

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge at 7:05 PM. The following members were present:

Ms. Sylvia Wedge, Chair	Mrs. Terri Cortvriend, Clerk	Mrs. Marge Levesque
Mr. Richard Carpender, V. Chair	Mr. Jamie Heaney	Mr. Michael Buddemeyer

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Asst. Supt. Jermain, Ms. Christine Tague, Mrs. Patti Cofield, and Miss Julie MacDougall

Absent: Mr. Douglas Wilkey

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ms. Wedge announced a special program for parents called "Connect the Dots: What You Need To Know To Keep Your Teen Safe," that is being held on Thursday, February 28th, at 7:00 pm, in the Portsmouth High School Auditorium. Parents will learn about the legal aspects of the new social host law, drinking and driving, alcohol/drug use by our teens and their friends. They will also learn about prevention and how to work together with other parents, school officials, and law enforcement. The guest speakers are Attorney Cort Chappell, Portsmouth Chief of Police Lance Hebert, Parent and Educator Nancy Fitzgerald, and Athletic Director Mike Lunney. Ms. Wedge also announced that the PHS Gymnasium Appreciation Reception is being held on Friday, March 14th, at 5:00 PM, in the new gymnasium. The public is invited to attend.
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi mentioned that on the same evening as the Gym Appreciation Ceremony, there will be a Senior Auction and the play. Hathaway School was scheduled to have a SALT visit this week, unfortunately, Dr. Martin was notified that the team could not come due to some difficulties of some of the team members. It will be rescheduled as soon as possible. She thanked the wonderful staff for all their hard work in preparing for the visit. Dr. Lusi announced that she put out an online survey on the listserv regarding the school calendar and full-day kindergarten to obtain input from parents. We will let you know the results of the survey and will bring the calendar to you for approval in March. She announced that there have been a number of articles in the newspapers regarding staffing of municipal and school departments over the past few weeks. She thinks they should be very carefully read using critical thinking skills. She thought today's article was a blatant statement of the obvious. The reasons primarily that School Department salaries dwarfed the Town is because there are so many more employees in the school department. We are in difficult budget times, and this type of reporting is emotional, and we need to make sure we are comparing apples to apples.

Dr. Lusi stated that the School Committee and Administration met on February 13th with the Town Council in a workshop format to discuss the finances of the community as a whole. Mr. Driscoll outlined a set of assumptions and issues in a memo that was distributed at the

last meeting. Mr. Carpender stated that it was mostly on the Town side with very little having to do with the School Committee, except warrants. Mrs. Cortvriend stated that they also talked about the Performance Audit, which is supposed to come out some time in March.

- a) **Teaching and Learning:** Assistant Superintendent Jermain announced that the NECAP scores for Grade 11 will be published in tomorrow's newspaper. She explained that in the Reading/ELA area, 80 percent of our students showed proficiency; however, the Math portion was very low statewide. Proficiency was about 35 to 36 percent. The State average was 22 percent. Two of the other subcategories are the Special Needs population and students who qualify for "free and reduced" meals. Our goal is to have all students reach proficiency, and that is why we focus our professional development on the needs of the students in the classroom and the curriculum in the classroom. Mrs. Jermain will give a presentation on the NECAP scores at a future meeting. Dr. Lusi stated that this is the first year the NECAP tests were given in Grade 11.
- b) **Finance and Operations:** Ms. Tague reported that the School Committee received a copy of a letter from our Blue Cross/Blue Shield administrator regarding recently proposed legislation and the Governor's proposal to try to get a uniform health policy for municipalities. She stated that the GHGRI does not have a problem with this proposal as long as the community saves money; however, they are doing quite well as a collaborative.
- c) **High School Liaison:** Miss Julie MacDougall announced that the Class of 2008 is holding a Silent Action on Friday, March 14th. The performance of Cinderella will also take place that evening. The students are holding a Variety Show on April 10th, and Fashion Show on May 15th. She congratulated the National Honor Society for raising \$17,000 for St. Jude's Children's Hospital. She announced that Portsmouth High School is Number 1 high school contributor in the country.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2008, meeting. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 5-0-1. Mr. Buddemeyer abstained due to his absence from that meeting. The minutes of the January 22, 2008, and February 12, 2008, meetings were withdrawn from the agenda and will be presented at a future meeting.

4. BUSINESS AGENDA

- a) **Rescission of Teacher Non-Renewal.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to rescind the non-renewal of Teacher 14, as presented. Dr.

Lusi stated that Teacher 14 holds another type of teaching certificate, so she should have been displaced because she has more seniority than other individuals in the system in that other area. You are moving this teacher from a layoff to a displacement. So voted 6-0.

- b) **Non-Renewals/Displacements/Terminations.** Dr. Lusi announced that all teachers have received their notification letters, and Carroll Feather, President of NEA, was notified. She stated that the School Department has to make layoff decisions prior to completing their budget; and pursuant to Rhode Island law, the notices must be delivered in writing to allow the School Committee to make decisions before March 1st. She announced that this is a pre-deprivation hearing, and by law, the affected individuals have a right to make a public statement. Individuals affected, or their union representatives, may make a statement if they want to be heard. The individuals affected are not listed by name in the agenda, and they do not have to be publicly announced until such time as their position has been formally terminated, which is at the end of the school year. Dr. Lusi requested that if anyone wanted to make a public statement, it was their choice; however, the School Committee has made the decision to keep the anonymity of the individuals until June. She also asked that everyone should refrain from mentioning teachers' names.

Dr. Lusi said that she had delivered notices to the individuals affected and that she had prepared the report in the ordinary course of business. She replied Yes.

- 1) **Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpenter and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend that the teaching contract of Teacher 34 not be renewed on June 17, 2008, or the last day of the 2007-08 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to declining enrollment and the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department's 2008-09 budget. If there is a reduction, the School Committee will have to reorganize programs, eliminate positions, and consolidate classrooms in order to operate within the total budget allocation for school operations. As a result of this reorganization and consolidation, this position may be eliminated or senior teachers may opt for a position in this area of certification. So voted 6-0. No comments from public.
- 2) **Teacher Displacements.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpenter and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend that the teaching contract of Teachers 14 and 33 be eliminated on June 17, 2008, or the last day of the 2007-08 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to declining enrollment and the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department's 2008-09 budget. As a result of this, these teachers will be displaced and will be placed on the involuntary transfer list to retain rights to their current position at their current school. So voted 6-0. No comments from public.

- 3) **Teacher Non-Renewal/Termination.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend that the teaching contract of Teacher 35, not be renewed on June 17, 2008, or the last day of the 2007-08 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is the desire of the School Department to re-open the position to seek a larger pool of more qualified candidates. As a non-tenured teacher, he/she is free to reapply for the position once it is advertised. So voted 6-0.
- c) **Approval of Proposed Policy #4111.3 Family Medical Leave Act, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mr. Carpender to approve the proposed revisions to Policy #4111.3, Family Medical Leave Act, as a first reading. Ms. Tague explained that this is a policy that is consistent with federal law. She stated that Mr. Updegrove suggested we establish a policy into so that we have something in writing. Mr. Carpender stated that FMLA has been revised for individuals who have served in IRAQ and their spouses. Ms. Tague stated that the items on the policy are examples only and that there are several more that were not highlighted. Ms. Tague stated that we have a packet that we send to employees to notify them of their rights, and it includes many more examples. Mr. Heaney asked if teachers qualify for FMLA due to the length of time each year. Dr. Lusi suggested that the Committee passes this as a first reading, and we would look into it further. So voted 6-0.
- d) **Report on Medicaid Receipts and Approval of Transfer of Funds.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the transfer of \$120,000 of Medicaid receipts for use as revenue for the 2007-08 operating budget. So voted 6-0.

5. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Finance:** Mr. Carpender stated that there is a meeting tonight to discuss administration. The next meeting will be held on Thursday at 6:00 PM at the PHS Library to discuss technology and curriculum. A meeting had been scheduled on March 4th to discuss elementary schools' budgets; on March 11th to discuss the PMS budget; and on the March 13th to discuss the high school budget.
- b) **Policy:** No report.
- c) **Gymnasium Construction Oversight Committee (GCOC):** No report.
- d) **Facilities:** Mr. Buddemeyer stated that the first meeting is scheduled for tomorrow night at 6:00 PM at the PHS Library.

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to adjourn the meeting. So voted 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk