2.3b

t>c next group  
t>c next group  
2 fss group  
announcements on intercom  
t>c one more group  
t says we have time 3 minutes ur up

## J. Lancellotta Informal Observation #2

Wed. 2/27/19  
Exploratory Spanish  
room 11B 12:53-1:25

### 2.3a

classroom is organized into 3 different groups: 2 groups of 3 students and 1 of 2 students (jigsaw)  
every s observed has small colored circle of paper with letter on it with group task to complete and share  
fs enters classroom and joins cabinet group to form group of 3  
t>c form new groups: as to as, bs to bs, and cs to cs go to different groups  
t> passes out colored paper to students in each group with task to complete and share

## 2.4 Managing Student Behavior :

a. Behavioral Expectations

b. Responding to student behavior

2.4a

t>c remember no talking i'm ready

t>c ok kids settle down now nice and loud

2.4b

t>c ragazzi per favore, ragazzi shhh

t>c mike, stop talking

## 3.1 Communicating with Students:

a. Expectations for learning

b. Directions and procedures

c. Explanations of content

3.1b

t>c i just want to point out something before we start

t>c i want to point out a problem from period 6

t>c ss said vai alla porta, vai al bagno, vai alla lavagna, vai alla finestra

t>c repeats again it's a problem i want to clear up before we start

t> group presenting class listen, group nice and loud

t>c discuss it in groups and then we will talk about it for 30-40 seconds

t>c take 30-40 seconds to discuss this qt

2 male ss present

ms writes on board

t>c take 30 seconds and address 1<sup>st</sup> qt on board, talk with your partner

t says u can leave it up there

ms and fs go to front

J. Lancellotta Informal Observation #2

Wed. 2/27/19

Exploratory Spanish

room 11B 12:53-1:25

3.1b

t>c form new groups: as to as, bs to bs, and cs to cs go to different groups

t>c ask a qt about article

t>c paraphrase article to people in group

t>window group: after ur done paraphrasing write summary sentence on board

t>back group: go up and write summary sentence on board sheets

6 students writing on sheets

ss writes complete sentences (complex/long) on board

board topic papers: deportes/manners and customs/family life/leisure time

t>cabinet group take 2 more minutes...

cabinet group goes up to board

t>cabinet group just jot down 1, try to be brief on family life and leisure time

t>c 1 more minute kids

t>c let's start with family life and leisure

t>fs draw...me

t>fs come up and read them

fs passes sticks to next student

t pass sticks to mattie, mattie draw someone: autumn  
s passes sticks to ethan  
s choses stick w/ alana is chosen  
t>c pass sticks  
t pass sticks to Sebastian

### 3.1c

6 students (3 from window and 3 from back group) at board consulting with each other about what to write on board papers  
cabinet group: seated ms explains to 2 fs  
cabinet group: seated fs explains to ms and fs  
ss at board consulting with each other, other students writing complete sentences on board with summaries  
cabinet group goes to board and writes statements  
t>c you can go back to seat  
fs goes to board and reads statement aloud to class

## 3.2 Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques:

- a. Quality of questions
- b. Delivery techniques
- c. Discussion techniques

### 3.2a

t>c what's the problem?  
t>c how many commands were used?  
s>s che cos'e?  
s>s che cos'e?  
s> che cos'e?  
s>s che cos'e?  
s>s prendi ...?  
s>s che cos e?  
s>s che cos e?  
t>c what did they do poorly and well?  
t>s what did they do well and poorly?  
t>s what did ...?  
t>c what advice would you give them to improve? take 30-40 seconds to discuss  
t>c what advice would u give?  
t>Fabian how would they improve?  
t>c how does this skit compare to the last skit from the last chapter?  
t what does that mean Emily?  
t>c what didn't they use last time?  
t>c any advice?  
t>group with or without notes?  
ms>ms che cose?  
ms asks che cose?  
t>c ok brianna what did they do well?  
t>ms could u hear them?  
t>ms what advice would you give?  
t>c how does it compare to previous presentations?  
t>s why?

t >group with or without notes?  
s>s asks cose?  
s>s rispondi alla domanda: come stai?  
s>s cose e?  
s>s asks cose?  
t>c alexa any + or -?  
t>stef, pos or neg?  
fs asks qt  
t>fs 1 neg?  
t>luciano any advice? word ciao  
t>ms come stai? how answer? answer cosi cosi  
t>c whos next?

### 3.2b

t>c how many commands were used?  
s>s/c riga  
s>s/c finestra  
s>s/c cestino  
s>s/c lavagna

### 3.2c

s>s/c dillo in inglese ripeti  
s>s/c repeat  
s>s vai alla lavagna  
s>s responds and points out object  
s>s s points out  
s>s responds ciao  
t>c discuss it in groups and then we will talk about it for 30-40 seconds  
all groups discussing previous presentation  
s says really clear, said commands  
t>s they spoke loudly and clear  
group said they spoke clear  
group said they did good pronouncing, finished quickly  
t>c what advice would you give them to improve? take 30-40 seconds to discuss  
all student groups discussing qt as teacher walks around class  
fs says study more so they can do it by memory  
t>Rachel says speak up, study more and do from memory  
s says study more  
Emily says it flowed better  
Emily says partners bounced back off each other better  
t says did it from memory  
Derrick says everyone more fluent because they have been doing Italian a while  
ms says they were more confident  
ms answers gives commands: apri il libro, chiudi il libro  
all groups discussing qt  
ss talking group to group and 2 talking groups with other groups  
fs they memorized it poorly  
fs quite soft  
s responds using notes  
s responds using notes  
s responds to qt



t>c take 30 seconds and address 1<sup>st</sup> question on board  
many groups discussing within group and among groups  
fs responds

J. Lancellotta Informal Observation #2  
Wed. 2/27/19  
Exploratory Spanish  
room 11B 12:53-1:25

### 3.2a

t > s can u summerize it without reading? try it in your group  
t>2f group t>s can u summarize article in ur own words?  
t>s compare it to America fs2 gives answer to question  
back group ms asks qt to fs  
window group: fs asks qt and ms answers  
t>c asks how is it different from American? t>fs how is it different?  
t>c asks why do you think they do it?  
t>c why do they take 2 hour break in middle of day?  
t>Valerie asks what article did you have?  
t>s regarding article what about personal space?  
t>c asks anyone want to speak to that? what did it said about personal space?  
t>fs asks how does it compare to us?  
t>ethan tell me about her presentation  
t>ethan asks what do they do?  
t>c which?  
t>group what does that mean add 12 hours? what are they referring to? military time what is it?  
t>ethan asks are you familiar?

### 3.2c

2 student group 2<sup>nd</sup> student talks to other student  
3 student m group: m student talks to 2 others  
3 student f group: new f student talks to 2 others  
2 student group s both discussing topic  
t > s can u summerize it without reading? try it in your group  
t>2f group t>s can u summarize article in ur own words?  
fs2 gives a summary  
t>s compare it to America fs2 gives answer to question  
back group: student in each group gives article summary to other group members  
ms1 summarizes, fs asks qt and ms explains  
window group: fs explains to m and f group members  
cabinet group: fs summarizes to ms  
window group: ms explains to other group members  
back group: fs explains to other 2 in group  
cabinet group: ms explains to fs  
cabinet group: ms explains to fs  
back group: fs2 explains to other 2 group members  
t>cabinet group: remember what article is about? talk about it  
cabinet group: new f student explains her article to ms and fs  
fs says not enough time with family  
fs only time to be together  
t Spanish kiss on cheek for greeting  
Valerie explains to t how greeting America  
fs answers t

autumn discusses fam life and leisure  
ethan>c people got out early at noon  
ethan>c we don't get out at noon  
ethan>c they don't do afterschool activities  
s answers sports clubs  
t>c it's up to students and parents  
t>alana talk about their time  
alana discusses it w/c  
fs from group answers  
fs answers  
t>c spanish speaking countries use military time unlike us  
ms chooses ethan then talk about sports  
ethan explains jai alai  
ms discusses manners and customs

### 3.3 Engaging Students in Learning:

- a. Projects, activities and assignments
- b. Instructional materials and technologies

J. Lancellotta Informal Observation #2  
Wed. 2/27/19  
Exploratory Spanish  
room 11B 12:53-1:25

3.3b  
every s observed has small colored circle of paper with letter on it

### 3.4 Using Assessment in Instruction:

- a. Assessment criteria
- b. Monitoring of student learning
- c. Providing feedback to students

3.4a  
t>ms think about criteria we had discussed: projection, body language, memory  
s says pronunciation  
t>c last category language usage, language used in skit

3.4b  
s answers one, same command form  
t walks through the room monitoring students  
t walks thru classroom and monitors students  
ms says superb... next time do it from memory  
teacher walks thru classroom  
Jacob says memory impressive only did poorly  
aidan says quiet .... soft  
ms>group speak louder  
ms it was better  
s the pronunciation was better  
s says they did pretty well, little louder

J. Lancellotta Informal Observation #2  
Wed. 2/27/19  
Exploratory Spanish  
room 11B 12:53-1:25

3.4b

t>2f group t>s can u summarize article in ur own words?

3.4c

t discusses point with 3 student fs

t discusses point with 3 sf group

t speaks with f student

t>s what is title of article?

t>fs that's a good summary but try not to read it

t walks through class and monitors each group

<u>Effective Ratings</u>	*Ineffective	Developing	Effective	Highly Effective	N/A
<b>Standard 2: The Classroom Environment</b>					
<b>2.1: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</b>					
2.1.a <i>Teacher Interaction with Students</i>				X	
2.1.b <i>Student Interactions with One Another</i>				X	
<b>2.2: Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>					
2.2.a <i>Importance of the Content</i>				X	
2.2.b <i>Expectations for Learning and Achievement</i>				X	
<b>2.3: Managing Classroom Procedures</b>					
2.3.a <i>Management of Instructional Groups</i>				X	
2.3.b <i>Management of Transitions</i>				X	
2.3.c <i>Management of Materials and Supplies</i>				X	
<b>2.4: Managing Student Behavior</b>					
2.4.a <i>Behavioral Expectations</i>				X	
2.4.b <i>Responding to Student Misbehavior</i>				X	
<b>Standard 3: Instruction</b>					
<b>3.1: Communicating With Students</b>					
3.1.a <i>Expectations for Learning</i>			X		
3.1.b <i>Directions and Procedures</i>				X	
3.1.c <i>Explanation of Content</i>				X	
<b>3.2: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</b>					
3.2.a <i>Quality of Questions</i>				X	
3.2.b <i>Delivery Techniques</i>				X	
3.2.c <i>Discussion Techniques</i>				X	
<b>3.3: Engaging Student in Learning</b>					
3.3.a <i>Projects, Activities and Assignments</i>				X	
3.3.b <i>Instructional Materials, and Technologies</i>			X		
<b>3.4: Using Assessment in Instruction</b>					
3.4.a <i>Assessment Criteria</i>				X	
3.4.b <i>Monitoring Student Learning</i>				X	
3.4.c <i>Providing Feedback to Students</i>				X	

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

**John D. Lancellotta** <jlancellotta@westwarwickpublicschools.com>

Date:

Fri, Feb 8, 2019 at 11:04 AM

Subject: WWTA Membership

To: Sean Doyle

<sdoyle@westwarwickpublicschools.com>

Hello Sean,

I had a few questions about WWTA membership that I have been meaning to ask you, but I've been so busy this year with daily teaching tasks that I haven't had time to getting around to it.

1. Is membership mandatory?
2. If membership isn't mandatory, what is the process for resigning my membership?
3. If I choose to rejoin in the future, will I be excluded from membership?
4. If I resign my membership, are my dues paid up until this year refundable?

Thank you,

John Lancellotta (DMS)

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# WWTA Membership

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email: "sdoyle@wwta1017.org Sean J. Doyle"

Monday, February 11, 2019 at 5:39:04 PM Eastern Standard Time

To: email: "jlancellotta@westwarwickpublicschools.com John Lancellotta"

Cc: email: "jgiovanelli@westwarwickpublicschools.com John Giovanelli"

Hello

John:

1.

Membership

in the WWTA ("the union") is not mandatory to be an employee of the WWPS. It is, however, mandatory to gain access to all benefits of union membership.

2.

If

you wish to renounce membership in the WWTA then I will be very willing to meet with you to discuss the process. I do respectfully suggest that we first meet to discuss the benefits from which you will be excluded if you decide to take such action.

3.

All

certified bargaining unit employees gain entrance into the WWTA upon hire. If a member renounces membership then there will be an application for future potential re-admittance. There will also be benchmark dates where a vote of a re-admittance application can be considered. It will likely have to align with one of the four annual WWTA quarterly meetings.

4.

There

will be no refund of dues for services already rendered by the WWTA. Our dues are set among the lowest of all urban districts in the state. The refund of dues for one person will adversely affect the remaining members as

all costs to operate will be shifted away from non-dues paying members to all dues paying members.

We are very proud of our collaborative work in West Warwick. The district considers the WWTA to be a "district partner". In my twenty-seven years here, the WWPS has never carried a non-union member in its employment. I'd appreciate the opportunity to explain our positive culture in WW and why we have carried 100% membership up to this point.

As I stated, renunciation of union membership is your absolute right and choice. I look forward, however, to an opportunity to meet with you to discuss the benefits that we offer to members.

Please let me know if you would entertain a meeting with me and John Giovanelli to discuss this further. John is an active member on two of our union committees, the *WWTA Education Committee* and the *WWTA Community Relations and Education (CoRE)* committee.

In  
Unity,

Sean

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Sean J.  
Doyle, President  
West Warwick Teachers' Alliance  
AFT, Local 1017  
AFL-CIO  
(401) 828-9090

**WEST WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Educator Observation Form**

*Exh E  
admitted  
1-27-2*

Teacher's Name: Lancellotta, John  
School: John F. Deering Middle School

Employee # 36968

Date of Formal  
Observation:

11/14/2019

Formal Observation Start  
Time:

9:38 AM

Formal Observation End  
Time:

10:20 AM

Subject of Lesson:

WWPS School:

John F. Deering Middle

Grade Level:

08

Raw Evidence Formal:

J. Lancellotta DEP observation, Thursday, 11/14/19  
period 1 (9:38-10:22), Exploratory Italian, room 108  
2.1a, 3.2c, 3.3a

**2.1a**

Educator Interaction with Students Educator-student interactions are appropriate, positive and respectful to groups of students as well as individuals.

**3.2c**

Discussion Techniques Educator creates an authentic discussion among students, using instructional and questioning techniques that successfully engage students in the discussion, stepping aside when appropriate. Students ensure that all voices and ideas are heard in the discussion.

**3.3a**

Projects, Activities and Assignments Projects, activities, and assignments are appropriately challenging for all students, require 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and cognitively engage student in complex learning.

10:38 evaluator seated in rear right table of classroom

on board: jigsaw reading expert group read notes discuss,  
break out summarize to classmates,  
report out

students enter room and take "do now" worksheet from wall envelope and take seats

t talks with students about where to sit in groups

ss take seats and start working on worksheet assignment individually

t talks to mstudent and tells him to sit over there

t walks through room

t distributes cultural packets to each table

when ss finish "do now" worksheet they put it in the p. 1 drawer plastic cabinet

t>fs? u wanna get the door? fs opens door

students seated in groups continue working on "do now" assignment while others put papers in drawer

t>c 1 more minute kids

t passes out lined paper to each group

/

t monitors each table and walks thru room  
t>c enough with "do now"  
t>c take a look at board  
t>c 4 groups of 5  
t>ms 1 person over here  
t>s another over here  
t>c break up and choose group  
ss break into groups  
t>c listen up please  
t>s Jacob this group  
t>c all eyes on board  
t>c we will read 4 articles about Italian culture  
t>c read, take notes, discuss for 7-10 minutes  
t>c ill give abcde papers and u will summarize to other students  
t>c put some facts on board and have group discussion  
st?t I need an article  
t>s sorry and gives article to s  
t>c start reading  
t goes to from table to table and gives more articles  
t>s? what article u need?  
s>t school  
t>s write and take notes on that paper  
s>t? need paper  
t>Jacob? u need paper?  
t passes out paper to other ss  
t>c take notes because you will have to share out  
front group s reads article outloud  
t passes out numbered papers to 4 groups purple and beige pieces of paper  
ss at tables reading and taking notes, some groups discussing  
s>t? this an A?  
t>s yes when u break out  
t>c 4 more minutes kids  
t>c just jot down some facts, u don't have to answer qts at bottom  
4 groups continue reading, writing and discussing articles  
s?and t answers  
t>fs brief discussion about gestures  
t>ms brief discussion  
t>fs brief discussion  
t>c 2 more minutes and well break out and explain what u read  
all groups writing  
t walks thru room  
t goes to each table  
t walks thru room  
10:55  
t>c times up  
t>c all as here  
t>c bs come here  
t>c cs come here  
t>c ds come here  
t>c es come here  
students move to different tables  
t>s u might have to bring a chair over there  
5 groups of 4 now  
t>c take 5 minutes and explain your article to your group



1 member in each group explains to 3 others in group  
t talks to 1 door group  
t goes to window group  
t goes to back wall group  
1 member of each group explains and then next student discusses article  
t talks to fs window group  
t goes to cabinet group  
t goes to window group  
t goes to desk group  
t goes to door group  
t goes to cabinet group  
t>ms? cabinet group ms did u share out yet?  
students continue to rotate within group and discuss article  
t>c 2 more minutes then we will put it on the board  
t>c? who needs more time?  
t>c next step  
t>c come up and jot down facts on each article on any topic  
t>c 5 minutes and jot down then we will have discussion  
students go to papers hanging on back wall and write facts on large sheet  
there are 4 boards on wall  
ss write facts with markers  
topics on papers: gestures, sports, name day/school, school/leisure  
students at back wall writing and discussing  
t talks to different students as they write on boards  
t>c after u r done go back to normal seats  
t walks thru room, monitors tables and back boards  
some ss at tables discussing facts and articles in door, desk and cabinet groups  
ss continue writing on back boards  
t>c 30 seconds, enough facts  
1010  
t>ss lots of sports up there  
t monitoring students writing on back boards  
t>c settle down please  
t>c ok lets start with school leisure  
t>c 1.5 hw t>c? how does it compare to us?  
s>c 5 minutes  
s>c math takes time  
s>c im slow so it takes all night  
t>s a few hours?  
t>c sports?  
t>c schools don't have sports programs  
elise>t? what does it mean?  
t>c be quiet please  
elise answers  
t>c where do u play sports?  
fs>c parents schedule u and set it up  
t>c gestures? what about gestures?  
t>c very expressive when usa  
fs>c they use hand gestures  
t>c what else?  
t>c kids shh, eyes on me  
t>c kiss on both cheeks  
t>c do we do that here in usa?  
t>c what do we do here?

fs>c wave, hugs, handshakes  
t>c more personal space  
t>c name day and school  
t>c 6 days of school  
t>c what's the difference between here and there?  
fs>c 5 days in usa  
t>c no grades in ms  
fs>c no grades until hs  
t>c who can summarize name day?  
fs explains to class  
t>c one more fact  
fs>c named after saints  
t>c lets go back to school...

1020 jg leaves

Date of Informal  
Observation 1 :

Informal Observation 1  
Start Time:

Informal Observation 1 End  
Time:

Raw Evidence Informal 1:

Date of Informal  
Observation 2 :

Informal Observation 2  
Start Time:

Informal Observation 2 End  
Time:

Raw Evidence Informal 2:

## 2.1 Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport:

- a. Teacher interaction with students
- b. Students interactions with one another

### 2.1a

Educator Interaction with Students Educator-student interactions are appropriate, positive and respectful to groups of students as well as individuals.

t talks with students about where to sit in groups  
t talks to mstudent and tells him to sit over there  
t walks through room  
t distributes cultural packets to each table  
t>fs? u wanna get the door? fs opens door  
t>c 1 more minute kids  
t passes out lined paper to each group  
t monitors each table and walks thru room  
t>c enough with "do now"

4

t>ms 1 person over here  
t>s another over here  
t>c listen up please  
t>s Jacob this group  
t>c all eyes on board  
st?t I need an article  
t>s sorry and gives article to s  
t goes to from table to table and gives more articles  
t>s? what article u need?  
s>t school  
t>s write and take notes on that paper  
s>t? need paper  
t>Jacob? u need paper?  
t passes out paper to other ss  
t>c take notes because you will have to share out  
s>t? this an A?  
t>s yes when u break out  
t>c 4 more minutes kids  
t>c just jot down some facts, u don't have to answer qts at bottom  
s? and t answers  
t walks thru room  
t goes to each table  
t walks thru room  
10:55  
t>c times up  
t>c all as here  
t>c bs come here  
t>c cs come here  
t>c ds come here  
t>c es come here  
t>s u might have to bring a chair over there  
t talks to 1 door group  
t goes to window group  
t goes to back wall group  
t talks to fs window group  
t goes to cabinet group  
t goes to window group  
t goes to desk group  
t goes to door group  
t goes to cabinet group  
t>ms? cabinet group ms did u share out yet?  
t>c 2 more minutes then we will put it on the board  
t>c? who needs more time?  
t>c next step  
t talks to different students as they write on boards  
t>c after u r done go back to normal seats  
t walks thru room, monitors tables and back boards  
t>c 30 seconds, enough facts  
10:10  
t>ss lots of sports up there  
t monitoring students writing on back boards  
t>c settle down please  
t>c be quiet please  
t>c kids shh, eyes on me

5

t>c lets go back to school...

## 2.2 Establishing a Culture for Learning:

- a. Importance of the content
- b. Expectations for learning and achievement

## 2.3 Managing Classroom Procedures:

- a. Management of instructional groups
- b. Management of transitions
- c. Management of materials and supplies

## 2.4 Managing Student Behavior :

- a. Behavioral Expectations
- b. Responding to student behavior

## 3.1 Communicating with Students:

- a. Expectations for learning
- b. Directions and procedures
- c. Explanations of content

## 3.2 Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques:

- a. Quality of questions
- b. Delivery techniques
- c. Discussion techniques

3.2c

Discussion Techniques Educator creates an authentic discussion among students, using instructional and questioning techniques that successfully engage students in the discussion, stepping aside when appropriate. Students ensure that all voices and ideas are heard in the discussion.

front group s reads article outloud  
ss at tables reading and taking notes, some groups discussing  
4 groups continue reading, writing and discussing articles  
t>fs brief discussion about gestures  
t>ms brief discussion  
t>fs brief discussion  
t>c 2 more minutes and well break out and explain what u read  
t>c take 5 minutes and explain your article to your group  
1 member in each group explains to 3 others in group

6

1 member of each group explains and then next student discusses article  
t>ms? cabinet group ms did u share out yet?  
students continue to rotate within group and discuss article  
t>c come up and jot down facts on each article on any topic  
t>c 5 minutes and jot down then we will have discussion  
students go to papers hanging on back wall and write facts on large sheet  
there are 4 boards on wall  
ss write facts with markers  
topics on papers: gestures, sports, name day/school, school/leisure  
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some ss at tables discussing facts and articles in door, desk and cabinet groups  
t>c ok lets start with school leisure  
t>c 1.5 hw t>c? how does it compare to us?  
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t>s a few hours?  
t>c sports?  
t>c schools don't have sports programs  
elise>t? what does it mean?  
elise answers  
t>c where do u play sports?  
fs>c parents schedule u and set it up  
t>c gestures? what about gestures?  
t>c very expressive when usa  
fs>c they use hand gestures  
t>c what else?  
t>c kiss on both cheeks  
t>c do we do that here in usa?  
t>c what do we do here?  
fs>c wave, hugs, handshakes  
t>c more personal space  
t>c name day and school  
t>c 6 days of school  
t>c what's the difference between here and there?  
fs>c 5 days in usa  
t>c no grades in ms  
fs>c no grades until hs  
t>c who can summarize name day?  
fs explains to class  
t>c one more fact  
fs>c named after saints

### 3.3 Engaging Students in Learning:

- a. Projects, activities and assignments
- b. Instructional materials and technologies

3.3a  
Projects, Activities and Assignments Projects, activities, and assignments are appropriately challenging for all students, require 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and cognitively engage student in complex learning.

on board: jigsaw reading expert group read notes discuss,  
break out summarize to classmates, report out  
students enter room and take "do now" worksheet from wall envelope and take seats

ss take seats and start working on worksheet assignment individually  
when ss finish "do now" worksheet they put it in the p. 1 drawer plastic cabinet  
students seated in groups continue working on "do now" assignment while others put papers in drawer  
t>c take a look at board  
t>c 4 groups of 5  
t>c break up and choose group  
ss break into groups  
t>c we will read 4 articles about Italian culture  
t>c read, take notes, discuss for 7-10 minutes  
t>c ill give abcde papers and u will summarize to other students  
t>c put some facts on board and have group discussion  
t>c start reading  
t passes out numbered papers to 4 groups purple and beige pieces of paper  
ss at tables reading and taking notes, some groups discussing  
4 groups continue reading, writing and discussing articles  
all groups writing  
students move to different tables  
5 groups of 4 now  
students at back wall writing and discussing  
ss continue writing on back boards

### 3.4 Using Assessment in Instruction:

- a. Assessment criteria
- b. Monitoring of student learning
- c. Providing feedback to students

<u>Effective Ratings</u>	*Ineffective	Developing	Effective	Highly Effective	N/A
<b>Standard 2: The Classroom Environment</b>					
<b>2.1: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</b>					
2.1.a Teacher Interaction with Students				X	
2.1.b Student Interactions with One Another					
<b>2.2: Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>					
2.2.a Importance of the Content					
2.2.b Expectations for Learning and Achievement					
<b>2.3: Managing Classroom Procedures</b>					
2.3.a Management of Instructional Groups					
2.3.b Management of Transitions					
2.3.c Management of Materials and Supplies					
<b>2.4: Managing Student Behavior</b>					
2.4.a Behavioral Expectations					
2.4.b Responding to Student Misbehavior					
<b>Standard 3: Instruction</b>					
<b>3.1: Communicating With Students</b>					
3.1.a Expectations for Learning					
3.1.b Directions and Procedures					
3.1.c Explanation of Content					
<b>3.2: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</b>					
3.2.a Quality of Questions					
3.2.b Delivery Techniques					
3.2.c Discussion Techniques				X	
<b>3.3: Engaging Student in Learning</b>					
3.3.a Projects, Activities and Assignments				X	
3.3.b Instructional Materials, and Technologies					
<b>3.4: Using Assessment in Instruction</b>					
3.4.a Assessment Criteria					
3.4.b Monitoring Student Learning					X
3.4.c Providing Feedback to Students					

9

**In The Matter Of:**  
*West Warwick School Committee*

---

*Non-Renewal Hearing*  
*December 1, 2020*  
*John Lancellotta*

---

*Rebecca J. Forte*  
*Certified Professional Court Reporters*  
*33 Rollingwood Drive*  
*Johnston, RI 02919*  
*(401)474-8441*



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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
TOWN OF WEST WARWICK  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

\*\*\*\*\*  
PROCEEDINGS AT HEARING IN RE:  
NON-RENEWAL HEARING  
JOHN LANCELOTTA  
\*\*\*\*\*

Tuesday, December 1, 2020  
5:30 p.m.  
All Parties Participating Via Google Meets

WEST WARWICK SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steven Lawton, Chairman  
Luis Colon  
Rene Coutu  
Susan St. Armand  
Joseph DiMartino  
James Monti

REBECCA J. FORTE  
CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL STENOGRAPHERS  
33 Rollingwood Drive  
Johnston, Rhode Island 02919  
(401)474-8441

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I N D E X

1

2 OPENING STATEMENT:

3 Ms. Lombardo, 7  
4 Ms. Rapport, 8

5

6 WITNESS FOR THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT PAGE NUMBER  
EDWARD J. DAVIS

7 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO..... 18  
8 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT..... 28  
9 REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO..... 47

10 JOHN GIOVANELLI

11 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO..... 50  
12 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT..... 79

13

14

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23

24

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APPEARANCES:

FOR THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT:

HENNEOUS CARROLL & LOMBARDO  
BY: AUBREY LOMBARDO, ESQUIRE  
150 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903

FOR THE TEACHERS:

CHRISTOPHER LAMBERT, ESQUIRE  
86 WEYBOSSET STREET  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903

FOR THE TEACHER:

WHELAN CORRENTE  
BY: SARA RAPPORT, ESQUIRE  
TIMOTHY CAVAZZA, ESQUIRE  
DERK WILCOX, ESQUIRE  
100 WESTMINSTER STREET, SUITE 710  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903  
srapport@whelancorrente.com

CHARLES RUGGERIO, LEGAL COUNSEL, ESQUIRE

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E X H I B I T S  
(MARKED SCHOOL COMMITTEE)

1

2

3

4 NO. DESCRIPTION PAGE NUMBER

5 1 Email to Phil Solomon on December 14, 2019... 68  
6 2 Notes..... 73

7

8

9 (FOR THE APPELLANT)

10 A Student Learning Objectives..... 95  
11 B Lesson plan..... 99  
12 C Document that reflects the preparation and  
13 planning for the lesson that was delivered  
14 as part of his formal observation in the '18/'19  
15 school year.....103

16

17

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22

23

24

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1 Tuesday, December 1, 2020  
 2 (Commencing at 6:16 P.M.)  
 3 **MR. MONTI:** I'm going to start the  
 4 recording. 6:16 p.m. Is everybody amenable for me  
 5 recording?  
 6 (NO OBJECTION)  
 7 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So before we open  
 8 executive session and we call the roll, I would just  
 9 like to give counsel and Mr. Lancellotta a brief  
 10 overview of how we are going to proceed.  
 11 This is the appeal pursuant to Rhode Island  
 12 General Law 16-13-4. It is Mr. Lancellotta's appeal. I  
 13 would expect that the parties will be able to make a  
 14 brief opening statement. I ask that it be kind of  
 15 brief. I will make recommendations to the Chair  
 16 regarding any evidentiary objections or any objections  
 17 that may come up between the parties towards the  
 18 proceedings and the Chair will start off the meeting.  
 19 Following the opening statements, the parties will  
 20 be afforded the opportunity to call witnesses and  
 21 present evidence in support of their respective  
 22 positions, and at the conclusion of their cases the  
 23 committee will deliberate and then come back and provide  
 24 a decision in open session.

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1 So, with that, if there are any questions, I can  
 2 answer the questions now and we will open it up and call  
 3 the role.  
 4 I am going to turn it over to the Chair to call  
 5 the executive session and call the roll.  
 6 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Can we have a roll call,  
 7 please, Michelle.  
 8 **MS. COLOZZO:** Mr. Lawton?  
 9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Here.  
 10 **MS. COLOZZO:** Mr. Colon?  
 11 **MR. COLON:** Here.  
 12 **MS. COLOZZO:** Mr. Coutu?  
 13 **MR. COUTU:** Here.  
 14 **MS. COLOZZO:** Mrs. St. Amand.  
 15 **MS. ST. AMAND:** Here.  
 16 **MS. COLOZZO:** Mr. DiMartino?  
 17 **MR. DIMARTINO:** Here.  
 18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Are we closing the  
 19 executive session now?  
 20 **MS. LOMBARDO:** No.  
 21 **THE CHAIRMAN:** You have a quorum.  
 22 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes, we do, we have a  
 23 full quorum. So, with that we would ask that, the  
 24 parties are free to make a brief opening statement, if

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1 they so choose and turn it over to Ms. Lombardo to do  
 2 so.  
 3 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Hi, everyone. As you  
 4 know, tonight I'm representing the School Department and  
 5 you're sitting here as the School Committee to determine  
 6 whether or not you made the correct decision in February  
 7 when you voted to non-renew the Appellant, John  
 8 Lancellotta.  
 9 In Rhode Island, when a tenured teacher moves from  
 10 one district to another district within the State of  
 11 Rhode Island they're given an annual contract by the  
 12 School Department, School Committee, in this case West  
 13 Warwick for the first two years. Then prior to  
 14 March 1st of that second year the district has to  
 15 decide whether or not they want to renew the teacher's  
 16 contract and for that teacher to become a tenured  
 17 teacher in the district, or if they choose not to retain  
 18 that teacher. The legal standard for the district to  
 19 nonrenew a teacher is extremely low. The law says the  
 20 district can choose to nonrenew a teacher if they  
 21 believe they can find a better qualified teacher  
 22 anywhere to fill that position.  
 23 You will hear testimony tonight from numerous  
 24 people, including teachers and administrators, for all

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1 of the reasons that Mr. Lancellotta was not a good fit  
 2 for the district and was not the most qualified person  
 3 for his position.  
 4 As you hear the district's witnesses, all of whom  
 5 are extremely experienced with assessing teacher  
 6 performance and hiring teachers and all of whom you know  
 7 and trust have West Warwick's best interest at heart, I  
 8 think you will agree with Superintendent Tarasevich that  
 9 the middle school could certainly find a more qualified  
 10 teacher for the world languages position than  
 11 Mr. Lancellotta, and I would ask that you vote to uphold  
 12 the decision to non-renew him tonight. Thank you.  
 13 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Ms. Rapport.  
 14 **MS. RAPPORT:** I have a brief opening  
 15 statement on the legal standard, which, as Ms. Lombardo  
 16 said, it is the standard that decidedly seeks to  
 17 distinguish between probationary teachers and teachers  
 18 who have tenure.  
 19 The case law on this point has emerged over the  
 20 years in a way that has created an increasingly  
 21 demanding exercise of School Committees before they  
 22 terminate even a probationary teacher, principally  
 23 because of the robust development of an evaluation  
 24 system. So, it is not sufficient any longer to simply

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1 say after the fact that somebody wasn't a good fit.  
 2 As early as 1999, in a decision which still has  
 3 fight, Lawrence and Amaral vs. The Pawtucket School  
 4 Committee, the Commissioner has articulated this  
 5 probationary standard to require that a decision could  
 6 be related to the educational process, not trivial and  
 7 supported in fact. It is the supported in fact which is  
 8 the subject of this proceeding, and, as Ms. Lombardo has  
 9 promised, we will be hearing from various people about  
 10 the fact, which I'm confident the superintendent is  
 11 aware, required a process and a vetting that is  
 12 something other than an after-the-fact post-hoc  
 13 justification as that amounts to reputational smears.  
 14 We hope that is not happening here.  
 15 We also want to elicit and put on the record a  
 16 concern, and I think that this is appropriate for  
 17 opening about the alignment of participants in this  
 18 proceeding because it is unusual.  
 19 Typically, the person who is non-renewed, the  
 20 teacher who is non-renewed is represented by Mr. Doyle  
 21 and Mr. Lambert. Stunningly neither of these  
 22 individuals has approached our client to solicit a  
 23 question as to whether they would be needed to represent  
 24 him, but, in fact, what appears to have taken place

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1 before this hearing has begun is that both Mr. Doyle and  
 2 Mr. Lambert had been present with the administration in  
 3 the break-out room. If I'm mistaken about that, I think  
 4 we can be corrected, but if that is as it appears, which  
 5 is a disadvantage of doing this virtually, I hope I will  
 6 be corrected immediately.  
 7 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I would actually like to  
 8 correct you immediately. So, yes, we were all in a room  
 9 together, but we didn't have any substantive discussion  
 10 about this case at that time.  
 11 **MS. RAPPORT:** Okay. Well, that's a  
 12 separate issue, but what I was describing was the  
 13 alignment, which is that there is a place where the  
 14 committee can convene separately with Mr. Ruggiero,  
 15 which is, obviously, an appropriate best practice.  
 16 There is a room in which the teacher is to convene  
 17 typically with his or her lawyer and representative, and  
 18 then there is an administrative break-out suite, which  
 19 is not virtual in nonCOVID times in which the  
 20 administration meets with its lawyer in the case of  
 21 Ms. Lombardo, but what I'm hearing is that, in fact, my  
 22 perception out of perfection of the alignment  
 23 irrespective of the contents of the discussions is  
 24 correct, in that the break-out room is populated by the

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1 union with the administration. Whether or not there was  
 2 substantive conversation is a separate matter.  
 3 I will state that we're a little also confused as  
 4 to why the Union reputation is participating in the  
 5 hearing on behalf of witnesses instead of  
 6 Mr. Lancellotta. Why would that be?  
 7 **MS. LOMBARDO:** So I'm just going to, if  
 8 I can just address this one issue of the break-out room.  
 9 We didn't necessarily go in break-out rooms. You asked  
 10 for a break-out room so they gave you a break-out room  
 11 with your client, and there was a break-out room given  
 12 to the School Committee with Attorney Ruggiero so they  
 13 could discuss their case. We were just all in a general  
 14 waiting room that had nothing to do with any kind of  
 15 alignment. I didn't ask for a specific breakout room  
 16 with my client, and if I had asked for a specific  
 17 break-out room with my client, I would have gone in with  
 18 Superintendent Tarasevich and possibly the secondary  
 19 director, Phil Solomon. I think that's all I want to  
 20 say on the record about this. I don't feel like I need  
 21 to address it further.  
 22 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Before we go far afield  
 23 on this, this is still opening statements. I understand  
 24 the issue raised by Ms. Rapport, but I'd ask to just

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1 continue with her opening statement at this time. If  
 2 there is no objection regarding the propriety of the  
 3 break-out rooms as they're currently situated, we can  
 4 deal with it once the objection is raised, but I'll ask  
 5 her to proceed with her opening statement.  
 6 **MS. RAPPORT:** I'm done with the opening  
 7 statement.  
 8 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Thank you.  
 9 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Okay. I would call as my  
 10 first witness Ed Davis, so I think we just need to get  
 11 Jim Monti to call Ed Davis and Chris Lambert who is his  
 12 Union attorney in from the other room.  
 13 **MS. COLOZZO:** Okay.  
 14 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I'd actually ask Ms.  
 15 Forte, in the event that she can't hear, to let us know.  
 16 I will ask counsel to go slowly. I'll actually ask  
 17 Ms. Forte in the event she can't hear counsel or if  
 18 there is some breakup in the transmission, if she could  
 19 just let us know, and we'll make sure to be extra  
 20 cautious in terms of how we proceed so that everything  
 21 is on the record.  
 22 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Would it be helpful if  
 23 everybody else mutes while someone is testifying.  
 24 (OFF THE RECORD)

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1           **MS. RAPPORT:** It looks to me like Sean  
 2 Doyle and Chris Lambert is on. We would object to both  
 3 of those participants standing with Mr. Davis. I am not  
 4 even understanding why any lawyer is participating and  
 5 watching the witness's testimony. I don't understand.  
 6 I'm really baffled by that. Because unless there's a  
 7 Fifth Amendment issue or an issue of potential  
 8 discipline, I don't see any role for Mr. Doyle or  
 9 Mr. Lambert to observe their clients, the testimony of a  
 10 witness, and we would object to their presence.  
 11           **MS. LOMBARDO:** So I am going to let  
 12 Mr. Lambert address that first, Attorney Lambert address  
 13 that first, if he's in here.  
 14           **MS. RAPPORT:** It looks like both are.  
 15           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes.  
 16           **MS. RAPPORT:** And Chris joined.  
 17           **MR. LAMBERT:** Well, they're entitled to  
 18 representation. They can be represented if they want to  
 19 be.  
 20           **MS. RAPPORT:** Not in an executive  
 21 session when they're testifying. Based on what?  
 22           **MR. LAMBERT:** Why not?  
 23           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Well, Ms. Lombardo, do  
 24 you foresee any disciplinary action resulting from the

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1 testimony of Mr. Doyle in this proceeding?  
 2           **MS. LOMBARDO:** Certainly, Mr. Doyle is  
 3 actually not testifying. It's Mr. Davis who is  
 4 testifying who is a Union member. I do not foresee  
 5 disciplinary action.  
 6           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Can you see any  
 7 disciplinary action potentially for Mr. Davis as a Union  
 8 member?  
 9           **MS. LOMBARDO:** I do not.  
 10           **MR. RUGGERIO:** So I would ask, it is  
 11 executive session, I think it would be appropriate for  
 12 both Mr. Lambert and Mr. Doyle to wait, continue to wait  
 13 in the waiting room while the testimony of Mr. Davis  
 14 proceeds, and that if Mr. Doyle testifies, then we would  
 15 let him in as well, but it is executive session. This  
 16 matter was asked to be heard by Mr. Lancellotta in  
 17 executive session. I think it would be appropriate to  
 18 have that executive session and confidentiality of the  
 19 proceeding be preserved. That would be my preference,  
 20 Mr. Chair.  
 21           **MR. LAMBERT:** I would disagree. I think  
 22 that each teacher is entitled to their own  
 23 representation in any hearing of an individual.  
 24           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Well, if the

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1 representation stems from the potential discipline. If  
 2 there is no potential discipline, I don't necessarily  
 3 see how they would be entitled to representation, but  
 4 that would be my recommendation, Mr. Chair.  
 5           **MR. LAMBERT:** That standard is  
 6 different. That's a different standard. That's not  
 7 even the standard applied to this. I understand the  
 8 whole disciplinary -- you're entitled to representation  
 9 if there is a potential discipline, but they're not in  
 10 that capacity. They're here and testifying as  
 11 witnesses.  
 12           **MR. RUGGERIO:** So, why would they be  
 13 entitled to counsel for testimony as a witness, I guess  
 14 would be my question?  
 15           **MR. LAMBERT:** Why wouldn't anybody asked  
 16 to testify in front of any type of administrative board?  
 17           **MS. RAPPORT:** Steve, can I. If this  
 18 were an open proceeding, you could sit there and watch,  
 19 but this is not an open proceeding. This is an  
 20 executive session discussing a personnel matter. If  
 21 they're going to give evidence, and there's no risk of  
 22 self-incrimination, criminal, or in the case of the  
 23 Union matter civil, there is no right to representation  
 24 in executive session, and there is just no basis for any

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1 time a Union member is testifying to have a lawyer in  
 2 the room, if the Union member were testifying in Family  
 3 Court in a juvenile proceeding the lawyer wouldn't  
 4 necessarily be admitted in the room unless there was  
 5 some risk of a concern about the witness's testimony.  
 6 This is a confidential proceeding. It's not open.  
 7           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Mr. Chair, you have to  
 8 make a ruling. My recommendation is that the objection  
 9 be sustained and that we proceed with the testimony of  
 10 Mr. Davis alone in the confidential fashion to preserve  
 11 the executive session.  
 12           **THE CHAIRMAN:** Your recommendation is to  
 13 have Mr. Doyle or Mr. Lambert leave?  
 14           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Correct.  
 15           **THE CHAIRMAN:** And the main reason is  
 16 because it's a personnel matter private that nobody  
 17 should hear?  
 18           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Correct. We are in  
 19 executive session. I think it's appropriate that the  
 20 witnesses be sequestered, and because it was elected to  
 21 be heard in executive session, I don't think their  
 22 participation, unless they're actually testifying in  
 23 executive session, should be included.  
 24           **THE CHAIRMAN:** I'm going to agree with

1 you, Charlie, Charles.  
 2 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So I'd ask -- is  
 3 Mr. Monti still on the line?  
 4 **MR. LAMBERT:** I know how to exit.  
 5 **MS. COLOZZO:** I can chat to Mr. Monti to  
 6 come in, if you would like him to come in.  
 7 **MR. RUGGERIO:** If Mr. Lambert knows how  
 8 to exit.  
 9 **MR. LAMBERT:** I can exit. Thank you.  
 10 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Thank you, Chris. Is  
 11 Mr. Davis on?  
 12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I do see him.  
 13 **MR. DAVIS:** I was on mute.  
 14 **MS. LOMBARDO:** This is Mr. Davis.  
 15 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Okay. You may proceed.  
 16 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I am assuming he needs to  
 17 be sworn. So I'm calling Edward Davis as my first  
 18 witness.  
 19 **EDWARD DAVIS**  
 20 Being duly sworn, deposes and testifies as follows:  
 21 **COURT REPORTER:** Please state and spell  
 22 your name for the record, please.  
 23 **THE WITNESS:** Edward J. Davis.  
 24 **COURT REPORTER:** Thank you.

1 **A I've been in the position, this is my sixth year.**  
 2 **Q** Okay. And do you have any other roles in the school  
 3 community at Deering Middle School?  
 4 **A Yes. I'm the chair, the chairman of the School**  
 5 **Improvement Committee for Technology.**  
 6 **Q** Can you tell us what the School Improvement Committee  
 7 is, what a School Improvement Committee is?  
 8 **A A School Improvement team basically is committees made**  
 9 **up of faculty members that deals with issues and**  
 10 **policies for Deering Middle School. Basically, it gives**  
 11 **educators a voice in the direction of the school a lot**  
 12 **of times. In my other districts teachers will complain**  
 13 **that everything comes from administration down and they**  
 14 **never get to have any input. Well, these teams give the**  
 15 **members of the faculty input as to, like I said, school**  
 16 **policies and some of the problems that we deal with on a**  
 17 **day-to-day basis, how to solve them.**  
 18 **Q** Okay. And is it common for district employees in West  
 19 Warwick to participate on these teams?  
 20 **A Just about. I would say we're close to 100 percent**  
 21 **participation on school improvement teams, and, in fact,**  
 22 **many faculty members participate in more than one**  
 23 **committee.**  
 24 **Q** And you're the chair of the technology committee, is

1 **EDWARD DAVIS (Sworn)**  
 2 **DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO**  
 3 **Q** Ed, can you just spell your name for the stenographer?  
 4 **A E-D-W-A-R-D J. D-A-V-I-S.**  
 5 **Q** Thank you. Okay. Hi, Ed. How are you?  
 6 **A Good. You?**  
 7 **Q** I'm good. Ed, can you tell us your educational  
 8 background?  
 9 **A Yes. I have a master's degree and a bachelor's degree**  
 10 **from Rhode Island College in industrial education. I've**  
 11 **been teaching for 43 years. I taught in Fall River and**  
 12 **Tiverton besides West Warwick. Basically, a tech ed**  
 13 **teacher for 38 years. I was in vocational education,**  
 14 **graphic arts for two, and I was the tech integration**  
 15 **coordinator at Matthew J. Kuss Middle School in Fall**  
 16 **River. I ran some work sites for at risk youths in the**  
 17 **City of Fall River for 18 years. I'm also an authorized**  
 18 **Google trainer for education, and I am a teacher trainer**  
 19 **for the Rhode Island Society of Technology Educators.**  
 20 **Q** That's very impressive. Can you tell us what is your  
 21 present position?  
 22 **A I'm teaching digital media to seventh and eighth grade**  
 23 **at Deering Middle School in West Warwick.**  
 24 **Q** And how long have you been in that position?

1 that what you testified?  
 2 **A Yes.**  
 3 **Q** And what role does the chair play?  
 4 **A Well, basically I put together the agendas. I will**  
 5 **usually, you know, pinpoint four, five major topics.**  
 6 **For instance, we had problems with a lot of students had**  
 7 **breakage on their Chromebooks, and, basically, I spent a**  
 8 **lot of time as a liaison pretty much between the**  
 9 **faculty, administration and central administration with**  
 10 **a lot of the problems that we were dealing with with**  
 11 **technology.**  
 12 **Q** Okay. Are you familiar with the Appellant, John  
 13 Lancellotta?  
 14 **A Yes, I'm familiar with John.**  
 15 **Q** How do you know Mr. Lancellotta?  
 16 **A Well, he was hired in October of 2018, I believe. And**  
 17 **at the time they were doing a lot of work on Room 107**  
 18 **where I normally would be, so I was teaching a lot of**  
 19 **my -- what would be my things that I would keep in my**  
 20 **desk normally, in the foreign language, world language**  
 21 **room, so I did get to know him right away, because a lot**  
 22 **of times on my prep period I would go in there for**  
 23 **things, and we usually were both there early in the**  
 24 **morning, we would talk a little bit.**

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1 Q Okay. And so when you say you were around the world  
2 language room, can you tell us what position John  
3 Lancellotta was hired in?  
4 A Yes, I believe he was teaching two languages at the  
5 time. I believe he was teaching Italian and he was  
6 teaching Spanish to seventh and eighth grade.  
7 Q Okay. So he was a world language teacher?  
8 A Yes.  
9 Q And you were in his room, you testified, quite often?  
10 A Yes, at least a couple of times per day.  
11 Q So you had a chance you think to observe the classroom?  
12 A When I would be in there, yes, he would be teaching,  
13 sometimes I would try not to disturb him, kind of go in  
14 quietly and leave quietly.  
15 Q Okay. What was your impression of what you observed?  
16 A Well, when I first met him I thought he knew a subject  
17 matter. I thought he was well prepared. I just  
18 initially thought that he was extremely strict with his  
19 classes.  
20 Q And what do you mean by that?  
21 A Well, he just basically -- I mean, if he did, you know,  
22 have students leave a lot to go to the office, he didn't  
23 seem like he was a warm and fuzzy-type character with  
24 the kids, he was very disciplined, regimented.

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1 Q And how was his rapport with the other teachers in the  
2 building?  
3 A I very rarely saw him interacting with the other  
4 teachers in the building. For the most part he seemed  
5 like he stayed in his room. He was very quiet. He  
6 would usually stay to himself. He would talk a little  
7 bit with -- he talked quite a bit with me, but he didn't  
8 talk to a lot of the other teachers on the floor that  
9 way.  
10 MS. RAPPORT: I'm going to object, move  
11 to strike, lack of foundation. That has no basis for  
12 knowing who he talked to. How doesn't.  
13 MS. LOMBARDO: So I asked what his  
14 observations, what did he observe.  
15 MS. RAPPORT: And I object to lack of  
16 foundation.  
17 MR. RUGGERIO: Rebecca, could you hear.  
18 A He went down the hallway and he wouldn't be talking to  
19 anybody.  
20 MR. RUGGERIO: Hold on, Mr. Davis,  
21 Rebecca, could you read back the question and answers.  
22 (Whereupon stenographer read back previous  
23 testimony.)  
24 MR. RUGGERIO: I am going to ask

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1 Mr. Lancellotta not to comment during this witness's  
2 testimony, please.  
3 MS. RAPPORT: Objection, lack of  
4 foundation to the last comment. Motion to strike.  
5 MS. LOMBARDO: I'm just going to say  
6 it's his observations. I think he is allowed to testify  
7 to what he observed.  
8 MS. RAPPORT: I'm just going to renew  
9 the objection.  
10 MR. RUGGERIO: Mr. Chair, I think that  
11 it would be appropriate to just take the testimony as  
12 his opinion and overrule the objection. I would  
13 recommend that the objection be overruled.  
14 THE CHAIRMAN: I agree.  
15 MR. RUGGERIO: The objection is  
16 overruled. Continue, Ms. Lombardo.  
17 Q So, Mr. Davis, did you have an opportunity to observe  
18 Mr. Lancellotta with students?  
19 A Yes, I did observe him with students. Again, I did not  
20 see him, especially like in the hallways, interacting  
21 with students. He pretty much would tell them to line  
22 up and be quiet.  
23 Q Okay. Did you get the impression, in your opinion, that  
24 he was connecting with the student body?

Page 24

1 MS. RAPPORT: Objection. Objection.  
2 A No.  
3 MS. RAPPORT: I'm going to object and  
4 interpose an objection to this entire line of testimony.  
5 This man is not an evaluator, he's not with him all the  
6 time, and he's offering -- and we don't even have any  
7 understanding of what relevance this has to the  
8 superintendent's recommendation. This is, you know,  
9 just, you know, I didn't see him interacting with  
10 people, but this doesn't have any -- this doesn't -- I  
11 don't -- I don't have any basis for thinking this is  
12 tied up to the superintendent's recommendation.  
13 MS. LOMBARDO: So the superintendent  
14 said that the reason that he was non-renewed, one of the  
15 reasons is that he was not a good fit in the school, and  
16 I think that this is relevant testimony towards why he  
17 was perceived as not being a good fit within Deering  
18 Middle School.  
19 MR. RUGGERIO: I would recommend that  
20 Ms. Lombardo be afforded some latitude here, but I ask  
21 that she provide a little bit more background regarding  
22 Mr. Davis and the proximity Mr. Davis had to  
23 Mr. Lancellotta in terms of their classrooms and his  
24 observations and how frequently he was able to observe

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1 Mr. Lancellotta to allow some form of foundation for  
2 this line of questioning.

3 Q Mr. Davis, how often did you observe Mr. Lancellotta on  
4 a daily basis?

5 A Well, I would be in his room, like I said, on my prep  
6 period. I would be out in the hall a lot of times while  
7 the students were lining up. Sometimes after school I  
8 would be out, you know, doing my hall duty at the end  
9 and he would have students coming back to stay after  
10 school, and I was able to observe how he acted with them  
11 in those situations.

12 Q And so based on all of those observations, when you said  
13 he wasn't, you felt he wasn't connecting with the  
14 student body, can you explain why you say that?

15 A Well, at first we thought he was just trying to set the  
16 tone, you are a new teacher, and I've seen, you know,  
17 because I have been a teacher mentor in other districts  
18 where I try to help teachers get used to a new district  
19 and a new way of doing things, and I thought that he was  
20 just, you know, setting the tone and that he would kind  
21 of back off later, and in the roughly, you know,  
22 year-and-a-half that I was next to him he never seemed  
23 to back off on the way he was with the students.

24 Q Okay. And was Mr. Lancellotta active in the school

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1 community?

2 A Other than coming to a few of my technology meetings, I  
3 did not know that he was active.

4 Q And so you said he came to a few of your technology, the  
5 team meetings that you had talked about earlier,  
6 correct?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Did he come to though meetings regularly?

9 A I believe the first year I did not take attendance. I  
10 believe he went to two. Normally, we have one almost  
11 every month, and last year he only attended two meetings  
12 out of five.

13 Q And how was his participation at those meetings compared  
14 to the other team members?

15 A He didn't really participate. I don't remember him  
16 speaking pretty much at all.

17 Q Okay. And since you're the chair of the technology  
18 committee can you tell me a little bit about technology  
19 in the district?

20 A Well, I think it is an important part, an integral part  
21 of the school teacher. When I retired from Fall River,  
22 one of the reasons that I accepted the position at  
23 Deering Middle School over returning to Tiverton High  
24 School, my alma mater where I taught 12 years, was I

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1 wanted to be a part of the district's one-on-one program  
2 because I felt I could make an impact as a Google  
3 trainer and I knew I had an opportunity to develop  
4 curriculum from scratch. The one-on-one program is very  
5 important. Number one, it saves a ton of supply money  
6 as far as paper and textbooks, it helps keeps the kids  
7 engaged, and I think everybody knows there is a pandemic  
8 right now, the one-on-one program has given West Warwick  
9 a huge advantage in coping with this problem we're  
10 having right now. A lot of districts are trying to  
11 catch up to speed. We had a lot of the infrastructure  
12 already in place. A lot of our students had a device.  
13 So, yes, it is an integral part of West Warwick School  
14 Department.

15 Q And, based on your observations and interactions with  
16 Mr. Lancellotta, did he embrace that philosophy?

17 MS. RAPPORT: Objection. Objection.

18 A No. From what he said to me, he wasn't a big proponent  
19 of it when we were leaving the meeting because I really  
20 tried to get him involved.

21 MS. RAPPORT: I objected to that based  
22 on a lack of foundation.

23 MS. LOMBARDO: Well, it is based on his  
24 observation. He said that he has observed him numerous

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1 times throughout the day, and he, you know, he sat on a  
2 technology, a SIT committee with him, and, you know, he  
3 has testified that technology is a big source of pride  
4 and a part of the West Warwick School District  
5 philosophy, and I asked him what his impression, or his  
6 opinion was based on his impressions of  
7 Mr. Lancellotta's feelings on that.

8 MR. RUGGERIO: Rebecca, could you read  
9 the question back, please.  
10 (Whereupon stenographer read back pending  
11 question.)

12 MR. RUGGERIO: I would recommend  
13 overruling the objection.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I agree with  
15 Mr. Ruggiero.

16 Q Okay. And, Mr. Davis, based on all of your years as a  
17 teacher, observing and training other teachers, do you  
18 feel that the district could find a better fit for the  
19 world languages position at the middle school than  
20 Mr. Lancellotta?

21 A Yes, I do.

22 MS. LOMBARDO: Okay. No further  
23 questions.

24 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT

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1 Q Mr. Davis, you're a technology -- tell me your title  
2 again in the district.

3 A Excuse me, I have to turn my speaker up. You are a  
4 little muffled. I am a technology education teacher.  
5 It's basically what used to be the old industrial arts  
6 certification, where you could teach wood, you could  
7 teach graphic arts, and right now I'm teaching computer  
8 science, a combination of computer science, graphic  
9 design, video game development.

10 Q And you said that for a period of time you were in the  
11 same room as Mr. Lancellotta where he was actually  
12 teaching?

13 A Yes. On my prep period I really did not -- they were  
14 redoing the room that I normally had taught out of. I  
15 don't have a classroom, okay. I float. And, what was  
16 happening at the time, there was so much new supplies  
17 coming into Room 107, okay, because they invested a lot  
18 of money in STEM and world language, that room, there  
19 was a lot of room in the back, and the teacher before  
20 Mr. Lancellotta allowed me to put my stuff there, and  
21 when he came, I asked him if I could keep it there and  
22 he said yes.

23 Q So my question is that, so you didn't have your own  
24 classroom and you were in the room with Mr. Lancellotta

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1 during your prep period, is that --

2 A Yes, yes.

3 Q And was that -- you obviously have a prep period every  
4 day, right?

5 A Yes.

6 Q And you were there in Mr. Lancellotta's room for the  
7 entire prep period?

8 A No, no. I would -- I would have to go in there at  
9 times. I had, like, my bag, computer mice in there, I  
10 would have a couple of notebooks that I would write down  
11 notes, I would charge my Chromebook in there, but I  
12 didn't want to be in there full time because I didn't  
13 think that was good teacher etiquette.

14 Q So how long would you be in there during your prep  
15 period on a day to day?

16 A Twenty minutes, sometimes half the period.

17 Q And where did you sit?

18 A In the back of the room.

19 Q Okay. And you were doing things appropriate for prep,  
20 is that right?

21 A Yes, yes. I would be trying out different apps, things  
22 like that, emailing parents.

23 Q And did this continue for the entire year-and-a-half  
24 that you were with Mr. Lancellotta?

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1 A No. Pretty much it was just last year, the first year  
2 that he was there. Last year I was moving around even  
3 more. So, I was kind of all over. But, I did teach a  
4 couple of periods, three -- the first trimester I was  
5 right next to him, three periods a day. The only thing  
6 that separated us was like a fire door.

7 Q Okay. So I'm asking about, the prep period was only in  
8 the '18/'19 school year, is that correct?

9 A Yes, yes.

10 Q So in the '19/'20 school year that was not the  
11 situation, is that correct?

12 A No, not at all.

13 Q And then you said that you taught next to him and there  
14 was a wall or a door separating you?

15 A Yes, it was a door sometimes. Sometimes it would be  
16 open when it was like either extremely cold, because he  
17 had heat and I didn't, and so we were, you know, we were  
18 right next to each other quite a bit.

19 Q You were teaching next to him?

20 A Yes, yes.

21 Q Okay. And so he was in his room teaching and then you  
22 were in your room teaching?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Okay. And would you say you had a friendly

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1 relationship?

2 A Well, with John, yes, for the most part. You know what  
3 I mean. You know, we had different teaching styles, we  
4 disagreed on some things, but as far as, you know, he  
5 was new and I tried to support him, like I would do to  
6 anybody that was next to me.

7 Q You disagreed on teaching matters?

8 A I teach totally different.

9 Q And you're not -- it would be fair to say you're not his  
10 supervisor or his evaluator?

11 A No, I am not his supervisor or his evaluator.

12 Q And over this period of time -- and then the other  
13 contact that you said you had with him was when he was  
14 on the, or participated occasionally on the technology?

15 A The SIT technology committee, yes.

16 Q Now, are there other SIT teams that deal with different  
17 project matters?

18 A Yes, there's about 12 of them, I would say 12 to 15.  
19 Transition committee for the kids coming in from the  
20 fifth group of the transition eighth grade, they have,  
21 you know, a culture committee.

22 Q Okay. And these are teams comprised of both faculty,  
23 parents and administrators?

24 A No. Just, no, it's basically just, for the most part,



<p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p> <p>1 <b>it's just teachers, okay. There are some administrators</b>  2 <b>at certain committees.</b>  3 Q I would assume parents would be on these committees,  4 right?  5 A <b>I never had a parent on mine. Because the committees</b>  6 <b>are meeting at 2:30 in the afternoon, so it is not ideal</b>  7 <b>for people that have to work.</b>  8 Q Okay. Did you at any time over the period of time have  9 a conversation with the principal -- who is the  10 principal of Deering Middle School?  11 A <b>Well, it was originally, his first year it was Jeff</b>  12 <b>Guiot, and then last year it was Chris Allen and</b>  13 <b>Elizabeth Furtado were appointed principals.</b>  14 Q And Elizabeth Furtado was the principal of the seventh  15 and eighth grades, is that correct?  16 A <b>I believe Mr. Allen was in charge of the fifth and sixth</b>  17 <b>grade, and Mrs. Furtado was in charge of seventh and</b>  18 <b>eighth grade, but Mr. Allen was in charge of my --</b>  19 <b>oversees my department.</b>  20 Q Your department?  21 A <b>Yes.</b>  22 Q So the principal for Mr. Lancellotta was --  23 Mr. Lancellotta teaches seventh and eighth grade math,  24 correct?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p> <p>1 Q Did you at any point in the '18/'19 school year talk to  2 any of your colleagues about Mr. Lancellotta?  3 A <b>No, no, no, I didn't talk to any of my colleagues about</b>  4 <b>him specifically, no.</b>  5 Q At all?  6 A <b>Well, no. Basically, you know, I would ask people, oh,</b>  7 <b>John is out today, does anybody know what's going on, or</b>  8 <b>just small talk like that. Never any conversations</b>  9 <b>about his performance or anything like that.</b>  10 Q Or his style of interaction with the students. Did you  11 talk to your colleagues about his style of interaction  12 with the students?  13 A <b>No, no. Like I said, I'm not someone who is evaluating</b>  14 <b>him. Just simply asked to speak my opinion here</b>  15 <b>tonight.</b>  16 Q Okay. And did you talk to your colleagues about  17 Mr. Lancellotta's, in your opinion, seeming not to  18 embrace the technology that you care so much about, did  19 you ever talk to any of your colleagues about that?  20 A <b>No, no, I didn't.</b>  21 Q Okay. I would assume you didn't talk to any of the  22 administrators we've ticked off about Mr. Lancellotta's  23 so-called failure to embrace technology, is that fair to  24 say?</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p> <p>1 A <b>I believe so.</b>  2 Q And as principal for Mr. Lancellotta in the '18/'19  3 year was Guiot?  4 A <b>Yes, yes.</b>  5 Q At any point in that '18/'19 school year did you have  6 any conversation with Mr. Guiot about Mr. Lancellotta?  7 A <b>No, I didn't, not that I recall.</b>  8 Q And at any time in the '19/'20 school year did you have  9 any conversation with Ms. Furtado about Mr. Lancellotta?  10 A <b>No, I did not.</b>  11 Q And did you at any time, in either the '18 or '19 school  12 year, have any conversation with Mr., I believe his name  13 is Solomon, the director of secondary education?  14 A <b>No, no, I did not talk to Mr. Solomon at all.</b>  15 Q Did you talk to him at all?  16 A <b>No. I meant, my apologies, I meant regarding</b>  17 <b>Mr. Lancellotta. I'm sorry.</b>  18 Q Okay. Did you at any time in the '18/'19 or '19/'20  19 school years have any conversations with the  20 superintendent about --  21 A <b>No.</b>  22 Q -- Mr. Lancellotta?  23 A <b>Oh, no, I have not had a conversation with</b>  24 <b>Mrs. Tarasevich.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p> <p>1 A <b>No, because even though we have different teaching</b>  2 <b>styles, I am not someone who's going to try to impose my</b>  3 <b>will on a fellow teacher. I'm not there with their</b>  4 <b>students. I'm not there with their subject matter. I</b>  5 <b>try to encourage him to use things such as easy accents,</b>  6 <b>I told him maybe he could make websites in Spanish or</b>  7 <b>Italian with his kids. I tried to encourage him, but I</b>  8 <b>wasn't there to evaluate him.</b>  9 Q And you said you haven't spoken with the superintendent  10 about Mr. Lancellotta?  11 A <b>No, no, no.</b>  12 Q Did you ever learn of any kind of complaint by any  13 student about Mr. Lancellotta?  14 A <b>The kids would talk about him all the time in my class.</b>  15 <b>My class, my students work in groups. They're able to</b>  16 <b>talk to each other because they're doing computer</b>  17 <b>science, and it's encouraged by the code curriculum to</b>  18 <b>have them work in groups of two or four, and I would</b>  19 <b>hear the students a lot of times complaining that he was</b>  20 <b>extremely strict and that he was rude and he was mean.</b>  21 Q Okay. Did you ever report any of that to any of your  22 colleagues?  23 A <b>Well, I would just -- actually would just tell the</b>  24 <b>students he is fairly new, why don't you give him a</b></p>

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1 **chance.**  
 2 Q Now, you said that you were -- you said, as you were  
 3 speaking in answering another question, you were asked  
 4 to come here and speak your mind?  
 5 A **Yes. It was kind of -- I would just, I was told a**  
 6 **couple of weeks ago that there was an issue with a**  
 7 **teacher that I was familiar with and they mentioned his**  
 8 **name, and I was asked if I would testify because I was**  
 9 **in a room next to him and I said I would. I really, you**  
 10 **know, I did not know a lot of what was going on was**  
 11 **going on, to be honest with you.**  
 12 Q You didn't know what was going on?  
 13 A Well, about him being, you know, not renewed, because  
 14 the only time I had heard that, you know, he wasn't  
 15 going to be renewed, I heard it in the hallway where a  
 16 group of teachers were speaking, and, to be honest with  
 17 you, a lot of stuff sometimes that you hear is hearsay,  
 18 so I never really, you know, paid a lot of attention to  
 19 it, to be honest with you.  
 20 Q And when you said you were asked if you would testify,  
 21 who asked you if you would testify?  
 22 A Sean called me and said that I would be hearing from  
 23 Aubrey Lombardo about an issue with the school  
 24 department with a non-renewal notice, and that was

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1 basically all the conversation was, and I waited to hear  
 2 from Attorney Lombardo.  
 3 Q Okay. So the Sean you're talking about is Sean Doyle  
 4 called you?  
 5 A Sean Doyle.  
 6 Q Okay. And Sean Doyle teaches at the high school, right?  
 7 A But he is also, he is my department chair. So we talk  
 8 probably not as much as most people in the department  
 9 because his main role with the middle school is getting  
 10 us supplies and curriculum, and the West Warwick School  
 11 Department has been shown nothing but confidence in me  
 12 to develop my own curriculum, I'm going on my own to get  
 13 my computer science certification at 64 years old, and  
 14 he also is in charge of getting us supplies, and since I  
 15 teach technology I need my Chromebook and the students  
 16 need their Chromebook, and that's about all they need  
 17 out of me.  
 18 Q Right. So you and Mr. Doyle have overlap in the subject  
 19 matter that you teach?  
 20 A Yes.  
 21 Q Okay. So a couple of weeks ago Mr. Doyle asked if you  
 22 would testify about Mr. Lancellotta?  
 23 A Yes, yes. He said there was a non-renewal on him.  
 24 Q And did he clarify with you whether you would be

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1 testifying in favor of Mr. Lancellotta or in favor of  
 2 the non-renewal of Mr. Lancellotta?  
 3 A He wasn't specific, okay. He just said that there was  
 4 an issue and he wanted me to talk to Attorney Lombardo.  
 5 Q Oh, okay. And you know that Ms. Lombardo represents the  
 6 school district?  
 7 A I didn't until I talked to her.  
 8 Q Okay. When you went and talked to her, you learned  
 9 that, right?  
 10 A Yes.  
 11 Q How many times did you speak with her?  
 12 A Oh, twice.  
 13 Q And when was that?  
 14 A I can't give you the exact dates. It's been within the  
 15 last ten days.  
 16 Q Okay. Did you share any documents or any kind of  
 17 material with her that you had in your emails or  
 18 anything like that?  
 19 A Well, yes. She asked me what I thought of him, and I  
 20 put some stuff together, basically, of what I thought.  
 21 Q What do you mean you put some stuff together?  
 22 A Yes, put the thought. Like I said, person to person.  
 23 Like, I got along fine with John, but I did not see him  
 24 as a good fit, and he seemed extremely disgruntled last

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1 year when I did talk to him, and it just seemed like  
 2 something to me that he was better off moving on. For  
 3 instance, he told me that last year that the kids in  
 4 West Warwick were getting to be as bad as the kids in  
 5 Providence, and that if this didn't workout, he was  
 6 going to go work at Electric Boat.  
 7 Q And you put, when you say you put some stuff together,  
 8 some stuff together in writing?  
 9 A Well, no. We were on a Zoom call, okay, and she asked  
 10 me, you know, if I thought -- did I think he was a good  
 11 fit, and I basically reflected some of the stuff that I  
 12 was telling you before. I think our students need  
 13 teachers with a lot of empathy. We have the fourth  
 14 poorest community in Rhode Island. We have the highest  
 15 percentage of reported child abuse. We have the highest  
 16 percentage of neglect cases. And, basically, we have, I  
 17 believe 25 is the high number of our kids who have  
 18 parents incarcerated, and that causes all sorts of  
 19 problems, and I just don't think someone that sends kids  
 20 automatically to the office is going to be able to  
 21 develop the relationships with these kids that they  
 22 need. Now, I have a big extensive background. When I  
 23 ran my crews in Fall River, I worked with kids that got  
 24 out of Dartmouth House of Corrections, and you really,

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1 really have to learn how to work with these kids. I  
 2 mean, a lot of their problems, discipline problems are a  
 3 result of emotional issues that they have, and right now  
 4 Deering Middle School and the State of Rhode Island is  
 5 going to a restorative justice model that's based on  
 6 communication and relationship building, mediation when  
 7 you have student conflict, okay, and he just did not fit  
 8 into the profile that you need to make something like  
 9 that work.

10 Q So when you said you put some stuff together, are you  
 11 saying that there was anything in writing that you  
 12 provided to Ms. Lombardo?

13 A Just pretty much what I told you right now.

14 Q But my question is, was there some document that you  
 15 provided to her?

16 A Yes, yes. It was an email. There was an email.

17 Q Okay. Anything other than an email?

18 A No.

19 Q Okay. And did you discuss your reflection about  
 20 Mr. Lancellotta with Mr. Doyle prior to speaking with  
 21 Ms. Lombardo?

22 A No, no, no.

23 Q Did you discuss your perspective with anyone other than  
 24 Ms. Lombardo?

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1 A Well, you know, we had a Zoom meeting and Mr. Lambert  
 2 was there.

3 Q Was Mr. Doyle there?

4 A Yes, he was.

5 Q Anyone else?

6 A Oh, God. I'm trying to think. I'm trying to recall.  
 7 Because I was nervous at that meeting as I am right now.  
 8 I don't believe so.

9 Q How many zoom meetings did you have?

10 MS. LOMBARDO: Asked and answered. He  
 11 said two.

12 Q Is that correct, two?

13 A Yes, yes.

14 Q And how long were they?

15 MS. LOMBARDO: I'm just going to object  
 16 as to relevance. I think I've given a lot of leeway in  
 17 this line of questioning. I'm not sure what the  
 18 relevance is in how long I spoke with Mr. Davis.

19 MR. RUGGERIO: I would just recommend  
 20 that counsel be given just a very brief...

21 MS. RAPPORT: I'll move on. I don't  
 22 need that.

23 MR. RUGGERIO: Thank you.

24 Q Other than the two Zoom meetings with Ms. Lombardo, did

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1 you have any other exchanges with anyone else about your  
 2 testimony here today?

3 A No, no.

4 Q And other than that email that you sent to Ms. Lombardo,  
 5 were there any other writings that you shared with  
 6 either the Union or Ms. Lombardo at any time?

7 A If anything, there might have been an attachment, you  
 8 know, because I really don't -- I'm not comfortable  
 9 writing out long emails. I tend to work in like a  
 10 Google Doc format better. I'm not exactly the greatest  
 11 at spelling.

12 Q And I just specifically want to know did you at any time  
 13 share any of these impressions with Mr. John Giovanelli?

14 A No, no. John, basically John would come in the morning  
 15 to see John. I would call him John squared. And with  
 16 John, it was basically, hey, John, how are you doing,  
 17 like that, because he is not my department chair. He is  
 18 a very nice man, so I would always want to talk to him,  
 19 but I would always just exchange hellos with him.

20 Q So you saw John and John together first thing in the  
 21 morning?

22 A Yes.

23 Q You would see them hanging out?

24 A Yes. John is the department chair, so he would be

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1 coming over, and John is very conscientious if the other  
 2 foreign teacher is absent, he's always there in the  
 3 morning to make sure the substitute teacher has the  
 4 proper materials to get through the day.

5 Q And this would happen in the room where you sometimes --

6 A Yes, yes. It would be very hard for me, Counsel, to  
 7 explain it to you. The rooms, it is like they took two  
 8 big rooms and made them into four little ones, so it  
 9 kind of has a crazy hallway. So, we pretty much knew.  
 10 In the morning John Lancellotta would leave his door  
 11 open, so, I mean, we would be trying to get some air in  
 12 those rooms.

13 Q So because they're close together and not well aerated,  
 14 is that right?

15 A Yes, yes, that's putting it -- yes.

16 Q Mildly?

17 A Yes.

18 Q In preparation for your presentation today -- now  
 19 Mr. Doyle is the leader of the Union, is that correct?

20 A He is the department chair and he is the president of  
 21 the West Warwick Teachers' Alliance.

22 Q Right. And he is here today in the break-out room, is  
 23 that correct?

24 A Right, yes.

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1 Q Okay. And did he, or anyone from the West Warwick  
 2 Teachers' Union offer you legal representation here  
 3 today?  
 4 A **He just said that, you know, they thought that I could  
 5 have representation, and he said that to me, that  
 6 Mr. Lambert would be here, that's all.**  
 7 Q Did he say that it would be free of charge?  
 8 A **No, we never discussed that.**  
 9 Q Okay. Did you assume that if you did have  
 10 representation you wouldn't have to --  
 11 A **Yes, I would assume, but.**  
 12 Q So that --  
 13 A **You know something, let me take that back. In the  
 14 beginning I do remember him saying that he would get,  
 15 you know, if I wanted representation, it would be  
 16 offered to you, okay, that's all.**  
 17 Q Without cost, right?  
 18 A **Uh-hum.**  
 19 Q Yes?  
 20 A **Yes.**  
 21 Q And that would be in order for you to testify --  
 22 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm just going to object  
 23 again as to relevance. I don't see what the relevance  
 24 of whether Chris Lambert is paid by the Union or through

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1 dues or how that works has any relevance as to whether  
 2 John Lancellotta was the most qualified person for his  
 3 job.  
 4 Q Mr. Davis, I will withdraw the question. Mr. Davis, are  
 5 you yourself a Union member?  
 6 A **Yes, I am.**  
 7 Q And how long have you been a Union member?  
 8 A **Well, I was a member of the NEA Massachusetts, Fall  
 9 River FREA. For 25 years I was in Fall River. I was a  
 10 member of NEA Tiverton and now I'm a member of the West  
 11 Warwick Teachers' Alliance.**  
 12 Q Did you hold any leadership positions in the unions?  
 13 A **No, I never have.**  
 14 Q So you have been a Union member since you began  
 15 teaching, right?  
 16 A **Yes, yes, 1978.**  
 17 Q If I could just --  
 18 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I just kind of object  
 19 again to any more questioning about his Union  
 20 membership. We established he is a Union member.  
 21 Again, I don't understand the relevance of that and John  
 22 Lancellotta being the most qualified person for his  
 23 position.  
 24 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Noted.

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1 **MS. RAPPORT:** I didn't ask another  
 2 question. I just said I wanted to just have a moment to  
 3 confer with my co-counsel, if that's acceptable before I  
 4 break?  
 5 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Certainly.  
 6 **MS. RAPPORT:** Okay. I'm not sure if we  
 7 should go to the break-out room. Is that correct? No,  
 8 I don't want to do that because I think that would be  
 9 too strategically complex. If I could just, because of  
 10 Mr. Davis, I am Luddite when it comes to computers.  
 11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sara, can you shut off  
 12 your microphone and video for a second then.  
 13 (BRIEF RECESS)  
 14 **MS. RAPPORT:** I have no further  
 15 questions.  
 16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Any redirect?  
 17 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I just have a few very  
 18 brief questions.  
 19 REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO  
 20 Q So, Mr. Davis, you testified that Sean Doyle is your  
 21 Union President, correct?  
 22 A **Yes.**  
 23 Q Would it be typical in a legal proceeding, to your  
 24 knowledge, for him to provide assistance and act as a

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1 representative?  
 2 **MS. RAPPORT:** Objection, lack of  
 3 foundation. He has no basis for understanding.  
 4 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I asked him based on his  
 5 knowledge. I'm sure he understands his role as a Union  
 6 member. You certainly asked a lot of questions about  
 7 him as a Union member.  
 8 **MS. RAPPORT:** Lack of foundation.  
 9 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I recommend sustaining  
 10 the objection. I think you can rephrase, Ms. Lombardo.  
 11 Q Mr. Davis, what is your understanding of Mr. Doyle's  
 12 role as your Union president?  
 13 A **Basically, you know, I just think that that's a hard  
 14 question, his role. I think that basically he tries to  
 15 make sure that, you know, that everything is done within  
 16 our rights, okay. Okay. And, to make sure that people  
 17 are following the letter of the law in certain  
 18 situations, and following, more importantly, the  
 19 contract. Okay.**  
 20 Q Go ahead.  
 21 A **And there are times in the past where I know that  
 22 there's been issues where teachers have needed, you  
 23 know, Union representation at different types of  
 24 hearings. I really didn't understand fully the debate**

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1 that was going on, as to whether Mr. Lambert was here or  
 2 not, even though I have my whole family has worked in  
 3 the court systems. So, no. Usually a lot of times you  
 4 do have Union representation, but in this forum I'm not  
 5 someone who knows the letter of the law to know whether  
 6 that is, you know, appropriate or not. Does that answer  
 7 your question?  
 8 Q Yes. And were you comfortable with Attorney Lambert  
 9 representing you or being here with you today?  
 10 A Yes, I would have been comfortable with it.  
 11 MS. LOMBARDO: No further questions.  
 12 MS. RAPPORT: I have no questions.  
 13 THE WITNESS: Thank you.  
 14 MR. RUGGERIO: The witness is excused.  
 15 MS. LOMBARDO: I think we need to get  
 16 Jim Monti to move him, and I'm going to call John  
 17 Giovanelli as my next witness.  
 18 THE WITNESS: Thank you. Everybody have  
 19 a good night. Thank you.  
 20 MS. RAPPORT: Stay safe.  
 21 THE WITNESS: Safe and healthy.  
 22 MS. COLOZZO: So you need  
 23 Mr. Giovanelli?  
 24 MS. LOMBARDO: Yes, Mr. Giovanelli.

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1 MS. COLOZZO: I'll let Mr. Monti know.  
 2 Thank you.  
 3 MS. LOMBARDO: Thank you.  
 4 JOHN GIOVANELLI  
 5 Being duly sworn, deposes and testifies as follows:  
 6 COURT REPORTER: Please, state and spell  
 7 your name for the record, please.  
 8 THE WITNESS: John Giovanelli.  
 9 G-I-O-V-A-N-E-L-L-I.  
 10 COURT REPORTER: Thank you.  
 11 JOHN GIOVANELLI (Sworn)  
 12 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO  
 13 Q Good evening, Mr. Giovanelli.  
 14 A Good evening.  
 15 Q Could you tell us your educational background.  
 16 A Yes. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in education  
 17 with a concentration in Italian and Spanish from the  
 18 University of Rhode Island from 1987, I also have a  
 19 master's degree in secondary education with a  
 20 concentration in both Italian and Spanish from the  
 21 University of Rhode Island in 1992 and I have more than  
 22 15 credits over and above the master's degree from study  
 23 abroad.  
 24 Q Thank you. Can you tell us what your certifications

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1 are?  
 2 A Yes. I'm life certified in both Italian and Spanish.  
 3 Q And what is your work history in the West Warwick School  
 4 District?  
 5 A I have been working at West Warwick High School in West  
 6 Warwick District since 1988.  
 7 Q Okay. So it's a long time, since 1988. What is your  
 8 current position?  
 9 A My current position, I'm an Italian and Spanish teacher  
 10 of West Warwick High School.  
 11 Q And have you been in that position the entire time?  
 12 A When I started in 1988 I was actually split at Deering  
 13 Junior High and West Warwick High School, so I taught in  
 14 both buildings, that's when the middle -- well, there  
 15 was no middle school, it was junior high, sixth, seventh  
 16 and eighth grade -- no. Seven, eight and nine, and the  
 17 high school was ten, eleven and twelve.  
 18 Q Okay. And when did you switch over from teaching at the  
 19 high school?  
 20 A It was probably after two or three years.  
 21 Q Okay. Do you have any current leadership roles in the  
 22 district?  
 23 A I do.  
 24 Q And what are they?

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1 A I am the World Languages department head of both West  
 2 Warwick High School and Deering Middle School.  
 3 Q And what are your duties in that role as a department  
 4 head?  
 5 A As the department head, and, again, this goes to both  
 6 schools, we would do work on curriculum development, I  
 7 develop budgets for both buildings, ordering for both  
 8 buildings, I keep an inventory of the materials, I'm  
 9 also available for interviews, I've done evaluations, I  
 10 have assisted with professional development, I work with  
 11 the administration when we deal with scheduling, I'm  
 12 kind of the link between the administration and the  
 13 department, the department administration, and I'm there  
 14 to support teachers and programs.  
 15 Q Can you tell me the recent history of the World  
 16 Languages Department at the middle school in West  
 17 Warwick?  
 18 A Again, when it started, it started in the 1990's and it  
 19 has been an exploratory program, which means we expose  
 20 students to French, Italian and Spanish. Over the years  
 21 the scheduling has changed, it was half year, it was a  
 22 semester, it was a quarter, it was day on/day off, that  
 23 type of thing, so it's modified. That was basically the  
 24 format until March of 2012. In March of 2012, due to

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1 financial conditions, the School Committee eliminated  
 2 the program, among other programs, so it was totally  
 3 eliminated. So that means there was no language at  
 4 Deering Middle School exploratory in the year 2012/2013.  
 5 The following year they brought back one instructor, so  
 6 for the 2013 and '14 school year there was an Italian  
 7 and Spanish, and then the year after that, in the  
 8 2014/2015, the French position was restored. So the  
 9 department was brought back, as it was before, in  
 10 2014/2015, so relatively recently, and we've been  
 11 offering French, Italian and Spanish. French in grade  
 12 seven, Spanish in grade eight and Italian in grade  
 13 eight.  
 14 Q And when those positions were eliminated, how did you  
 15 feel about that as the department head?  
 16 A Again, we had worked a long time to strengthen the  
 17 program, and the whole objective of the program was to  
 18 familiarize students so they can make a decision on what  
 19 language is best for them in the high school. It's also  
 20 to expose them to different languages and different  
 21 cultures of the world, and for many of them that was the  
 22 first time they were exposed to language or a foreign  
 23 culture. So, it was really a building program for the  
 24 high school, but it was also a way to expose them. And

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1 the student could say, oh, I like this language best,  
 2 not what was popular, what their friends were taking,  
 3 but they could make a judgment based on their own  
 4 exposure to the language.  
 5 Q And so based on all of that I am getting that you  
 6 thought it was important that those positions stay in  
 7 place, correct?  
 8 A Absolutely, very important.  
 9 Q And do you think it's particularly important to have  
 10 strong teachers in those world language middle school  
 11 roles?  
 12 A It's very important, because, remember, the teacher is  
 13 the face of the program. A strong teacher gives you a  
 14 strong program, it nurtures the programs, it builds  
 15 relationships and it makes connections to students, and,  
 16 again, helps them with that whole transition to expose  
 17 them in a positive way to the language, to the culture,  
 18 and, again, with that, help them make a decision, what  
 19 language is best for them based on knowing the students.  
 20 Q Okay. And as department chair how often do you meet  
 21 with the teachers in your department as a whole?  
 22 A As a whole, we have formal meetings probably every four  
 23 to six weeks, but I usually meet with teachers at the  
 24 high school on a daily basis, we're all in the same

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1 general vicinity, so I am able to see them every day.  
 2 The middle school, because we have a different time  
 3 schedule and sometimes I have to teach first class, so  
 4 usually I'm down at the middle school a good two to  
 5 three times per week.  
 6 Q Okay. And do you think these I meetings are important  
 7 for the world languages department, either together or  
 8 separated by school?  
 9 A Absolutely. It's very, very important to just touch  
 10 base. It's important for professional exchange,  
 11 exchange of ideas, exchange of materials, websites,  
 12 share activities, work together to develop rubrics,  
 13 assessments, talk about language issues, like what  
 14 language is popular right now, what jobs require what  
 15 languages. So, this is our way to bring it all  
 16 together, and we all have different strengths. I mean,  
 17 some of are us more writing oriented, some of us more  
 18 oral or speaking oriented, so we are able to share our  
 19 knowledge with others, you know, and ideas that way.  
 20 Q So is it fair to say that you all rely on each other in  
 21 the department?  
 22 A Absolutely, yes.  
 23 Q Are you familiar with the Appellant, Mr. Lancellotta?  
 24 A I am.

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1 Q When did you first meet with Mr. Lancellotta?  
 2 A I first met him in October of 2018, when we were doing  
 3 interviews for a world language position at Deering  
 4 Middle School. I was part of the committee.  
 5 Q Did you know of him or were you aware of his existence  
 6 prior to that?  
 7 A I'm good friends with his aunt, and, again, I'm familiar  
 8 with the family.  
 9 Q Okay. So when he came to work in the district, knowing  
 10 that you knew his aunt, how did you feel about him  
 11 starting work at the middle school?  
 12 A I was happy.  
 13 Q Okay. Were you ever hoping that he would succeed in  
 14 that role?  
 15 A Yes.  
 16 Q Okay. Once he was hired, so in the Fall of 2018 how  
 17 often did you interact with him?  
 18 A Again, when he was first hired we met daily, probably  
 19 for a good two to three weeks.  
 20 Q And how about after that?  
 21 A Well, the first two to three weeks, again, because he  
 22 was brand new to the position, so, again, I had to  
 23 transition him to the position, like the curriculum, the  
 24 material, the schedule, Aspen, grading, all of those

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1 types of things, so it was a familiarization, and,  
 2 again, to answer any questions and get him up to speed  
 3 on what was going on in the classes there.  
 4 Q Okay. How did those meetings go?  
 5 A Again, basically it was me sharing the information with  
 6 him. Again, I didn't get too much feedback from him.  
 7 He was serious about it, very quiet, and, again, I  
 8 shared the information that I had with him, answering  
 9 any questions that he might have had.  
 10 Q Did you feel like he was receptive to what you were  
 11 saying in those meetings?  
 12 A He was receptive, yes.  
 13 Q Okay. Did he collaborate with you in those meetings?  
 14 A Not really. I was hoping maybe for a little  
 15 collaboration because he came from Providence, that he  
 16 could talk about the program there and maybe he could do  
 17 something with what was going on in our school, but that  
 18 didn't take place.  
 19 Q Okay. And so after those initial first two or three  
 20 weeks where you said you met with him every day do you  
 21 continue to meet with him?  
 22 A Yes. Again, I would go down the middle school a good  
 23 two to three times per week, drop in, again, and I asked  
 24 both teachers, you know, how did your lesson go, do you

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1 need anything, how were your classes, what did you teach  
 2 today, that type of thing, do you need any materials, is  
 3 there anything I can do to assist you, anything I can do  
 4 to help you.  
 5 Q And how did these meetings go in the subsequent weeks?  
 6 A Again, John is usually very quiet, is serious about it,  
 7 and, again, there wasn't too much interaction, we would  
 8 answer the question, yes, no, it went well, something  
 9 like that, but no detail. I would try to get some more  
 10 information out, and, again, ask more questions to try  
 11 to pull out more information, but it was hard to get any  
 12 information basically. So it was like pulling, in some  
 13 cases, I don't know, pulling teeth. I felt a little  
 14 uncomfortable that I was asking all these things, but I  
 15 had to find out how things were going.  
 16 Q So did it concern you that it was like pulling teeth?  
 17 A It did. I thought there would be a little more  
 18 collaboration, openness that way.  
 19 Q Okay. And when you met as a world languages department  
 20 as a whole, how was Mr. Lancellotta's participation in  
 21 those meetings?  
 22 A Again, he was very quiet, there was not much  
 23 interaction, practically no interaction, and that was --  
 24 Q How -- go ahead.

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1 A It was in a variety of different situations. I mean, we  
 2 did all kinds of things at meetings, but I also did  
 3 some, like, breakfast for the department, so have the  
 4 department get together at the middle school and high  
 5 school, offer them a breakfast, so we can get together  
 6 socially, and also to exchange professional things. We  
 7 have an embedded day that we all get together and work  
 8 together, plan, and, again, I allotted some time for the  
 9 middle school to work together, but it was basically  
 10 working on their own in that case.  
 11 Q Okay. Why do you say it was working on their own?  
 12 A Well, I try to spend some time where they could work  
 13 together, but, again Mr. Lancellotta was working by  
 14 himself and the other French teacher was working by  
 15 herself. There was no collaboration there.  
 16 Q So there were only two world teachers at the middle  
 17 school, is that correct?  
 18 A Yes, that is correct.  
 19 Q And Mr. Lancellotta is teaching Italian and Spanish?  
 20 A Yes.  
 21 Q And who is teaching French?  
 22 A And I can say her name on this or?  
 23 Q You can say her name.  
 24 A Danielle Campbell is the French teacher. She also

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1 teaches literacy and library, that type of thing.  
 2 Q Did she express to you she wanted to collaborate with  
 3 Mr. Lancellotta?  
 4 A She was very excited when he first started and she was  
 5 looking for collaborating, having somebody there to  
 6 share, to work on things together, work on activities,  
 7 because even though they're different languages, the  
 8 techniques are the same, the activities are the same,  
 9 but with a different language.  
 10 Q And did you observe Mr. Lancellotta collaborating with  
 11 the French teacher?  
 12 A No, I never observed them together.  
 13 Q Okay. All right. So you testified earlier about the  
 14 history of the world languages department and the fact  
 15 that it was recently re-established. Did that effect  
 16 how you felt about interaction within the department?  
 17 A Yeah. I mean, it's a team effort. You know, for both  
 18 schools, for both Deering and the high school, working  
 19 together, and, again, our objective is to turn kids onto  
 20 the language, give them a positive experience, encourage  
 21 them to continue their study, but also know the kids  
 22 well enough so that you can actually help them make a  
 23 decision when it comes time to sign up for high school  
 24 classes. So, help them choose. So by knowing the kids

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1 interacting, having that comfort with them, again, you  
 2 are assisting them. Knowing the kids will help you help  
 3 them. Because, again, if you know that the student is  
 4 from a French background and he said, well, I don't know  
 5 what language to take, but my family is French, well,  
 6 that might be something that you can talk out, okay, or  
 7 you come from an Italian background, or if you know that  
 8 the person is a native Spanish-speaking you might say,  
 9 well, now is the opportunity to go to Italian or French  
 10 because you have already mastered Spanish. So, those  
 11 are the things, you need to know the students so you can  
 12 **actually help them out that way.**

13 Q And would you discuss students as a group in your world  
 14 languages department meetings?

15 A Yeah, because we would have students, you know, work in  
 16 **other different classes, visit classes, do**  
 17 **presentations, that type of thing, so that often**  
 18 **occurred.**

19 Q Did you have the opportunity to evaluate Mr. Lancellotta  
 20 in the '18/'19 school year?

21 A **I was not his evaluator. I did two informal**  
 22 **observations.**

23 Q And how did those informal observations go?

24 A **I did one in, it was January of 2019 and another one in**

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1 February of 2019, and, again, I found that he delivered  
 2 the curriculum, it was planned, it was structured, it  
 3 was organized in that way, but I think that, I didn't  
 4 see a lot of communication, it was more teacher to  
 5 class, it's the teacher to student, teacher to student.  
 6 It was general to the entire group for the most part.  
 7 Again, there were some smaller interactions, but, again,  
 8 it was teacher to class. He was serious. That's the  
 9 way he always is. He's serious. And that type.

10 Q So were you concerned about the fact that he was very  
 11 serious and there wasn't a lot of interaction with  
 12 individual students?

13 A It did concern me because, again, I'm worried about the  
 14 interactions because it has a lot to do with the program  
 15 development.

16 Q Okay. Did you get the chance to evaluate  
 17 Mr. Lancellotta in the '19/'20 school year?

18 A **Yes, I did. It was a different type of evaluation**  
 19 **though than the first year.**

20 Q How so, briefly how so?

21 A **It is a complicated process, but it's called a DEP**  
 22 **process, where it is the Differentiated Evaluation**  
 23 **Process, so it's not the full, okay, it's the off-year,**  
 24 **you could call it, and in this case you're not evaluated**

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1 on all of the indicators, okay, but some of them, and  
 2 the teacher actually gets to choose the indicators, they  
 3 get to choose the indicators. The evaluator goes in,  
 4 and the way this works is there's usually a formal  
 5 evaluation and then the teacher works with a teacher  
 6 partner, and the objective is to discuss good practice,  
 7 teaching and collaborate together, okay. So, I went in  
 8 to do the evaluation, I score and rate, and then, of  
 9 course, the teacher and the partner go over the ratings,  
 10 they discuss them, and, again, there's sometimes  
 11 movement in those ratings, because the teacher can also  
 12 **bring other evidence to the floor at that time.**

13 Q What did you think about Mr. Lancellotta's interaction  
 14 with students during those observations?

15 A Again, during the observation I found the same thing I  
 16 found before, the curriculum was delivered. Again, it  
 17 was a lot of teacher-to-class interaction. There was  
 18 some teacher-to-student interaction, too, but it was to  
 19 **a minimal degree. I just didn't...**

20 Q For the record, I received something asking me to go to  
 21 the break-out room. I think it was just a mistake.

22 A **Me, too. I will cancel. Or should I go to the**  
 23 **break-out room to find out?**

24 Q No, I don't think so.

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1 Did you have any concerns about those student  
 2 interactions in the '19/'20 observation?

3 A Again, I didn't see any difference from the previous  
 4 year. It was about the same. So, I did not see any  
 5 growth or an increase, that type of thing.

6 Q Do you think that interacting with the students when  
 7 you're teaching a world language is important?

8 A Again, interaction, oral communication is the basis for  
 9 language learning, and, again, it's our job as language  
 10 teachers to make students comfortable, make them feel  
 11 nurtured, give them an understanding environment and be  
 12 **patient with them as they learn and develop the**  
 13 **language, and the only way to do that is by interacting.**

14 Q And based on your observations do you feel that  
 15 Mr. Lancellotta was doing that?

16 A **I saw him teach his class, but I did not see the**  
 17 **individualized type interaction.**

18 Q Okay. Did you have any other opportunities to observe  
 19 Mr. Lancellotta interacting with students outside of  
 20 those observations that you have spoken about?

21 A **Again, I could see him on hall duty, lab duties**  
 22 **sometimes, in the hall, that type of thing. And,**  
 23 **sometimes I would have to drop off something to the room**  
 24 **and I would go in there and drop something off and then**



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1 leave.

2 Q What did you think about his rapport with students

3 during those observations?

4 A Again, usually he was working alone at the desk, or

5 wherever he was stationed. Again, when I had to go into

6 the room, the students are usually working on the

7 Chromebook or doing some written activity.

8 Q And did that concern you?

9 A It did.

10 Q Okay. How come?

11 A Because, again, I didn't see interaction between the

12 teacher and the student.

13 Q So at the end of the '18/'19 school year how did you

14 feel Mr. Lancellotta's overall job performance was based

15 on your observation?

16 A Again, I felt he was delivering the curriculum. Again,

17 I was concerned about interaction, not only with

18 students, but, again, with the department members and

19 even with the faculty. When I used to go there in the

20 morning, he was sitting in his room alone. I never --

21 once in a while there was another teacher there, the

22 person that was next door once in a while would be

23 there. But even, like, before class, again, I see

24 everybody out in the hallway, all of the music teachers

Page 66

1 are together, and then I saw the art teachers together

2 and that was it. I didn't see --

3 Q You never saw him collaborating with his department?

4 A No. It was before class, on hall duty before the

5 students, they were going to their lockers, that type of

6 thing.

7 Q So did you continue to meet with Mr. Lancellotta during

8 the '19/'20 school year?

9 A Yes, the same type of schedule, two to three times per

10 week.

11 Q I know that you said you got to observe him during that

12 time as part of the DEP process. Did you get to observe

13 him beyond that, or, you know, see him at school?

14 A Well, just like I said, in the hall duty, that type of

15 thing.

16 Q Did you notice any improvement during that time, from

17 the '18/'19 school year?

18 A It was the same. I didn't see any difference.

19 Q Okay. Did you relay the concerns that you said that you

20 had during the '18/'19 school year and then again in the

21 '19/'20 school year to anyone else?

22 A I did, yes.

23 Q Who did you relay those concerns to?

24 A I relayed them to Phil Solomon, who was the director of

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1 secondary education.

2 Q How did you meet with him, or how did it come about that

3 you relayed those concerns?

4 A It was after the evaluation, because we did the DEP

5 evaluation on the 14th of November, and then the

6 evaluation came out with the scores, and, again, I felt

7 that the evaluation really didn't reflect the

8 performance that I was seeing, so it didn't reflect that

9 interaction with the faculty, with the students,

10 according to the ratings.

11 Q Okay. Go ahead.

12 A I had a lot of issues to talk to Phil about at the

13 middle school in terms of the program, scheduling, in

14 terms of open house, conferences, policy, and then I had

15 the concern about Mr. Lancellotta.

16 MS. LOMBARDO: Okay. And I'm now just

17 going to mark what we have marked as School Committee

18 Exhibit 1, and, I don't know, I know we haven't really

19 gone over how we're going to do this yet, but are you

20 going to share your screen, Attorney Ruggiero?

21 MR. RUGGERIO: Yes. So let me try do

22 that now.

23 MS. RAPPORT: So we're on 1.

24 MS. LOMBARDO: Yes, 1.

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1 (Whereupon School Committee's Exhibit 1 is

2 marked for identification.)

3 Q Okay.

4 A It's very, very, very small, but I see a little box, but

5 that's about it.

6 Q So I can see it.

7 MS. RAPPORT: Can you maybe enlarge it a

8 little bit?

9 Q Okay. So, Mr. Giovanelli, can you see this now?

10 A Yes, it is a little clearer, yes, yes.

11 Q Can you tell us what this is?

12 A Yes. It is an email that I wrote to Phil Solomon on

13 December 14th.

14 Q And why did you write this email to Phil Solomon on

15 December 14th?

16 A I think we have to scroll down because I think this is

17 his answer back. Yeah, again, this was to setup a

18 meeting about some concerns I had at the middle school.

19 Q And one of those concerns you testified to earlier was

20 about Mr. Lancellotta's job performance?

21 A Yes, and also some activities at the middle school that

22 I wanted to bring to his attention.

23 MS. LOMBARDO: Okay. I would ask to

24 move this as a full exhibit.

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1 **MS. RAPPORT:** No objection.  
 2 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Can you hear me. I am  
 3 sorry.  
 4 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Yes.  
 5 **MR. RUGGERIO:** The exhibit will be  
 6 entered as School Exhibit Committee Exhibit 1 in full.  
 7 I will circulate with the committee during their  
 8 deliberations.  
 9 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Thank you.  
 10 (Whereupon School Committee's Exhibit 1 is  
 11 marked a full exhibit.)  
 12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I don't think we need to  
 13 share it anymore.  
 14 Q And so you said the purpose of this meeting was to share  
 15 some concerns at the middle school, including about  
 16 Mr. Lancellotta's job performance?  
 17 A Yes.  
 18 Q Did you ever document your concerns with respect to  
 19 Mr. Lancellotta's job performance?  
 20 A I did.  
 21 Q Okay. And now I'm going to ask, you know, if you can  
 22 put up the exhibit that we've marked as School Committee  
 23 Exhibit 2 in our prior communications. Can you folks  
 24 see this document. This one is going to be a little bit

Page 70

1 more difficult. I'm going to try to zoom in so you can  
 2 see a little bit.  
 3 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Maybe at the bottom.  
 4 Yeah. And, if you wouldn't mind, Attorney Ruggiero, if  
 5 you can go down to number five. Thank you. Okay.  
 6 Q Mr. Giovanelli, can you tell me, since these are your  
 7 notes, this is in your handwriting, correct?  
 8 A Yes, it is.  
 9 Q Can you tell me what this is?  
 10 A This is a summary of the notes I brought to the meeting.  
 11 Q The meeting with --  
 12 A With Mr. Solomon on the 18th of December.  
 13 Q I'm just going to ask you, because this is in your  
 14 handwriting, to read that number five in the record for  
 15 us, please.  
 16 **MS. RAPPORT:** I would like -- are we  
 17 looking at the whole document or a part of it? I feel  
 18 like -- I don't think this is a full description of the  
 19 document.  
 20 **MR. RUGGERIO:** This is a zoomed-in  
 21 version of the document.  
 22 **MS. LOMBARDO:** It's a zoomed-in version.  
 23 The relevant portion for our proceeding is number five,  
 24 but.

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1 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Well, let me just  
 2 identify --  
 3 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I can have him read the  
 4 whole thing if you want.  
 5 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Before we do that,  
 6 Aubrey, let me identify this as, this is a one-page  
 7 document, this seems to reflect the entirety of the  
 8 document, and if you want to start at the top, I will  
 9 begin at the top for you, Mr. Giovanelli.  
 10 **THE WITNESS:** Sure. Blow it up again.  
 11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** How is that?  
 12 **THE WITNESS:** That's fine.  
 13 A So Phil Solomon, we had the meeting on 12/18/19. The  
 14 first issue was the schedule for the 20/2021 school  
 15 year, seventh grade, five French classes, eighth grade  
 16 five classes, three Italian, two Spanish. The seventh  
 17 grade would be the Spanish.  
 18 Then we have the middle school open house because  
 19 there was some concern about how it was run, maybe to  
 20 change the open house procedure. Then conferences for  
 21 middle school, again, and Mr. Solomon said to talk to  
 22 Betsy about it, that's why Betsy's name was on the side.  
 23 And then I had some things about the field trip policy,  
 24 children start paying for field trips, that type of

Page 72

1 thing.  
 2 Q And now number five -- oh, sorry.  
 3 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes, I want to scroll  
 4 down.  
 5 A Okay. And the "JL" refers to John Lancellotta, and I  
 6 did two informals. Jeff had just left. He was the  
 7 previous principal of Deering. There were two new  
 8 principals, and that was why I went to Phil, because  
 9 these new principals had just started. I didn't think  
 10 they had enough experience with -- didn't know the staff  
 11 or faculty, and I knew Phil very well, because, again,  
 12 we worked, he was my principal, and he was the assistant  
 13 principal, too, so we worked together for many years at  
 14 the high school, and I said that I did the DEP this year  
 15 on November 14th. I wanted to talk about the  
 16 interaction, again, I have "wall cold," that -- in terms  
 17 of interaction like stone, like stonewall cold, that  
 18 type of thing. I think we need to go a little bit more  
 19 to the left so I can see the rest of that. So,  
 20 interacting, personality.  
 21 Q So when you say stonewall cold, you're referring to  
 22 Mr. Lancellotta and your observation of him?  
 23 A Just the seriousness during the lesson, yes.  
 24 Q Okay. Continue.

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1 **A** Okay. Then I said delivers instruction. Interactions,  
 2 again, with students, then with the faculty. Because,  
 3 again, I had seen him isolated, and then with the  
 4 department, how there was lacking, it was minimum. And  
 5 the last thing is lack of collaboration, communications,  
 6 connections, and, again, I had kids there.  
 7 **Q** And this was all in reference to Mr. Lancellotta?  
 8 **A** Yes.  
 9 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I would ask to move this  
 10 as a full exhibit, also.  
 11 **MS. RAPPORT:** No objection.  
 12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Thank you.  
 13 **MR. RUGGERIO:** The exhibit will be  
 14 entered into as full as School Committee Exhibit 2.  
 15 (Whereupon School Committee's Exhibit 2 is  
 16 marked a full exhibit.)  
 17 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Thank you.  
 18 **Q** So you used these notes for your meeting with  
 19 Mr. Solomon?  
 20 **A** Just to remember my points and to stay on task.  
 21 **Q** Okay. And what did you discuss in that meeting?  
 22 **A** Well, first of all, Mr. Solomon, when we went in, he  
 23 started talking about his own children, they're students  
 24 in Narragansett, they go to elementary school there, and

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1 they're taking Spanish at the elementary school, and he  
 2 said, oh, why aren't we doing this in our elementary  
 3 schools here and why aren't we doing it in the middle  
 4 school, like in grades five and six, early on instead of  
 5 waiting until grade seven and eight. And he said, why  
 6 can't we bring Spanish down to, you know, fifth and  
 7 sixth grade, and, again, once he made that statement, I  
 8 started to get a little concerned, because, again, that  
 9 would be moving Spanish to an earlier grade, elementary  
 10 or fifth or sixth, and Mr. Lancellotta, of course, would  
 11 be responsible for teaching the elementary school  
 12 students. So, I was a little concerned about  
 13 interaction with elementary school students, too.  
 14 **Q** Why were you concerned about interaction with elementary  
 15 school students?  
 16 **A** I think just the seriousness, again, in terms of the  
 17 elementary type, the structure, that type of thing that  
 18 he had, the idea of the seriousness.  
 19 **Q** Okay. So you thought he would not be successful with  
 20 connecting with elementary school students?  
 21 **A** No, I didn't think so.  
 22 **Q** Okay. And what else did you discuss with Mr. Solomon?  
 23 **A** Again, those other issues, around the --  
 24 **Q** And what other issues, can you elaborate for us, do you

Page 75

1 remember specifically what you talked about?  
 2 **A** Well, about the schedule, the open house, the  
 3 conferences, the field trips.  
 4 **Q** And with respect to Mr. Lancellotta?  
 5 **A** Again, in terms of those issues that we had talked  
 6 about, again, about, I was concerned about the program.  
 7 Again, remember, the program had been cut a few years  
 8 ago, so I was worried about it being cut again. We  
 9 wanted to give the strongest program that we can to our  
 10 students. I was a little concerned also about students,  
 11 you know, in terms of their interactions. I was  
 12 concerned about the department, the collaboration  
 13 between the department members there. It has to be a  
 14 team effort. It has got to be shared throughout the  
 15 school, and that's the best way to do it, together as a  
 16 team. Again, the communications, the connections, the  
 17 collaboration, and I didn't see that again in my  
 18 observations with the faculty, with the department  
 19 member, and, again, with the students.  
 20 **Q** From Mr. Lancellotta?  
 21 **A** Yes.  
 22 **Q** By the time that you went to Phil Solomon to voice your  
 23 concerns, how concerned were you?  
 24 **A** I was concerned.

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1 **Q** And you relayed all of this to Mr. Solomon?  
 2 **A** I did, yes.  
 3 **Q** Did you feel at that point by the time you had this  
 4 meeting that there was anything else that you could do  
 5 as the department head to support Mr. Lancellotta in  
 6 improving his job performance?  
 7 **A** I mean, I went down two or three times a week. Any  
 8 assistance, we did the evaluations together, talked  
 9 about different points, made suggestions, that type of  
 10 thing. So there was nothing else I could do at this  
 11 point.  
 12 **Q** Okay. And I'll just shift a little bit. Did John  
 13 Lancellotta ever speak to you about the union or his  
 14 union membership?  
 15 **A** There was a couple of meetings that we had to discuss  
 16 some Union. He had some questions about the Union dues.  
 17 **Q** Okay. Okay. Go ahead.  
 18 **A** I was involved immediately, but I guess he had some  
 19 questions about Union dues, so he went to Mr. Doyle, and  
 20 then because they didn't know each other well I think  
 21 Mr. Doyle suggested that I also could attend because I  
 22 knew John, I was a department head, we worked together,  
 23 and so I guess John said, yes, I was invited to come to  
 24 the meeting, which I did.

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1 Q Okay. And there were two meetings, correct?

2 A **Yes, there were two meetings.**

3 Q How long did those meetings last?

4 A **It was brief. I mean, maybe 15 minutes, something like**

5 **that, 20 minutes.**

6 Q Okay. And what did you perceive as your role of those

7 meetings?

8 A **I was just sitting there observing.**

9 Q How did you feel that those meetings went?

10 A **They were totally fine, very professional, pleasant,**

11 **and, again, I think the result, the final result was an**

12 **agreement between the two of them. Everything was**

13 **resolved. Everything was fine.**

14 Q What was your understanding of the agreement between the

15 two of them?

16 A **The agreement between the two, again, that a certain**

17 **percentage of -- he wouldn't have to pay a certain**

18 **percentage of dues to the Union, that that percentage**

19 **could, if he wanted to, voluntarily be donated to a**

20 **scholarship committee, to the West Warwick students, the**

21 **high school students at the end of the year.**

22 Q Okay. And so when you left you felt like he was fine,

23 everything was fine?

24 A **Everything was resolved, everybody was happy and that**

Page 78

1 **was it.**

2 Q Did he ever speak to you about the Union after that

3 point?

4 A **No.**

5 Q All right. Did Mr. Lancellotta's position with respect

6 to the Union and these meetings that you had, or

7 anything about his issues with the dues influence you in

8 deciding to speak to Phil Solomon?

9 A **No.**

10 Q In your time as department head, approximately how many

11 teachers have you worked with and had the opportunity to

12 observe?

13 A **Probably well over a hundred.**

14 Q Have you ever seen another teacher have as little

15 interaction with students as Mr. Lancellotta had?

16 A **No.**

17 Q Have you ever seen another teacher have as little

18 collaboration with other teachers as Mr. Lancellotta

19 had?

20 A **No.**

21 Q In your time as department head approximately how many

22 teachers have you been a part of hiring?

23 A **In world languages I also served on administrative**

24 **interviews, I have done budget interviews, club**

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1 **interviews. I have a done a lot of interviewing.**

2 Q Okay. Let's start with overall, anyone that you have

3 been a part of hiring for the district?

4 A **As sitting on the interview or?**

5 Q Visiting the interview committee?

6 A **Hundreds. In my years since I started hundreds.**

7 Q Okay. How about teachers, how many teachers,

8 approximately, do you think you interviewed for world

9 languages positions?

10 A **I would say 40 to 50.**

11 Q Do you feel at the time that Mr. Lancellotta was

12 non-renewed that the district could find a more

13 qualified candidate for the middle school world

14 languages position than him?

15 A **Yes.**

16 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Okay. No further

17 questions. Thank you.

18 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Ms. Rapport.

19 **CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT**

20 Q Good evening.

21 A **Good evening. How are you?**

22 Q I want to get your name pronounced correctly.

23 A **Giovanelli. I don't have your name either because it**

24 **says unknown, so I don't know who you are.**

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1 Q I'm Sara Rapport. You may call me Sara.

2 A **Okay. Sorry.**

3 Q Nice to meet you.

4 A **Same here.**

5 Q So your role as department head is, among other things,

6 to help with the evaluation to conduct evaluations of

7 your colleagues; is that correct?

8 A **Usually the first year that the teachers are there,**

9 **there is another evaluator from central office that does**

10 **it, and I usually do an informal as part of the**

11 **language. They want to make sure that the foreign**

12 **language, because they can't always understand what's**

13 **going on in the class, so I'm there kind of just to**

14 **confirm that they have the language ability, grammatical**

15 **ability, vocabulary, that type of thing.**

16 Q Okay. And in doing that work do you have communications

17 with the principal, is that someone that you would work

18 with in doing the evaluations at the middle school?

19 A **Yes, they usually assign evaluators, that type of thing,**

20 **yes.**

21 Q Okay. And in the '18/'19 school year, you said that

22 when Mr. Lancellotta started there, there were two world

23 language teachers at the middle school; is that correct?

24 A **Well, there are two teachers there, yes.**

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1 Q So there are two at the middle school and then another  
2 cohort of which you are a member at the high school,  
3 right?  
4 A Yes.  
5 Q You teach at the high school, right?  
6 A Yes.  
7 Q And how many teachers, world language teachers are at  
8 the high school?  
9 A **There are five.**  
10 Q So the whole department, if you include the two plus the  
11 five is a department of seven?  
12 A Yes.  
13 Q And that's the group that would meet, you said monthly?  
14 A **Sometimes it's every four to six weeks.**  
15 Q Okay.  
16 A **The way it's scheduled is sometimes the meetings would**  
17 **be together, but mostly they weren't because of the time**  
18 **schedule, but I used to have breakfast to try to bring**  
19 **both departments together.**  
20 Q So sometimes you, when you say it was four to six weeks  
21 you would meet, try to meet as seven, but you're saying  
22 that didn't always happen that way?  
23 A **What do you mean, before school, the time meaning?**  
24 Q When you met as a department did you meet as a group of

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1 seven, including yourself?  
2 A **Sometimes yes, sometimes no.**  
3 Q How often would you meet as a group of seven?  
4 A **It all depended because it all depended on the topics**  
5 **that were covered. Sometimes we had topics that were,**  
6 **sometimes we had topics that were just high school or**  
7 **sometimes they were just middle school. So I would say**  
8 **we had the better day in March. We probably had two**  
9 **breakfast, so at least three times probably.**  
10 Q So in the '18/'19 school year you met as a group of  
11 seven, you're saying three times?  
12 A **It could be two to three times, sure.**  
13 Q And you're saying that was a breakfast meeting?  
14 A **Usually we would have a kind of professional breakfast,**  
15 **bring everyone together so people could see each other,**  
16 **get to talk, meet, that type of thing.**  
17 Q Okay. And I would assume that would be before school  
18 started?  
19 A Yes.  
20 Q Okay. And so -- and now I'm trying to focus you a  
21 little bit because I know it's difficult sometimes to  
22 remember, but in the '18/'19 school year you're saying  
23 you met as a group of seven two to three times as a  
24 breakfast, right?

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1 A **We met a couple of times as a breakfast and then we had**  
2 **the embedded day in March where the whole department**  
3 **gets together at the central office.**  
4 Q And that was all seven?  
5 A **Now in terms of other meetings, like we have people --**  
6 Q Wait, I am sorry to interrupt you, but I need you to  
7 finish that point. Was that March meeting in '18/'19,  
8 was that all seven of you?  
9 A **Yes, that was all seven.**  
10 Q And that was like a PD day?  
11 A **Yes, it was an embedded day, we call it.**  
12 Q Okay. And there was professional development that day  
13 for the seven of you?  
14 A Yes.  
15 Q Yes?  
16 A Yes.  
17 Q So in the '18/'19 school year there were two to three  
18 breakfast meetings as a group of seven and then one  
19 professional development day that was embedded?  
20 A Yes.  
21 Q Okay. And then were there other meetings that were just  
22 the middle school teachers, not the high school  
23 teachers, or when you say there were other meetings in  
24 which the seven didn't participate, are you saying that

Page 84

1 you had your own high school meetings that were not  
2 including the middle school teachers; is that correct?  
3 A **The first day of school we have a high school meeting**  
4 **because we're dealing with different topics, and then**  
5 **the first day of school we have middle school because,**  
6 **again, the topics are very different. So to bring**  
7 **everyone together, so I do two meetings on that first**  
8 **day.**  
9 Q So you do one meeting at the high school and one meeting  
10 at the middle school?  
11 A Yes.  
12 Q The meeting at the middle school was just with John and  
13 the French teacher?  
14 A Yes.  
15 Q And that French teacher also you're saying did digital  
16 literacy and library teaching?  
17 A Yes.  
18 Q Okay. And John taught both Spanish and English and I  
19 think his schedule was something like two classes?  
20 A **Spanish and Italian, not English.**  
21 Q I am sorry, two classes of Spanish and three units of  
22 Italian, is that about right?  
23 A **Yes, three units, three classes of eighth grade Italian**  
24 **and two classes of seventh grade.**

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1 Q Three classes of eighth grade Italian and two classes of  
2 seventh grade Spanish?

3 A **Spanish, yes. And, it was really more because they meet  
4 on trimesters, so they meet for 60 days. That's another  
5 scheduling...**

6 Q Okay. So, other than the first day of high school and  
7 the first day of middle school, were there any other  
8 meetings, department meetings at the middle school that  
9 you were present at in the '18/'19 school years?

10 A **I was present at all of the meetings.**

11 Q Okay. Well, what other meetings were there at the  
12 middle school besides the first day of school with John  
13 and the French teacher, what other kinds?

14 A **Just middle school students you're talking about, yes.**

15 Q Okay. Yes. What?

16 A **Yes, that would be the first one. That would be it.**

17 Q So, that was the middle school meeting on like  
18 orientation day, kind of thing?

19 A **Yes.**

20 Q And, in addition, and your office and your space is at  
21 the high school, that's where you were, right?

22 A **Yes.**

23 Q And so the first two to three weeks of school you came  
24 by pretty frequently -- that John started and I'm still

Page 86

1 in the '18/'19 school year?

2 A **Yes.**

3 Q Two to three weeks you were there pretty regularly, is  
4 that fair to say?

5 A **Yes.**

6 Q Okay. And you would come by and sort of get him going  
7 and acclimated, is that true?

8 A **Go over what are you going to do for the day, plus there  
9 were emails, communications, yes, they have questions  
10 like that.**

11 Q And after that two to three weeks, and when you came  
12 in --

13 **MS. RAPPORT: I am sorry, strike that.**

14 Q When you met with him was it early in the day before  
15 classes started?

16 A **Yes.**

17 Q So like what time does -- like, could it have been as  
18 early as like 6:15/6:30?

19 A **It was usually quarter of 7:00, 7:00 o'clock, that type  
20 of thing, as I try to find time to meet with both  
21 Danielle and John.**

22 Q Okay. And was Danielle's space near John's or was it a  
23 different space?

24 A **It's in the vicinity.**

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1 Q Okay. It wasn't next door, right?

2 A **Not next door. You have to go up the hallway, but it's  
3 right there.**

4 Q Okay. So you would meet with John at 6:45.  
5 Approximately how long would you sit with him?

6 A **Sometimes it could be 20 minutes, it might be longer. I  
7 would split the time between the two of them equally,  
8 when possible.**

9 Q And this is before class started, correct?

10 A **Yes.**

11 Q And you did that, you said for two to three weeks, and  
12 then did you continue to meet with him first thing in  
13 the morning after that?

14 A **Again, I used to go to the middle school two to three  
15 times per week for the entire year.**

16 Q Okay. And that was -- you would go again first thing in  
17 the morning always before classes start?

18 A **Yes.**

19 Q Okay. And what time did classes actually start?

20 A **Well, my class starts at 7:30, but sometimes I was free  
21 for the first period, so it gave me the opportunity to  
22 stay a little later, but sometimes I had to be back for  
23 7:30.**

24 Q What time did classes start at the middle school?

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1 A **Well, they had homeroom at quarter of 8:00, 8:00.**

2 Q When did the classes begin, if you know?

3 A **I would say 8:00 o'clock. I don't know because now it's  
4 COVID. It's a different schedule. It's hard to keep  
5 all the years. But, I would say it is in the 8:00  
6 vicinity.**

7 Q It's fair to say you would leave from your early morning  
8 meeting before the students convene for classes at the  
9 middle school?

10 A **Sometimes it ran later and students were coming in.**

11 Q Did you stay to watch any classes or did you get back to  
12 the high school?

13 A **I mean sometimes I had to talk and kids were coming into  
14 the room, that type of thing.**

15 Q Now, in the '19/'20 school year, did you, and I know  
16 that's an odd school year because that's the one that  
17 ended in March, but from September to March did you have  
18 any -- how many seven-person team meetings did you have  
19 in that period of time, if you can estimate?

20 A **I think maybe we had one or two. I'm not positive.**

21 Q Do you recall an embedded day in March last year, did it  
22 happen?

23 A **We were supposed to have it. School was locked down on  
24 the 13th. We were supposed to have it on that Monday.**

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1 Q So, no, it didn't happen?  
 2 A **No, it didn't happen this year.**  
 3 Q So one or two group meetings in the '19/'20 school year.  
 4 And did you also have the orientation day as you did in  
 5 the prior school year?  
 6 A **Yes.**  
 7 Q And, again, that was with Danielle?  
 8 A **Yes.**  
 9 Q Is that right?  
 10 A **Yes.**  
 11 Q Okay. Now, in those two to three weeks --  
 12 **MS. RAPPORT:** Well, strike that.  
 13 Q Okay. In that '18/'19 school year you said that you did  
 14 the informal observations of Mr. Lancellotta as part of  
 15 his evaluation, is that correct?  
 16 A **Yes.**  
 17 Q And do you use the RIDE evaluation instrument or some  
 18 other document to use to evaluate teachers?  
 19 A **It's the district evaluation instrument.**  
 20 Q So it's different from the Rhode Island Department of  
 21 Education?  
 22 A **Yes.**  
 23 **MS. RAPPORT:** And I would like to call  
 24 up, Mr. Ruggiero, Charlie, if you would, Exhibits A, B,

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1 C.  
 2 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Let's do one at a time.  
 3 I am going to struggle doing one. So, which one would  
 4 you like me to start with?  
 5 **MS. RAPPORT:** I would start with A.  
 6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Okay. Sara, can you walk  
 7 me through where you want me on this particular document  
 8 as we go through it?  
 9 **MS. RAPPORT:** So, could you hold on one  
 10 second.  
 11 Q If I can, let me ask you this, who was doing the full  
 12 evaluation?  
 13 A **That was someone from the central office.**  
 14 Q Who was it?  
 15 A **I believe it was Paul Bovenzi.**  
 16 Q And did you get asked to participate in the informal  
 17 observations by Mr. Paul Bovenzi or someone else?  
 18 A **Yes.**  
 19 Q So it was Mr. Bovenzi who asked to do the informal  
 20 observation?  
 21 A **Yeah.**  
 22 Q And so looking at Exhibit A, were you familiar with --  
 23 did you review this prior to doing your informal  
 24 observations?

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1 A **Yes.**  
 2 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Can we establish what  
 3 Exhibit A is yet? Because I don't think it's as a full  
 4 exhibit.  
 5 **MS. RAPPORT:** It isn't because I was  
 6 questioning him about it.  
 7 Q Did you review this document before you did your  
 8 informal observations?  
 9 A **Okay. We have to blow it up a little bit so I can see**  
 10 **it.**  
 11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sure. I'm sorry. How is  
 12 that?  
 13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Click the plus a little  
 14 bit. A little bit. A little bit more.  
 15 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Is that okay,  
 16 Mr. Giovanelli. More?  
 17 A **So this is the student, the SLO.**  
 18 Q Did you review this before doing the informal  
 19 observation?  
 20 A **We probably went over it, yes.**  
 21 Q When you say we, who would that be?  
 22 A **It would be John and I.**  
 23 Q You would go over it before you would do the informal  
 24 observation?

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1 A **The informal usually is about a couple of -- the**  
 2 **indicators that weren't viewed during the full**  
 3 **evaluation, so an informal is kind of an opportunity to**  
 4 **go in and actually find evidence that maybe they didn't**  
 5 **see during the full evaluation process.**  
 6 Q So, when you say you went over it, did you essentially  
 7 prepare and work with -- not prepare, but work with  
 8 Mr. Lancellotta as he went through the evaluation  
 9 process in the '18/'19 school year?  
 10 A **We worked together, yes, definitely.**  
 11 Q Okay. So you helped him in developing his student  
 12 learning objectives?  
 13 A **Exactly.**  
 14 Q How often did you meet to talk about -- how many of your  
 15 meetings would you say you did discuss or talk about the  
 16 evaluation process, if you could put just an estimate on  
 17 it?  
 18 A **I couldn't even say. I mean, there were so many**  
 19 **different pieces.**  
 20 Q But regularly, would it be fair to say regularly?  
 21 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm going to object.  
 22 That's a very -- not a definitive term. I don't know  
 23 what regularly means.  
 24 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Let me make sure my mic

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1 is on. I think he can answer as to what it means to  
 2 him. Do you understand the question, Mr. Giovanelli?  
 3 **A The question again?**  
 4 **Q** Did you regularly speak with Mr. Lancellotta about the  
 5 evaluation process during the '18/'19 school year?  
 6 **A It usually happens in pieces, like you have to first**  
 7 **submit goals, SLO's, then the evaluation starts, so it's**  
 8 **not every week. You know, it's different times. But,**  
 9 **we would speak about it, any questions going over it,**  
 10 **ideas, that type of thing.**  
 11 **Q** More than once a week?  
 12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm going to object again  
 13 because he said it's in chunks. It wasn't a weekly  
 14 thing. It happened at a time. I think we get the  
 15 point, yes, they talked about it, it happened at  
 16 different points. He didn't testify weekly. In fact,  
 17 he really testified, no, it wasn't, you know, regularly  
 18 in terms of meeting at the same time every week or  
 19 whatever.  
 20 **MS. RAPPORT:** I would just ask  
 21 Ms. Lombardo to confine her objections to a basis under  
 22 the rules as opposed to an argument and sort of a  
 23 long-winded description of what her concerns are with  
 24 the question.

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1 **MS. LOMBARDO:** My concern was that he  
 2 testified to something other than what you were  
 3 asserting that he said.  
 4 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Let's go back.  
 5 **MS. RAPPORT:** I'll restate it.  
 6 **Q** When you were working on the student learning  
 7 objectives, there are two, correct?  
 8 **A Yes.**  
 9 **Q** Okay. And about how many times did you speak with  
 10 Mr. Lancellotta during the period of time when you  
 11 worked on the student learning objectives?  
 12 **A Again, there was probably speaking, there were emails,**  
 13 **shared Google docs that we modified the wording, that**  
 14 **type of thing.**  
 15 **Q** So more than once?  
 16 **A Probably, yes.**  
 17 **Q** Half a dozen times?  
 18 **A Again, it's hard to say because there were so many**  
 19 **pieces, student learning objectives, PGG evaluation,**  
 20 **again, there's so many different pieces to it.**  
 21 **Q** Okay. Now, I would like you to -- I'd like to, and  
 22 you're familiar with this document, you've seen it  
 23 through working with Mr. Lancellotta, these are his  
 24 student learning objectives for the '18/'19 evaluation

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1 period, right?  
 2 **A Again, it's been a while since I've seen them, so.**  
 3 **Q** If you want to take a look at them, you may.  
 4 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Would you like me to  
 5 scroll down, Mr. Giovanelli?  
 6 **A Yes. If you could scroll down a little bit, okay. Hold**  
 7 **on. Now it got a little blurry. Okay.**  
 8 **Q** Is this familiar to you from your work with  
 9 Mr. Lancellotta?  
 10 **A Yes.**  
 11 **Q** And it shows that he has a student learning objective of  
 12 a written assessment and a student learning objective of  
 13 a listening assessment, is that correct?  
 14 **A Yes, yes, yes.**  
 15 **MS. RAPPORT:** So I'm going to move  
 16 Exhibit A in, please.  
 17 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I have no objection.  
 18 **MR. RUGGERIO:** The document is entered  
 19 as a Petitioner's Exhibit, or Town's Exhibit A.  
 20 (Whereupon Town's Exhibit A is marked a full  
 21 exhibit.)  
 22 **MS. RAPPORT:** Now, I would ask that we  
 23 put up Exhibit B, please.  
 24 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Mr. Giovanelli, just

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1 guide me as to how much you would like me to below this  
 2 up.  
 3 **A Okay. I think that it is a little blurry, but now that**  
 4 **you've -- lesson plan template. Okay. Okay. You can**  
 5 **scroll down.**  
 6 **Q** So is this document familiar to the lesson plan  
 7 template?  
 8 **A Yes.**  
 9 **Q** Now, it's not 100 percent clear from the document, but  
 10 is this a lesson plan template for the formal  
 11 observation?  
 12 **A That would have been for the formal one, yes.**  
 13 **Q** And you went over this lesson plan with Mr. Lancellotta  
 14 before the formal observation, is that true?  
 15 **A I was not his formal evaluator.**  
 16 **Q** Did you help him plan the lesson plan for the formal  
 17 observation?  
 18 **A Yes, I worked with him.**  
 19 **Q** So you weren't doing the formal observation, but it is  
 20 correct to say that you worked with him to develop this  
 21 lesson plan template?  
 22 **A Yes.**  
 23 **Q** Yes, is that right?  
 24 **A He wasn't familiar with the process in West Warwick, the**



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1 **wording, the actual process of loading it in, so it was**  
 2 **a new process.**  
 3 Q And did you discuss this lesson plan with him, the  
 4 substance of it?  
 5 A **Yes, I'm sure we had communications about it.**  
 6 Q Okay. And we talked about what he had hoped to  
 7 accomplish in that presentation, is that fair to say?  
 8 A **Yes.**  
 9 Q Okay. And in that lesson plan, which was to be  
 10 presented on the 12th, did you read it before he  
 11 presented it to the evaluator, did you read it in full?  
 12 A **I am sure I had looked over it.**  
 13 Q Okay. Did you think it was a good lesson plan?  
 14 A **Yes, I even worked together on it.**  
 15 Q Now, that formal observation took place you said on the  
 16 12th of December; is that right?  
 17 A **I didn't do the formal update.**  
 18 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I am just going to  
 19 object. I don't think he said anything about when it  
 20 took place.  
 21 Q Well, it says Wednesday, December 12, 2018. Is that the  
 22 date of the formal observation?  
 23 A **No. I did the observation on November 14th, 2019.**  
 24 **That would have been the other evaluator that did this**

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1 **one.**  
 2 Q My question to you, Mr. Giovanelli, is whether it was  
 3 your understanding that the formal observation in the  
 4 '18/'19 school year took place on Wednesday,  
 5 December 12, 2018?  
 6 A **I mean, I was not the evaluator, so I didn't set up the**  
 7 **date or time. We went over the ideas of the plan, but I**  
 8 **had nothing to do with this in terms of the actual**  
 9 **evaluation itself.**  
 10 Q Now, at the end of the -- or after the evaluation there  
 11 is a document called the PGR Reflection, and that's in  
 12 the back of Exhibit B. Do you see that there?  
 13 A **I do.**  
 14 Q Okay. It's on page eight.  
 15 A **Uh-hum.**  
 16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I'll bring you to page  
 17 eight.  
 18 Q And did you review this document, the PGR Reflection,  
 19 either on or about the date that it was written?  
 20 A **Probably, yes.**  
 21 Q Okay. And if you look up there, it says January 13,  
 22 2019. Is that about when you saw this PGR Reflection?  
 23 A **Is that '18 or '19?**  
 24 Q Nineteen.

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1 A **Okay, again, this would have been with the -- this would**  
 2 **have been the other evaluator. That was the first year**  
 3 **evaluation.**  
 4 Q My question is did you -- I understand this is part of  
 5 the first year evaluation. My question to you is  
 6 whether you read the PGR Reflection?  
 7 A **Yes, probably.**  
 8 Q And did you talk with Mr. Lancellotta about the PGR  
 9 Reflection?  
 10 A **We probably discussed it, yes.**  
 11 Q Okay. Do you remember talking with him about it?  
 12 A **We discussed -- I mean, the wording of how to put one**  
 13 **together, because he had never done a reflection before,**  
 14 **so I'm sure I even might have shared an example of mine**  
 15 **with him.**  
 16 Q And I'm going to ask that Exhibit B be put into as --  
 17 **MS. LOMBARDO:** No objection.  
 18 **MR. RUGGERIO:** The document is entered  
 19 full as Appellant Exhibit B.  
 20 (Whereupon Appellant Exhibit B is marked a  
 21 full exhibit.)  
 22 **MS. RAPPORT:** Now I'm asking for Exhibit  
 23 C to go up.  
 24 Q And do you recognize this document?

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1 A **When did it occur, when did this take place?**  
 2 Q I'm just going to ask you if you could look at it and  
 3 see if it's familiar to you?  
 4 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Just direct me on how you  
 5 want me to scroll down, Mr. Giovanelli.  
 6 A **If you can scroll down a little bit. Hold it right**  
 7 **there. This is probably the one that he shared with the**  
 8 **evaluator. Yes, this is the lesson plan.**  
 9 Q Okay. So this is a document, Exhibit C is a document  
 10 that reflects the preparation and planning for the  
 11 lesson that was delivered as part of his formal  
 12 observation in the '18/'19 school year, right?  
 13 A **I didn't do the evaluation.**  
 14 Q Okay. Did you see this document at any point?  
 15 A **Yes, we discussed the lesson plan.**  
 16 Q Did you see this outcome document with the effectiveness  
 17 ratings at the back? Did you ever look at that with  
 18 him?  
 19 A **Usually -- I mean we would see it on Aspen. We would**  
 20 **see the radio buttons, that type of thing. So I could**  
 21 **see it on a computer one, so that's why it looks very**  
 22 **different here.**  
 23 Q If you could go to page eight. And on page eight, am I  
 24 correct in surmising that this is the evaluator

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1 assessment of the quality of his lesson plan?  
 2 **A Is this the finished product or was this the one that**  
 3 **took place immediately after?**  
 4 **Q I'm asking you what this is.**  
 5 **A Well, I have to know when it took place. It would have**  
 6 **been shared -- this would have been shared after with me**  
 7 **and John, and then we would have looked at -- if this**  
 8 **was the first evaluation, then we would have looked at**  
 9 **the ratings, and we would say, well, maybe when you come**  
 10 **in for the informal you can find more evidence of 1.3.B**  
 11 **or 1.3.C and move up the ratings a little bit because**  
 12 **sometimes you don't see everything in one evaluation.**  
 13 **That's why the informals are there.**  
 14 **Q So, whatever this is, this appears to award**  
 15 **Mr. Lancellotta a highly effective on six of the**  
 16 **indicators and an effective on two with regard to the**  
 17 **lesson plan, is that fair to say?**  
 18 **A This would be for just category one, yes, indicator one.**  
 19 **Q Okay. Which is the preparation and --**  
 20 **A That's correct.**  
 21 **Q So what this shows is that Mr. Lancellotta scored highly**  
 22 **effective in five out of seven categories marked for his**  
 23 **lesson plan; is that true?**  
 24 **A Yes, that's what it states.**

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1 **Q Okay. And you knew that because you looked at it with**  
 2 **him, right?**  
 3 **A Again, when I saw it was on the computer, it looked**  
 4 **differently than this hard copy.**  
 5 **Q But we would agree that virtual or print, it's the same**  
 6 **point?**  
 7 **A These are the points, yes.**  
 8 **Q And it describes his preparation and planning, right?**  
 9 **A Yes.**  
 10 **Q Is that yes?**  
 11 **A Are you still talking about one or?**  
 12 **Q Well, preparation and planning implies lesson plans,**  
 13 **planning and prepping for class, so I think we're all**  
 14 **using the same words, right?**  
 15 **A I can only see one portion of the document. I can't see**  
 16 **the entire page, so.**  
 17 **Q Okay. Well, effective ratings is under 1, 1.1, 1.2,**  
 18 **1.3?**  
 19 **A Okay. Yes, that was for the ones, yes.**  
 20 **Q That's all the ones?**  
 21 **A Yes.**  
 22 **Q The categories for planning, correct?**  
 23 **A Yes.**  
 24 **Q Now, in Exhibit D, I would like that put up, if we**

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1 could.  
 2 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Are you moving this as a  
 3 full exhibit?  
 4 **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes, yes.  
 5 **MS. LOMBARDO:** No objection.  
 6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** The document is entered  
 7 full as Appellant's Exhibit C.  
 8 (Whereupon Appellant's Exhibit C is marked a  
 9 full exhibit.)  
 10 **Q Now, have you --**  
 11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** How is that, Mr.  
 12 Giovanelli.  
 13 **A Yes.**  
 14 **Q Can you see that?**  
 15 **A Well, are we looking at the rates or are we looking at**  
 16 **the --**  
 17 **MR. RUGGERIO:** No. This is Exhibit D.  
 18 **Q I would like you to take a chance, I know this is hard**  
 19 **because it's virtual, but if you, Mr. Giovanelli, could**  
 20 **just look at Exhibit G. If you can scroll down and if**  
 21 **you can tell us what this looks like to you?**  
 22 **A Okay. If we can scroll down a little bit more. Yes, we**  
 23 **can keep scrolling. This is the scripting each of the**  
 24 **indicators.**

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1 **Q So if we could maybe just take it back up to the top,**  
 2 **and this is tricky virtually, but perhaps I can move**  
 3 **this along, if you look at pages one, two, three, three,**  
 4 **four, five, six, seven, eight, and half of nine, is it**  
 5 **fair to say that this is the raw data for the formal**  
 6 **observation conducted by your central office colleague**  
 7 **whose name escapes me at the moment?**  
 8 **A It says raw evidence formal, yes.**  
 9 **Q So this is the raw evidence compiled by your colleague**  
 10 **who did the formal observation in or about December of**  
 11 **2018?**  
 12 **A Yes.**  
 13 **Q And what he is doing there in taking these notes, is**  
 14 **describing almost like a stenographer what's going on in**  
 15 **the class as he's watching it, right?**  
 16 **A Absolutely, that's what we do.**  
 17 **Q Okay. And at the top, if you look down, if you look, go**  
 18 **to the top of the page, and, again, this is, we know**  
 19 **it's not you who's doing this, it's your -- tell me his**  
 20 **name again?**  
 21 **A The full evaluator.**  
 22 **Q What's his name again?**  
 23 **A Bovenzi.**  
 24 **Q Bovenzi, he shows that at the start of the class, and if**

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1 you can just go down, go down the script a little bit,  
 2 go down the page, if you would, Charlie, it shows that  
 3 the teacher is a T and students are S, is that right?  
 4 **A That's correct.**  
 5 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I am just going to object  
 6 as to speculation. I understand we're talking about a  
 7 general form, but he didn't write this. I have an  
 8 objection as to speculation as to what all of these  
 9 things mean that he didn't write on this sheet.  
 10 **MS. RAPPORT:** Well, this is a format.  
 11 I'm going to let a ruling happen on this.  
 12 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Well, I believe he  
 13 testified that he's familiar with the document, that  
 14 he's familiar with the scripting process, that the T  
 15 indicates the scripting that occurred during the formal  
 16 observation of the teacher and the S indicated that  
 17 that's the scripting that occurred from the students  
 18 that were in the classroom from a formal observation of  
 19 the teacher by an informal person doing the formal  
 20 observation who was not him but his colleague. I think  
 21 it's a fair line of questioning. I'll just ask if we  
 22 could move it along rather quickly, if we can.  
 23 **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes. Okay.  
 24 **Q** So, at the beginning he's writing down, and if you read

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1 through this, if one were to read through these  
 2 documents, you would see all of the interactions between  
 3 the student and the teacher throughout the class, is  
 4 that fair to say?  
 5 **A Well, during that teacher's -- during that evaluation,**  
 6 **again, I did not do -- those were his observations, yes.**  
 7 **Q** And then if you go to page nine, that's your informal  
 8 observation and your notes of the informal observation  
 9 that you conducted on January 24, 2019?  
 10 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I'll go back up here. I  
 11 am going to scroll down.  
 12 **A Where it says informal one.**  
 13 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I'm going to go back up.  
 14 **A It says informal. I don't know where it starts, but...**  
 15 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Let me see here.  
 16 **A I think that's probably his, so mine is below that, so,**  
 17 **yeah.**  
 18 **Q** If you look right there it says January?  
 19 **A Yes, this is probably the one. Again, he decided on me**  
 20 **looking at 2.1 as one of the indicators during my**  
 21 **informal observation.**  
 22 **Q** And that was a half hour, 1:45 to 2:15?  
 23 **A Yes. I usually put the time there, exactly.**  
 24 **Q** And you also, as did your colleague, script the entire

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1 process. And what I'm asking you is, what is T, there  
 2 is S, there's a T and there's C, or am I misreading  
 3 that?  
 4 **A No. S means student, T with the arrow to the C means**  
 5 **the teacher directed that to the class, the entire**  
 6 **class.**  
 7 **Q** And S and student to the teacher is a comment from the  
 8 student to the teacher?  
 9 **A Yes.**  
 10 **Q** Okay. And this is your sort of scripting of what  
 11 happened in the class?  
 12 **A Yes.**  
 13 **Q** Okay. And on page 10, Wednesday, 2/27, again, is  
 14 another informal observation, and it's about a half an  
 15 hour again?  
 16 **A Yes.**  
 17 **Q** From 12:53 to 1:25, right?  
 18 **A That's what it says on the document.**  
 19 **Q** Okay. Now, after you did these two informal  
 20 observations in I guess it was January and February of  
 21 2019, did you talk with Mr. Mr. Lancellotta about your  
 22 observations?  
 23 **A Yes.**  
 24 **Q** And in what context did you speak with him?

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1 **A Well, what we usually do with the evaluation is I put**  
 2 **all of the evidence into Aspen, as you see here, we**  
 3 **discuss the points and then the ratings might have**  
 4 **changed. They might have gone up or they might have**  
 5 **stayed the same on those particular indicators. Those**  
 6 **are probably indicators that he scored lower in. So,**  
 7 **this was the opportunity to get more evidence, and**  
 8 **perhaps raise those, sometimes they stayed the same, but**  
 9 **they were never lower.**  
 10 **MS. RAPPORT:** And on page 17 of Exhibit  
 11 D, I'd like to go to that.  
 12 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Page 17.  
 13 **A Yes.**  
 14 **Q** Can we go to page 17.  
 15 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I think this is it.  
 16 **Q** Okay. And at the top there, we have now, we already  
 17 went through standard number one, which was the  
 18 preparation, and here we're going through standard  
 19 number two, which is the classroom environment, and  
 20 standard number three, which is instruction. Are those  
 21 the three standards that are used to evaluate teachers,  
 22 one, two and three?  
 23 **A There's also four.**  
 24 **Q** What is four?

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1 A **Four comes in later. That is how you accomplish your goals, your SLO's, that type of thing.**

2

3 Q Oh, okay.

4 A **That would not be in the evaluation in class. That would be the discussion after.**

5

6 Q And that relates to the effectiveness?

7 A **Yes.**

8 Q As it's shown in the student learning objectives?

9 A **Yes, the ranking of those and the ratings of those.**

10 Q So this two and three captures what happens in the classroom?

11

12 A **Yes.**

13 Q Okay. And more captures the preparation. Got it. And four is the sort of overall efficacy through the SLO's?

14

15 A **Yes, and the PPG probably.**

16 Q Okay. Now, in this standard two, the first category there is creating an environment of respect and rapport, and 2.1.A is teacher interaction with students. Do you see that there?

17

18

19

20 A **Yes.**

21 Q Okay. And Mr. Lancellotta scored highly effective, right, is that true?

22

23 A **That's what it says, yes.**

24 Q And in student interactions with each other, which I

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1 assume means the ability of Mr. Lancellotta to engender a respectful environment in which students are --

2

3 **THE ARBITRATOR:** I'm going to object as

4 to speculation. It doesn't say that on here.

5 Q I'm asking him a question if he knows.

6

7 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Well, you are actually

8 testifying as to what you think that means. If you want to ask him what does that mean, that's different than you giving your definition of what it means.

9

10 **MS. RAPPORT:** I believe I am entitled to cross-examine with leading questions, is that fair?

11

12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** It's not just a leading question, though, I'm objecting because you're testifying.

13

14

15 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Let me hear the question.

16 Q Okay. In the category of student interactions with one another, is it fair --

17

18 A **I don't have the screen. I lost the screen.**

19

20 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I am sorry. That's my fault. I apologize. Go ahead.

21 A **So we're on 2.1, creating an environment of respect and rapport.**

22

23 Q Correct.

24 A **Okay.**

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1 Q And we agreed that the category of teacher interaction with students is given a highly effective for 2018/19, true, and you said yes?

2

3

4 A **Yes.**

5 Q 2.1.B, student interactions with one another, my question to you is, does this mean, and you're free to disagree if my characterization is inaccurate, does this mean that Mr. Lancellotta is being assessed on whether he engenders respectful interactions among the students?

6

7

8

9

10 A **This is the observation of the student interacting with students.**

11

12 Q And what does that have to do with Mr. Lancellotta? Why is it on the evaluation document?

13

14 A **Well, it's the teacher that sets up the environment of the classroom.**

15

16 Q Okay. So, would it be fair to say that this assesses Mr. Lancellotta's efficacy in engendering respectful interactions among students? Is that a yes?

17

18

19 A **Yes, because it's under the category of the environment of respect and rapport, what is the respect and rapport between student to student.**

20

21

22 Q Okay. And further down it deals with managing student behavior. Do you see that there?

23

24 A **Yes.**

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1 Q And there is a category of responding to student misbehavior?

2

3 A **Yes.**

4 Q Okay. And Mr. Lancellotta scored a highly effective there as well?

5

6 A **Yes.**

7 Q And in standard three, it's a description of communicating with students. Do you see that there?

8

9 A **Yes.**

10 Q And in expectations for learning, Mr. Lancellotta scored an effective, right?

11

12 A **Yes.**

13 Q And in directions and procedures, he scored highly effective in his communication with students, right?

14

15 A **Yes.**

16 Q Okay. And in 3.3, we see engaging students in learning, and what's effective again, tell me if I am correct, whether Mr. Lancellotta is effective at engaging students in the process of learning?

17

18

19

20 A **Yes.**

21 Q Okay. And he scored a highly effective in the category of engaging students in projects, activities and assignments, highly, right?

22

23

24 A **Yes.**

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1 Q And he scored an effective in instructional materials  
2 and technologies, right?  
3 A Yes.  
4 Q And then in the final category using assessment in  
5 instruction, this would evaluate Mr. Lancellotta's  
6 efficacy in using assessment as a way of teaching, fair  
7 to say?  
8 A Yes.  
9 Q Okay. And he scored a highly effective in the use of  
10 assessment criteria, correct?  
11 A Yes.  
12 Q Okay. And he scored a highly effective in monitoring  
13 student learning, right?  
14 A Yes.  
15 Q And he scored a highly effective in the way he provided  
16 feedback to students?  
17 A Yes.  
18 Q Okay. Now, at that point in time you had done -- and I  
19 assume that you saw all of this in Aspen?  
20 A Yes.  
21 Q You saw all of this?  
22 A Well, I didn't put my responses then in evaluating.  
23 Q I'm sorry.  
24 A I input my scripting in, and then, of course, the

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1 that he's not speaking enough directly with the  
2 students, he is doing more of his presentation to the  
3 whole class?  
4 A Well, the observations that I did to, the students were  
5 working in groups, so he was basically monitoring the  
6 groups by walking around.  
7 Q Okay. So what is it that you were looking to see more  
8 of that you didn't see?  
9 A Again, I saw teacher to class, I saw student to student,  
10 and I saw also teacher to student, but to a smaller  
11 degree, much smaller.  
12 Q Okay. And what is it that you wanted to see more of?  
13 A Again, it should be the idea of personalization. Again,  
14 there was no, it was, do you have a pencil, do you need  
15 paper, that type of thing, from my observations.  
16 Q And what is it you were looking to see?  
17 A Again, I think we needed to see a warm interaction  
18 that's nurturing and positive.  
19 Q And focused on individual students, more of that, is  
20 that what you're saying?  
21 A It should be focused on everyone, when you think about  
22 it, yes.  
23 Q And that was a concern to you after those observations  
24 that you did in January and February, is that true, it

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1 evaluator clicks over. After we stop, we agree on the  
2 ratings. It's the full evaluator that takes over.  
3 Q Okay. So the rating that we just went through happened  
4 after your input is delivered of the informal?  
5 MR. RUGGERIO: Sorry, Sara, if I may, I  
6 know we spent at lot of time on this questioning. I  
7 know we have a lot more to go this evening. Your point  
8 is noted.  
9 Q My question to you, Mr. Lancellotta, is at any point  
10 in --  
11 (TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES/OFF THE RECORD)  
12 Q So, John, you said that you had some concerns about  
13 Mr. Lancellotta's style of interaction with students; is  
14 that fair to say?  
15 A Not style. Interactions.  
16 Q Okay. A lack of warm or overly-structured demeanor or  
17 presentation of any work with students?  
18 A Again, in the observations that you saw with the T to C,  
19 I saw the majority of teacher to class. So the general  
20 class, there were examples of teacher to students, but,  
21 again, the majority of it was teaching to class, and  
22 those interactions that occurred are small, brief and  
23 short.  
24 Q Okay. So your concern, if I can try to summarize it, is

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1 was a concern of yours?  
2 A His ratings, again, were effective, highly effective in  
3 those areas. He did meet the standard according to the  
4 rubric.  
5 Q Would it be fair to say that the -- My question to you,  
6 John, is whether you had a concern after the  
7 observations about what you would describe now as an  
8 insufficient warmth?  
9 A I'm talking about in terms of interactions overall.  
10 Student with the department members and with faculty.  
11 Q So is it your answer to my question that, yes, you did  
12 have a concern?  
13 A Yes, I had a concern with interactions, yes.  
14 Q Okay. Now, and that concern was formed in early 2019  
15 after those observations, right?  
16 A Going back to the interactions with me, yes.  
17 Q Okay. So, now, at any point, at any point in the  
18 '18/'19 school years did you share with Mr. Lancellotta  
19 your concern?  
20 MS. LOMBARDO: I just really can't hear.  
21 I'm sorry, I don't mean to interrupt you, Sara, but I  
22 have to be able to hear you. I am sorry.  
23 MR. RUGGERIO: I'm struggling as well.  
24 MS. RAPPORT: I think we ought to, I

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1 don't like saying my questions and not having --  
 2 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I understand. I just  
 3 can't hear you, so.  
 4 **MS. RAPPORT:** I know. I'm sorry to say  
 5 this, but I know it's every hard.  
 6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So I think my  
 7 recommendation, Mr. Chair, is that we adjourn for this  
 8 evening and we can schedule another date. I would like  
 9 to briefly speak with the committee, if I could, in a  
 10 break-out room, if we're not going to get the feedback.  
 11 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I agree. I am sorry, so  
 12 it's not happening, finishing up tonight.  
 13 **MS. RAPPORT:** The only other thing I  
 14 would ask is if we could establish some very clear  
 15 protocol.  
 16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes.  
 17 **MS. RAPPORT:** Okay. Before we broke up,  
 18 or we want to do it after.  
 19 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I think we should do it  
 20 now.  
 21 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Okay.  
 22 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So, Mr. Giovanelli,  
 23 you're still on the witness stand. You are being  
 24 questioned by Ms. Rapport. You are not to speak about

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1 your testimony to counsel for the school district,  
 2 Ms. Lombardo, or anybody associated with them, or with  
 3 Ms. Rapport.  
 4 **MS. RAPPORT:** Or I would ask with  
 5 anybody.  
 6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Or with anybody. I think  
 7 that's fair.  
 8 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I have no objection to  
 9 that.  
 10 **MS. RAPPORT:** No contact with his  
 11 attorney, the Union or anybody.  
 12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Sorry, I have no issue  
 13 with you saying no contact over his testimony, but what  
 14 if he gets disciplined tomorrow or something. I don't  
 15 want to say he can't have any contact.  
 16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** No, it has to be specific  
 17 with respect to his testimony.  
 18 **MS. RAPPORT:** I agree. I overstated it.  
 19 I didn't mean it that broad. Absolutely no contact  
 20 regarding this case, his testimony, with anybody.  
 21 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Totally fair. No, I  
 22 agree. I don't want him to have contact either.  
 23 **MR. RUGGERIO:** That's understood,  
 24 Mr. Giovanelli, can you just acknowledge that on the

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1 record verbally, please?  
 2 **THE WITNESS:** I just want to make sure,  
 3 again, I'm not to talk to anyone about anything, even  
 4 the Union attorney, or if I have a question about  
 5 anything.  
 6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Anything about this case  
 7 or about your testimony, sir.  
 8 **THE WITNESS:** So anything is about the  
 9 case. That's fine with me.  
 10 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes.  
 11 **MS. LOMBARDO:** John, do you want to wear  
 12 a tie for night two for us?  
 13 **THE WITNESS:** Yes, absolutely.  
 14 **MS. LOMBARDO:** We might let you off the  
 15 hook.  
 16 **MS. RAPPORT:** Are we going to break out?  
 17 Are we going to set another date, or do you want not  
 18 want to do that now?  
 19 **MS. LOMBARDO:** We probably need to poll  
 20 the School Committee, and we're going to have to go  
 21 through all of that, so. And I, also, just really can't  
 22 hear you that well, Sara, and Chuck, with the  
 23 stenographer. So how about, can you give me some good  
 24 dates tomorrow, and then I can kind of go back and

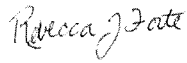
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1 circulate then and we can come with a good next date.  
 2 **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes, I will do that. The  
 3 only question I ask is, is it possible that we could try  
 4 to use the break-out room while we're still here, are  
 5 you amenable to that?  
 6 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I am amenable to almost  
 7 anything. So, that's totally fine with me. I don't  
 8 know that we would be able to settle a date, but can you  
 9 use it with your crew?  
 10 **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes, that's what I'm  
 11 saying.  
 12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Yes.  
 13 **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes, we will confer with  
 14 our group. And then we will confer on dates tomorrow.  
 15 I'll come up with some dates separately.  
 16 **MS. LOMBARDO:** You might even be able to  
 17 stay right here, if Charlie goes to the breakout room  
 18 with the School Committee and I'm done. I'm done.  
 19 (HEARING ADJOURNED AT 9:13 P.M.)  
 20  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Rebecca J. Forte, a Notary Public in and for the State of Rhode Island, hereby certify that the foregoing pages are a true and accurate record of my stenographic notes that were reduced to print through computer-aided transcription.

In witness whereof, I hereunto set my hand this 19th day of December, 2020.



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REBECCA J. FORTE, NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission (RI) Expires on 7/15/21  
My Commission (MA) Expires on 1/24/25

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**In The Matter Of:**  
*West Warwick School Committee*  
*Non-Renewal - John Lancellotta*

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*Non-Renewal - John Lancellotta*  
*Vol. 2*  
*January 27, 2021*

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*Rebecca J. Forte*  
*Certified Professional Court Reporters*  
*33 Rollingwood Drive*  
*Johnston, RI 02919*  
*(401)474-8441*

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
TOWN OF WEST WARWICK  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

\*\*\*\*\*  
PROCEEDINGS AT HEARING IN RE:  
NON-RENEWAL HEARING  
JOHN LANCELOTTA  
\*\*\*\*\*

VOLUME 2

Wednesday, January 27, 2021  
5:30 p.m.  
All Parties Participating Via Zoom

WEST WARWICK SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steven Lawton, Chairman  
Rene Coutu  
Susan St. Amand  
Joseph DiMartino  
James Monti

Karen Tarasevich, Superintendent

REBECCA J. FORTE  
CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL STENOGRAPHERS  
33 Rollingwood Drive  
Johnston, Rhode Island 02919  
(401)474-8441

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APPEARANCES:

FOR THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT:

HENNEOUS CARROLL & LOMBARDO  
BY: AUBREY LOMBARDO, ESQUIRE  
150 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903

FOR THE TEACHERS:

CHRISTOPHER LAMBERT, ESQUIRE  
86 WEYBOSSET STREET  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903

FOR THE TEACHER:

WHELAN CORRENTE  
BY: SARA RAPPORT, ESQUIRE  
TIMOTHY CAVAZZA, ESQUIRE  
DERK WILCOX, ESQUIRE  
100 WESTMINSTER STREET, SUITE 710  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903  
srapport@whelancorrente.com

CHARLES RUGGERIO, LEGAL COUNSEL, ESQUIRE

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1 Wednesday, January 27, 2021  
2 (Commencing at 6:10 P.M.)  
3 **MR. RUGGERIO:** We will go on the record.  
4 Please, Rebecca, if we can. Thank you very much.  
5 Good evening, everyone.  
6 Just to reorient everyone from where we left off  
7 from our last day of hearing. During the course of the  
8 last proceeding we concluded with the testimony of John  
9 Giovanelli, who was still under oath and upon  
10 examination by Ms. Rapport on cross-examination. So  
11 we're going to begin tonight with his continued  
12 cross-examination.  
13 I would like to acknowledge for purposes of the  
14 committee that there was a request for production of  
15 documents that was made by Ms. Rapport to the district  
16 subsequent to our last hearing. That request was  
17 discussed between Ms. Lombardo, Ms. Rapport and myself  
18 following some concern about the ability to produce  
19 certain documents. It's my understanding that these  
20 documents that have now been requested following a  
21 modification to that request were provided to  
22 Ms. Rapport and that there's going to be some further  
23 discussion perhaps regarding those items this evening,  
24 so I just wanted to acknowledge that those documents

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1 were produced, to my knowledge, to Ms. Rapport, and that  
2 that issue was discussed outside of the construct of our  
3 most recent meeting to the satisfaction of the parties.  
4 If either party disagrees with that, please let me  
5 know for purposes of the record.  
6 Ms. Lombardo, is that accurate?  
7 **MS. LOMBARDO:** That's accurate, yes.  
8 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Ms. Rapport?  
9 **MS. RAPPORT:** The documents were, in  
10 fact, produced.  
11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Very good. So, with that  
12 said, I think we left off with your cross-examination of  
13 Mr. Giovanelli. So, we're going to pick that up right  
14 now, I would imagine, unless there are any other  
15 preliminary issues that the parties would like to  
16 discuss.  
17 **MS. RAPPORT:** I would like to discuss a  
18 preliminary issue that was raised by a letter that was  
19 sent this morning by the West Warwick Teachers' Alliance  
20 from Mr. Doyle, and I am asking that that letter be made  
21 a part of the record as a bit of background to the  
22 issue, which is raised by this letter. I want to just,  
23 with some indulgence, review the discussions that were  
24 had with Mr. Ruggiero and Ms. Lombardo and I and put it

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1 on the record so the context is clear.  
2 At the conclusion of the hearing on December 1st  
3 Mr. Ruggiero issued an order to which Mr. Giovanelli  
4 agreed that "there was to be absolutely no contact," and  
5 I'm quoting, "regarding this case, his testimony, with  
6 anybody." That's at page 118 of the transcript.  
7 Mr. Giovanelli was asked by Mr. Ruggiero to acknowledge  
8 that order on the record, and he did so and said, "I'm  
9 not to talk to anyone about anything, even the Union  
10 attorney, or if I have a question about anything, so  
11 anything is about this case, that's fine with me."  
12 On January 5th, the School Department in  
13 response to our request for records --  
14 I'm sorry, strike that.  
15 On January 5th, Mr. Doyle, Sean Doyle, requested  
16 that he be copied on all correspondence to the Union  
17 members related to the renewal hearing, and after some  
18 discussion Mr. Ruggiero rejected that request in an  
19 email dated January 7th and directed that Ms. Lombardo  
20 was to reach out to Mr. Giovanelli so that she could  
21 collect the documents that were referenced in the  
22 production but not to talk about the case or to do any  
23 communication other than to solicit the documents.  
24 The documents at issue were documents pertaining

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1 to the department meetings and professional development,  
2 which, according to Ms. Lombardo, were likely to be in  
3 the primary control of Mr. Giovanelli, even though they  
4 were school department records.  
5 Mr. Giovanelli responded to Ms. Lombardo's  
6 solicitation of documents by requesting that he be  
7 permitted to consult with my Union rep, Sean Doyle, and  
8 legal counsel before I respond. That was on  
9 January 8th.  
10 Mr. Lancellotta, through our team, objected on the  
11 ground that the directive not to discuss the case at all  
12 while he was under cross-examination embraced  
13 necessarily a discussion of documents that were relevant  
14 and directly implicated in his testimony.  
15 On January 12th we convened for a second time  
16 with Mr. Ruggiero and had a discussion of this request,  
17 which Ms. Lombardo pressed on Mr. Giovanelli's behalf.  
18 We agreed in that conversation that she need not  
19 solicit documents at all from Mr. Giovanelli, so that  
20 the issue of his being asked to peruse documents without  
21 the assistance of the counsel was rendered moot.  
22 There was no claim that Mr. Giovanelli was at risk  
23 of discipline, so that the insistence that he confer  
24 with the Union to protect his interests seemed a bit

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1 odd.  
2 Then surprisingly, on January 20th  
3 Mr. Giovanelli produced the documents directly that  
4 Ms. Lombardo had agreed would not be solicited from him,  
5 all of the documents in an email to the superintendent.  
6 Now, one week later, on the date of the hearing we  
7 learned the morning of that Mr. Giovanelli has, in fact,  
8 spoken with, not even his Union attorney, but the  
9 Alliance about the case, expressing, according to  
10 Mr. Doyle, a belief that his professionalism and honesty  
11 is being challenged during cross-examination.  
12 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sara, how do you know  
13 that? And I think that's probably appropriate grounds  
14 for your continued cross-examination of Mr. Giovanelli.  
15 **MS. RAPPORT:** I appreciate that,  
16 Charlie, Mr. Ruggiero. I'm making an assumption which  
17 we will explore on cross-examination. I am putting on  
18 the record the information that was presented in the  
19 letter. It is our belief that it is a violation of the  
20 order to have a conversation about how you feel about  
21 your cross-examination in the matter, and it is also  
22 clear that in having this conversation the witness was  
23 given direction about how to respond to continued  
24 questioning, and I would read into the record what the

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1 letter says. "Please, be respectfully advised that we  
2 have counseled our members to cease their testimony and  
3 request Union and legal representation should they feel  
4 that they're being charged with any wrongdoing during  
5 further witness testimony." The wrongdoing articulated  
6 by Mr. Doyle is that their veracity has been called into  
7 question as well as their motivation to testify. I  
8 would just like to point out, which should be  
9 self-evident to any attorney in the room, that  
10 cross-examination is, by definition, a situation in  
11 which you are questioning a witness' veracity, motive,  
12 bias and professionalism in some instances. So, we are  
13 asking that should this issue arise, because it has been  
14 articulated as a possibility in a letter that issued  
15 this morning, we ask that the committee continue to  
16 adhere to its ruling of the 1st of December and not  
17 permit people without standing or an interest in this  
18 proceeding; namely, Mr. Lambert or Mr. Doyle, to be  
19 privy to this hearing. There is absolutely no interest  
20 that they have in this proceeding. These are witnesses  
21 called by the district, prepared by the district, they  
22 are the district's witnesses. They are not the Union's  
23 witnesses. The Union has no standing in this matter.  
24 They have no interest in this matter. There's been

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1 repeated assertions, including most recently as I  
2 reviewed the documents by Ms. Lombardo in writing that  
3 there is not an iota of disciplinary risk to either of  
4 these two gentlemen, one of whom has concluded his  
5 testimony, that is Mr. Davis. So the only reason, the  
6 only reason that they would need counsel, the only  
7 conceivable reason under the law is if there is a risk  
8 of self-incrimination, and if that is truly an issue,  
9 then, yes, Mr. Lambert could be in the room to protect a  
10 witness who may seek to invoke his or her right not to  
11 incriminate. Other than that, they should not be here,  
12 they should not be in the waiting room, they should not  
13 be pounding on the door seeking to participate, and I  
14 will say that based on the chronology of what happened  
15 and the varying assertions of why Mr. Giovanelli needed  
16 to speak with counsel that it was a ruse, because the  
17 assertion in the beginning was that he needed it to look  
18 at documents, and now what we're finding out is really  
19 the reason that they want counsel in the room is because  
20 Mr. Giovanelli feels that the cross-examination is  
21 making him feeling unsafe, and that is preposterous,  
22 they are voluntarily here. They are the witnesses of  
23 the district, not even under subpoena. It is a part of  
24 Mr. Lancellotta's due process rights under both the

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1 Constitution and Title 16 to be witnesses,  
2 cross-examined.  
3 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Thank you.  
4 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Can I please respond?  
5 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Briefly, please.  
6 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm going to object and  
7 ask that all of that be stricken from the record. It  
8 has absolutely no relevance to this. If Ms. Rapport  
9 wants to question the witness about this letter with  
10 foundation or communications that he had during her  
11 cross-examination, I certainly have no objection to  
12 that. However, at this point there's no basis for this  
13 letter being admitted. It's not, you know, written by  
14 any party to this proceeding, and I also will just point  
15 out that on page 118, lines 16 through 17 of our  
16 transcript, we did get into what, you know, what kind of  
17 interaction Mr. Giovanelli is permitted to have with the  
18 Union, and you specifically say, no, it has to be  
19 specific with respect to his testimony, and, as far as I  
20 can see, there's nothing in this letter, or that's been  
21 revealed by Mr. Giovanelli in any communications that  
22 reveal that he has said anything about his testimony to  
23 anyone, and I will say that I certainly have not spoken  
24 to Mr. Giovanelli about his testimony or about the

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1 documents or anything else outside of the email that I  
2 sent, which both of you were cc'd and advised of in  
3 advance of my communication with him.  
4 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Thank you, Ms. Lombardo.  
5 I am going to note both of your objections for the  
6 record. I think the proper examination point is  
7 continue cross-examination on that point should  
8 Ms. Rapport elect to do so. I will note both of your  
9 objections. I'm not going to admit or recommend the  
10 admission of Mr. Doyle's letter at this time. If  
11 counsel would like it marked for identification purposes  
12 we can do that, but I would not recommend its admission  
13 presently.  
14 **MS. RAPPORT:** I would like it marked.  
15 Thank you.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** That it will be -- what  
17 exhibit would that be for? I think that's Exhibit I, is  
18 that wrong?  
19 **MS. RAPPORT:** I think we admitted A, B  
20 and C, and I think D, E, and F were introduced, but not  
21 admitted.  
22 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Okay.  
23 **MS. RAPPORT:** So it would follow  
24 after -- I'm sorry, G, was the last one. So it's H.

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1 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So we will mark that  
2 presently as Appellant's Exhibit H for identification  
3 purposes only.  
4 (Whereupon Appellant's Exhibit H for  
5 identification purposes only.)  
6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** And, Ms. Rapport, you may  
7 proceed with your cross-examination of Mr. Giovanelli.  
8 Is he present in this room?  
9 **MS. LOMBARDO:** He is not.  
10 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Can you, please, ask,  
11 Jim, Aubrey, if you would, to readmit.  
12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Michelle will.  
13 **MS. COLOZZO:** Yes.  
14 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Can I ask one quick  
15 question?  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Certainly.  
17 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Can I make up a motion to  
18 move up one of these statements, or is it not at this  
19 time on the agenda?  
20 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So I'm wondering kind of  
21 where it is. I don't see an agenda, Steve.  
22 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay.  
23 **MR. RUGGERIO:** You have two matters  
24 scheduled for executive session, or just one?

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1 **THE CHAIRMAN:** No. We just have one  
2 matter, which we have a statement from the West Warwick  
3 Teachers' Alliance that was put down here to be done,  
4 number eight, and I wanted to see if we can move it up  
5 and get it done with now.  
6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Number eight, in open  
7 session or executive?  
8 **MS. LOMBARDO:** In open session.  
9 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So we would have to come  
10 back out of executive session, move into open session  
11 and have it heard. My recommendation is however the  
12 committee would like to proceed on that. She is about  
13 to call Mr. Giovanelli as a witness.  
14 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I thought I was going to  
15 get a chance to do that and we went right into it.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I am sorry, if that's the  
17 Chair's preference we can do that. We would have to  
18 move out of this, make a motion to move out of executive  
19 session, take up the matter in open session and make a  
20 motion to come back in, if that's the Chair and the  
21 committee's preference we can do that while Jim or  
22 Michelle tries to obtain Mr. Giovanelli and move them  
23 into this room.  
24 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I would like to do that,

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1 if possible. It would only take a couple of minutes.  
2 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Is there a motion?  
3 **MS. ST. AMAND:** Close executive session,  
4 Steve.  
5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** We need a motion first to  
6 move up Article Number 8, or line item number eight.  
7 **MS. ST. AMAND:** I think we have to leave  
8 the executive session.  
9 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I would recommend that.  
10 **MS. ST. AMAND:** I make a motion to close  
11 the executive session.  
12 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I'll second that. All in  
13 favor?  
14 **MS. ST. AMAND:** Do we have to vote on  
15 that, Charlie?  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes, you should call a  
17 roll on that.  
18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Michelle.  
19 **MS. COLOZZO:** Mr. Lawton?  
20 **MR. LAWTON:** Yes, I would like to go to  
21 executive session.  
22 **MS. COLOZZO:** Mr. Coutu?  
23 **MR. COUTU:** Yes.  
24 **MS. COLOZZO:** Ms. St. Amand?

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1 MS. ST. AMAND: Yes.  
 2 MS. COLOZZO: Mr. DiMartino?  
 3 MR. DiMARTINO: Yes.  
 4 MR. RUGGERIO: Let's have Jim move us  
 5 out of executive.  
 6 (BRIEF RECESS)  
 7 THE CHAIRMAN: We just took a vote in  
 8 executive session and now we're back.  
 9 (BRIEF RECESS)  
 10 (RESUMING AT 6:37 P.M.)  
 11 THE CHAIRMAN: The School Committee is  
 12 all here.  
 13 MR. DIMARTINO: Do a roll call.  
 14 MS. COLOZZO: Mr. Lawton?  
 15 MR. LAWTON: Here.  
 16 MS. COLOZZO: Mr. Coutu?  
 17 MR. COUTU: Yes.  
 18 MS. COLOZZO: Ms. St. Amand?  
 19 MS. ST. AMAND: Yes.  
 20 MS. COLOZZO: Mr. DiMartino?  
 21 MR. DIMARTINO: Here.  
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. So we're back  
 23 in executive session, and now the table is all yours.  
 24 MR. RUGGERIO: We'll continue with the

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1 cross-examination of Mr. Giovanelli by Ms. Rapport.  
 2 JOHN GIOVANELLI (Previously Sworn)  
 3 CONTINUED CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT  
 4 Q Good evening, Mr. Giovanelli. Am I pronouncing it  
 5 correctly?  
 6 A Yes. Before you start I just want to say that I've been  
 7 having eye treatments because of the screen, so I look  
 8 different ways and my eyes may close or blink weird. So  
 9 if I am looking all over the place or my eyes look like  
 10 they're closed or they are open, I am getting treatment  
 11 for the light and the screen time, I guess, so they're  
 12 just trying something new. It seems like it's working a  
 13 little better, but if my eyes do go crazy, I have to  
 14 look away from the screen.  
 15 Q I understand. I'm sympathetic because my eyes are  
 16 suffering badly. So, when we left it, it was now almost  
 17 two months ago and that was December 1st, I'm sure you  
 18 recollect?  
 19 A Yes.  
 20 Q And then at the conclusion of the hearing we had an  
 21 exchange about your responsibilities to maintain what is  
 22 called the sequester or the bubble that we put around  
 23 people who are in the midst of cross-examination. I am  
 24 refreshing your recollection and asking you if this is

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1 your recollection as well, that in that exchange with  
 2 Mr. Ruggiero, the Hearing Officer, we discussed the  
 3 facts, and I think these were my words, that you were to  
 4 have absolutely no contact regarding this case, his  
 5 testimony with anybody. Do you remember my saying that?  
 6 A I thought it was that I didn't talk about the testimony  
 7 with anyone.  
 8 Q Okay. So, I'm going to direct you to your statement on  
 9 the record, and I believe Ms. Lombardo has a transcript  
 10 if she needs to --  
 11 MS. LOMBARDO: I'm going to object,  
 12 because I do think the transcript speaks for itself, he  
 13 asked him his understanding, he gave his understanding.  
 14 I think beyond that the document speaks for itself.  
 15 MR. RUGGERIO: I agree, and it indicates  
 16 in the transcript, I'm reading my statement, no, it has  
 17 to be specific with respect to his testimony. That's on  
 18 page 118 of the transcript. And, I think it was pretty  
 19 clear that he was directed to have absolutely no  
 20 discussion with anybody concerning his testimony in this  
 21 matter, you know, in terms of the subject, so I guess  
 22 you can inquire, but I think my ruling or my  
 23 recollection of that ruling was that it was specific to  
 24 his testimony, the subject matter of this case.

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1 MS. RAPPORT: Respectfully,  
 2 Mr. Ruggiero, what you actually said on page 119, when  
 3 the witness said, "I just want to make sure again I'm  
 4 not to talk to anyone about anything, even the Union  
 5 attorney, or if I have a question about anything," and  
 6 you, Mr. Ruggiero said, "Anything about this case or  
 7 your testimony, sir." So, I think your ruling was a bit  
 8 broader than testimony, I think your ruling embraced the  
 9 notion of this case, and I would respectfully ask that I  
 10 be permitted to ask Mr. Giovanelli if that conforms to  
 11 his recollection.  
 12 A I have not spoken about the case, the testimony, but I  
 13 did speak about some of my -- about the hearing process,  
 14 with the delays, that type of thing, so.  
 15 Q Okay. So let me --  
 16 A Nothing to do with --  
 17 Q Let me be permitted to ask --  
 18 MR. RUGGERIO: You may inquire.  
 19 MS. RAPPORT: Thank you.  
 20 Q So, after that December 1st date did you have a  
 21 conversation with anyone in the Union about this matter?  
 22 A Not about my testimony, but when I got the emails from  
 23 Attorney Lombardo.  
 24 Q Yes.

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1 **A I asked about, yes.**  
2 **Q What did you do?**  
3 **A I didn't know what to do with them. I said that in my**  
4 **email that I was going contact the Union about it, and**  
5 **then you said that there was -- you responded to it, so**  
6 **I really didn't know what to do at that point.**  
7 **Q After you learned that -- after you made a request to**  
8 **talk to the Union and there was a response that objected**  
9 **to it, what did you do?**  
10 **A I didn't know what to do at that point, so I what is the**  
11 **process of hearing, what is my obligation.**  
12 **Q So, did you talk to anyone in the Union after you**  
13 **received that email from me or copied on it?**  
14 **A Yes, but I did not discuss the content of my testimony.**  
15 **Q When did you talk to the Union, approximately?**  
16 **A It had to have been after I looked at the emails.**  
17 **Q So was it within the past couple of weeks?**  
18 **A Whatever the date of the email was. I'm not sure.**  
19 **Q So when you say you spoke with the Union, who did you**  
20 **speak with?**  
21 **A I talked to Mr. Doyle.**  
22 **Q Did you also talk to Mr. Lambert?**  
23 **A Yes.**  
24 **Q Okay. Did you talk to them by telephone?**

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1 **A Yes.**  
2 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I am just going to object  
3 at this point. He said he didn't discuss his testimony.  
4 He could have talked to them about anything under the  
5 sun. I think the point is he's not going to be  
6 discussing his testimony. I don't know what the  
7 relevance of that is.  
8 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I think she hadn't gotten  
9 there yet. I think she's just asking right now who he  
10 spoke to and when. I would imagine that at some point  
11 we are going to get to the substance of that pretty  
12 quickly.  
13 **Q So you're saying that you had -- was it a single phone**  
14 **conversation or was it more than one?**  
15 **A It was multiple.**  
16 **Q Okay. And did you call the Union?**  
17 **A Yes.**  
18 **Q Who did you speak to in the first conversation?**  
19 **A It was Mr. Doyle.**  
20 **Q What did you ask him?**  
21 **A I said I got this email about evidence and what should I**  
22 **do with it.**  
23 **Q And what did he say?**  
24 **A Again, those things were I think part of our**

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1 **confidential conversation.**  
2 **Q So what did Mr. Doyle say to you?**  
3 **A I think that's part of our confidential conversation.**  
4 **Q Are you saying that you're not going to tell me what he**  
5 **said to you because you're invoking a privilege?**  
6 **A I'm saying that I asked for advice because I didn't know**  
7 **what to do.**  
8 **Q Okay. But my question to you is, and I'm asking that**  
9 **you be directed to answer the question, is that when you**  
10 **asked him what to do with this request for documents, my**  
11 **question to you is what did Mr. Doyle say to you in**  
12 **response?**  
13 **A Well, I was ready to get the documents, that was totally**  
14 **fine, but I didn't know if they involved other people,**  
15 **what kind of situation it is.**  
16 **Q So my question to you, Mr. Giovanelli, is what did**  
17 **Mr. Doyle say to you in response to your question about**  
18 **what to do with the request for evidence about the case?**  
19 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm going to object again  
20 for relevance. He produced the documents and they  
21 didn't discuss his testimony. He's already testified to  
22 that. This is really about the non-renewal of an  
23 employee and we're off on such a tangent. I don't know  
24 how this is relevant to whether or not this is the most

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1 qualified person for this job.  
2 **A And, I turned over the documents, exactly, but after**  
3 **Attorney Ruggerio said I didn't have to, I did forward**  
4 **the documents.**  
5 **Q I don't believe that I've gotten a response to my**  
6 **question and we've only hit the first telephone**  
7 **conversation.**  
8 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I think you have to  
9 answer the question, Mr. Giovanelli.  
10 **THE WITNESS:** What is the question  
11 again?  
12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Would you read it back to  
13 him, please.  
14 (Whereupon the stenographer read back the  
15 previous question.)  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Do you understand the  
17 question, sir? You have to answer it truthfully.  
18 **A No, I know, I'm trying to remember. Again, the final**  
19 **result of it was, again, we were talking about my Union**  
20 **rights and what the questioning was and having someone**  
21 **with me, that type of thing. So, again, finally we said**  
22 **to turn over the documents, and that's what the final**  
23 **result was.**  
24 **Q So, what did Mr. Doyle say when you asked him what to**

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1 do?

2 **A** Again, I asked other questions, too, you know, about

3 access to things and school is closed, this type of

4 thing. So, I'm dealing with all these things. I had no

5 idea what to do in this case. Since school is closed

6 it's virtual. I mean, I don't have access to

7 everything. It is not all electronic, so.

8 **Q** Okay. Did you convey what the documents were that you

9 were being asked to produce?

10 **A** Yes. Well, I conveyed what was in the email from

11 Attorney Lombardo.

12 **Q** And in that email you conveyed to Mr. Doyle that you

13 were being asked to produce documents pertaining to

14 professional development and department meetings,

15 correct?

16 **A** Yes.

17 **Q** Okay. And you told him that?

18 **A** Yes.

19 **Q** Okay. And did you also tell him that you were being

20 asked to produce documents pertaining to communications

21 between and among you and other members of the staff?

22 **A** Yes, whatever it was in the email was what --

23 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I just am going to object

24 because there was no basis for that and I'm not sure

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1 that was in the email. I would have to go look, but I

2 was really --

3 **MS. RAPPORT:** I'm not sure that it's

4 appropriate for Ms. Lombardo to contradict or correct or

5 testify about another person's testimony. If she wants

6 to make herself a witness and say that she disagrees

7 with what Mr. Giovanelli is saying, then we need to

8 reconfigure, but it's a pretty straightforward question,

9 and I believe Mr. Giovanelli just said to me that he

10 conveyed the specific items that Ms. Lombardo was asking

11 of him to produce, and I happened to know that the three

12 items that were at issue, because I requested it, were

13 professional development meetings, department meetings

14 and any and all communications between and among, among

15 others --

16 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'll withdraw my

17 objection.

18 **MS. RAPPORT:** Thank you. So could I

19 just have the last answer read back, question and answer

20 read back so that I can reset my train of thought,

21 please.

22 (Whereupon stenographer read back previous

23 question and answer.)

24 **Q** And when you shared that information with Mr. Doyle, did

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1 you also express concern to Mr. Doyle that it was

2 difficult to get access to some of these particular

3 materials because they were in her school department

4 building?

5 **A** Uh-hum, yes.

6 **Q** Okay. And did you express any concerns to him that, by

7 turning over these materials, you would be scrutinized

8 to potentially, subject to discipline?

9 **A** No.

10 **Q** So when you asked him what to do about this request, did

11 Mr. Doyle have any suggestions for you?

12 **A** Again, he said that I have the right to share things

13 with my legal Union representation and I should be

14 afforded that right.

15 **Q** Did he give you any direction about talking with

16 Mr. Lambert about it?

17 **A** I assume that they consulted.

18 **Q** Was Mr. Lambert on the phone with Mr. Doyle or was it

19 just Mr. Doyle?

20 **A** No, no.

21 **Q** Okay. So after -- how long did that conversation -- how

22 did you leave it with that conversation, were you going

23 to reach out to Mr. Lambert after that?

24 **A** No. I was waiting to hear from -- I got Attorney

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1 Lombardo's request, then I said that I was going to

2 check with the Union, and then you wrote your request,

3 or your statement, your follow-up, and then I waited

4 back and then Mr. Ruggiero responded back that I didn't

5 have to submit the documents, and --

6 **Q** So, let me just be clear, did you have your conversation

7 with Mr. Doyle after you received my response?

8 **A** I had the -- it was the original one, and then -- well,

9 that was before, and then your response is after, I

10 believe, yes.

11 **Q** Okay. So you had this, before you received the

12 response, when you requested of Ms. Lombardo while

13 waiting you went and called your Union rep, is that what

14 you're talking about?

15 **A** Yes.

16 **Q** And then after you received the response did you then

17 talk to Mr. Lambert?

18 **A** I talked to Mr. Doyle.

19 **Q** Did you have any conversation with Mr. Lambert after

20 Mr. Doyle?

21 **A** I don't know. I think the two of them spoke.

22 **Q** Okay. So, this was a second conversation?

23 **A** I would say, yes.

24 **Q** Okay. Was it a call initiated by you or did they call

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1 you?  
2 **A Yes.**  
3 **Q Which is it?**  
4 **A I would -- I was calling because I didn't know what to**  
5 **do at that time, and as time was going by, I didn't know**  
6 **what the deadlines were for documents and so forth.**  
7 **Q Okay. So you called Mr. Lambert or -- you called**  
8 **Mr. Doyle and Mr. Lambert happened to be there, or did**  
9 **you call the Union lawyer's office?**  
10 **A I talked to Mr. Doyle.**  
11 **Q And were both Mr. Lambert and Mr. Doyle on the phone**  
12 **with you at the same time?**  
13 **A No, no.**  
14 **Q So it was just Mr. Doyle?**  
15 **A Yes.**  
16 **Q And what happened in that second conversation with**  
17 **Mr. Doyle, what did you say?**  
18 **A I was just saying that I received a response from**  
19 **Attorney Ruggiero that I didn't have to produce the**  
20 **documents.**  
21 **Q Okay. And what did Mr. Doyle say?**  
22 **A Well, I had already produced -- I'd already got the**  
23 **documents, I had everything ready, I didn't know what to**  
24 **do with them, so I said I would forward them to the**

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1 **School Department.**  
2 **Q Did you tell Mr. Doyle what you were forwarding to the**  
3 **School Department?**  
4 **A Yes.**  
5 **Q Okay. And what did Mr. Doyle say?**  
6 **A Yes, he never saw them. He never saw the contents of**  
7 **any of that, what I sent to the school department.**  
8 **Q So you called him to tell him that you were going to**  
9 **send them to the school department?**  
10 **A Yes, it was part of our conversation, because I had the**  
11 **documents.**  
12 **Q Did Mr. Doyle --**  
13 **A And he reported that, yes, it was a support between the**  
14 **two of us.**  
15 **Q What else did you talk about?**  
16 **A That was it.**  
17 **Q And so you called him to tell him you were sending the**  
18 **documents, and he said, good, or that's okay?**  
19 **A I said I had the documents, I have them all set, ready**  
20 **to go.**  
21 **Q Okay. And after that conversation did you then talk to**  
22 **Mr. Lambert?**  
23 **A No, no.**  
24 **Q Did you ever talk to Mr. Lambert?**

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1 **A I don't know if I sent him an email or something like**  
2 **that, no. It was Mr. Doyle talked to him.**  
3 **Q Okay. Did you talk to him?**  
4 **A I didn't talk to Mr. Lambert, no.**  
5 **Q Okay. How do you know that Mr. Doyle talked to him?**  
6 **A Again, he told me, and --**  
7 **Q When did he tell you that?**  
8 **MS. LOMBARDO: I'm going to object,**  
9 **again, for relevance, renew my objection.**  
10 **MR. RUGGERIO: Noted. I think**  
11 **Ms. Rapport is almost done on this line of questioning.**  
12 **Q When did he tell you that? When did he tell you that?**  
13 **A We had conversations. The question again is --**  
14 **Q When did Mr. Doyle tell you that he spoke with**  
15 **Mr. Lambert about the fact that you had conveyed certain**  
16 **documents?**  
17 **A I think it was -- it was not to do with the documents**  
18 **but it was to do with my representation of having people**  
19 **that could look over the documents, that I had the, I**  
20 **would say the right to share them with my legal Union**  
21 **representation.**  
22 **Q Okay. And so you talked to Mr. Doyle about that and he**  
23 **told you that he spoke with Mr. Lambert about that?**  
24 **A No. I assume that both of them were working together in**

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1 **terms of, in terms of the legal representation.**  
2 **Q Did you have a third conversation with Mr. Doyle?**  
3 **A Just mine, just conversations, update, that type of**  
4 **thing, but nothing...**  
5 **Q What did you mean by update?**  
6 **A I mean just in terms of the case, do you think there's**  
7 **going to be any other delays, that type of, little**  
8 **conversations like that.**  
9 **Q Did you talk to him in person or was this all by**  
10 **telephone?**  
11 **A Yes, this is phone.**  
12 **Q And you sent the documents, as you said, that you had**  
13 **compiled to the superintendent; is that correct?**  
14 **A Yes.**  
15 **Q Did you share those documents, the content of those**  
16 **documents or those documents with Mr. Doyle or**  
17 **Mr. Lambert?**  
18 **A No.**  
19 **Q Other than those conversations that you described, and**  
20 **you described two with some updates, did you talk to**  
21 **anybody else about anything remotely pertaining to this**  
22 **case?**  
23 **A No.**  
24 **Q Prior to coming here today did you review the transcript**

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1 of your testimony from December 1st?  
2 **A No, I did not.**  
3 **Q** Did you review any exhibits or any documents that had  
4 been, other than the documents that you collected, have  
5 you reviewed any documents?  
6 **A I don't have access to any documents.**  
7 **Q** Okay. So the answer is no?  
8 **A No.**  
9 **Q** Okay. Did you at any point talk to Mr. Doyle about, in  
10 those two conversations, in addition to talking about  
11 the documents did you talk to Mr. Doyle about feeling  
12 that your honesty and professionalism were under attack  
13 in these proceedings?  
14 **A I think that, yes, that would be the case.**  
15 **Q** Okay. You did say that to him?  
16 **A Yes, I feel that I'm here to talk about my observations**  
17 **of Mr. Lancellotta, and now I'm being questioned about**  
18 **all these different things.**  
19 **Q** That's not exactly my question. My question to you is,  
20 in your conversations with Mr. Doyle, and you have  
21 described two, in addition to talking about the  
22 documents that you were being asked to produce and  
23 describing them, did you also tell Mr. Doyle that you  
24 felt that your honesty and professionalism has, in

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1 essence, been placed into the hearing as evidence, did  
2 you make that concern known to him, in essence?  
3 **A I just made the concern that I'm talking about issues**  
4 **that I didn't think I would be talking about.**  
5 **Q** And did you say to Mr. Doyle, or convey to him that your  
6 veracity has been challenged, as has your motivation to  
7 testify, did you say that to him, in essence?  
8 **A I mean, like I said, I'm not talking about what I'm here**  
9 **to talk about, and that's what -- we're talking about**  
10 **professional development of the department, we're**  
11 **talking about department agendas. I mean, I don't --**  
12 **it's not the same topic as I was expecting to be**  
13 **interviewed about, so.**  
14 **Q** So, just to make my question crystal clear, my question  
15 isn't whether you feel that the questioning is not on  
16 point, that is a separate issue. My question to you,  
17 Mr. Giovanelli, is in your conversations with Mr. Doyle  
18 did you convey to him that you felt that your honesty  
19 and professionalism has been placed into the hearing as  
20 evidence, did you say that to him, in essence?  
21 **A I really don't know what it means in terms of what**  
22 **you're trying to say. I don't understand exactly what.**  
23 **Q** Well, let me say it a different way.  
24 **A Yes.**

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1 **Q** Did you convey to Mr. Doyle that you felt that you were  
2 being questioned on topics that weren't really why you  
3 were here?  
4 **A Yes.**  
5 **Q** Okay. And did you tell him that you felt that the  
6 questioning went after your professionalism?  
7 **A Well, I think we are spending more time talking about**  
8 **Mr. Doyle than we are about the reason I'm here. That's**  
9 **what I'm not understanding.**  
10 **Q** So is your answer yes or no, did you say that to  
11 Mr. Doyle, in other words?  
12 **A I feel like we are going after what I was doing**  
13 **somewhat, yes.**  
14 **Q** Did you say that to Mr. Doyle?  
15 **A Well, those were the things that I said, you know,**  
16 **that --**  
17 **Q** That's my question, did you say that to Mr. Doyle?  
18 **A Based on the email that you sent, in terms of requesting**  
19 **the documents, I said there's documents for agendas,**  
20 **professional development, it looks like they're asking**  
21 **questions about my department head role.**  
22 **Q** Okay. And did you talk to him about their asking  
23 questions about communications between us, which is  
24 really not part of the case?

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1 **A No, I didn't talk about anything with the case.**  
2 **Q** Did you talk to him about the fact that emails were  
3 being requested?  
4 **A That was in the emails, so, yes. Whatever in the email**  
5 **was what I shared.**  
6 **Q** Okay. And did you tell him that you wanted him to be in  
7 the room while you were being questioned?  
8 **A I would feel more comfortable, yes.**  
9 **Q** And did you tell him that the reason is that some of the  
10 questioning was going to undermine your honesty and you  
11 felt like you were being attacked?  
12 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm going to object  
13 again. I really feel this is irrelevant.  
14 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I think this is the last  
15 question that we should allow on this point. I would  
16 recommend that counsel move on from that. But, I think  
17 Mr. Giovanelli should answer this question. I don't  
18 think we have got a straight answer on this question.  
19 **THE WITNESS:** What is the question  
20 again?  
21 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Did you tell Mr. Doyle  
22 that you felt like your professionalism was being  
23 attacked during the course of this proceeding?  
24 **THE WITNESS:** I mean, not attacked. It



1 was being questioned. I mean, but not through the  
2 testimony, it's through the emails, the request for  
3 documents.  
4 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I would ask that we move  
5 on, Ms. Rapport. I think we've explored this  
6 significantly.  
7 Q Okay. Let's talk about some of the documents that you  
8 produced. You gathered the documents that pertained to  
9 professional development and department meetings?  
10 A Yes.  
11 Q Is that correct?  
12 A Yes.  
13 Q I just want to just go over a couple of those pieces of  
14 information and ask you to just confirm  
15 Mr. Lancellotta's involvement to the best of your  
16 memory. Mr. Lancellotta's first day at work, so to  
17 speak, was October 1st, 2018; is that right?  
18 A I would say yes.  
19 Q Okay. And prior that you were part of the team that  
20 interviewed Mr. Lancellotta, correct?  
21 A Yes.  
22 Q Okay. And it's correct, is it not, that,  
23 Mr. Giovanelli, that Mr. Lancellotta was the only  
24 applicant from, among those who applied, who actually

1 A Yes.  
2 Q And that's the meeting at which you introduced  
3 Mr. Lancellotta to the department, correct?  
4 A We also had a welcome dinner, I believe, but I'm not  
5 sure if it happened before or after. I think it  
6 happened after.  
7 Q But in the documents that you produced you had made a  
8 notation inviting people to come to that meeting because  
9 this is the one where we're going to meet the new hire,  
10 Mr. Lancellotta, correct?  
11 A But that was also the scheduled breakfast meeting. That  
12 was one of the --  
13 Q That was the scheduled breakfast meeting for the  
14 department, correct?  
15 A Yes.  
16 Q And it was at that meeting, and maybe, this is, maybe  
17 you remember this, maybe you don't, it was at that  
18 meeting at which Mr. Lancellotta signed his Union card,  
19 right?  
20 A I don't know about that. He didn't do it during the  
21 meeting, the breakfast meeting.  
22 Q Okay. Now, after that, shortly after that there was a  
23 Rhode Island Foreign Language Association meeting,  
24 correct?

1 had certification, is that correct?  
2 A Again, I'm, yes, I think, yes, I would say so.  
3 Q He was the only certified person in --  
4 A Yes.  
5 Q -- in both Spanish -- well, he was certified in both  
6 Spanish and English, correct?  
7 A Spanish and Italian.  
8 Q I'm sorry, I said that the last time. Spanish and  
9 Italian, right?  
10 A Yes.  
11 Q That's your certification as well?  
12 A Yes.  
13 Q Okay. And even though his first day of work was not  
14 until October 1st, Mr. Lancellotta came to the open  
15 house that was on September -- late in that month,  
16 September 18th or so he came?  
17 A Yes.  
18 Q Before his, before his hire date?  
19 A Yes.  
20 Q And he came without getting paid, right?  
21 A Yes, I believe so.  
22 Q And then after that, the very first breakfast meeting  
23 that you had that year was October 5th, or early in  
24 October, right?

1 A Yes, the conference, yes.  
2 Q And that's held in the fall and it's on a weekend,  
3 correct?  
4 A Yes.  
5 Q Mr. Lancellotta went to the meeting that you had?  
6 A I believe the entire department went.  
7 Q In the Fall of 2018 isn't it true that that year was  
8 just the two of you?  
9 A I don't know if it was the first or the second year, I'm  
10 not positive, but I attend all of them, so.  
11 Q After that fall meeting there was various meetings over  
12 the course of the year and at the end of the year  
13 Mr. Lancellotta participated in the interviews of the  
14 high school students, is that correct?  
15 A Yes.  
16 Q Now, were you aware that Mr. Lancellotta participated in  
17 the extracurricular service of chaperoning or being an  
18 adult in the room at the eighth grade dance, do you know  
19 that?  
20 A No.  
21 Q And did you have any awareness of Mr. Lancellotta's  
22 sponsoring one of his top students for the Sons of Italy  
23 Scholarship Award, did you know about that?  
24 A Yes, I informed him about that.

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1 Q And he put a student in the mix and was there at that  
2 presentation?  
3 A Yes.  
4 Q Okay. And you're saying that the Rhode Island  
5 Association, Rhode Island Foreign Language Association  
6 meeting in the Fall of 2019, or maybe you don't  
7 remember, but there was a meeting at which more than one  
8 member of the department went and Mr. Lancellotta was  
9 among those?  
10 A Yes.  
11 Q That's in the documents you produced as well, in fact,  
12 there was five people that went, including you and  
13 Mr. Lancellotta; is that right?  
14 A Yes.  
15 Q Now, in your testimony on the 1st of December you had  
16 described two issues with Mr. Lancellotta, one was that,  
17 and I'm quoting from your testimony at page 62, "I found  
18 that he delivered the curriculum, it was planned, it was  
19 structured, it was organized in that way, but I think  
20 that I didn't see a lot of communication. It was more  
21 teacher to class. It's the teacher-to-student  
22 teacher-to-student. It was general for the entire group  
23 for the most part. Again, there were some smaller  
24 interactions, but, again, it was teacher-to-class. He

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1 was serious, that's the way he always is. He is  
2 serious." And, the other concern that you expressed was  
3 that he, for lack of a better word, didn't really seem  
4 to collaborate or socialize or communicate much with his  
5 colleagues, do you remember articulating that concern?  
6 A Yes.  
7 Q And you said that --  
8 A Yes.  
9 Q And I believe I have it right, you did an informal  
10 observation of him in January of 2019, and then you did  
11 another formal in February of 2019 and those are  
12 reflected in the documents that have been admitted into  
13 evidence; is that right?  
14 A Yes. I was not the main observer. I only did the  
15 informals.  
16 Q And you also -- and you did those informals in the, sort  
17 of in the beginning of his tenure, in January and  
18 February, correct?  
19 A It was after the informal one, yes. The informal had  
20 taken place, this came after.  
21 Q Now, in that observation you said you saw a lot of, as  
22 just described in the testimony, teacher to student, but  
23 not as much intimacy with the students, is that fair to  
24 say?

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1 A Yes. The original observation, the formal one, whatever  
2 is missing, the informal one will go in and look for  
3 evidence that wasn't seen in the initial observations.  
4 Q So your informal observation, were you looking for  
5 something in particular or were you just there to do an  
6 informal? Did you have something in particular that you  
7 were looking at?  
8 A Well, there were certain things that Mr. Lancellotta, in  
9 terms of the evidence wasn't on the original  
10 observation, so those were things that I specifically  
11 had to look for in terms of evidence.  
12 Q Okay. Now, after that informal observation did you have  
13 a concern after those two informal observations about  
14 the way he was interacting with students, did you have  
15 that concern at that time?  
16 A Yes.  
17 Q Okay. So that would have been in January and February  
18 of 2019, is that right?  
19 A Yes.  
20 Q And after that observation did you tell Mr. Lancellotta  
21 that you had that concern?  
22 A What I did was I made suggestions based on what I  
23 observed in the class.  
24 Q And what did you suggest?

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1 A And I suggested, again, what was a group work activity  
2 and he was monitoring from the outside, and I said it  
3 would be a good idea. I suggested that you could  
4 actually get into the group, and, again, instead of  
5 asking just simple recall questions, ask opinion  
6 questions, because they were talking about, I think it  
7 was Italy, the school system, sports, holidays, we could  
8 get some actual opinions, points of view, that type of  
9 thing. So it was -- because questioning was one of the  
10 issues I believe in terms of the evaluation. So I gave  
11 some suggestions, as you can just ask questions that are  
12 point of view opinion, that would also allow you some  
13 interactions with students, too.  
14 Q And how did you convey that to him? When did you convey  
15 that to him?  
16 A That's what we talked about when we looked over the  
17 script. Remember what I always do with the evaluation,  
18 once I share the script, because, again, I share the  
19 script always with the teacher, give time to look it  
20 over, then we usually meet on the next day. Again, we  
21 discuss the script, what did you see, and then I always  
22 ask questions like how do you think the class sent, do  
23 we both see the same things. So that's why, again, that  
24 interaction is important. And, Mr. Lancellotta didn't

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1 give much feedback in terms of that. He did everything  
2 in the script.  
3 Q Well, after the observation you sat down with him and  
4 went over how he could ask different questions that  
5 might elicit more student activity?  
6 A That was one of the things we were looking for, was  
7 questioning. So, we went over some questioning, yes,  
8 instead of simple recall, other ways of doing questions.  
9 Q And was this in a meeting?  
10 A Yes, it was in his room before school probably.  
11 Q And did you in any way write down or reflect that  
12 concern or observation on any document?  
13 A No. We just spoke about it. I gave suggestions about  
14 questioning, and that would be a way of getting  
15 communication between the student and teacher and vice  
16 versa, but more personalized communication, because  
17 you're asking point of view, you're asking opinions.  
18 Q So, other than your suggestion about the type of  
19 questioning, did you ever say to Mr. Lancellotta, I am  
20 concerned that you don't seem to have much interaction  
21 with students, that you are removed from them, did you  
22 ever say that to him?  
23 A Again, I can only make suggestions based on my  
24 observations and our conversations.

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1 Q So is the answer, no, you didn't actually express that  
2 concern?  
3 A I expressed it through a means of achieving that by  
4 doing the questioning with the students.  
5 Q So the concern that you felt about his global reticence  
6 around students you described through a particular style  
7 of questioning?  
8 A Questioning was one of the -- was one of the aspects,  
9 yes.  
10 Q What else?  
11 A Well, we talked about other things, too, in terms of,  
12 again, there was students putting things up on boards in  
13 the back, again, there was a line of students, saying  
14 there was a good idea, maybe one at a time to put up,  
15 instead of even groups, so they could work at their  
16 desk, and then one student at a time could go up and  
17 that would eliminate some of the -- everybody being at  
18 the backboards writing things down, so the congestion.  
19 So, those would be types of things, based on the  
20 observations.  
21 Q Did you reflect any of these concerns in your scoring of  
22 Mr. Lancellotta?  
23 A What I do is I follow the rubric exactly. Whatever the  
24 rubric says is how we're scored.

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1 Q So, is the answer no or yes? Did you have concerns --  
2 let me ask it a different way. Did the concerns that  
3 you have described about the kind of questions he asked  
4 and the way the students were lined up in a line, did  
5 those concerns get reflected in any scores on his  
6 evaluation?  
7 A No, because we follow the rubric. Our discussions talk  
8 about that.  
9 Q Okay. And these discussions, if you could just be a  
10 little bit more specific, there were two observations,  
11 one was in January and one was in February. Was there  
12 one discussion after the observations or was there a  
13 discussion after each one?  
14 A After each one, we meet after they reflect on your  
15 script, and we meet and we talk about that and that is  
16 where the professional growth takes place, through the  
17 practice, through the discussions.  
18 Q So you had a discussion after each of the informal  
19 observations?  
20 A Yes.  
21 Q Now, at the conclusion of that school year -- oh, by the  
22 way, did you at any time have any conversations that  
23 first year, that would be '18/'19, about  
24 Mr. Lancellotta's apparent lack of collegiality, did you

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1 ever talk to him about working more collaboratively with  
2 other faculty?  
3 A What I did was make other suggestions, what didn't you  
4 talk to the French teacher about this, about curriculum,  
5 about some of the school policies. Again, also, when we  
6 talked about students, I said, well, talk to, again, the  
7 French teacher, maybe she had the kids last year and she  
8 can give you some information about that.  
9 Q So you suggested that he talk to the French teacher?  
10 A Yes. And, I suggested to the French teacher that she  
11 talk to John about trying to get them to connect.  
12 Q And when did you make that suggestion?  
13 A Again, when it came up in conversation.  
14 Q Okay.  
15 A Again, when he -- I know he had a discipline problem,  
16 and it was around the same time I said, well, you might  
17 want to check with Danielle because she might have had  
18 the student last year and observed the same thing. I  
19 also suggested that maybe talk to the core teachers,  
20 talk to the encore teachers to see if they're having the  
21 same problem, so consult with others. But, I didn't say  
22 go to this person. I said, you might not want to talk  
23 to the core teacher, the encore teacher, people that  
24 they may have right now as teachers.

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1 Q So, Mr. Giovanelli, did these two concerns, or these  
2 sets of concerns that you had, that you said you  
3 conveyed through questions or suggestions through  
4 Mr. Lancellotta how he might address these concerns,  
5 that's essentially your testimony, is that fair to say?  
6 A Well, this was a pattern of the communication. Students  
7 were one thing. Again, with the colleague at the middle  
8 school, again, in our department meetings, I never saw  
9 interaction with faculty, so these were things that I  
10 observed.  
11 Q My question to you is whether you talked to  
12 Mr. Lancellotta about it?  
13 A I can make suggestions, that type of thing. I cannot  
14 tell people what to do.  
15 Q These concerns that you have that that you described as  
16 real concerns, did you share these concerns with anybody  
17 in the administration at the end or at any point over  
18 the '18/'19 school year?  
19 A No. Again, I figured he was still new, again, give him  
20 some time to make connections, collaborate, that type of  
21 thing.  
22 Q So you did not share with Mr. Solomon at all any of  
23 these concerns in the '18/'19 school year?  
24 A Not until of the second -- well, the DEP observation

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1 that I did in November.  
2 Q And what about the superintendent, did you ever talk to  
3 her about these concerns?  
4 A No.  
5 Q That would be no?  
6 A No.  
7 Q And what about the principal in the '18/'19 school year  
8 was Mr. Guiot, Jack Guiot?  
9 A Yes. I never spoke with him about it.  
10 Q What about the assistant principal, was there an  
11 assistant principal?  
12 A No, because I kept it pretty, get used to the school,  
13 get used to the faculty, that type of thing.  
14 Q Did you ever talk about any of these concerns with your  
15 colleagues such as Mr. Doyle?  
16 A No. The only thing some people said at department  
17 meetings, John is very quiet, that was about it.  
18 Q Now, after that first school year, we are in the second  
19 year, and the DEP was on November 14th, is that  
20 correct?  
21 A Yes.  
22 Q And, by the way, going back to the '18/'19,  
23 Mr. Bovenzi -- am I saying his name correctly?  
24 A Yes.

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1 Q Mr. Bovenzi was his formal evaluator in the '18/'19  
2 school year; is that true?  
3 A Yes.  
4 Q And he's actually a member of the faculty, he's a  
5 teacher, right?  
6 A He is a teacher but he's also an administrator.  
7 Q He is in the --  
8 A He works in the administration building, but he is a  
9 teacher. I can't exactly -- I'm not sure of the exact  
10 title.  
11 Q Okay. Did you ever talk with Mr. Bovenzi about your  
12 concerns?  
13 A No, I did not. I never saw the final results. I only  
14 did input my section, and then he works with  
15 Mr. Lancellotta and he does the final summary of the  
16 evaluation, so I did not see the final evaluation  
17 document. I entered my two informals and that was it.  
18 I never see the end result.  
19 Q In the '19/'20 school year you were the evaluator for  
20 the DEP?  
21 A That's correct.  
22 Q That's what you said on November 14th or?  
23 A Yes.  
24 Q That was November 14th. And after that evaluation you

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1 said, or you testified that you saw no change, no growth  
2 and the same concerns; is that right?  
3 A Yes, yes.  
4 Q And you entered the scores on that evaluation as you did  
5 for the prior year, is that correct?  
6 A And I followed the rubric and the way the rubric is  
7 written, those were the scores that he obtained, yes.  
8 Q And did you talk with Mr. Lancellotta after that  
9 evaluation -- well, it was an observation letter, right?  
10 A Yes.  
11 Q About a half hour, a little longer than a half hour?  
12 A It could have been 40 minutes, something like that. It  
13 was longer than a half hour, I believe.  
14 Q After that observation did you talk to him about the way  
15 he was interacting with students?  
16 A We went over the script, the results, again, I asked the  
17 same questions, how do you think the class went.  
18 Q And what did he say?  
19 A And, again, I had very little input, very little  
20 feedback.  
21 Q From whom?  
22 A From Mr. Lancellotta.  
23 Q What were your criticisms at the class?  
24 A My criticism again was the lack of communication, the

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1 **personalization with students.**  
2 Q What do you mean by the personalization?  
3 A **Again, not just general, do you need paper, do you have**  
4 **a packet, what about personalization, how are you, how**  
5 **are things going, a smile, a friendliness, that type of**  
6 **thing.**  
7 Q Did you talk to him about that after that scoring?  
8 A **No, because that is not part of the rubric.**  
9 Q Did you talk to him about your concerns after that  
10 scoring?  
11 A **Again, we discussed what was in the observation, again,**  
12 **the communication, the questioning.**  
13 Q And when did the scoring get inputted, or when did that  
14 get fully completed, how long after that?  
15 A **The DEP, I did the script, we shared it with him, I went**  
16 **over with it, we went over the scores. Usually that is**  
17 **50/50, where the two people are talking, again, engaging**  
18 **in the lesson, talking about the lesson, trying to**  
19 **improve practice. I end up doing 95 percent of the**  
20 **discussion, and I didn't get much influence or input**  
21 **from Mr. Lancellotta.**  
22 Q When did you have that conversation, how long after the?  
23 A **It had to be the day or two after the observation**  
24 **occurred.**

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1 Q So, the observation was on the 14th, and within a  
2 short period of time after you had that meeting with him  
3 and you sat down with him; is that correct?  
4 A **Yes, yes.**  
5 Q And the scores were pretty much done within a few days?  
6 A **Yes, very quickly, yes.**  
7 Q Now, after that conversation in November, or after that  
8 meeting in November did you then have any meetings or  
9 conversations, I know you met with Mr. Solomon, but did  
10 you meet with the new principal, I believe her name is  
11 Elizabeth Furtado?  
12 A **No, I did not.**  
13 Q Okay. Did you talk with her at all about  
14 Mr. Lancellotta?  
15 A **We talked about scheduling, that type of thing.**  
16 Q Did you talk to Ms. Furtado about the content of  
17 Mr. Lancellotta's performance?  
18 A **No, we didn't talk about evaluation or observations.**  
19 Q Okay. And did you talk with -- was Mr. Bovenzi still  
20 available to you to discuss Mr. Lancellotta or was he  
21 not a part of this conversation?  
22 A **He was not a part of that DEP evaluation.**  
23 Q Okay. And did you talk with the superintendent after  
24 this November meeting with Mr. Lancellotta?

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1 A **I didn't, no.**  
2 Q And did you talk to any faculty member or colleague  
3 about Mr. Lancellotta's performance?  
4 A **No.**  
5 Q Okay. So the first time you had --  
6 **THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry.**  
7 **(INTERRUPTION)**  
8 **MS. RAPPORT: Is it okay to proceed?**  
9 Q The first time you shared any concerns with anybody  
10 about Mr. Lancellotta's style of interacting with  
11 students and faculty was on December 18th, when you  
12 spoke with Mr. Solomon, that was the very first time?  
13 A **Yes.**  
14 Q Now, were you aware on December -- and I believe you  
15 initiated that meeting with Mr. Solomon, is that  
16 correct?  
17 A **Yes, I had a few issues to talk about, yes.**  
18 Q Okay. And that's reflected in Exhibit 1, the email  
19 dated, I believe it was December 13th, you sent him an  
20 email and said can we meet?  
21 A **Yes, yes.**  
22 Q Now, at any point prior to you making that overture to  
23 Mr. Solomon did Mr. Solomon reach out to you to get  
24 input on Mr. Lancellotta?

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1 A **Before meeting?**  
2 Q Yes.  
3 A **No.**  
4 Q Did the superintendent reach out to you to get input on  
5 Mr. Lancellotta?  
6 A **No, they wouldn't have known because I didn't tell them.**  
7 Q So, my question to you is, did you receive any  
8 communication, either oral or written, from anyone in  
9 the administration, or Mr. Bovenzi, to give input on  
10 Mr. Lancellotta's teaching?  
11 A **No. That was my idea.**  
12 Q Okay.  
13 A **As department head I felt that I needed to go to the**  
14 **administrator and just make them aware of my**  
15 **observations.**  
16 Q So it was your idea?  
17 A **It was my idea. Again, I was concerned about the lack**  
18 **of interaction with the colleague at the middle school.**  
19 **Again, just the isolationism, what I observed in the**  
20 **class in terms of the collaboration with students, the**  
21 **interaction, those communications. And, again, the same**  
22 **thing with me, again, the communications with me were,**  
23 **again, short. There was very little communication. I'm**  
24 **doing all of the communicating in terms of the**

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1 **relationship.**  
2 Q Okay. And you had this idea in mid-December because you  
3 wanted to talk to Mr. Solomon about a few other things  
4 at the middle school?  
5 A **Well, I had to wait until the observation was over to**  
6 **see if anything had changed, progressed, improved.**  
7 Q And did you at the time, on December 13th or  
8 thereabouts, know that Mr. Lancellotta was a  
9 probationary employee?  
10 A **I know that he was the nontenured.**  
11 Q And so you knew when you went to talk to Mr. Solomon  
12 that if the district didn't make a decision by  
13 March 1st he would become tenured?  
14 A **That, I wasn't sure about dates and that type of thing.**  
15 **I know three years to get tenure, I believe, right,**  
16 **three years.**  
17 Q Are you familiar with the March 1st deadline, have you  
18 ever heard of that?  
19 A **I've heard of it, yes.**  
20 Q Did you know what it was?  
21 A **I mean, I don't know who gets anything at March 1st.**  
22 **I'm not sure, because I had never been involved in a**  
23 **process like this.**  
24 Q Okay. So what is it about December, mid-December that

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1 made you decide to go to Mr. Solomon? Why did you feel  
2 like you needed to go to him?  
3 A **Well, again, I didn't see the interactions with the**  
4 **colleague, I didn't see interactions among the**  
5 **department, I didn't see interactions with faculty.**  
6 **Again, my concerns with students, the seriousness which**  
7 **I saw in the class. Remember, in terms of students, we**  
8 **want to keep them interesting, excited, encourage them**  
9 **to study language, and that's the key element of it.**  
10 Q Okay.  
11 A **And, again, I don't know, I was not seeing that type of**  
12 **enthusiasm.**  
13 Q Okay. And so you collected your thoughts on  
14 December 13th. And did you write them down on that  
15 little piece of paper that is Exhibit 2?  
16 A **My thoughts went on from the year before. But, again, I**  
17 **figured it was transitional, you know, getting used to**  
18 **the school, that type of thing. So these thoughts were**  
19 **in my mind, but, again, I was hoping to see some type of**  
20 **change, progress of getting more involved, you know,**  
21 **working with colleague, because there's only one**  
22 **colleague at the middle school, and, again, this is a**  
23 **specialized area, so the specialized areas have to work**  
24 **together.**

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1 Q So my question to you is that you're familiar with the  
2 Exhibit 2, you know what that is?  
3 A **I don't know.**  
4 **MS. RAPPORT:** Maybe we could put it up  
5 on the screen so he can see it again. Is that possible?  
6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Do I have the ability to  
7 screen share?  
8 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Let me see. If you want  
9 me to I can try to do it, too.  
10 **MR. RUGGERIO:** If you could, Aubrey.  
11 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Sure. Just bear with me.  
12 Can you see that?  
13 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes.  
14 **MS. RAPPORT:** Thank you.  
15 Q So this is Exhibit 2, and this is a document that's  
16 familiar to you, Mr. Giovanelli?  
17 A **Yes, it is.**  
18 Q So my question to you is, did you make these notes on  
19 this piece of paper before you went into the meeting on  
20 December 18th?  
21 A **Yes.**  
22 Q So you wrote this little list of things for you to take  
23 with you to the meeting to keep your memory intact,  
24 right?

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1 A **It's my habit to actually write an agenda beforehand,**  
2 **weeks sometimes ahead of time and I add and subtract as**  
3 **things come up and come to mind. So, this might not**  
4 **have all been done on the same day. It definitely**  
5 **wasn't. I just add to the list and I delete, if things**  
6 **get resolved they get deleted. So I always have a**  
7 **working list going on.**  
8 Q How often -- I am sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt you.  
9 Were you done?  
10 A **Yes.**  
11 Q How often would you meet with Mr. Solomon?  
12 A **We met frequently because we were at the department head**  
13 **meetings, and, again, I would see him very often.**  
14 Q So when you say frequently, do you mean once a month,  
15 once a week?  
16 A **Again, it could be at least once a week, yes.**  
17 Q Okay. And did you, before meeting with him, typically  
18 write things down on a list to keep yourself attentive  
19 to what you were going to be talking about?  
20 A **Yes.**  
21 Q And my question to you about this particular list is,  
22 did you write this down, there are five items here, did  
23 you write them down before you went into the meeting on  
24 the 18th?

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1 A Yes.  
2 Q Sometime before the 18th you wrote down JL, two  
3 informals, and then what does that say after that?  
4 A **Can we make it a little bigger?**  
5 MS. LOMBARDO: You're asking a lot of me  
6 now. I can try.  
7 A **I have it perfectly now.**  
8 MS. LOMBARDO: Okay. Go for it.  
9 A **It says two informals, Jeff, new principals, one DEP**  
10 **this year, November 14th.**  
11 Q So Jeff, Jeff is the principal from the year before,  
12 correct?  
13 A **Yes, that's correct, uh-hum.**  
14 Q So he had two informals with Jeff?  
15 A **No, no. He had the two informals with me.**  
16 Q Well, when Jeff -- who was the principal, correct?  
17 A **Yes.**  
18 Q And then there are new principals, meaning Elizabeth and  
19 the other principal?  
20 A **Yes.**  
21 Q Okay. And one DEP this year, November 14th?  
22 A **Uh-hum.**  
23 Q Okay. And then you wrote, "Talk to, about it?"  
24 A **Yes.**

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1 Q Okay.  
2 A **Talk about it, interaction, wall, cold, interactions,**  
3 **personality.**  
4 Q Okay. And then you wrote, "Delivers instruction," and  
5 then underneath, "Interactions, students, faculty,  
6 department," is that what you wrote there?  
7 A **Yes.**  
8 Q Okay. Do you remember when you wrote this note about  
9 Mr. Lancellotta, was it a week before the meeting, a few  
10 days before?  
11 A **It was before the meeting.**  
12 Q And the other topics you wrote also before the meeting,  
13 is that right?  
14 A **Yes.**  
15 Q I think we can take it down, if you don't mind. When  
16 you got into the meeting, you used this piece of paper  
17 as sort of a memory prod for your meeting with  
18 Mr. Solomon, right?  
19 A **Yes.**  
20 Q And at the meeting itself did you write anything else on  
21 that piece of paper, did you add to it, did you make any  
22 notes on it?  
23 A **Yes. Well, that word Betsy, I think Phil made the**  
24 **recommendation that I talk to Betsy about, it was one of**

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1 **the items there. I don't know if it was open house or**  
2 **conferences. So, that was added during the meeting.**  
3 Q And did you add any notes about Mr. Lancellotta during  
4 the meeting?  
5 A **Those would be the meeting -- well, what was written at**  
6 **the bottom. No, I don't believe so.**  
7 Q Okay. And you described to Mr. Solomon the concerns  
8 that you had that are reflected in those little notes  
9 that you made, right?  
10 A **Yes, yes.**  
11 Q What did Mr. Solomon say to you about these concerns?  
12 A **He didn't give me -- I said I was there just to make him**  
13 **aware of the situation, that I didn't know what to do at**  
14 **this point. I had never been in a situation like that**  
15 **and I could use some direction.**  
16 Q And what did he suggest?  
17 A **And that was it. That was how -- the bell rang I think**  
18 **at that point and I had to leave to go to class.**  
19 Q So did Mr. Solomon give you any feedback on your  
20 concerns about what to do in this situation?  
21 A **Not at that moment, no.**  
22 Q What were you asking him for advice to do, what did you  
23 want him to, what were you looking for?  
24 A **Whatever administrative things is necessary. I didn't**

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1 **have any idea at this point, so.**  
2 Q You just wanted to share these concerns with him?  
3 A **I wanted to share them, and, again, if he told me to do**  
4 **something I would have done it.**  
5 Q And have you never been in a situation where you had  
6 concerns about a teacher before?  
7 A **Never, no.**  
8 Q So, Mr. Solomon didn't have time to give you any  
9 feedback on that concern that you articulated?  
10 A **At that time, no, we didn't.**  
11 Q Okay. At any time?  
12 A **After that, no, I didn't discuss it. I was waiting to**  
13 **hear back.**  
14 Q Now, after you left that meeting, I assume you went on  
15 your business, it's almost Christmas by this point?  
16 A **Yes.**  
17 Q It's a busy time. What did you do with that little  
18 piece of paper?  
19 A **I have it in the file.**  
20 Q And what is in that file?  
21 A **It's just from the observation, or it was a Phil file,**  
22 **with other issues in terms of scheduling at the middle**  
23 **school, those types of things, so I had actually a Phil**  
24 **file.**

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1 Q A what file?  
2 A **A Phil. P-H-I-L.**  
3 Q What does that mean, a Phil file? Oh, a Phil for Phil?  
4 A **Yes, exactly.**  
5 Q So it is all the things that you talked with Phil about  
6 in that file?  
7 A **Well, I mean, yes, during that year, exactly.**  
8 Q So it wasn't just -- it wasn't Mr. Lancellotta's file,  
9 it was a Phil file, and you keep all your notes in that  
10 file?  
11 A **Well, I have a discussion with Phil about**  
12 **Mr. Lancellotta, so it went in the Phil file.**  
13 Q Okay. Were there other things in the Phil file?  
14 A **Again, there were things about scheduling, about the**  
15 **memos from what the schedule looked like that school**  
16 **year.**  
17 Q So, there's all kinds of -- it's a folder, I am  
18 assuming, right?  
19 A **Exactly.**  
20 Q Okay. All right. And did you share that little piece  
21 of paper or Exhibit 2 with -- did you ever show it to  
22 Phil, the piece of paper?  
23 A **I had the folder and the piece of paper on the table**  
24 **when we met.**

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1 Q Okay. But did he make a copy of it?  
2 A **I don't think so.**  
3 Q Okay. Did you give him a copy of it?  
4 A **It was just my handwritten notes.**  
5 Q So you took it with you when you left the meeting,  
6 right?  
7 A **Yes.**  
8 Q And did you ever share the contents of it with anybody?  
9 A **Just Mr. Solomon.**  
10 Q Just Mr. Solomon, okay. And then you put it back in  
11 that little folder, the Phil file?  
12 A **Yes.**  
13 Q Okay. And that's in your office, in your department?  
14 A **Yes.**  
15 Q Okay.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sara, it is already  
17 getting rather late. I don't know how much you have of  
18 Mr. Giovanelli, but I think you've explored this line of  
19 questioning significantly. I'm hoping you can move on  
20 from the Phil file.  
21 Q Okay. So after that meeting on December 18th did you  
22 have any more conversations with Mr. Solomon about  
23 Mr. Lancellotta?  
24 A **No.**

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1 Q Did you have any conversations with the superintendent?  
2 A **No, I did not.**  
3 Q Okay. Did you have any conversations with anybody?  
4 A **No.**  
5 Q Okay. Did you talk to Mr. Boyle about Mr. Lancellotta?  
6 A **Mr. Boyle?**  
7 Q I'm sorry, Doyle.  
8 A **No, no.**  
9 Q When was the next time you took out Exhibit 2?  
10 A **Not until I was asked by Attorney Lombardo if I had any**  
11 **communications about Phil.**  
12 Q And that would have been in November of 2020?  
13 A **Probably, yes.**  
14 Q So you kept it in the Phil file for the year,  
15 essentially?  
16 A **Exactly.**  
17 Q And did everything stay in that Phil file?  
18 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I am going to object to  
19 relevance.  
20 **MR. RUGGERIO:** If we're talking after  
21 the time in which he was put forth for non-renewal, I  
22 don't know what the relevance of what happens with the  
23 Phil file after that is.  
24 **MS. RAPPORT:** So the objection is

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1 sustained?  
2 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I'll sustain the  
3 objection.  
4 Q Okay. When did you -- did you learn at any point that  
5 you would become a witness for this proceeding?  
6 A **It was I would say at the end of the last -- maybe the**  
7 **summer.**  
8 Q Okay. And how is it that you became aware of that?  
9 A **I received the call saying that I might be asked to give**  
10 **testimony.**  
11 Q And who did you get that call from?  
12 A **I got it from Mr. Doyle.**  
13 Q And did Mr. Doyle explain to you why you would be asked  
14 to give testimony?  
15 A **He just said I might have to give testimony in terms of**  
16 **Mr. Lancellotta.**  
17 Q Okay. And do you remember about when that was?  
18 A **It was the end of the school year, or maybe it was after**  
19 **the school year was over.**  
20 Q Okay. And did Mr. Doyle ask you any questions about  
21 what kind of testimony you would be asked to give?  
22 A **No. He said that I would be asked to give testimony**  
23 **about Mr. Lancellotta.**  
24 Q Who said that? I'm sorry.



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1           **MR. RUGGERIO:** I don't know. Do you  
2 need the last question read back, or last answer read  
3 back?  
4           **MS. RAPPORT:** I heard mama mia. That  
5 sounded like irritation. Do we need to take a break?  
6           **MR. RUGGERIO:** I can ask the committee  
7 members. Committee members, would you like to take -- I  
8 would like to get through. I would imagine you're  
9 pretty much done, Sara?  
10          **MS. RAPPORT:** I'm getting close, but I  
11 have a few more questions.  
12          **MR. RUGGERIO:** Why don't you proceed.  
13          **MS. RAPPORT:** Thank you.  
14 Q So you don't recall when Mr. Doyle called you to say you  
15 would be giving testimony?  
16 A **Again, as I said, it was late in the year. It was the**  
17 **beginning of summer.**  
18 Q Did you talk with Mr. Doyle about what you would be  
19 testifying about?  
20 A **No.**  
21 Q After that initial call when was the next time that you  
22 received any request to give testimony?  
23 A **Then I got the -- it had to be the notification from**  
24 **Attorney Lombardo.**

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1 Q And that would have been in November?  
2           **MS. LOMBARDO:** Objection. Relevance.  
3           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sustained.  
4 Q And did you meet with Ms. Lombardo?  
5           **MS. LOMBARDO:** Objection. Relevance.  
6           **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sustained.  
7           **MS. RAPPORT:** I think this goes to the  
8 question of his bias, and I would like to be able to  
9 explore the nature of the meetings in preparation for  
10 the proceeding.  
11          **MR. RUGGERIO:** The nature of the  
12 meetings where the attorney was questioning the  
13 witnesses that she intends to present to support her  
14 case in chief?  
15          **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes. I think there's some  
16 relevance revealed by the discovery that was produced,  
17 Mr. Ruggerio.  
18          **MR. RUGGERIO:** I disagree and I would  
19 sustain the objection.  
20 Q At the meetings was Mr. Doyle and Mr. Lambert present?  
21          **MS. LOMBARDO:** Objection. Relevance.  
22          **MR. RUGGERIO:** What's the relevance  
23 there, Counsel?  
24          **MS. RAPPORT:** He has made a claim that

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1 his knowledge of the Union issues had no influence on  
2 his testimony.  
3           **MS. LOMBARDO:** And I don't see how  
4 having --  
5           **MR. RUGGERIO:** When you say the Union  
6 issues, I just want to make sure I understand what  
7 you're referring to. You're saying Mr. Lancellotta's  
8 Union issues?  
9           **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes.  
10          **MR. RUGGERIO:** I think that's an  
11 appropriate question you could ask him.  
12          **MS. RAPPORT:** Well, I would like to ask  
13 the questions the way I asked the question, so if you  
14 sustain the objection, I'll ask a different question.  
15          **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sustained.  
16 Q Okay. So, Mr. Giovanelli, you testified on direct that  
17 you were at two meetings with Mr. Lancellotta and  
18 Mr. Doyle to discuss Mr. Lancellotta's objection to  
19 being in the Union. Do you recall that testimony?  
20 A **It was about the dues payment and where the dues went.**  
21 Q Okay. And do you recollect that Mr. Doyle asked you to  
22 participate in these meetings?  
23 A **Yes.**  
24 Q Okay. And you have had leadership roles in the Union,

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1 is that fair to say?  
2 A **I mean, not leadership. I've been on certain**  
3 **committees, groups.**  
4 Q And, in fact, in a communication that Mr. Doyle had with  
5 Mr. Lancellotta, he copied you and noted that you had  
6 been an active union member, and, in fact, had been on  
7 two committees with respect to the Union in a leadership  
8 role?  
9           **MS. LOMBARDO:** Objection. We don't have  
10 that document.  
11          **MS. RAPPORT:** Well, he produced the  
12 documents.  
13          **MS. LOMBARDO:** Are you producing it?  
14          **MR. RUGGERIO:** He can answer the  
15 question. I'm going to overrule the objection. Do you  
16 need the question read back, sir?  
17          **THE WITNESS:** Yes.  
18          **MR. RUGGERIO:** Rebecca, could you please  
19 read the question back.  
20                   (Whereupon the stenographer read back the  
21 previous question.)  
22 A **I was a participant, but I was not in a leadership role,**  
23 **no. I was not in a leadership role.**  
24 Q So you were on the WWTa Education Committee and WWTa

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1 Community Relations and Education?  
2 **A Yes.**  
3 **Q** And Mr. Doyle made note of your participation on those  
4 committees in his communications with Mr. Lancellotta,  
5 is that true?  
6 **A I believe so, yes.**  
7 **Q** And you were copied on that email?  
8 **A Yes.**  
9 **Q** Okay. And you were a participant in two meetings, one  
10 in February and one in March of 2019, in which  
11 Mr. Lancellotta's objection to Union dues was discussed?  
12 **A Well, he just wanted to know about where the money of**  
13 **the dues was going.**  
14 **Q** Okay. Did you understand Mr. Lancellotta's objection to  
15 that, that he didn't really want to be paying Union  
16 dues?  
17 **A He wanted to know where the dues was going, I believe.**  
18 **Q** And in that communication for Mr. Doyle do you recollect  
19 that Mr. Doyle was encouraging Mr. Lancellotta not to  
20 withdraw from the Union, do you recollect reading that?  
21 **A Well, I was at the meeting and I know that they came to**  
22 **an agreement and everything was fine, I thought.**  
23 **Q** So you were at a meeting in which they came to a  
24 resolution in which it was agreed that some of these

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1 Union dues would be paid to a community organization or  
2 a student organization; is that right?  
3 **A Yes, it would go to a scholarship fund instead.**  
4 **Q** Okay. And in both of those meetings, were those  
5 meetings in the '18/'19 school year or were they in the  
6 '19/'20 school year?  
7 **A I would say, I believe it was '19, it had to be**  
8 **February, I think, and March of '19.**  
9 **Q** And at the beginning of that school year, the following  
10 one, the '19/'20 school year, were you at a meeting with  
11 Mr. Lancellotta in September, and Mr. Doyle about the  
12 Union issue?  
13 **A In September?**  
14 **Q** Yes, at the start of the '19/'20 school year.  
15 **A No, I don't think so, no.**  
16 **Q** Okay. Now, outside of these two meetings with  
17 Mr. Giovannelli and Mr. Doyle, did you ever have any  
18 other communications with Mr. Doyle about  
19 Mr. Lancellotta's position on the issue of joining the  
20 Union?  
21 **A No.**  
22 **Q** Okay. Never?  
23 **A Nope, because it was all ended at that meeting. That**  
24 **was it. Those two meetings, everything was resolved,**

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1 **concluded, and that was the end.**  
2 **Q** So by March of 2019 it was all done and worked out?  
3 **A Right. I never spoke about it again so.**  
4 **Q** Okay. Now, after those two meetings in 2019 did you  
5 become aware at any time that Mr. Lancellotta had, in  
6 fact, withdrawn from the Union?  
7 **A No.**  
8 **Q** You never learned that?  
9 **A No.**  
10 **Q** Okay. Did you learn that had he withdrawn from the  
11 Union?  
12 **A He had told me, Mr. Lancellotta told me.**  
13 **Q** And when did he tell you that?  
14 **A He told me on the day that he got the non-renewal letter**  
15 **from Human Resources.**  
16 **Q** And when was that?  
17 **A It was a couple of days before that February vacation.**  
18 **Q** Okay. In February of 2020?  
19 **A Yes, that must have been, yes.**  
20 **Q** Okay. So you didn't know before that from anybody that  
21 Mr. Lancellotta had withdrawn from the Union?  
22 **A No, no, he never said anything about me.**  
23 **Q** So getting back to the conversations that were  
24 preparatory for this meeting or this hearing, in

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1 November when you met with Ms. Lombardo is it correct to  
2 say that Mr. Doyle and Mr. Lamberto were both in the  
3 meetings with Ms. Lombardo?  
4 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Objection, relevance.  
5 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Sustained.  
6 **Q** Now, after Mr. Lancellotta was terminated, you replaced  
7 Mr. Lancellotta with Ms. Samantha Scattone, am I saying  
8 her name correctly?  
9 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Objection, relevance.  
10 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I will allow it.  
11 **A I did not replace it. I was part of the committee that**  
12 **interviews.**  
13 **Q** She was replaced, I should say -- he was replaced with  
14 Ms. Scattone?  
15 **A Yes.**  
16 **Q** And am I saying her name correctly?  
17 **A I think Scattone would be the English equivalent.**  
18 **Q** And did you post for that position at the beginning  
19 of -- when did that position get posted, if you know?  
20 **A That's Human Resources. I have nothing to do with that.**  
21 **Q** Okay. Were you involved in the interview of  
22 Ms. Scattone?  
23 **A Yes.**  
24 **Q** And when did that interview take place?

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1 A Over the summer, I'm not sure, maybe August. I'm not  
2 sure exactly.  
3 MS. LOMBARDO: Objection. Relevance.  
4 This has nothing to do with the decision to non-renew  
5 Mr. Lancellotta.  
6 MS. RAPPORT: Okay. I would disagree.  
7 I would like to be able to ask some questions on this?  
8 MR. RUGGERIO: Very briefly, Counsel.  
9 Q So, she was the person who filled the position held by  
10 Mr. Lancellotta at the middle school, correct?  
11 A Yes.  
12 Q Okay. And did she teach both Spanish and Italian?  
13 A Yes.  
14 Q Okay. And did she teach three units of Italian and two  
15 units of Spanish, as had Mr. Lancellotta?  
16 A Yes.  
17 Q Okay. And did she teach under an emergency  
18 certification?  
19 A I believe so, yes.  
20 Q And her emergency certification was in Spanish, correct?  
21 A I believe so, yes.  
22 Q Okay. Because she's not certified in Spanish?  
23 MS. LOMBARDO: Objection. He just  
24 testified that she is emergency certified in Spanish.

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1 MR. RUGGERIO: Sustained.  
2 MS. RAPPORT: I have a follow-up  
3 question.  
4 Q When did she get emergency certified?  
5 A That would be a Human Resource question. I'm not sure.  
6 Q Did you know? You were on the committee to interview  
7 her. When she started the school year did she have  
8 emergency certification in September to teach Spanish?  
9 MS. LOMBARDO: Objection. Relevance.  
10 MR. RUGGERIO: I will allow that  
11 question.  
12 A Again, I thought that the emergency -- I'm not Human  
13 Resources, so I don't know exactly when the date. I  
14 know they were all with -- the Department of Ed, there  
15 is a slow down with COVID and things going on like that,  
16 so I'm not sure.  
17 Q So if the portal says that her emergency cert issued in  
18 December, that would be just a reflection of the  
19 slowdown?  
20 MS. LOMBARDO: Objection, asked and  
21 answered. He doesn't know.  
22 MR. RUGGERIO: Sustained.  
23 MS. RAPPORT: I would like to confer  
24 with my colleague, and I may be close to wrapping up.

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1 MR. RUGGERIO: Are you going to a  
2 breakout room, or are you doing that by different means,  
3 Sara? If you want to just shut your mic off and maybe  
4 call him, maybe that's easier. I'm just trying to avoid  
5 any delay, if we can.  
6 MS. RAPPORT: Okay, we can do that.  
7 (BRIEF RECESS)  
8 MR. RUGGERIO: We're ready to go back  
9 on. Let the record reflect that we took a brief respite  
10 while counsel conferred with co-counsel.  
11 Following that break, Ms. Rapport, are there any  
12 further questions of the witness?  
13 MS. RAPPORT: No, no further questions.  
14 MR. RUGGERIO: Counsel, any redirect?  
15 MS. LOMBARDO: I do have just one very  
16 brief question for redirect. I am going to screen  
17 share, if I can figure it out, and I would like to mark  
18 this, I think as Exhibit 3 for the School Committee.  
19 MR. RUGGERIO: I can see it, yes.  
20 MS. LOMBARDO: So I would just like to  
21 mark this as Exhibit 3.  
22 (Whereupon School Committee Exhibit 3 is  
23 marked for identification.)  
24 REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO

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1 Q Mr. Giovanelli, can you tell us what this is?  
2 A Yes.  
3 Q What is it?  
4 A Yes, that was the email, if you scroll down a little bit  
5 more, that was the email I had received from you.  
6 Q And this email was to you and Ms. Rapport is cc'd on  
7 this email, correct?  
8 A Yes.  
9 Q And this is the email that you discussed with your Union  
10 President and Attorney Lambert, correct?  
11 A Exactly.  
12 MS. LOMBARDO: No further questions.  
13 Okay. Oh, can I move it as full exhibit. Sorry.  
14 MS. RAPPORT: I need to see the whole  
15 thing.  
16 MR. RUGGERIO: Can you scroll down,  
17 Aubrey?  
18 MS. LOMBARDO: Yes. Sorry.  
19 MS. RAPPORT: I have no objection to  
20 that.  
21 (Whereupon School Committee Exhibit 3 is  
22 marked a full exhibit.)  
23 MS. RAPPORT: I would also ask that the  
24 full exhibit of the communication be introduced into the

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1 proceeding.  
2 **MR. RUGGERIO:** When you say the full  
3 exhibit of the communication, let me make sure I know  
4 what you mean.  
5 **MS. RAPPORT:** A letter. I don't have  
6 any objection to this being introduced as Exhibit 3, but  
7 we had an exhibit that has one the original  
8 communications to Ms. Lombardo, and I would also like to  
9 that admitted as an exhibit.  
10 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Okay. Sure.  
11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** That was the exhibits  
12 that you forwarded to my attention to Aubrey prior to  
13 tonight.  
14 **MS. RAPPORT:** That was the letter dated  
15 August 31.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So, Aubrey, you would  
17 like this as School Committee Exhibit 3?  
18 **MS. LOMBARDO:** As School Committee  
19 Exhibit 3.  
20 **MR. RUGGERIO:** And you would like the  
21 other exhibit as an exhibit for the Appellant?  
22 **MS. RAPPORT:** Correct.  
23 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I will mark Appellant's  
24 J.

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1 **MS. RAPPORT:** You marked something as I  
2 identification, so that would be J, yes?  
3 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So School Committee  
4 Exhibit 3 is entered in full. And, Appellant Exhibit J,  
5 which I'll have to forward to the committee is also  
6 entered in full.  
7 (Appellant's Exhibit J is marked a full  
8 exhibit.)  
9 And maybe for Rebecca's purposes, can we just  
10 identify for her Appellant Exhibit J for the record  
11 right now, if you could.  
12 **MS. RAPPORT:** It's a letter from my  
13 office to Ms. Lombardo dated December 31, 2020.  
14 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Any recross-examination?  
15 **MS. RAPPORT:** None.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Mr. Giovanelli, you are  
17 excused, sir. Thank you for your participation, and  
18 have a good evening.  
19 **THE WITNESS:** Can I leave totally and  
20 for good?  
21 **MR. RUGGERIO:** You can leave totally and  
22 for good. You don't have to look back.  
23 **THE WITNESS:** Okay. Thank you.  
24 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Thank you very much,

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1 Mr. Giovanelli.  
2 **MS. RAPPORT:** Goodnight, Mr. Giovanelli.  
3 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Okay. Recognizing that  
4 it is now 8:13, I think you have a couple of additional  
5 witnesses, Ms. Lombardo?  
6 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I do.  
7 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Before we proceed with  
8 those, I just want to know, kind of in terms of your  
9 order of events how long would you expect your direct  
10 examination of your next witness to take?  
11 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Twenty minutes to a half  
12 hour, maybe not even that long.  
13 **MR. RUGGERIO:** All right. Any objection  
14 from the committee in terms of proceeding at this hour?  
15 I would recommend that we, you know, try to get in as  
16 much as we can, if we can. Mr. Chair, what do you  
17 think?  
18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Let's go, finish it up.  
19 **MR. RUGGERIO:** All right. You may  
20 proceed.  
21 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Okay. I would like to  
22 call Phil Solomon as my next witness. So think I  
23 Michelle needs to let Jim know. Thanks, Michelle.  
24 PHILIP SOLOMON

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1 Being duly sworn, deposes and testifies as follows:  
2 **COURT REPORTER:** Please state and spell  
3 your name for the record, please.  
4 **THE WITNESS:** Philip Solomon,  
5 P-H-I-L-I-P S-O-L-O-M-O-N.  
6 **COURT REPORTER:** Thank you.  
7 **EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO**  
8 Q Hi, Phil.  
9 A Hi.  
10 Q Can you tell us your educational background?  
11 A Yes. I attended the University of Rhode Island for my  
12 undergraduate degree, and then I earned my teaching  
13 certification and my master's in administration at  
14 Providence College.  
15 Q And what certifications do you currently hold?  
16 A I hold a certification in secondary social studies as  
17 well as building level administrator and superintendent.  
18 Q Okay. And what's your work history in education?  
19 A So, I worked as a teacher, an administrative part, part  
20 administrator at Ocean Tides High School for eight  
21 years. I had worked as a teacher at St. Rafael Academy  
22 in Pawtucket and I worked as assistant principal at St.  
23 Ray's in Pawtucket for three years and assistant  
24 principal for a year in West Warwick, West Warwick High

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1 School, a principal in West Warwick High School for six  
2 years and now I'm in my second year as director of  
3 secondary education in West Warwick.

4 Q And as director of secondary education what's your role  
5 and what are your job duties in that position?

6 A So, overall I oversee the evaluation of the principals  
7 at the high school, I support them in various ways, I  
8 oversee the implementation of the school improvement  
9 plan at both schools, the continuity and transitioning  
10 between the two schools, the budget process between the  
11 two schools, and various other areas that it would go  
12 very long if I were to get into everything.

13 Q We'll try not to do that to everyone tonight. So, you  
14 mentioned that you evaluate administrators in your role  
15 now. Have you evaluated employees or been responsible  
16 for evaluating of employees in your other roles?

17 A Yes. That's been an extensive aspect of my career  
18 throughout. As assistant principal I was overseeing  
19 evaluations at St. Raphael Academy, and this was part of  
20 the evaluation as assistant principal at West Warwick,  
21 and then, of course, it was a main aspect of my role as  
22 principal at West Warwick High School as well.

23 Q Can you give us a ballpark, if you can, an approximate  
24 figure of how many employees you think you have

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1 evaluated in your career?

2 A There's been a lot. So, in my 10 years as a building  
3 administrator, especially some of our earlier years in  
4 the changeover to this evaluation system of Rhode  
5 Island, there was quite a few. Ballpark figure, I would  
6 say at least 250 to 350.

7 Q Okay. So quite a bit of percentage?

8 A Yes.

9 Q And these are all at the secondary level?

10 A That's correct.

11 Q Do you think that the current evaluation process in  
12 place for teachers in West Warwick paints an accurate  
13 picture of job performance?

14 MS. RAPPORT: I object to this as  
15 irrelevant.

16 Q I mean, we've spent an entire night discussing  
17 Mr. Lancellotta's evaluation. I think that this is  
18 relevant to whether or not that's an accurate picture of  
19 his performance as an employee which is the whole  
20 subject of this hearing?

21 MS. RAPPORT: His opinion on the  
22 evaluation instrument is really not relevant.

23 MS. LOMBARDO: He is an expert.

24 MS. RAPPORT: He is not qualified as an

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1 expert on the evaluation instrument. We've had no  
2 foundation on that. He has done evaluations.

3 MS. LOMBARDO: And it is his opinion on  
4 whether or not, and we're relying on opinions of  
5 administrators to make his decision, it's his opinion on  
6 whether or not the evaluation is an effective tool,  
7 which I imagine your argument is that it is an effective  
8 tool which is why you asked questions about it for hours  
9 on end the first time.

10 MS. RAPPORT: Putting aside the  
11 combativeness of the argument, my objection is that it's  
12 a question that is not relevant and it also lacks  
13 foundation. He does not have a -- she hadn't qualified  
14 him as an expert to opine on the efficacy of the  
15 instrument that is used by the West Warwick School  
16 Department. I just, I don't see, he hasn't engaged in  
17 any analysis of comparative instruments. We don't --  
18 this isn't really a --

19 MR. RUGGERIO: I understand Counsel's  
20 issue, and I think that's proper grounds for argument,  
21 and I think the committee should let it in for whatever  
22 it's worth.

23 MS. LOMBARDO: I think so.

24 MR. RUGGERIO: You can answer the

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1 question, Mr. Solomon.

2 MS. LOMBARDO: I do need the  
3 stenographer to read it back.

4 THE WITNESS: Sure.

5 (Whereupon the stenographer read back the  
6 previous question.)

7 A No, I don't. I think the evaluation system, we use it  
8 as a tool for professional development. It gives a  
9 snapshot of what a teacher can do a prepared and very  
10 structural environment. It's a tool that we use to  
11 help, and most districts use in my shared experience  
12 with colleagues and in conversation and analysis of this  
13 entire process since its inspection. Most districts use  
14 it as a way to show what an exemplary lesson is and how  
15 to write a good lesson, and it's more of a snapshot of a  
16 moment in time, not a true picture of a teacher's level  
17 of efficiency, efficacy.

18 Q Are you familiar with the Appellant, John Lancellotta?

19 A I am.

20 Q How are you familiar with him?

21 A I knew that he was a teacher at the middle school and  
22 his performance was brought to my attention by the world  
23 language department chair.

24 Q Okay. And when was that?

1 A So, that was in December when John Giovanelli asked to  
2 meet with me to discuss some middle school issues.  
3 That's when that was.  
4 Q Okay. And does John Giovanelli typically discuss middle  
5 school issues with you?  
6 A Yes, in this role, and even in my previous role, so he's  
7 the department chair for grade seven through twelve, and  
8 so even in my previous role as high school principal,  
9 the program development throughout the grade span was a  
10 thing that we would discuss, but more so in my role as  
11 director of secondary schools where part of the  
12 transition is, as an aspect of my current job  
13 responsibility we discussed program development and  
14 helping to go in and students coming and various aspects  
15 of that.  
16 Q So, it's fair to say that you rely on John Giovanelli to  
17 report information to you as department chair?  
18 A Yes, definitely.  
19 Q Okay. And what are your impressions of Mr. Giovanelli  
20 professionally?  
21 A John is an extremely thorough, in my experience with  
22 him, professional, detail oriented, incredible level of  
23 experience, great with promotion, the way that we want  
24 teaching and learning to look in our district and in his

1 understanding that the mission of the department and the  
2 type of teaching and learning that we promote, they  
3 were -- there were a few different areas, but that was  
4 most of it was, like, the delivery of the content and  
5 struggling with the students and not seeming to  
6 understand the type of teaching and learning that we  
7 really need to happen, students very engaged in an  
8 active teaching environment in world language classes.  
9 Q Did he discuss with you any efforts that he may have  
10 made with respect to Mr. Lancellotta's job performance?  
11 A He did. That was likely the first thing that I asked,  
12 what type of supports have been provided, which is  
13 standard for any new teachers in our district. It's to  
14 make sure that they're receiving the proper supports.  
15 And, as expected, Mr. Giovanelli had provided ample  
16 amounts of support in all the ways that are available.  
17 Q So were you concerned by what Mr. Giovanelli relayed to  
18 you about Mr. Lancellotta's job performance?  
19 A I was, because I know how Mr. Giovanelli is with  
20 supporting teachers and how clear he is and how helpful  
21 he is and how much time he will spend to ensure that  
22 somebody is performing to our district's expectation in  
23 a way that truly serves our students. So, yeah, I was  
24 concerned.

1 department and really supportive of the teachers of his  
2 department, the school's overall mission, students in  
3 need, he's one of the more professional detail-oriented,  
4 just skilled educators I've ever had the pleasure of  
5 working with.  
6 Q So is it fair to say that you rely on information that  
7 he gives you and on his work?  
8 A Absolutely.  
9 Q And why did he ask to meet with you that day about  
10 Mr. Giovanelli?  
11 A We covered, we covered a few issues, but he wanted to --  
12 he had concerns about Mr. Lancellotta, and, you know, in  
13 my role he knows that, you know, overseeing the two  
14 schools, that I'll also work closely with the  
15 superintendent and with people on the ground at both  
16 schools, and so he wanted to go over his concerns that  
17 he had with this teacher and how that teacher was  
18 performing.  
19 Q Okay. And what were the concerns that he relayed to  
20 you?  
21 A He felt like the teacher was really struggling with a  
22 lot of the things that we find really important in world  
23 language classes, especially interaction with the  
24 students, getting along, like his work with his peers,

1 Q Okay. And what did you do after that meeting ended with  
2 Mr. Giovanelli with that information?  
3 A So at some point after that meeting I relayed that  
4 information -- I did a couple of things. First, I  
5 reminded the principals I oversee at both the middle and  
6 high school to check in on the new teachers, check in on  
7 all of their nontenured teachers, if that's standard  
8 procedure, to make sure that they're doing okay, they're  
9 receiving the supports that they should, and just keep  
10 in mind they're nontenured teachers, they're new  
11 teachers, make sure that things are going okay, if they  
12 need any assistant to let me know. The other thing I  
13 did was I did report Mr. Giovanelli's concerns about  
14 Mr. Lancellotta to our superintendent.  
15 Q Okay. And what did you relay to the superintendent?  
16 A I mentioned to her how certain that Mr. Giovanelli was  
17 that things not only were not going well with  
18 Mr. Lancellotta, but that he wasn't seeing any good  
19 response to the attempts at improvement and assistance  
20 that were provided, and so at that point, you know, that  
21 was most of the conversation, was making sure that that  
22 was on the superintendent's radar.  
23 Q Okay. And based on your experience as an administrator  
24 and the information that you were provided about

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1 Mr. Lancellotta, do you feel that the district was  
2 correct or the superintendent was correct in  
3 recommending his non-renewal?  
4 **A I do.**  
5 **Q How come?**  
6 **A I had a lot of experience with hiring, evaluating,**  
7 **overseeing world language teachers, what we want in our**  
8 **world language classes, the importance of that content**  
9 **area, the most successful levels of delivery to promote**  
10 **student engagement and enhancement throughout a child's**  
11 **engagement in that area, and all of those experiences**  
12 **together made me feel very confident that we can do**  
13 **better elsewhere.**  
14 **Q Meaning you could find a more qualified candidate?**  
15 **A That's correct.**  
16 **MS. LOMBARDO:** No further questions.  
17 **MS. RAPPORT:** If I could have a few  
18 minutes and then we'll return.  
19 **MR. RUGGERIO:** That's fine.  
20 **(BRIEF RECESS)**  
21 **MS. RAPPORT:** Thanks. Okay. We're  
22 ready.  
23 **MR. RUGGERIO:** You may inquire, Counsel.  
24 **CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT**

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1 **Q Mr. Solomon, good evening.**  
2 **A Good evening.**  
3 **Q You oversee the principals at the middle school and the**  
4 **high school, that's part of your role?**  
5 **A That is correct.**  
6 **Q And in overseeing the principals and as a former**  
7 **principal yourself, one of your jobs is to make sure**  
8 **that the principals are monitoring their staff properly,**  
9 **professionally and effectively; is that fair to say?**  
10 **A That's fair to say.**  
11 **Q And the principal of the Deering Middle School in the**  
12 **'18/'19 school year was Mr. Guiot, right?**  
13 **A Yes, correct.**  
14 **Q And do you have a practice of working with the**  
15 **principals to -- do you meet with the principals**  
16 **periodically or on a regular basis?**  
17 **A Yes.**  
18 **Q Okay. And do you keep track of the teachers in the**  
19 **middle and high schools who are probationary, do you**  
20 **know who they are?**  
21 **A Yes, yes.**  
22 **Q Okay. Do you have a practice of communicating with the**  
23 **principals of the middle and high school to, as you put**  
24 **it, check in with them to see how the probationary**

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1 teachers are doing?  
2 **A I do.**  
3 **Q And is that a formal sit down conversation or is it a**  
4 **regular meeting? What is that practice?**  
5 **A It's typically more of running items in meetings to make**  
6 **sure that they're aware of their new teachers, providing**  
7 **the support the new teachers need, it reminded them of**  
8 **any support, answering any questions they might have**  
9 **about the practice.**  
10 **Q Do you have a practice in West Warwick of requiring your**  
11 **principals to check in on the probationary teachers**  
12 **personally by going into the classroom from time to**  
13 **time?**  
14 **A I think that would depend on, so I could give guidance**  
15 **on the things that I previously mentioned about making**  
16 **sure that principals are aware of their new teachers and**  
17 **that they're receiving supports and things are going**  
18 **well. I don't think I can comment on the individual**  
19 **practices. I don't tell principals exactly how to do**  
20 **their jobs, just what their job responsibilities are and**  
21 **answer any questions they might have and provide any**  
22 **support they might need. So, I think it probably varies**  
23 **between principals on how they perform those duties.**  
24 **Q And your principal at Deering in, as we said, was**

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1 Mr. Guiot in the '18/'19 school year, right?  
2 **A Correct.**  
3 **Q And did you talk with Mr. Guiot at any point over that**  
4 **school year about Mr. Lancellotta's performance?**  
5 **A Not that I recall.**  
6 **Q Okay. And in the '19/'20 school year the principal**  
7 **shifted to a woman named Ms. Elizabeth Furtado?**  
8 **A Correct.**  
9 **Q Did you talk with Ms. Furtado at any point in that**  
10 **school year about prior to the meeting with**  
11 **Mr. Giovanelli on the 18th about Mr. Lancellotta's**  
12 **performance?**  
13 **A Not that I recall. I'm sure -- no. He would be lumped**  
14 **under the reminders I previously mentioned following our**  
15 **process with new teachers and non-tenured teachers,**  
16 **making sure they have the support.**  
17 **Q Did you personally ever do any observations of**  
18 **Mr. Lancellotta's teaching or interactions with**  
19 **students?**  
20 **A No.**  
21 **Q Okay. In your meeting with Mr. Giovanelli was**  
22 **approximately December 18; is that correct?**  
23 **A That's correct.**  
24 **Q And he initiated the meeting with you to talk about an**

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1 array of middle school issues?  
2 **A Correct.**  
3 **Q** And Mr. Lancellotta was one topic that was in the mix,  
4 correct?  
5 **A Correct, as far as I can recall.**  
6 **Q** Okay. And how long was that meeting, approximately, the  
7 whole meeting?  
8 **A I don't think I have that. I don't have that exact**  
9 **information.**  
10 **Q** Well, approximately, more than a half hour?  
11 **A Could have been, you know, over a year ago, so.**  
12 **Q** Did you ever receive any writing from Mr. Giovanelli  
13 about Mr. -- other than the evaluations, other than the  
14 evaluation did you ever receive any writing from Mr.  
15 Giovanelli articulating concerns about Mr. Lancellotta?  
16 **A Not that I'm aware of.**  
17 **Q** And after you got this report from Mr. Giovanelli, or  
18 expressing these concerns you say -- the first thing you  
19 did was you reminded your principals to check in on  
20 teachers, is that right?  
21 **A Correct.**  
22 **Q** And did you talk to Mr. Furtado who was the principal at  
23 Deering about Mr. Lancellotta at that point?  
24 **A I don't recall. I have regular meetings with the**

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1 **principal, say, you know, like, that just might have**  
2 **been a reminder to check in on all your nontenured**  
3 **teachers, follow-up with the process, make sure they**  
4 **have support.**  
5 **Q** And what supports did Mr. Giovanelli describe being  
6 given to Mr. Lancellotta, what were the supports that he  
7 got?  
8 **A To the best of my recollection, you know, I believe we**  
9 **talked about direct support from Mr. Giovanelli. That's**  
10 **to the best of my recollection.**  
11 **Q** Did he have a mentor?  
12 **A So most -- I can't answer that just because I'm not**  
13 **sure. I don't know if I oversee our mentor program. I**  
14 **know teachers have a mentor.**  
15 **Q** Did Mr. Giovanelli mention a mentor?  
16 **A I don't recall.**  
17 **Q** Did Mr. Giovanelli mention any kind of program of  
18 providing a model or peer support, did he talk about  
19 that, did he say he did that?  
20 **A You know, with the type of supports that Mr. Giovanelli**  
21 **provides, I could certainly say he probably did, but I**  
22 **also, you know, to be more accurate, I would say I don't**  
23 **recall that level of specificity from our meeting. I**  
24 **know he mentioned the supports. I really don't remember**

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1 **exactly what they were.**  
2 **Q** And you said the second thing you did -- and you don't  
3 recall whether you talked Ms. Furtado, who was the  
4 principal, right?  
5 **A Correct.**  
6 **Q** Mr. Guiot no longer worked with you as of December 2019,  
7 is that correct?  
8 **A That's correct.**  
9 **Q** Did you reach out to him professional to professional to  
10 find out if he had any concerns over the '18/'19 school  
11 year?  
12 **A I did not.**  
13 **Q** Did you talk to Mr. Bovenzi? I apologize if I am not  
14 saying his name correctly? Do you know who I mean?  
15 **A Yes, Mr. Bovenzi.**  
16 **Q** Yes, Bovenzi, that's it. Thank you. Did you talk to  
17 Mr. Bovenzi -- did you look at the evaluations?  
18 **A No.**  
19 **Q** Okay. Did you know who evaluated him in his '18/'19  
20 school year?  
21 **A No.**  
22 **Q** Okay. Did you talk to Mr. Doyle?  
23 **A No. In regards to this?**  
24 **Q** Yes.

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1 **A No.**  
2 **Q** Did you talk to Mr. Doyle about Mr. Lancellotta?  
3 **A No.**  
4 **Q** Never?  
5 **A I'm trying to recall if as part of when this trial**  
6 **process started, so I don't recall. Maybe.**  
7 **Q** And when did you talk to the superintendent about the  
8 report that Mr. Giovanelli had given you?  
9 **A The superintendent and I meet regularly, so I would**  
10 **imagine it was probably early the next week, if not**  
11 **shortly after my meeting with Mr. Giovanelli. I**  
12 **certainly can't recall the exact date.**  
13 **Q** Okay. Did you make any notes in any meetings with the  
14 superintendent?  
15 **A Not that I recall.**  
16 **Q** Did she make any notes as you were meeting with her?  
17 **A I'm not aware of what notes she may have or may have not**  
18 **made.**  
19 **Q** Did you see her making notes?  
20 **A Not that I recall.**  
21 **Q** Was there anyone else in the meeting with you and the  
22 superintendent when you talked to the superintendent  
23 about the concerns that Mr. Giovanelli had shared with  
24 you on December 18th?



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1 A Not that I recall, and I would think not. Typically we  
2 meet alone, you know, we meet in groups as well, but  
3 typically also have regular meetings with just her and  
4 I.  
5 Q Now, did you and the superintendent together make a  
6 decision to recommend non-renewal of Mr. Lancellotta?  
7 A I don't make the decisions on non-renewal.  
8 Q So the answer is, when you spoke with the superintendent  
9 did you recommend to her or did you discuss with her  
10 that Mr. Lancellotta should be non-renewed?  
11 A I don't recall the language I used in our discussion.  
12 Q Did you discuss with her the fact that he was  
13 probationary?  
14 A I don't recall.  
15 Q Did the superintendent say to you in that meeting that  
16 perhaps we should consider terminating him?  
17 A I don't recall that level of specificity from that  
18 conversation.  
19 Q Okay. Well, what did the superintendent say?  
20 A I don't recall. I know what I reported, I know the  
21 basis of what I reported, which was, you know, the main  
22 aspect of what Mr. Giovanelli and I discussed.  
23 Q Okay. And what did you say to Mr. Giovanelli on  
24 December 18th, when you met with him, when he reported

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1 that concern what did you say in response?  
2 A Well, it was likely that I asked about supports first,  
3 because that's what we do, and then it was likely that  
4 I -- I mean, I don't recall, so I don't really want to  
5 speculate.  
6 Q So when you say it's likely you asked about supports, do  
7 you have a memory of asking about supports, or are you  
8 just assuming that because that's what you think you  
9 would have said?  
10 A I am assuming that because that's what I think I would  
11 have said. That's how, in conversations like this, with  
12 any teacher, anything, that's the first thing you make  
13 sure that the teacher involved would receive some  
14 support and guidance.  
15 Q And, just to be clear, he described the teacher as  
16 struggling in his interactions with the students, is  
17 that the way you defined it, struggling?  
18 A Yeah, yeah, struggling in his interaction with students,  
19 and --  
20 Q And Mr. Giovanelli said, in essence, that it didn't seem  
21 like he understood the mission of the district, is that  
22 what -- you used the word mission of the district?  
23 A Yeah. I don't know if I said mission of the district or  
24 mission of the department, so, but maybe the district as

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1 well, but, yeah, like, the peer interactions, I mean the  
2 student interactions, that we try to make, with any  
3 student, centered, open classroom, interactive.  
4 Q In what way did Mr. Giovanelli describe  
5 Mr. Lancellotta's failure to appreciate the mission of  
6 the department?  
7 A So I don't think he would use those exact words. I  
8 think that's my interpretation. The teachers describe  
9 to me as being poor from the delivery of their content  
10 and their interaction with the students and their  
11 ability to make the classroom environment engaging and  
12 highly efficient and highly effective, especially in a  
13 world language setting where that auditory response and  
14 back and forth is such a big aspect of the delivery and  
15 the content and of the student engagement, and then it's  
16 me who would think that that is somebody that doesn't  
17 fit in with what we try and do, the most important  
18 mission that's supposed to permeate through our world  
19 language course.  
20 Q Is to be interactive and have conversation flowing,  
21 right?  
22 A Well, to have students engaged in the lesson.  
23 Q And in this meeting with the superintendent, you had one  
24 meeting with her in which you reported these concerns,

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1 is that it, just one meeting, or was there more?  
2 A I'm pretty sure there was more, because I'm pretty sure,  
3 I'm pretty sure I mentioned it more than once to the  
4 superintendent because it's something that we revisit.  
5 Q So do you remember how many times you mentioned it to  
6 her?  
7 A So probably at least, probably at least twice.  
8 Q And how was it that you remember two times, were they  
9 both occasions -- the non-renewal was in early February,  
10 so are you saying was it before Christmas you met with  
11 her or was it after Christmas? Can you put a little  
12 precision on your timing?  
13 A It's difficult for me to say when the meetings occur,  
14 but I meet with the superintendent weekly and there's  
15 certain running items, especially that are timely with  
16 things like non-renewal, coming up that we probably had  
17 spoken about it more than once.  
18 Q So did you talk about non-renewals, did you talk about  
19 more than one non-renewal?  
20 A I don't recall.  
21 Q Were there any lists of probationary teachers that you  
22 kept to see -- you're familiar with the March 1st  
23 deadline, I would assume, right?  
24 A Correct.

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1 Q So you know that you have got to make your decisions  
2 pretty much by early February so it can get through the  
3 committee and the notice can be issued in advance of  
4 March 1st, you know all of that?  
5 A **Correct.**  
6 Q Okay. So did you, in the '19/'20 school year, have a  
7 list of probationary teachers whose performance you were  
8 watching?  
9 A **Yes. Well, a list of, yes, a list of probationary**  
10 **teachers.**  
11 Q Right. And you had said you were watching them, or were  
12 you watching them to see if any of them would be  
13 non-renewed by March 1st?  
14 A **No, that wouldn't be inaccurate. I can't answer yes to**  
15 **that the way you asked it.**  
16 Q Okay. So, did you meet with the superintendent to talk  
17 about the probationary teachers with an eye towards the  
18 March 1st deadline?  
19 A **No.**  
20 Q Okay. So what did you talk about with respect to the  
21 probationary teachers?  
22 A **Poor performance of John Lancellotta as reported to me**  
23 **by John Giovanelli.**  
24 Q So that was the only probationary teacher you talked

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1 about?  
2 A **Correct.**  
3 Q And in prior years have there been other probationary  
4 teachers whom you've talked about in or about January?  
5 A **Yes.**  
6 Q Okay. And how do you get information about their  
7 performance?  
8 A **Well, in prior years it was when I was principal, so**  
9 **that was information that I had gathered either myself**  
10 **or from my assistant principals who are overseeing other**  
11 **evaluations.**  
12 Q So it wasn't in a decision making capacity, it was in a  
13 recommending capacity as a principal?  
14 A **It was in a conversation about the process capacity. So**  
15 **a recommendation is the last step in the process.**  
16 Q Okay. So you said that you had more than one  
17 conversation with the superintendent. Do you think it  
18 was more than two conversations?  
19 A **I don't recall.**  
20 Q Did you and the superintendent together look at any  
21 documents regarding Mr. Lancellotta?  
22 A **I don't recall, but I don't think so.**  
23 Q And did you reach out to either Mr. Guiot or Ms. Furtado  
24 at any point in the process of reviewing this with the

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1 superintendent?  
2 A **About?**  
3 Q Mr. Lancellotta?  
4 A **No.**  
5 Q Okay. Did you bring Mr. Giovanelli to talk directly  
6 with the superintendent at any point?  
7 A **No.**  
8 Q Did you talk to any of Mr. Lancellotta's students?  
9 A **No.**  
10 Q Any parents?  
11 A **No.**  
12 Q Okay. Did you review any disciplinary referrals of  
13 Mr. Lancellotta?  
14 A **I did not.**  
15 Q Did you look at his personnel file?  
16 A **No.**  
17 Q Were you present at any meeting in which the  
18 superintendent indicated to you that she had made a  
19 decision to recommend the non-renewal of  
20 Mr. Lancellotta?  
21 A **I just don't recall.**  
22 Q In your meetings with the superintendent was there ever  
23 anyone else present other than you and the  
24 superintendent talking about Mr. Lancellotta?

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1 A **No.**  
2 Q Okay. Do you have a practice as a district of informing  
3 the Union when a decision has been made to recommend  
4 non-renewal?  
5 A **I'm not sure. That's not my level.**  
6 Q But when you were a principal and you were deciding that  
7 a probationary teacher would be non-renewed, or might be  
8 non-renewed, did you have a practice as a district of  
9 advising the Union before it was sent to the School  
10 Committee as a recommendation?  
11 A **That wouldn't have been my role as a principal.**  
12 Q Okay. Do you know if there's a practice of having the  
13 Union advised of the potential recommendations for  
14 non-renewal?  
15 A **I do not.**  
16 Q Okay. Were you aware that the superintendent made a  
17 recommendation not to renew the employment of  
18 Mr. Lancellotta?  
19 A **Yes.**  
20 Q And how did you become aware of that?  
21 A **I attended every School Committee meeting. Somewhere in**  
22 **that, the exact details of when I became aware I don't**  
23 **recall.**  
24 Q Well, you were aware of it before it went to the School

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1 Committee as a recommendation, I would assume?  
2 **A I don't recall, and I wouldn't make -- I don't know.**  
3 **You can make any assumption you want. I am not saying**  
4 **that's a good assumption to make.**  
5 **Q So you don't remember learning of it before it was**  
6 **presented to the School Committee, the superintendent's**  
7 **recommendation?**  
8 **A That's correct, I don't recall that.**  
9 **MS. RAPPORT:** Okay. If I could just  
10 have a moment to consult with co-counsel, I may be done.  
11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** You may.  
12 **MS. RAPPORT:** Thank you.  
13 (BRIEF PAUSE)  
14 **MS. RAPPORT:** We have no further  
15 questions.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Any redirect?  
17 **MS. LOMBARDO:** No redirect.  
18 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Mr. Solomon, you are  
19 excused, sir. Thank you very much.  
20 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Thanks, Phil.  
21 **THE WITNESS:** Thank you.  
22 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I would like to call, or  
23 do you want to discuss first?  
24 **MR. RUGGERIO:** No. If you're ready to

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1 go, as long as there is no objection from any committee  
2 member, I think we will just keep pushing right through.  
3 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I good. I would like to  
4 call as my next witness Superintendent Karen Tarasevich.  
5 **KAREN TARASEVICH**  
6 Being duly sworn, deposes and testifies as follows:  
7 **COURT REPORTER:** Please state and spell  
8 your name for the record, please.  
9 **THE WITNESS:** K-A-R-E-N  
10 T-A-R-A-S-E-V-I-C-H.  
11 **COURT REPORTER:** Thank you.  
12 **DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO**  
13 **Q Good evening, can you tell us your educational**  
14 **background?**  
15 **A Sure. I have my undergraduate bachelor's degree from**  
16 **the University of Rhode Island in English and secondary**  
17 **education and my master's degree from Providence College**  
18 **as a building level administrator K through 12 and**  
19 **superintendent.**  
20 **Q And your certifications?**  
21 **A I still retain my secondary English teacher**  
22 **certification. I have a building level principal**  
23 **administrator K through 12 and superintendent**  
24 **certification.**

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1 **Q And what's your work history?**  
2 **A As a teacher I worked for ten years in the Narragansett**  
3 **school system as an English teacher in both the middle**  
4 **school and the high school, and when I obtained my**  
5 **administrative degree building level principal I went to**  
6 **West Warwick, and was first hired as an associate**  
7 **principal of secondary schools and served in that role**  
8 **for one year, and then it became the high school**  
9 **principal and served in that role for four years, and**  
10 **since then I've been in the superintendent role and this**  
11 **is my eighth year.**  
12 **Q So how long -- it took 13 years total in West Warwick?**  
13 **A This is my 13th year, correct.**  
14 **Q Okay. And how many teachers are employed by the West**  
15 **Warwick public schools in this school year,**  
16 **approximately?**  
17 **A Approximately 350.**  
18 **Q And in any given year how many teachers do you appoint**  
19 **as superintendent?**  
20 **A Well, every year is different. On average I would say**  
21 **10 to 20.**  
22 **Q Do you recall when Mr. Lancellotta was hired?**  
23 **A I do.**  
24 **Q Do you recall what the date was and what the school**

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1 year?  
2 **A I believe he was hired in August of 2018.**  
3 **Q And what position was he hired for?**  
4 **A He was hired for a world language position at Deering**  
5 **Middle School to teach English -- I am sorry, Italian**  
6 **and Spanish.**  
7 **Q Can you tell me a little bit about the hiring process**  
8 **for Mr. Lancellotta?**  
9 **A Sure. It's the same as any position we need to fill.**  
10 **The position is posted usually internally/externally,**  
11 **contractually if there is any qualified internal**  
12 **candidate, you know, they would have the right to bump**  
13 **into it. They would post the position, review the**  
14 **candidates, interview, and typically have a joint**  
15 **interview committee, meaning we have representation from**  
16 **the administration, the Teachers' Alliance, Council 94,**  
17 **we usually try to have a parent and student if we can,**  
18 **and the interview process unfolds and a recommendation**  
19 **is made to the superintendent for hire.**  
20 **Q And you recommended, at that point the law was**  
21 **different, you recommended that he be hired to the**  
22 **School Committee, correct?**  
23 **A Yes, correct.**  
24 **Q And would it be typical for you to check up on the 10 to**

1 20 new employees in the district each year?  
2 **A Yes. Our typical process would be -- actually, as**  
3 **Mr. Solomon just testified, you know, him as an example,**  
4 **as director of secondary schools, works directly with**  
5 **the principals who would ensure that they had that**  
6 **expected duty.**  
7 **Q Okay. Well, when you receive feedback about the new**  
8 **teacher hires for the probationary employees --**  
9 **A Yes.**  
10 **Q -- how would you receive that feedback?**  
11 **A Again, similar to what Mr. Solomon just outlined, the**  
12 **information would come back to me from the teacher, the**  
13 **teacher leaders, the evaluator, the building principal,**  
14 **the director of secondary schools, director of**  
15 **elementary school.**  
16 **Q And did you receive feedback on Mr. Lancellotta's job**  
17 **performance?**  
18 **A I did.**  
19 **Q And what was that feedback?**  
20 **A That feedback came to me at the end of December of 2019,**  
21 **so the typical process is we know that a non-tenured**  
22 **teacher, if we're going to nonrenew, that needs to be**  
23 **done by March 1st, so our standard practice in the**  
24 **district is at the beginning of every year I remind the**

1 **extensive supports that Mr. Giovanelli had been giving**  
2 **him in terms of individual attention, morning meeting,**  
3 **going from the high school where Mr. Giovanelli works,**  
4 **his classroom is and his assignment is to the middle**  
5 **school two or three times a week, and Mr. Giovanelli,**  
6 **Mr. Solomon expressed that Mr. Giovanelli had concerns**  
7 **about Mr. Lancellotta's engagement in those supports,**  
8 **and that he didn't see, starting in his first year,**  
9 **starting in the '18/'19 school year and continuing into**  
10 **the '19/'20 school year and his lack of process.**  
11 **Q And you did you trust that feedback from Solomon and**  
12 **Mr. Giovanelli?**  
13 **A I did.**  
14 **Q What makes you trust what they had to say?**  
15 **A I've known the John Giovanelli for the 13 years I have**  
16 **been in West Warwick, and, again, as I just outlined, my**  
17 **experience first as assistant principal, now as a**  
18 **principal and now as a superintendent, I worked with him**  
19 **closely when I was at the high school, on teacher**  
20 **evaluations, improvement team, all kinds of initiatives,**  
21 **you know, personally, as an employee at the high school,**  
22 **as principal, his record over the 20 plus years in the**  
23 **district is second to none, he is the ultimate**  
24 **professional. He is the expert in content. He is an**

1 **principals and the district team, director of elementary**  
2 **and director of secondary schools, of the expectation**  
3 **that if there are any teachers that are nontenured that**  
4 **are struggling, that, first, we provide support and,**  
5 **second, I remind them of the timeline of non-renewal.**  
6 **So I would expect any concerns to come to me by the**  
7 **December timeframe.**  
8 **Q Okay. And did you receive concerns?**  
9 **A I did.**  
10 **Q What were the concerns that you received about**  
11 **Mr. Lancellotta?**  
12 **A Mr. Solomon and I met at the end of December and he**  
13 **reported to me, after meeting with Mr. Giovanelli, the**  
14 **concerns that Mr. Giovanelli had, again, as he had**  
15 **outlined and testified earlier. He was concerned about**  
16 **Mr. Lancellotta's ability to collaborate and engage with**  
17 **his colleagues. He was concerned about his interactions**  
18 **with the students in terms of building a rapport,**  
19 **building a relationship, more teacher directed at the**  
20 **class versus him interacting with students one on one.**  
21 **He expressed concerns about Mr. Lancellotta's engagement**  
22 **in the department conversations, when they would have**  
23 **department meetings. He expressed a lot of concern**  
24 **about Mr. Lancellotta's lack of engagement in the**

1 **expert in curriculum development. He is a public author**  
2 **on textbooks on such. I have every confidence in his**  
3 **understanding of what the world language department**  
4 **needs in terms of the teachers, and I understand the**  
5 **history of that department and how it unfolded and how**  
6 **he's advocated and fought. Every year he acquires**  
7 **grants to make sure that the world language department**  
8 **gets grants, funded opportunities, so he's given his**  
9 **heart and soul into this department, so I have every**  
10 **confidence in his judgment, I've seen him support**  
11 **teachers, I have seen him firsthand to the extent that**  
12 **he'll go to support teachers, nontenured and veteran**  
13 **teachers. So I have every -- Mr. Solomon brought that**  
14 **report to me. I had every confidence in the judgment**  
15 **set forth.**  
16 **Q Okay. And Mr. Solomon mentioned that he felt like what**  
17 **Mr. Giovanelli had described wasn't in line with the**  
18 **district's mission and with the department's mission, do**  
19 **you agree with that?**  
20 **A I do.**  
21 **Q Okay. And can you elaborate on that a little?**  
22 **A Yes. So, I mean, especially in world language, the**  
23 **communication and interaction of the staff to students**  
24 **as a whole and individually is key, in terms of, it's**

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1 the expression, it's very much culturally centered as  
2 shown by some of the multiple activities that  
3 Mr. Giovanelli holds, holiday, feast, you know, just  
4 explore the foods and the language and the culture. So,  
5 you know, I do believe that I understand, to the extent  
6 that what the staffing needs to be in that department.  
7 If I said that right. That's awkward.  
8 Q Okay. And had Mr. Giovanelli ever come to you or gone  
9 to Mr. Solomon who then came to you about an employee  
10 before who he was concerned about?  
11 A No.  
12 Q So this was the first time?  
13 A Yes.  
14 Q So at that point when he received that information what  
15 were your next steps?  
16 A Well, I thought about what Mr. Solomon reported. I had  
17 not seen Mr. -- I'm sorry, Mr. Lancellotta's evaluation,  
18 which are in Aspen student information system. So I  
19 went in there, looked at his evaluations, I called Betsy  
20 Furtado, who is one of the two new principals, and said  
21 that, you know, this report had come to me and did she  
22 have any concerns, any additional information, and she  
23 admitted that as a new principal she really didn't know  
24 Mr. Lancellotta, she hadn't really had the opportunity

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1 to engage with, you know, she didn't know all of the  
2 staff yet because at that point she was hired in August,  
3 and we were under admin restructure at the middle school  
4 at that point, that year we hired two, we went from one  
5 principal to two principals, there was a lot of movement  
6 in terms of, you know, responsibilities and duties,  
7 which was all the more reason I rely on Mr. Solomon.  
8 Q Okay. And so you looked at the evaluation. What did  
9 you think about the evaluations?  
10 A I did note the ratings. The evaluation is based on  
11 observations and those are moments in time. So, I take  
12 an evaluation and the ratings associated with it as just  
13 that, a snapshot, a moment in time, and a missed, you  
14 know, as Mr. Giovanelli testified, that, you know, he  
15 had worked with Mr. Lancellotta on his lesson plan  
16 development, which is typical of especially a nontenured  
17 teacher that's being evaluated. Again, as Mr. Solomon  
18 testified, our evaluation tool is really -- I mean, the  
19 State requires us to evaluate teachers, so we do, and we  
20 use our evaluation tool, you know, it gives us different  
21 information, and one of the benefits of the tool we  
22 have, it's not the Rhode Island model, it is the  
23 innovation model, it really is a form of professional  
24 development because it's centered around conversation,

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1 and that conversation, the lesson plan development is --  
2 there's conversation around the lesson plan development  
3 as well, so, and then the observations take place, and  
4 then there's the conferencing, so it's not just the  
5 observation. It's the conferencing that goes on before  
6 and after the observation. And, again, just like  
7 Mr. Giovanelli testified, after the observation, there's  
8 the post-observation conference, and they discuss,  
9 evaluator and evaluatee discuss the evidence that the  
10 evaluator collected, and then the second observation is  
11 an opportunity for the employee to demonstrate anything  
12 they may have maybe missed in the first observation, or  
13 something that you wanted to enhance, or, you know, up  
14 their score a little bit. So, it's really around the  
15 conversation. And so based on what Mr. Solomon told me,  
16 I was satisfied that that had actually, in fact,  
17 happened, because, again, I worked with Mr. Giovanelli  
18 for many years and have witnessed his evaluation as a  
19 principal, I would work with him as an evaluator because  
20 we have teacher evaluators. Administrators don't do all  
21 of the evaluation. We have peer evaluators that are  
22 trained in the process.  
23 Q Okay. And when you spoke with Ms. Furtado, did you  
24 indicate to her what you were thinking of about

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1 non-renewing Mr. Lancellotta?  
2 A Not at that point. I told her the concerns had come to  
3 my attention. I did, when I had finally made a  
4 decision, I did call her back and let her know, because  
5 as a principal of the building, if the School Committee  
6 approved the recommendation, we need to know that we  
7 would be posting for a new teacher.  
8 Q And was she resistant, or did she say, no,  
9 Mr. Lancellotta is the best person we can have here, or  
10 what was her response?  
11 A At that point, like I just said, she really didn't know  
12 him and she really, as a new principal, only had, being  
13 in the building for a few months, she really hadn't  
14 encountered him very much to have an opinion. I can say  
15 that, you know, the person we hired to replace him she's  
16 thrilled with, she absolutely feels like she's a better  
17 fit, she is doing a wonderful job. She, you know,  
18 really seems to be the person for that position and  
19 fits.  
20 Q So after you speak with Ms. Furtado, look at the  
21 evaluations and consider everything that Mr. Giovanelli,  
22 all of his concerns that he relayed to Mr. Solomon, what  
23 did you do at that point?  
24 A So, as I said, I had just, I had called, and I can't

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1 remember if this was before or after I spoke to  
 2 Mr. Solomon again, I can't remember if I talked to  
 3 Ms. Furtado and talked to Solomon or vice versa. So,  
 4 when I went met with Mr. Solomon again, I brought the  
 5 conversation back up, and said, after giving it a lot of  
 6 consideration and considering everything he had told me  
 7 and the extent of the supports Mr. Giovanelli had given  
 8 Mr. Lancellotta and that he had concerns that he was the  
 9 right fit for the department, and, you know, that we  
 10 could do better, that I would be recommending to the  
 11 School Department his non-renewal.  
 12 Q Okay. And how many teachers would you say that you  
 13 recommended for appointment or have appointed during  
 14 your time as superintendent?  
 15 A Teachers?  
 16 Q Approximate.  
 17 A Yes, it varies every year. Probably 10 to 20 a year, on  
 18 average.  
 19 Q And how many teachers do you think that you've  
 20 interviewed over the years, again, approximate?  
 21 A Hundreds.  
 22 Q Okay. Do you feel that your experience at interviewing  
 23 and appointing teachers have given you a good idea of  
 24 prospective teachers potentially available for a job?

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1 A Yes.  
 2 Q And specifically for the world languages position at the  
 3 middle school?  
 4 A Yes.  
 5 Q And with that knowledge, at the time that you made the  
 6 recommendation to the School Committee did you feel that  
 7 you could find someone more qualified and a better fit  
 8 for the world languages teacher position than  
 9 Mr. Lancellotta?  
 10 A Yes. Because it's, you know, you phrase that question  
 11 in two parts, more qualified and a better fit. So, yes,  
 12 I think that better fit is equally as important as the  
 13 content area or expertise.  
 14 Q And that's why you made that recommendation for  
 15 non-renewal?  
 16 A Yes.  
 17 MS. LOMBARDO: And I had a document that  
 18 I had marked, I think, in the original proceeding, and I  
 19 can try to pull it up, is that helpful, or that I had  
 20 flagged for us as potentially a part of an exhibit that  
 21 we were going to enter.  
 22 MR. RUGGERIO: Yes, I think the way we  
 23 usually marked them, Aubrey, is out of order because of  
 24 the intervening document.

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1 MS. LOMBARDO: Yes, they are out of  
 2 order, so I think now it would be School Committee 4.  
 3 Do you have that, Charlie, or do you need me?  
 4 MR. RUGGERIO: I do have it, but it's my  
 5 old School Committee 3.  
 6 MS. LOMBARDO: Right. So that would be  
 7 School Committee 4, I think.  
 8 MR. RUGGERIO: Would you like me to try  
 9 to share that?  
 10 MS. LOMBARDO: If you wouldn't mind.  
 11 MR. RUGGERIO: As long as I can.  
 12 MS. LOMBARDO: Do you have the ability  
 13 to?  
 14 MR. RUGGERIO: I believe so.  
 15 MS. LOMBARDO: There it is. Can you  
 16 scroll down a little bit?  
 17 MR. RUGGERIO: Okay.  
 18 MS. LOMBARDO: Okay. So, I would like  
 19 to mark this as School Committee Exhibit 4.  
 20 (Whereupon School Committee 4 is marked for  
 21 identification.)  
 22 Q Ms. Tarasevich, can you tell us what this is?  
 23 A This is a letter that I signed and was sent to  
 24 Mr. Lancellotta letting him -- as notice that he would

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1 be presented on the School Committee agenda in executive  
 2 session and I would be recommending his non-renewal  
 3 because I believe there are more qualified candidates  
 4 for that position.  
 5 MS. RAPPORT: Can we see the date?  
 6 MR. RUGGERIO: Certainly.  
 7 MS. RAPPORT: For the record, it's  
 8 February 2, 2020.  
 9 MS. LOMBARDO: I would like to move this  
 10 as a full exhibit, please.  
 11 MS. RAPPORT: No objection.  
 12 MR. RUGGERIO: It will be entered as  
 13 full and it will be School Committee 4 in full, which is  
 14 a February 2nd letter to Mr. John Lancellotta from  
 15 Superintendent Tarasevich notifying him of the  
 16 recommendation of non-renewal for the School Committee.  
 17 (Whereupon School Committee Exhibit 4 is  
 18 marked a full exhibit.)  
 19 MR. RUGGERIO: Would you like me to exit  
 20 out of this document?  
 21 Q No. I would actually, like, if you could, if you scroll  
 22 all the way down, please. Can you keep scrolling?  
 23 A Yes.  
 24 MR. RUGGERIO: Yes.

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1 Q This is what I'm looking for. So you sent this to  
2 Mr. Lancellotta, or how did he end up -- I assume that  
3 is his signature on there. How did he end up signing  
4 it?  
5 A **The HR director would deliver that and have him sign  
6 receipt.**  
7 Q Okay. And it's signed receipt on February 2nd, 2020,  
8 correct?  
9 A **Yes.**  
10 Q So at that point after he received this letter what  
11 happens next?  
12 A **Then the School Committee meeting takes place and the  
13 recommendation is made, in this case it was approved,  
14 and then notice gets sent to Mr. Lancellotta after the  
15 meeting telling him that the School Committee approved  
16 that recommendation for non-renewal.**  
17 Q Okay. So you recommended non-renewal, the School  
18 Committee approved your recommendation?  
19 **MS. LOMBARDO:** And then, Attorney  
20 Ruggerio, if you don't mind putting up what we had  
21 marked as School Committee Exhibit 4, and now I would  
22 ask to mark as School Committee Exhibit 5.  
23 (Whereupon School Committee's Exhibit 5 is  
24 marked for identification.)

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1 Q And so can you tell me what this is, Ms. Tarasevich?  
2 A **This is the letter sent to Mr. Lancellotta after the  
3 February 10, 2020 School Committee meeting letting him  
4 know that the School Committee voted unanimously for his  
5 non-renewal or his teaching contract.**  
6 Q Okay. And this was sent to Mr. Lancellotta, correct?  
7 A **Correct.**  
8 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I would ask to move that  
9 as a full exhibit, also, School Committee Exhibit 5.  
10 **MS. RAPPORT:** No objection.  
11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** It will be entered as  
12 School Committee Exhibit 5, which is a February 24th  
13 letter to Mr. John Lancellotta notifying him of the  
14 board action, non-renewing his teaching contract.  
15 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Thank you.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Would you like me to exit  
17 the document?  
18 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Yes, please.  
19 Q Do you still feel that it was the right decision to  
20 recommend Mr. Lancellotta's non-renewal?  
21 A **Yes, I do.**  
22 Q Okay. Why?  
23 A **Based on the concerns that were brought to me for me to  
24 make the recommendation, and the fact that there was --**

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1 **that there was no improvement and the fact that we did  
2 find a better candidate, better suited for that position  
3 and she's doing wonderfully, and the principal is happy  
4 with her performance, her colleagues are happy with her  
5 performance and she's a better fit.**  
6 Q So you did find a more qualified person, you would say?  
7 A **Yes, it was a better fit.**  
8 Q And your teachers in the district, they're represented  
9 by a Union, correct?  
10 A **Yes.**  
11 Q And what Union is that?  
12 A **West Warwick Teachers' Alliance.**  
13 Q Okay. And if someone opts out of the Union or opts out  
14 of paying certain fees, do you know where they send that  
15 notice?  
16 A **A notice was sent to the business office to manage that  
17 transaction.**  
18 Q And do you see that notice?  
19 A **No.**  
20 Q Okay. Were you aware of any notice that Mr. Lancellotta  
21 may have sent to the business office or of any issues he  
22 may have been having with the Union at the time that he  
23 recommended his non-renewal?  
24 A **I did know that he had noted a notice to the business**

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1 **office. I did not know of any issues with the Union at  
2 the time.**  
3 Q Did your knowledge of that letter, or whatever it was to  
4 the business office have any impact on your decision to  
5 recommend his non-renewal?  
6 A **None at all.**  
7 Q Okay. And did you discuss his Union membership or  
8 anything to do with the dues he was paying with anyone  
9 at the Union?  
10 A **No. Only Joe Spagna, who is our director of finance,  
11 brought it to my attention just as a matter of business.  
12 I meet with him regularly, just like Mr. Solomon  
13 reported, I meet with all of the directors independently  
14 once a week and then we meet as a team, and when  
15 Mr. Spagna and I meet he just reports out, obviously we  
16 review budget and status, but anything, you know, those  
17 out of the ordinary type things that will come up, and  
18 that was, and I had never seen anybody submit a notice  
19 like that prior. I don't know. Another example, if  
20 there's, you know, an unusual change in people, I'm  
21 making up an example right now, just exhibit types of  
22 things that we would talk about, you know, when a lot of  
23 teachers, a lot of staff moved over to the HSA for  
24 health insurance, he would report to me how many**

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1 teachers were still on Classic Blue Cross and how many  
2 were on HSA, so like anything out of the ordinary or a  
3 status update, so that was out of the ordinary, so  
4 that's what I would have performed.  
5 Q And at that point you didn't have any conversation with  
6 the Union president or anyone about him not -- or  
7 whatever this notice was?  
8 A No. I never even saw it. Joe Spagna just told me about  
9 it. It has no bearing on the school department. Any  
10 Union member, in either union, their business with the  
11 Union has no bearing on the school department.  
12 Q Okay. And at the time that you made the decision to  
13 recommend Mr. Lancellotta's non-renewal, did you inform  
14 the Union of that fact?  
15 A Yes.  
16 Q And would that be typical for you, to inform the Union  
17 if you're planning on non-renewing a nontenured  
18 employee, teachers?  
19 A Yes. For either Union certified or classified, if there  
20 is any change in, you know, classic example, if we are  
21 going to nonrenew anybody, or if, you know, you know,  
22 classified Union, if we were going to -- if there was  
23 going to be a termination of any sort, I would let the  
24 Union president know out of courtesy, just so they're

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1 aware.  
2 Q Okay. And so you just followed your typical protocol  
3 with respect to Mr. Lancellotta?  
4 A Correct. Before the agenda went out for the February  
5 meeting, in which Mr. Lancellotta's non-renewal would  
6 have been on, I let the Union, West Warwick Teachers'  
7 Alliance know.  
8 Q And did Mr. Doyle say anything to you at that point,  
9 like I have an issue with him anyway, or we're having an  
10 argument, or we disagree over the Union, or any  
11 indication that there was some kind of an issue?  
12 A No.  
13 MS. LOMBARDO: No further questions.  
14 MS. RAPPORT: If I could have a few  
15 minutes.  
16 MR. RUGGERIO: Yes.  
17 MS. RAPPORT: Are we prepared to go for  
18 longer, I would assume.  
19 MR. RUGGERIO: Yes, I would think. I  
20 would ask the Chair.  
21 (BRIEF RECESS)  
22 MR. RUGGERIO: Sara is back.  
23 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT  
24 Q Okay. Superintendent Tarasevich, if I am saying that

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1 name correctly?  
2 A Yes.  
3 Q Okay. You became the superintendent in West Warwick in  
4 what year?  
5 A 2013.  
6 Q And you testified that, and I wasn't sure if this was  
7 ever year, or in the year, in an average year, but you  
8 typically have in your cohort of 350 teachers about 10  
9 to 20 new teachers?  
10 A Yes. I would, on average, it varies by year, it could  
11 be less, it could be more, it just depends on the year,  
12 how many retirements we have, how many new, you know,  
13 sections of courses we need to run.  
14 Q But it's between that number, 10 and 20?  
15 A Average.  
16 Q And these are probationary teachers because they're new  
17 to the district?  
18 A Yes.  
19 Q Okay. And some probationary teachers who haven't taught  
20 in another district have three years and other  
21 probationary teachers, such as Mr. Lancellotta, have two  
22 years because they have come from another district; is  
23 that correct?  
24 A Correct.

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1 Q Okay. And you testified that when a new teacher comes  
2 into the district, you have a practice with your  
3 principals to check in on them, or to be aware that  
4 they, the principal, the building principal has a new  
5 teacher in his or her midst, is that fair to say?  
6 A Yes.  
7 Q And when you say check in on them, is there any  
8 formalization of what that means, what do you mean by  
9 check in and what is carried out with respect to  
10 checking in? Let's take the first question, what do you  
11 mean check this?  
12 A It really is carrying out their duties as building  
13 principal, which includes managing the staff, making  
14 sure the evaluation process is implemented, making sure  
15 they had any supports they might need.  
16 Q Okay. Do you ask of your building principals to hop  
17 into the classroom to see how it's going?  
18 A That's an expectation of all teachers, all principals,  
19 you mean?  
20 Q I'm sorry. Yes.  
21 A Principals of all teachers, no just the nontenured ones.  
22 Q Okay. So, is there heightened expectation of popping in  
23 on a class when a teacher is new?  
24 A No more than any other teacher.



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1 Q And do you meet with your building principals on a  
2 regular basis?  
3 A **We have a district admin meeting. This year we're**  
4 **meeting twice a month. Typically we meet once a month.**  
5 **And, I started to meet with the principals monthly, but**  
6 **Mr. Solomon meets with the secondary principals.**  
7 Q Okay. So you don't meet with the secondary principals,  
8 he does?  
9 A **Not regularly. He does regularly, correct.**  
10 Q And in the '18/'19 school year, was that the practice  
11 that Mr. Solomon would meet regularly with the  
12 principals, the secondary principals?  
13 A **Not as much as we do now. We changed our -- we had an**  
14 **admin restructure at the middle school in particular,**  
15 **and once we did that we changed how we meet with the**  
16 **principals more regularly.**  
17 Q So in the '18/'19 school year were you meeting with the  
18 secondary building principal, principals?  
19 A **Not as regularly as we do -- as Phil does now.**  
20 Q Okay. So, in the '18/'19 school year did you meet once  
21 a month with your building principals?  
22 A **I don't know if I could say with fidelity every month we**  
23 **met, but it would be about monthly. It wasn't weekly,**  
24 **in other words.**

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1 Q Okay. I am sorry.  
2 A **It wasn't weekly, in other words.**  
3 Q Right. And in that year, the 2018/'19 school year, Jeff  
4 Guiot was the building principal, correct?  
5 A **Correct.**  
6 Q And did you meet with him a number of times over that  
7 school year?  
8 A **At certain points I did, more towards the second half of**  
9 **the year.**  
10 Q Okay. And was there any other probationary teacher at  
11 the middle school other than Mr. Lancellotta that year?  
12 A **I believe there was.**  
13 Q Okay. And who was that?  
14 A **I don't have a list of names in front of me. I couldn't**  
15 **tell you today.**  
16 Q Okay. And did you check in with Mr. Guiot and  
17 Mr. Lancellotta and this other probationary teacher's  
18 status, how they were doing?  
19 A **No, I didn't.**  
20 Q You didn't?  
21 A **I did not. Again, the expectation is they would bring**  
22 **any concerns to me.**  
23 Q And did Mr. Guiot bring any concerns to you in the  
24 '18/'19 school year about either probationary teacher?

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1 A **He did not.**  
2 Q Who was the assistant principal at that time?  
3 A **Mike Green.**  
4 Q I am sorry. Would it be a practice for the assistant  
5 principal to, similarly, check on the probationary  
6 teachers or was that an expectation of the principal as  
7 opposed to the assistant?  
8 A **The principal.**  
9 Q And Mr. Guiot was an experienced principal?  
10 A **Yes.**  
11 Q How many years has he been principal?  
12 A **I believe that was his third year.**  
13 Q Okay. And he was a teacher before that?  
14 A **He was an assistant principal at the high school before**  
15 **that and a teacher before that.**  
16 Q And he's now currently in a different school district,  
17 correct?  
18 A **I'm not sure where he is employed right now.**  
19 Q And do you have any conversations with Mr. Solomon in  
20 the '18/'19 school year about the probationary teachers  
21 and how they were doing?  
22 A **The only conversation I had was to remind the elementary**  
23 **and secondary directors about the timeline for letting**  
24 **me know if there were any concerns for somebody**

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1 **struggling and remind them that the expectation that**  
2 **there be supports in place.**  
3 Q When you say timelines for somebody struggling, timeline  
4 refers to the March 1st deadline?  
5 A **Correct.**  
6 Q Okay. And struggling refers to supports that would be  
7 given to someone who's having trouble so that perhaps  
8 they didn't need to be terminated; is that fair to say?  
9 A **What I meant was the timeline from non-renewal, for**  
10 **somebody who we would have identified prior to needing**  
11 **support, which was the district's expectation that**  
12 **people, any new hire, nontenured person that we thought**  
13 **needed support in any way, that that was provided, and**  
14 **that if around, again, as I mentioned earlier, around**  
15 **the December timeline, I would need to know if there was**  
16 **any recommendations that anybody should be placed on a**  
17 **recommendation list for non-renewal.**  
18 Q Okay. And you testified that one of the functions, if  
19 not the primary function of the evaluation instrument,  
20 which is the innovation model, is to provide  
21 professional development and feedback; is that correct?  
22 A **Correct.**  
23 Q Okay. So that this document of, and process of scoring  
24 and having conversations is designed to identify and

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1 correct issues involving deficiencies or struggles in  
2 the classroom; is that fair to say?  
3 **A It's meant to -- well, it serves two purposes. It will**  
4 **give a rating for that one instance, that one moment in**  
5 **time. So the rating reflects that specific observation,**  
6 **that specific conversation, as well as provides**  
7 **professional development and support in good teaching**  
8 **practice.**  
9 **Q** Where in the instrument does the professional  
10 development and support and teaching practice get  
11 reflected, where does it get reflected?  
12 **A I'm not sure I understand your question, the rating.**  
13 **Q** The ratings are reflected in the instrument, and you  
14 said that the other purpose of it is to provide feedback  
15 and support, and I'm asking you where in the instrument  
16 can we see that feedback and support?  
17 **A That's the conference portion of the evaluation process.**  
18 **Q** And is there a record of the conference portion of the  
19 evaluation process?  
20 **A No, I don't believe so, because it's all recorded in**  
21 **the -- I believe there might be notes in Aspen.**  
22 **Q** Are there notes in Aspen?  
23 **A You know what, I'm trying to remember. I don't**  
24 **remember.**

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1 **Q** If you could take a look, and I am asking you to call up  
2 Exhibit 2.  
3 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Charlie, would you mind  
4 putting that up on the screen?  
5 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Yes, I can do that. Just  
6 let me know where you would like me to go, Sara.  
7 **Q** So, I would like you, Superintendent, to take a look at  
8 this document and show me where on the, let's call it  
9 the PD portion of it is reflected?  
10 **A The PD portion would be the whole conversation in the**  
11 **evaluation process, so it would be the guidance around**  
12 **the development of the lesson plan, then the observation**  
13 **takes place, and then there's conferencing is part of**  
14 **the process. It's not documented in the -- well, if you**  
15 **could scroll down maybe. I can't see the whole thing.**  
16 **So, this would be the script.**  
17 **Q** This, as I understand it, records what is happening in  
18 the classroom?  
19 **A Yes.**  
20 **Q** As it's happening?  
21 **A Correct.**  
22 **Q** In code. Okay. So, that's the observation of the  
23 evaluator as it's happening to show the process that he  
24 or she is witnessing?

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1 **A Correct.**  
2 **Q** Okay. And then at the conclusion of that there is a  
3 rating date?  
4 **A Correct.**  
5 **Q** Okay. And that shows the scores, and in this one, if we  
6 go all the way to the end, we see on page 17 various  
7 scores that are noted there under the standards that are  
8 articulated in your model?  
9 **A Correct.**  
10 **Q** Okay. And what you're saying to me is that this  
11 reflects the rating based upon the observation, based  
12 upon the script that's communicated, and then,  
13 additionally, in addition to this raw evidence and  
14 rating, there's a conference afterwards in which they  
15 talk about this moment in time that they witnessed?  
16 **A Correct.**  
17 **Q** And that conference is designed to provide some feedback  
18 on everything that happened in that moment in time that  
19 they saw?  
20 **A Correct.**  
21 **Q** Okay. And that may or may not be recorded somewhere in  
22 writing?  
23 **A Yeah. I don't remember, to be honest, if it is recorded**  
24 **or if it is just the conversation, the conference. More**

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1 **inclined to think it's just the conference. It's been a**  
2 **long time since I actually did an observation.**  
3 **Q** Okay. And I realize that we did not -- is this  
4 Mr. Lancellotta's observation that you, or a form that  
5 you looked at when you were assessing his nonrenewal?  
6 **A Yes, yes.**  
7 **MS. RAPPORT:** So I would move D in, and  
8 I would also ask that D be presented to the  
9 superintendent.  
10 **MS. LOMBARDO:** No objection to D being  
11 presented as a full exhibit.  
12 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Exhibit D is in full as  
13 Exhibit D. I'm going to try to pull up Exhibit E now.  
14 (Whereupon Appellant's Exhibit D is marked  
15 for identification.)  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Can I see that?  
17 **Q** And so this is E, and this is the formal observation  
18 that Mr. Giovanelli did on November 14th, 2019, is  
19 that we've heard some discussion about, is that correct?  
20 **A Yes.**  
21 **Q** Okay. And this is one of the documents that you looked  
22 at when contemplating Mr. Lancellotta's termination?  
23 **A Yes.**  
24 **Q** Okay. And in this document we can see that not all of

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1 the standards are scored, only a couple; is that fair to  
2 say?  
3 **A Yes.**  
4 **Q** Okay. And it looks like 3.A is scored and it looks like  
5 3.B.2, 3.2.C is scored as well as 2.A, 2.1.A is scored.  
6 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Is there a particular  
7 place that you want me to reference here?  
8 **Q** Well, it looks like at the top of the document it says,  
9 it shows the three standards that are actually scored on  
10 this document, and I'm asking the superintendent to  
11 confirm that.  
12 **A Yes, that's correct.**  
13 **Q** So 2.1.A is teacher interaction with students, and he  
14 got a highly effective on that, right?  
15 **A In this observation, correct.**  
16 **Q** And on 3.2.C, Discussions techniques, he got a highly  
17 effective on that?  
18 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm going to object and  
19 say the documents speak for itself. We agree the  
20 document says what it says. There is no need to go  
21 through this.  
22 **MS. RAPPORT:** Okay. So I'd like E moved  
23 into evidence as well, please.  
24 **MS. LOMBARDO:** No objection.

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1 **MR. RUGGERIO:** No objection. The  
2 document is so entered as full.  
3 (Whereupon Appellant's Exhibit E is marked a  
4 full exhibit.)  
5 **MS. RAPPORT:** And then I would like to  
6 move in exhibit, what's marked as G, and I'm going to  
7 make that F, because I am going to skip F. I'd ask the  
8 superintendent to look at that.  
9 **MR. RUGGERIO:** All right. Is that the  
10 document you're referring to, Sara?  
11 **MS. RAPPORT:** Yes.  
12 **Q** Did you also look at this, Ms. Tarasevich?  
13 **A Yes.**  
14 **Q** Okay. And this is the final scoring for the '18/'19  
15 school year, correct?  
16 **A Yes, correct, actually it's -- okay.**  
17 **Q** Okay. And it shows that he achieved a score of highly  
18 effective, right?  
19 **A For these observations, yes.**  
20 **Q** Okay. And the only pieces missing from this evaluation  
21 instrument that we don't have documentation of are those  
22 conferences which may or may not be recorded in Aspen  
23 that take place afterwards, correct?  
24 **A Yeah, I don't think there is a record of those. It's a**

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1 the conversation, and I believe, you know, what they  
2 gathered from the observation, as Mr. Giovanelli  
3 testified earlier, you know, they carry into the next  
4 observation where the evaluatee gets the opportunity,  
5 based on what they talk about, to present more evidence  
6 in the next observation that might have been missed in  
7 the first observation, or they want to, you know, maybe  
8 increase their rating.  
9 **Q** Okay. Those conferences are confined to the very  
10 snapshot in time that the documents that we've been  
11 reviewing are confined to, is that fair to say?  
12 **A Yes.**  
13 **Q** Okay. Now, over the course of the '18/'19 school year  
14 you did not get any feedback from Principal Guiot,  
15 you've already testified to that, correct?  
16 **A Correct.**  
17 **Q** And you didn't get any feedback from Mr. Solomon  
18 regarding Mr. Lancellotta, is that correct?  
19 **A Correct.**  
20 **Q** And did you get any complaints from any parents or  
21 anybody about his performance?  
22 **A Not that I recall, no.**  
23 **Q** Okay. And in the '19/'20 school year you said you did a  
24 reorg, so that's when Ms. Furtado began, correct?

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1 **A Uh-hum.**  
2 **Q** And I take it from the fact that you reached out to her  
3 twice and she didn't really know him, you didn't get any  
4 complaints or concerns articulated by Ms. Furtado  
5 either?  
6 **A No. Because, as I said, she didn't know all of the  
7 staff members yet.**  
8 **Q** And then until Mr. Solomon reported the conversation by  
9 Mr. Giovanelli in December, late December of 2019,  
10 Mr. Solomon didn't report any concerns about  
11 Mr. Lancellotta?  
12 **A Correct.**  
13 **Q** Okay. Now, the concerns that Mr. Solomon reported as  
14 reported by Mr. Giovanelli you testified were that he  
15 had concerns about collaboration and with colleagues and  
16 building relationships with the students; is that fair  
17 to say?  
18 **A Yes, as well as fitting into the department in terms of  
19 engagement with his colleagues. One of Mr. Giovanelli's  
20 biggest concerns was Mr. Lancellotta's willingness to  
21 engage in the extensive support that Mr. Giovanelli  
22 himself had provided for Mr. Lancellotta and his lack of  
23 progress based on lack of engagement.**  
24 **Q** Okay. So, let's talk about that, so it was reported to

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1 you by Mr. Solomon that Mr. Giovanelli was concerned  
2 that Mr. Lancellotta did not engage in the extensive  
3 support that Mr. Giovanelli had offered?  
4 **A Correct.**  
5 **Q** Okay. What was the extensive support?  
6 **A** Well, again, as Mr. Giovanelli testified earlier, the --  
7 **Q** My question to you, I'm sorry to interrupt you, is I  
8 want to know what you were told --  
9 **A** Sure.  
10 **Q** -- in January?  
11 **A** **In December Mr. Solomon reported to me that**  
12 **Mr. Giovanelli had reported to him that he had made the**  
13 **effort to go to the middle school two or three times a**  
14 **week to specifically meet with Mr. Lancellotta, as well**  
15 **as the other French teacher, and he attempted to, you**  
16 **know, have them collaborate more, they were the morning**  
17 **breakfast meetings, they were the department meetings, I**  
18 **know there's embedded PD days, and what he reported his**  
19 **efforts were.**  
20 **Q** And what were his efforts?  
21 **A** **To have him suggest -- he suggested multiple times that**  
22 **he talk to other colleagues, to talk about engaging with**  
23 **the students more, to collaborate more, things along**  
24 **those lines.**

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1 **Q** Okay. Did he offer to Mr. Solomon any examples of  
2 Mr. Lancellotta's failure to collaborate?  
3 **A** **Yeah. One example he mentioned was whether he would be**  
4 **meeting with him. I think it was described in one of**  
5 **the -- two to three times a week he would go over**  
6 **meetings before school would start. I think he**  
7 **described it as pulling teeth. In other words, he would**  
8 **talk -- do most of the talking where Mr. Lancellotta**  
9 **really wouldn't even engage in a dialogue around best**  
10 **practice.**  
11 **Q** So, that is the testimony that Mr. Giovanelli gave. My  
12 question to you is, what did Mr. Solomon tell you  
13 Mr. Giovanelli gave as specific examples of failure to  
14 collaborate, what was the data, Superintendent, upon  
15 which you base this decision to fire him?  
16 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I'm going to object to  
17 the characterization of fire him. We're here for a  
18 non-renewal hearing.  
19 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Noted.  
20 **Q** So, my question is not about what Mr. Giovanelli  
21 testified to in this proceeding. My question to you is,  
22 what was specifically conveyed to you by Mr. Solomon as  
23 examples of lack of engagement with students,  
24 Mr. Giovanelli, or colleagues, what examples did you

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1 base this on?  
2 **A** **Mr. Solomon described to me that Mr. Giovanelli had**  
3 **described to him his efforts and attempts, specifically**  
4 **the morning meetings, the department meetings,**  
5 **encouraging him to be engaged with students, encouraging**  
6 **him to engage with his colleagues more, and, again,**  
7 **based on my working with Mr. Giovanelli for 13 years now**  
8 **and my time firsthand side by side with Mr. Giovanelli**  
9 **at the high school I understand, and I know his**  
10 **willingness to support his staff and the commitment he**  
11 **has to his department, so I witnessed myself how hard he**  
12 **tries and how hard he's willing to try. So, when**  
13 **Mr. Solomon gave me too much information, I was**  
14 **satisfied Mr. Giovanelli had provided ample support.**  
15 **Q** Did you reach out to Mr. Giovanelli and talk with him  
16 directly ever?  
17 **A** No.  
18 **Q** Did you receive any document or piece of written  
19 communication for Mr. Giovanelli to describe with any  
20 specificity the nature of his concerns?  
21 **A** No.  
22 **Q** Did you reach out to Mr. Guiot to find out how he had  
23 experienced his leadership of Mr. Lancellotta in the  
24 '18/'19 school year?

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1 **A** No.  
2 **Q** Did you reach out to any faculty other than  
3 Mr. Giovanelli who worked with Mr. Lancellotta?  
4 **A** No.  
5 **Q** Did you reach out to any parent or student who had  
6 Mr. Lancellotta as a teacher?  
7 **A** No.  
8 **Q** Did you familiarize yourself with the extracurricular  
9 efforts that Mr. Lancellotta had made by way of  
10 supporting a student outside of the school program who  
11 had done well, were you familiar with that?  
12 **A** No.  
13 **Q** Did you make inquiry of -- did you even talk to  
14 Mr. Lancellotta?  
15 **A** No.  
16 **MS. LOMBARDO:** Excuse me one second. I  
17 suggest that we take down this exhibit so I can see  
18 everybody.  
19 **MS. RAPPORT:** I would like to move G,  
20 which is now I'm asking that to be F.  
21 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I have no objection.  
22 **MR. RUGGERIO:** No objection. So the  
23 Summative Observation Evaluation Form will be marked as  
24 Exhibit F and entered as a full exhibit.

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1 (Whereupon Appellant's Exhibit F is marked a  
2 full exhibit.)  
3 Q You said that Mr. Spagna had brought to you a letter, or  
4 information about a letter that was out of the ordinary  
5 regarding dues. Do you recall that testimony?  
6 A Yes.  
7 Q Okay. And that was in -- when was that?  
8 A You know, I don't remember when it was. I honestly  
9 don't. I meet with all my directors frequently. I meet  
10 with the director of finance probably the most, and I  
11 don't remember when it was.  
12 Q Okay. Had you ever seen a request from a member of a  
13 Union to withdraw or not pay dues before this time?  
14 A No.  
15 Q And you said you typically, out of courtesy to the  
16 Union, inform them of a non-renewal before you submit it  
17 to the committee; is that correct?  
18 A Correct.  
19 Q Both unions. And did you inform the union in this  
20 instance of the non-renewal?  
21 A Yes.  
22 Q And who did you inform?  
23 A Sean Doyle.  
24 Q Was that in a meeting?

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1 A You know what, I don't remember exactly when it was or  
2 how I did it. It was probably in a meeting. At that  
3 point that was before COVID so all of our meetings would  
4 have been in person.  
5 Q And these are meetings that you regularly had with the  
6 Union?  
7 A We don't have regular meetings. We meet, you know, we  
8 collaborate a lot, we work on a lot the things so we do  
9 have frequent meetings but so it's not like every Monday  
10 we have a meeting. There is no set scheduled meetings.  
11 Q How often were you meeting with the Union in the '19/'20  
12 school year?  
13 A I don't know. Like I said, we were meeting in person up  
14 until March 13th, and it just depends on what -- I am  
15 trying to think of what was happening in terms of  
16 district initiatives or practices. We have many joint  
17 committees. We've got a, you know, district evaluation  
18 committee, we put on joint management committees. Right  
19 now we have a district task force joint committee  
20 regarding COVID things. I don't recall how often or  
21 frequently we were meeting at that point in time.  
22 Q Are there occasions, not necessarily in this case, but  
23 are there occasions in which Mr. Doyle on behalf of the  
24 member seeks to negotiate a resolution so that you don't

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1 submit the name to the committee, has that ever  
2 happened?  
3 A No.  
4 Q Okay. Now, the replacement for Mr. Lancellotta is this  
5 woman Scattone, am I saying her name correctly?  
6 A Yes.  
7 Q And are you familiar with whether she had emergency  
8 certification on the start of the school year to teach  
9 Spanish?  
10 A I was aware that she needed emergency certification, and  
11 I believe Human Recourses, and I believe it was  
12 confirmed with RIDE that she was eligible and that they  
13 would start the process, but she did have Italian  
14 certification.  
15 Q So, she was eligible for emergency cert in September,  
16 but she didn't have emergency cert until December 4th;  
17 is that correct?  
18 A Correct.  
19 Q So between September 1 and December 4th she did not  
20 have emergency certification to teach Spanish?  
21 A Correct.  
22 Q And did she teach Spanish?  
23 A She did, but I believe, because she was eligible, and I  
24 don't know the number of days, but I believe because she

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1 had one certification and was eligible for the second  
2 one it was allowed for her, because RIDE was backed up  
3 because of COVID, and, you know, she was allowed to  
4 teach the Spanish classes given her Italian cert and  
5 that she's eligible. They allow, I believe they allow  
6 it up to a certain number of days, it was allowed.  
7 Q Do you know that or are you --  
8 A I believe, I believe that is true. I know the Human  
9 Resources Director handles all of that, and I know when  
10 we interviewed Ms. Scattone and we did know that was her  
11 certification status, as the Human Resources director  
12 reached out to RIDE and did confirm that it was  
13 appropriate that we hire her and that they would  
14 emergency certify her, and she's eligible, was eligible.  
15 Q So do you have approval from RIDE to have her teach  
16 pending her emergency certification?  
17 A I don't. Again, the Human Resources office handles all  
18 of that.  
19 Q Okay. And she is a brand new teacher, this is her first  
20 job, right?  
21 A I believe so.  
22 MS. RAPPORT: I want an opportunity to  
23 confer with my colleague and then we may be finished.  
24 MR. RUGGERIO: Very good.

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1 (BRIEF PAUSE)  
2 MS. RAPPORT: We have no further  
3 questions.  
4 MR. RUGGERIO: Any redirect,  
5 Ms. Lombardo?  
6 MS. LOMBARDO: Very quick.  
7 MR. RUGGERIO: Quick.  
8 REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO  
9 Q So Mrs. Tarasevich, Attorney Rapport asked you did you  
10 contact any parents, did you conduct the former  
11 principal that was no longer with the district, like a  
12 number of people and you responded no to all of those  
13 people. Did you find it necessary to reach out to those  
14 people in order to determine if Mr. Lancellotta was the  
15 most qualified or best fit person for this position?  
16 A No, I didn't.  
17 Q How come?  
18 A Because I trusted -- I trust Mr. Giovanelli's opinion,  
19 his judgment, he understands his department, he knows  
20 what we need for the right teachers in that department,  
21 he knows what good teaching practice is, he understands  
22 the need for a certain rapport and communication skill  
23 and style with the students and colleagues, and I had  
24 that information, that I didn't feel like it was

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1 necessary to do otherwise.  
2 Q So, relying on your experience of eight years as  
3 superintendent, you felt like you had enough information  
4 to make that decision?  
5 A Correct.  
6 Q And you still feel confident about that decision?  
7 A Correct.  
8 MS. LOMBARDO: No further questions.  
9 MR. RUGGERIO: Any recross?  
10 RECROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT  
11 Q Have you talked to Mr. Giovanelli since you made that  
12 decision?  
13 A I have not.  
14 Q So the first time you heard from Mr. Giovanelli directly  
15 about the issues that were allegedly articulated to  
16 Mr. Solomon was when he testified here?  
17 A No. Well, what he relayed to Mr. Solomon and then  
18 Mr. Solomon related to me.  
19 Q Okay. The first time you heard from Mr. Giovanelli  
20 himself was during this hearing?  
21 A Yes, correct.  
22 MS. RAPPORT: Okay. I do not have any  
23 further questions.  
24 MR. RUGGERIO: Any further witnesses,

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1 Ms. Lombardo?  
2 MS. LOMBARDO: No. I do have one  
3 further follow-up, if I may.  
4 MR. RUGGERIO: Sure.  
5 FURTHER REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. LOMBARDO  
6 Q Ms. Tarasevich, how about Mr. Solomon, did you feel like  
7 you could trust him at his word with respect to what  
8 Mr. Giovanelli said?  
9 A Yes.  
10 Q And can you explain why?  
11 A Because, again, I worked closely with Mr. Solomon in my  
12 time at the high school, and Mr. Solomon was an  
13 administrator even before he came to West Warwick, he  
14 has got extensive experience in education as an  
15 administrator. I've witnessed and collaborate with him,  
16 and I understand his practice and his philosophy and  
17 trust his sound educational judgment.  
18 MS. LOMBARDO: No further questions.  
19 Thank you.  
20 MS. RAPPORT: One further.  
21 FURTHER RECROSS EXAMINATION BY MS. RAPPORT  
22 Q Just to make it crystal year, neither you nor  
23 Mr. Solomon have ever seen Mr. Lancellotta teach?  
24 A I can't speak for Mr. Solomon. I have not.

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1 Q And Mr. Solomon did not report to you any observations  
2 that he had made?  
3 A No, I don't, I don't, I don't do teacher observations.  
4 Q I understand that, but I'm just clarifying that you  
5 personally have had not had any experience with Mr.  
6 Lancellotta. Have you met him?  
7 A No.  
8 MS. LOMBARDO: Objection. Relevance.  
9 MR. RUGGERIO: I will allow it. It's  
10 answered.  
11 A No.  
12 MS. RAPPORT: Okay.  
13 MR. RUGGERIO: All right. Any further  
14 witnesses, Ms. Lombardo?  
15 MS. LOMBARDO: No further witnesses.  
16 MR. RUGGERIO: Ms. Rapport?  
17 MS. RAPPORT: I have no witnesses.  
18 MR. RUGGERIO: All right. It's the  
19 Chair's prerogative, but I would expect maybe we could  
20 allow the parties to make a very brief closing argument  
21 before we go into deliberations. I couldn't hear you  
22 there, Mr. Chair, is that okay? He's done, but he's  
23 saying okay. I would like to keep it as brief as we  
24 can, so I'd ask no more than five minutes, if you guys

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1 can.

2 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I think we all know the  
3 standard here is for non-renewal, for a nontenured  
4 teacher like Mr. Lancellotta, if we can find someone  
5 better, if there's a more qualified person in the  
6 universe of people then non-renewal is an acceptable  
7 decision. The superintendent listened to a 40-year  
8 employee of the district who everyone has testified is  
9 beyond reproach, someone who has never made a complaint  
10 or voiced a concern about a fellow teacher previously  
11 but felt so compelled by Mr. Lancellotta's lack of  
12 interaction with students, by his harsh discipline, by  
13 his inability to connect with students, with colleagues  
14 and to buy into the mission of the West Warwick Public  
15 Schools, and, frankly, the community around him. This  
16 is a community that envelops people, that envelops  
17 students and really prides itself on welcoming students,  
18 on engaging students, and Mr. Lancellotta was clearly  
19 unable to do that, despite the Herculean efforts of  
20 Mr. Giovanelli in supporting him. Mr. Giovanelli went  
21 to Mr. Solomon, he voiced his concerns. Mr. Solomon  
22 appropriately relayed those concerns to the  
23 superintendent. She considered those concerns and she  
24 took them very seriously because of whom they were

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1 coming from. She reviewed his evaluations, she spoke  
2 with his principal and she decided at that point that  
3 she could do better, that West Warwick schools could do  
4 better, and, in fact, we heard from everyone involved,  
5 that they have done better. They have found someone  
6 who's more qualified. They have found someone who is a  
7 better fit. And, for all those reasons, I ask that you  
8 uphold the decision of this School Committee and the  
9 recommendation of your trusted superintendent and uphold  
10 the non-renewal of Mr. Lancellotta. Thank you.

11 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Thank you, Ms. Lombardo.  
12 Ms. Rapport.

13 **MS. RAPPORT:** The standard is that a  
14 School Committee is entitled to seek a better fit but  
15 shall not make decisions that are based upon  
16 arbitrariness, capriciousness or a violation of the law,  
17 and it is no secret, based upon the substance and  
18 process that has been displayed in this proceeding, that  
19 there is an unlawful issue with respect to the decision  
20 to terminate Mr. Lancellotta.

21 The practice and protocol of West Warwick, with  
22 respect, is at odds with the very claim of  
23 professionalism and professional development and  
24 constructive feedback that it purports to hold at the

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1 center of its mission.

2 In this case a teacher had a stellar  
3 top-of-the-line evaluation, no complaints, no issues,  
4 not a peep for the '18/'19 school year, not a peep.  
5 And, he also had a stellar performance in November of  
6 2019 by the very man who one month later said that he  
7 had been nursing and harboring concerns, concerns that  
8 did not get revealed to anybody, except, according to  
9 Mr. Giovanelli, obliquely through conferences that they  
10 had after the three meetings that they had in which  
11 Mr. Giovanelli discussed his snapshot observation of  
12 Mr. Lancellotta. And then we find out that in December  
13 sometime there's a communication to the School  
14 Department about a removal of Mr. Lancellotta from the  
15 Union roles, which is such an abnormal event that the  
16 superintendent heard about it, by her own description,  
17 from the finance director.

18 We also had some very strange and unusual indicia  
19 of unlawfulness in the practice of gathering witnesses  
20 by the Union adverse to the person it represents, highly  
21 unusual, highly unusual, and we have a timing and piece  
22 of chronology that puts in to start questioning the  
23 motivations with respect of the superintendent.

24 The practice of terminating somebody based upon

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1 secondhand description of a vague nature without even  
2 going to the person who is supposed to be making these  
3 claims, against an evaluation which is perfect, that a  
4 very time when the individual has renounced Union  
5 membership raises an issue, and the graduation of that  
6 concern through this proceeding, right up until the  
7 submission of the Complaint, this warning about the  
8 failure to have support for the Union members during  
9 their testimony, when just posed with the admission by  
10 Mr. Giovanelli that he did talk about the case, he did  
11 talk about the case with Mr. Doyle and Mr. Lambert, not  
12 once but twice, and maybe more. He talked about the  
13 documents he was producing, which documents were about  
14 the case. So, he violated the order that he was  
15 directed to adhere to, and he did after being told not  
16 to. So, there is a problem here. There has been a  
17 sufficient description of that problem to raise some  
18 concerns for the committee.

19 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Thank you, Ms. Rapport.  
20 I don't know who is responsible for kicking us into  
21 breakout room, but I would ask that Jim.

22 **MS. LOMBARDO:** I think Jim.  
23 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So Jim can do that for  
24 the members and the committee, also.

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1 (BRIEF PAUSE)  
2 (OFF-THE-RECORD COLLOQUY)  
3 (COUNCIL DELIBERATING)  
4 (RESUMING AT 11:05 P.M.)  
5 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Let's go on the record.  
6 So back in executive session, and thank you everybody  
7 for your participation this evening.  
8 After consideration of all of the evidence and the  
9 exhibits presented, the Board is prepared to issue --  
10 excuse me, the committee is prepared to issue its  
11 decision. And I would ask, is there a motion that the  
12 committee is prepared to make?  
13 **MR. DIMARTINO:** I move that we deny the  
14 appeal and uphold the non-renewal of Mr. Lancellotta.  
15 **MS. ST. AMAND:** I second that.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Okay. Is there any  
17 discussion on the topic?  
18 **MR. COUTU:** Do you have to vote first?  
19 **MR. RUGGERIO:** First we could do the  
20 discussion.  
21 **MR. COUTU:** Okay. After consideration  
22 of all of the evidence presented, the committee finds  
23 that the district has established that it had a good  
24 faith belief at the time of Mr. Lancellotta's

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1 non-renewal that it could find a better qualified  
2 teacher who would be a benefit for the position than  
3 Mr. Lancellotta. The committee also finds that there is  
4 insufficient evidence to establish that the district's  
5 decision on non-renewal, or non-renewed Mr. Lancellotta  
6 was based upon his failure to be a member of the  
7 Teachers' Union or based upon any other illegal  
8 motivation.  
9 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So, is there any further  
10 discussion on the topic?  
11 (NO RESPONSE)  
12 **MR. RUGGERIO:** If there's no further  
13 discussion, there's been a motion, a motion has been  
14 seconded. I guess, Rebecca, you would need to call the  
15 roll. There should be a roll call vote.  
16 **COURT REPORTER:** Mr. Coutu?  
17 **MR. COUTU:** Aye.  
18 **COURT REPORTER:** Mr. DiMartino?  
19 **MR. DIMARTINO:** Yes.  
20 **COURT REPORTER:** Ms. St. Amand?  
21 **MS. ST. AMAND:** Yes.  
22 **COURT REPORTER:** Mr. Chairman?  
23 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Yes.  
24 **MR. RUGGERIO:** That is everyone. All

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1 right. That's the decision of the committee. We have  
2 to go back out into open session, but before we do that  
3 we need to make a motion to seal the minutes of this  
4 particular meeting.  
5 **MS. ST. AMAND:** I make a motion to seal  
6 the minutes.  
7 **MS. LOMBARDO:** You have to seal the  
8 minutes in open. You have to you seal them in open  
9 session. Sorry.  
10 **MR. RUGGERIO:** Okay. No, thank you very  
11 much. So we'll make a motion then to come out of  
12 executive session and go back into open session.  
13 **MS. ST. AMAND:** I make a motion to go  
14 back into open session.  
15 **MR. DIMARTINO:** I second.  
16 **MR. RUGGERIO:** I need you to do a roll  
17 call vote, Rebecca.  
18 **COURT REPORTER:** Mr. Coutu?  
19 **MR. COUTU:** Aye.  
20 **COURT REPORTER:** Mr. DiMartino?  
21 **MR. DIMARTINO:** Yes.  
22 **COURT REPORTER:** Ms. St. Amand?  
23 **MS. ST. AMAND:** Yes.  
24 **COURT REPORTER:** Mr. Chairman?

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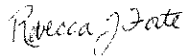
1 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Yes.  
2 **MR. RUGGERIO:** So we will leave this  
3 room, and I believe that takes us to the open session.  
4 Okay.  
5 (HEARING CONCLUDED AT 11:07 P.M.)  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Rebecca J. Forte, a Notary Public in and for the State of Rhode Island, hereby certify that the foregoing pages are a true and accurate record of my stenographic notes that were reduced to print through computer-aided transcription.

In witness whereof, I hereunto set my hand this 9th day of February, 2021.



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REBECCA J. FORTE, NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission (RI) Expires on 7/15/21  
My Commission (MA) Expires on 1/24/25

A				
	<b>admin (3)</b> 239:3;254:3,14	245:1;251:4	203:7;261:14;263:3; 270:1	<b>Aspen (4)</b> 238:18;258:21,22; 263:22
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<b>ability (5)</b> 126:18;180:6; 224:11;235:16;244:12	<b>administrative (3)</b> 184:24;205:19;232:5	<b>ago (2)</b> 139:17;218:11	<b>applied (1)</b> 158:24	<b>assertions (2)</b> 132:1,15
<b>able (2)</b> 191:8;198:7	<b>administrator (10)</b> 172:6;177:14; 205:17,20;207:3; 213:23;231:18,23; 276:13,15	<b>agree (3)</b> 140:15;237:19; 262:19	<b>appoint (1)</b> 232:18	<b>assessing (1)</b> 261:5
<b>abnormal (1)</b> 280:15	<b>administrators (3)</b> 206:14;208:5;240:20	<b>agreed (4)</b> 128:4;129:18;130:4; 194:24	<b>appointed (1)</b> 242:13	<b>assignment (1)</b> 236:4
<b>absolutely (7)</b> 128:4;131:19;133:8; 140:4,19;211:8;241:16	<b>admission (3)</b> 134:10,12;281:9	<b>agreement (1)</b> 194:22	<b>appointing (1)</b> 242:23	<b>assistance (2)</b> 129:21;213:19
<b>Academy (2)</b> 205:21;206:19	<b>admit (1)</b> 134:9	<b>ahead (1)</b> 181:2	<b>appointment (1)</b> 242:13	<b>assistant (13)</b> 171:10,11;205:22, 23;206:18,20;213:12; 227:10;236:17;256:2, 4,7,14
<b>acceptable (1)</b> 278:6	<b>admitted (6)</b> 133:13;134:19,21; 163:12;202:9;238:23	<b>allegedly (1)</b> 275:15	<b>appreciate (2)</b> 130:15;224:5	<b>associate (1)</b> 232:6
<b>access (4)</b> 146:3,6;148:2;154:6	<b>admission (3)</b> 134:10,12;281:9	<b>Alliance (6)</b> 127:19;130:9;136:3; 233:16;248:12;251:7	<b>appropriate (4)</b> 130:13;147:4; 192:11;273:13	<b>associated (1)</b> 239:12
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Thank you all so much.

Can you all let me know a good time to meet? Chris previously said that Tuesday might work?

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 15, 2020, at 8:13 PM, Sean J. Doyle <[sdoyle@wwta1017.org](mailto:sdoyle@wwta1017.org)> wrote:

Hello:

I've contacted both John Giovanelli and Ed Davis. They are both willing to provide testimony and realize that the timeframe is relatively short. Their contact information is as follows:

John Giovanelli  
World Languages Department Leader  
401-596-2166

Ed Davis  
DMS Industrial Technology Teacher / SIT subcommittee chair  
401-330-0797

They both also wish to be accompanied by Chris for representative support while they realize that they are not in any type of adverse position with the WWPS.

Sincerely,  
Sean

**From:** Aubrey Lombardo  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 15, 2020 10:46 AM  
**To:** Christopher Lambert ; Sean J. Doyle  
**Subject:** Witness Prep

Hi Chris and Sean,

Chris and I emailed a little bit about this, but I would like to meet with Ed David and John about being witnesses on 12/1, preferably this week sometime? Do you think we can make that happen? I can be flexible. We really need them for the non-renewal hearing and I want to firm things up.

Thanks.

<image002.jpg>

**Aubrey L. Lombardo**

Henneous Carroll Lombardo, LLC

155 South Main Street, Suite 406

Providence, RI 02903

401.424.5224

[alombardo@hcllawri.com](mailto:alombardo@hcllawri.com)

[www.hcllawri.com](http://www.hcllawri.com)

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