

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge at 5:33 PM. The following members were present:

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

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Asst. Supt. Jermain, Christine Tague, Patti Cofield

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Job Performance/Personnel Matters. So voted 6-0.

Public Session recessed at 5:33 and resumed at 7:24 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ms. Wedge announced that an Executive Session was held at 5:30 PM on a personnel matter, and no votes were taken. Ms. Wedge also announced that Item a) on the Business Agenda was removed
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi welcomed everyone to the meeting. She distributed a revision to Policy #4133, Travel Reimbursement - Private Vehicles, and announced that the Policy Committee had reviewed and approved the changes. It will be brought forward at the next meeting for approval.

Dr. Lusi announced that the Administrators' Retreat will be held this Thursday and Friday at the Hampton Inn and Conference Center, compliments of Mr. Buddemeyer. She also announced that Staff Orientation will be held Friday, August 29th, at 8:00 AM at the PHS Auditorium, and the Committee is welcome to attend. Following the orientation, the teachers will return to their buildings for school-based activities. The first day of school is Tuesday, September 2nd.

Dr. Lusi alerted the Committee that the State released the school accountability standings, and they will be announced in tomorrow's newspaper. She stated that the state is no longer using the rankings of high performing, moderately performing, or low performing. Instead, they are indicating whether or not we are meeting AYP (adequate yearly progress). Unfortunately for us, if a school misses even one target this year, it does not meet AYP. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education has stated that a school cannot appeal its rating to the Commissioner, even if only one target was missed by a very small amount. Three of our schools missed one of their multiple performance targets and consequently did not meet AYP: Elmhurst, students with IEPs in English Language Arts (ELA); Melville, student attendance; PMS, students with IEPs in ELA. Hathaway and PHS did meet AYP.

- a) **Teaching and Learning:** Assistant Superintendent Jermain explained our results of the school accountability standings. She stated that the Melville situation is a data reporting and practice issue; and the targets were missed in ELA by a very small margin at Elmhurst and PMS. Mr. Carpenter stated that the Director of Assessment, Mary Ann Snyder, indicated in a letter that an absence of this label does not mean a reduction in performance. The RI Department of Education requested from the US Department of Education that there be a process for schools that missed one target by a small amount to appeal, however, the US Department of Education denied the request.

Mrs. Jermain also reported that a “report card” committee has been meeting over the spring and summer. Teachers have found that there is a lot of review being done during the first quarter, so they have been working on a trimester report card and will present a draft next week. Teachers will also be trained in online report cards. Mrs. Jermain stated that a lot of curriculum work is being done in the areas of literacy and math, and the virtualization process is beginning at Melville. She announced that the phones at the Administration Building crashed today, and a more efficient system is being installed immediately. The implementation had been scheduled to take place tomorrow anyway. With the new system, we won’t be charged for calls within the district.

- b) **Finance and Operations:** Ms. Tague reported that we are trying to realign the budget that was approved by the Town Council. She will bring it to the Committee for approval in the near future. She is also waiting on the Newport County Regional Assessment. She announced that we have a new audit firm onboard, Brower and Associates, and they are interviewing staff regarding internal controls that are in place.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Carpenter made a motion to approve the minutes of the meetings held June 10, 2008; June 24, 2008; and July 15, 2008. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) **Teacher Resignation.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation of Kristin White, part-time Art Teacher at Elmhurst School, effective immediately.”
- b) **Appt. – Modern Language Teacher, F/T, PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee affirms the Superintendent’s appointment, Recommendation #1-8/19/08, to the position of Modern Language Teacher (Portuguese/Spanish), full-time, at Portsmouth Middle School, effective August 29, 2008.”

- c) **Appt. – Reading Teacher, P/T, PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #2-8/19/08, to the position of Reading Teacher, part-time, at Portsmouth High School, for the 2008-09 school year."
- d) **Appt. – Art Teacher, P/T, Elmhurst.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #3-8/19/08, to the position of Art Teacher, .6 time, at Elmhurst School, for the 2008-09 school year."
- e) **Approval of Requests for Permission to Home School.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee approves the requests to provide home schooling for the 2008-09 school year for students HS#2 through 11-8/08, as listed in the confidential memo dated August 8, 2008, in accordance with the provisions of R.I. Law 16-19-2."

Mr. Carpender made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.

Dr. Lusi announced the following appointments:

- b) Mrs. Susana Louro – Modern Language Teacher, F/T, PHS
- c) Ms. Kimberly Hancock – Reading Teacher, P/T, PHS, Step 5 + Masters
- d) Ms. Katelyn Guignard – Art Teacher, P/T, Elmhurst, Step 1

5. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Discussion re Prudence Island Transportation.** This item was removed from the agenda.
- b) **Agenda Item Request – Waiver to Policy #6301 Home Schooling.** This item was requested by Mr. Avery Seaman, Jr., of 289 Freeborn Street. He asked for a waiver to School Department Policy #6301 regarding participation in extra-curricular activities so his son, Chad Seaman, could play on the PHS soccer team. Chad will be a senior at School One, which is an alternative high school in Providence, this year; and School One does not offer an interscholastic sports program. Mr. Seaman stated that Chad has played soccer for most of his life and plays soccer on a travel team. He hopes a year of high school soccer will round out his college applications. He stated that the Principal of School One pointed out to him that the Rhode Island Interscholastic League allows a private school student to play on a public school team under certain circumstances and if both principals agree to it. However, under Portsmouth Policy #6301, the last sentence states that students attending private schools cannot participate. Mr. Carpender explained that the reason for the last sentence was for private school students who have

sports at their schools to not be allowed to play here. He asked Mr. Littlefield how we ensure that our criteria are met for participation. Mr. Littlefield stated that there are a number of issues that would have to be met because we monitor our students' academic progress, attendance, and behavior, and we have a number of rules in our Athletic Department and our school on how athletes behave; and he wasn't sure how we would give a student who is not in our school the same scrutiny. He thinks it would be difficult but not impossible. He stated that the Rhode Island Interscholastic League amended this rule because there were charter schools and alternative schools, primarily in the urban setting, that were cropping up, so they made the provision that schools may accept students from private schools that are less than 400 students and do not have their own athletics. However, Portsmouth policy would preclude that. He said he would be hesitant to grant waivers for athletes who are not students of our school that are not kept to the same level of scrutiny. Ms. Wedge asked about liability for this student if he rides our buses. Ms. Tague stated that if we allow him to play, we would be liable under our umbrella policy. Ms. Wedge stated that we should support athletics in our town. Mr. Carpender asked if there is a way for us to grant a waiver to our policy and then contact the principal of School One to develop a plan for the future. Mr. Buddemeyer suggested a weekly progress report from School One to us. Mr. Seaman passed out the policy that indicates what the other principal needs to send to our principal. Mr. Littlefield stated that Portsmouth has adopted far more stringent policies than the Rhode Island Interscholastic League has. He stated that he spoke with the administrator of School One, and this is not foreign to them. They had a student who played field hockey in Cumberland, and they had a different policy than Portsmouth. He stated that if it is the wish of the School Committee to grant a waiver, he would certainly do whatever he could to make it happen while at the same time maintaining the standards of Portsmouth High School. Mrs. Levesque thinks that Portsmouth High School students should have the first shot at spots on the team. She said if we do grant the waiver and put something in place, she thinks it would be the other principal's responsibility to provide the information in a timely manner. She also thinks we should have something acknowledged by the student and parents that they will conform to our rules. Mr. Heaney disagreed with Mrs. Levesque's assessment and doesn't think that PHS students should have the first crack. He stated that this student is a citizen of Portsmouth, and although PHS may not be the optimum place for him to learn, he thinks it is our duty to provide a sports team for the town. Mr. Heaney does agree, however, that we need to hold him to the same standards of our own students. Mr. Buddemeyer agreed with Mr. Heaney. He also agreed with Mr. Littlefield about granting waivers and with Ms. Wedge about supporting athletics. Mr. Buddemeyer would like to revisit the policy but not establish a waiver for one case. Mr. Heaney stated that it seems that the policy is out of date, so in this instance we may need to provide a waiver in order to bring it up to date. Dr. Lusi stated that she is ambivalent. She agrees with everything that has been said by the School Committee to some degree. She believes she heard that Chad is a premiere soccer player, so this is not his only option

to play. She also heard that he wants to round out his college application. She asked Mr. Littlefield how many students try out and how many get to play. She stated that if our goal is to win, then we want to consider this; however, if our goal is to give as many students as possible to participate, she was conflicted. Mr. Littlefield stated that it varies from year to year; and they have made cuts on the varsity team in the past, and those students get to play on the junior varsity team. He stated that 11 students can play on the field at one time; however, there is no set number of spots on a team. Ms. Wedge asked Mr. Seaman if this is Chad's only chance to play varsity sports, and Mr. Seaman stated that School One has a relationship with Providence Country Day school but only up through junior varsity soccer. Mr. Heaney stated that there are certain criteria colleges look at, and it would hurt his chances of playing college soccer if he isn't involved in varsity soccer. Mr. Carpenter respectfully disagreed with Mr. Heaney that we should take someone from another school over someone on our own team. He feels it should be on a space-available basis. Mr. Littlefield suggested that if it is the wish of the School Committee to grant a waiver and that the waiver be worded to say that this young man would have the same status as a home school student, then we would apply the policy as we would a home-school student, providing there is space, and accommodate this student. A Portsmouth resident, Mr. Wroblewski, stated that he worked on the language of Policy #6301 eleven years ago when Mr. Carpenter and Mrs. Levesque were on the Committee, and he recommended that the Committee not do anything with this policy.

Mr. Carpenter made a motion that the School Committee grants a waiver to that portion of Policy #6301 that states, "Students attending private or parochial schools shall not be eligible for inclusion under the provisions of this policy for Chad Seaman, for the 2008 Soccer Season, while details of guaranteeing PHS participation policies are followed and while Policy #6301 is reviewed to determine possible rewording or writing a second policy, and that he be treated as a Home Schooled student." Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. Mr. Littlefield stated that if it is the wish of the School Committee, then he will make it work by communicating with the principal of School One to make sure that we've got the assurance of the regular scrutiny of attendance, behavior, and academic progress that we give our own students. Mr. Carpenter asked Mr. Littlefield to let the School Committee know how it worked when it's done. Mrs. Levesque stated that she is going to vote against this because this student made a choice to go to School One, and it is not fair to the PHS students. The motion passed 5-1. Mrs. Levesque was opposed.

- c) **Progress Report on Implementation of Berkshire Performance Audit.** Dr. Lusi offered to go through the Implementation Report line-by-line, but the Committee didn't feel it was necessary. Dr. Lusi stated that overall, we are on track. We were able to implement some of the items through the budget that was passed, but we still need to work on funding for library books and textbooks. She announced the items that have already been accomplished. Mr. Carpenter stated that at the last meeting, six items were completed and nineteen were in progress. Dr. Lusi stated that work has been ongoing on

those items in progress. Dr. Lusi stated that moving forward, she would provide a timeline or summary page on the status of the items. The Committee agreed to both.

- d) **Rescission of Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to rescind the teacher non-renewals as presented. So voted 6-0.
- e) **Bid Award – Facilities Study.** Mr. Buddemeyer reported on the RFQ process for the Facilities Study. He stated that four companies bid on the RFQ, and they were then ranked by a point system that was established from the nine tasks contained in the RFQ. From this ranking, the Facilities Committee took the two companies with the top scores and had them bid on the 5-Year Plan project. The two companies then submitted dollar bids for the cost of the project. The Facilities Committee broke each one down into the most cost effective for the school system. Once this was done, they had the most qualified responder meet with them and run down each point of their proposal for better understanding of the process and cost factors. Mr. Buddemeyer made a motion that the School Committee grants \$51,000 to enter into a contract with RGB for the development of a 5-year plan. Seconded by Mr. Carpender. Ms. Tague stated that the school facility reimbursement won't come in for about two year, and this cost of this study is an unbudgeted variance. However, she also stated that we've received \$11,000, our first installment of state aid from the gambling funds. Mr. Buddemeyer stated that our buildings are in the late stage of decay. We have to do this as a first step if we want to approach the state for additional housing aid for future projects.. The motion passed 6-0.
- f) **Bid Award – Grounds Maintenance.** Mr. Carpender asked if this contract covered the Town as well, and Ms. Tague replied that it does not. Mr. Carpender made a motion to award the 3-year contract for grounds maintenance to DaPonte in the amount of \$231,552. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.
- g) **Bid Award – Snow Removal.** Mr. Carpender made a motion to award the contract for snow removal 2-year contract be awarded to Aquidneck Construction in the amount of \$90, \$95, and \$110 depending on equipment. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.
- h) **On-Call Bid Awards.** Mr. Carpender made a motion to award the contracts for on-call contractor services as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 6-0. Ms. Tague thanked Mr. Davidson for his hard work over the past 13 months.
- i) **Ratification of Letter of Intent to Award Fuel Oil Contract.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to ratify the Letter of Intent to award contract for fuel oil to the Brennan Oil Company. So voted 6-0. Ms. Tague stated that

this was bid on both variable and fixed rates, and we went with the fixed rate. We budgeted a 30 percent increase for this year. We will be paying \$3.40 per gallon, which is \$1.13 more than we paid last year. We used approximately 53,000 gallons of oil last year. Ms. Tague stated that we have a projected negative variance of \$18,000 this year. Dr. Lusi stated that this bid was done through the East Bay Collaborative so that we could be more competitive.

- j) **Report on Medicaid Receipts and Approval of Transfer of Funds.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to transfer \$200,000 of Medicaid receipts for use as revenue for the 2008-09 operating budget. So voted 6-0.
- k) **Approval of Policies Reviewed by Policy Subcommittee.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mr. Carpender to approve the unchanged policies listed in the backup and adopt them as presented. So voted 6-0.
- l) **Approval of Policy #5131 – Student Transportation Services, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the proposed changes to Policy #5131, Student Transportation Services, as a first reading. So voted 6-0.
- m) **Approval of Policy #5131.1 – Student Transportation Services, Walkers and Riders, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the proposed changes to Policy #5131.1, Student Transportation Services, Walkers and Riders, as a first reading.” So voted 6-0.
- n) **Approval of Policy #5131.2 – School Bus Code, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the proposed changes to Policy #5131.2, School Bus Code, as a first reading. So voted 6-0.
- o) **Approval of Policy #5131.3 – Transportation Guidelines, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend to approve the proposed changes to Policy #5131.3, Transportation Guidelines, as a first reading. So voted 6-0.
- p) **Approval of Policy #5131.4 – Video Cameras on School Buses, 1st Reading.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and seconded by Mr. Carpender to approve the proposed changes to Policy #5131.4, Video Cameras on School Buses, as a first reading. So voted 6-0.

6. **SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

- a) **Finance.** No report.

- b) **Policy.** Mrs. Levesque will be scheduling another meeting in September.
- c) **GCOC.** Mrs. Cortvriend stated that the work on the fitness center is nearly complete. However, it may not be ready for the start of school.
- d) **Facilities.** No further report.

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mr. Buddemeyer to adjourn the meeting. So voted 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk