

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 PM by the Chairman, Mr. Carpender, and the following members were present:

Mr. Richard Carpender, Chair
Ms. Sylvia Wedge, Vice Chair

Mrs. Marge Levesque, Clerk
Mr. Michael Buddemeyer
Mrs. Angela Volpicelli

Mrs. Marilyn King
Mrs. Cynthia Perrotti

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

A motion was made by Ms. Wedge 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, (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation. So voted 7-0.

Public Session recessed at 6:46 PM and resumed at 7:02 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Mr. Carpender announced that an Executive Session was held prior to this meeting. Ms. Wedge made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0. Ms. Wedge made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0. Ms. Wedge made a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0. Mr. Carpender announced that the RIPEC presentation on regionalization will be given by Mr. Simmons on Wednesday, September 23rd, at 7:00 PM, the Town Hall. The public will be allowed to ask questions. Mr. Carpender announced that starting at the next meeting, he will add a 20-minute public comment section at the beginning of the meeting. There will be a 2-minute limit per individual about anything that they are concerned with or would like to commend. It is not meant for individuals to circumvent the agenda. There will be a sign-up sheet, and there will be no discussion from the committee, just public comment. During Public Comment, the public cannot talk about personnel or individual employee issues or student issues. Mrs. Melvin applauded the School Committee for opening up communications.
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi announced that Portsmouth High School hosted the Commissioner's Review Team today. The purpose of the visit was to review progress in implementation of the State PBGRs, with particular focus on personalization and proficiency. The team met with Central Office and school administration, teachers, students, and representatives of PMS. They looked in particular at ILP process implementation and development of diploma assessments. We hope to get final feedback on the visit in January. Dr. Lusi attended the NESDEC Board of Directors meeting and Fall meeting of NEASS last Thursday and Friday. The focus of the NEASS meeting was on regional approaches and regionalization. There was a very clear focus of discussion in every New England state with a number of variations. The speakers made the point that parties needed to make sure to account for transition costs and also recurring cost increases with examples of salaries and transportation. They also discussed the need for openness to regional and other models of educational delivery. Dr. Lusi reiterated Mr. Carpender's announcement that the RIPEC

report will be presented tomorrow night at the Town Hall. The next meeting of the Aquidneck Island Group will be held on Monday, September 28th. Dr. Lusi stated that she hopes to have information from the Department of Health on school-based H1N1 immunization clinics within the next couple of weeks. Parental consent is required, and it is a voluntary program. Dr. Lusi distributed the draft rubbish and recycling bid as partial response to an agenda item request from Mrs. Perrotti. Missing are the detailed sheets on the number of dumpsters, frequency of pick-ups, etc.

a) Teaching and Learning: Assistant Superintendent Jermain stated that the literacy team has been very involved with classroom teachers setting up their routines. They have also done online pre-screening, using Gates test to screen all of our students in Grades 5-11 on reading ability and comprehension. Results indicate any loss of learning over the summer. The purpose is to be proactive, so we can intervene in students' learning, so they don't need to be referred for special services. The Literacy Team also looked at the Strategic Plan draft, and Denise Dvorak is mapping out some draft work plans. Mrs. Jermain stated that she attended the Open Houses at Melville and PMS, and both went very well. She reported that PMS is implementing a robotics curriculum in Grades 6-8. It used to be an after-school program but is now part of our curriculum. We are reaching out and working more with NUWC and Lee Fenton, who works with the regional robotics team. It is becoming very popular, is very important to the regular academics in the classroom, and engages children more in science and math. Mrs. Jermain also attended the Dana Institute Math Training. Portsmouth participates as an open session group, and there are 12 sessions. The group worked on gap analysis back in May. Last week's session was on alignment, looking at the standards and what we are teaching in the classroom. Mrs. Jermain has been asked to sit on the Commissioner's Review Team. The team is particularly focused on Race to the Top and bringing in more grant money for the state. She announced that all of our teachers are receiving training on iParent and School Center. We currently have iParent at PMS, and it will be coming to the high school shortly. Last Thursday, Mrs. Jermain attended the Rhode Island Healthy Breakfast meeting. The following Portsmouth Middle School students were asked to perform a skit before hundreds of people who were there: Andrew DeSanto, Andreas Evangelatos, Chrissy Hall, Peter Lowen, Megan Steen, and Zachary Wyatt. These students were chosen because some of our Health and Wellness members were impressed with what they do. Their Student Advisory Committee is very concerned with what is being served in the cafeteria and the importance of vitamins and healthy eating. These students are also members of the morning fitness club, run by teachers Kathy Arent and Leslie Choinski. Mrs. Melvin inquired about Open Circle. Mrs. Jermain stated that Open Circle is a plan we have had for at least four years in our district. It is a social-emotional competency program, for the elementary school level.

b) Finance and Operations: No report.

c) High School Liaison: Absent.

Dr. Lusi stated that the September 3rd minutes were being postponed. The approval of the Prudence Island Lease and the bid award for the high school windows were also being postponed.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The September 3, 2009, minutes were withdrawn from the agenda. Mrs. Perrotti submitted a list of three items to the Chair and asked that they be added to the August 18, 2009, minutes. Mr. Carpender stated that minutes are an overview of a meeting and are not verbatim. The meetings are recorded, and DVDs are available for purchase in the Clerk's Office. Dr. Lusi stated that our attorney advised us against producing verbatim minutes. Mr. Carpender stated that he would take it to a vote, but if anyone wants to see verbatim discussion, they can watch the DVD. Mrs. Perrotti made a motion to amend the minutes to add her three points. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. The motion failed 3-4. Mrs. Perrotti, Mrs. King, and Ms. Volpicelli were in favor. A motion was made by Ms. Wedge and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2009, meeting. So voted 4-3. Mrs. Perrotti, Mrs. King, and Ms. Volpicelli were opposed.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) **Requests for Leave of Absence.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee approves the request for Family and Medical Leave in accordance with the backup information."
- b) **Appt. – Clerk, Category B, Hathaway.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, "that the Committee affirms the Superintendent's appointment, Recommendation #1-9/22/09, to the position of Clerk, Category B, at Hathaway School, effective September 10, 2009."
- c) **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 2009-10 school year for students HS#19 through 20-9/09, as listed in the confidential memo dated September 16, 2009, in accordance with the provisions of R.I. Law 16-19-2."

A motion was made by Ms. Wedge and seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0. Dr. Lusi announced the appointment of Mrs. Pat Wentzel to the position of Clerk, Category B, at Hathaway School.

5. BUSINESS AGENDA

- a) **Approval of Prudence Island School Lease.** This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

- b) **Agenda Item Request – Skate Park.** Requested by John McDaid. The School Committee implied approval of the request of the ad-hoc Skate Park Committee to work with the administration to evaluate possible locations for a town skate park on school department property. Further considerations include ensuring that the School Department is not responsible for supervision or maintenance of the park and ensuring liability coverage.
- c) **Ratification of PSAA and Council 94 Contracts.** Mr. Carpender explained that the ratification of the PSAA and Council 94 contracts was as a result of the agreement with NEA to give step increases. Both PSAA and Council 94 submitted letters asking the School Committee and Administration to re-examine their contracts, in light of the fact that they agreed to take zero increases. After the NEA contract was approved, PSAA and Council 94 asked us to consider giving step increases to their members who qualified for a step increase (there are four individuals in Council 94 and one individual in PSAA). The total cost of the step increases is \$7,356.93. It was discussed that since the teachers received their step increase, it is only fair that these five individuals get their step increase and that passing this motion would restore the step increase that was removed from the contract in the spring. Financial statements were distributed when the contracts were ratified in their entirety. A motion was made by Ms. Wedge to ratify the PSAA and Council 94 contracts. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 4-3. Mrs. Perrotti, Mrs. King, and Ms. Volpicelli were opposed.
- d) **Technology Plan Presentation and Update regarding Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).** Assistant Superintendent Jermain introduced our IT Director, Rose Muller, and our Technology Integration Specialist, Gail Darmody. She stated that the purpose for bringing the plan to the Committee was for approval and to share with everyone what work has been done, what will be done, what we need in the future. Mrs. Muller began the presentation by explaining the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) to the School Committee. She stated CIPA is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-rate program – a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety/acceptable use policy and technology protection measures in place. Schools and libraries must also certify that, as part of their Internet safety policy, they are educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including cyber-bullying awareness and response and interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms. Mrs. Muller and Mrs. Darmody continued with a Powerpoint presentation of the Technology Plan, which was developed over the past year with input from the district and the public. The following topics were reviewed: Portsmouth Technology Goals, the Technology Plan Outline, Engaging the Entire Community, Technology Policy Development, Technology Integration in the Classroom, Professional Development Strategies,

Equipment Acquisition and Budgeting, Promoting Equity and Access, and Evaluating Instructional Uses and Impact on Student Achievement. A motion was made by Ms. Wedge to accept the technology plan and CIPA. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0.

- e) **Bid Award – PHS Windows.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee awards the alternate contract for window replacement at Portsmouth High School as presented.” This item was removed from the agenda.
- f) **Approval of Final Payment on PHS Gym Mezzanine.** A motion was made by Ms. Wedge to approve the payment of Invoice #5 in the amount of \$2,000 to Alhambra Building Company as final payment on the PHS gym mezzanine project. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0. The total cost of the mezzanine project was \$412,270.
- g) **Approval of Resolution re Mandatory Binding Arbitration on Monetary Matters for Teachers.** Mr. Carpender read the resolution into the record as follows:

WHEREAS, Current state law does not provide for mandatory binding arbitration on monetary matters for school teachers; and

WHEREAS, Payroll cost is the largest single expenditure in school budgets; and

WHEREAS, Mandatory binding arbitration would undermine SB 3050 and would force municipalities into non-compliance with SB 3050; and

WHEREAS, Taxpayers are already burdened by state mandates; and

WHEREAS, Property taxes in Rhode Island are among the highest in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Mandatory binding arbitration would take away from elected local officials the ability to control the biggest component of local budgets; and

WHEREAS, Mandatory binding arbitration does not prevent work to rule or other union job actions.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Portsmouth School Committee is opposed to mandatory binding arbitration on monetary matters for teachers; and be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to every City and Town Council and School Committee, every State Senator and State Representative, and Governor Carcieri.

Mr. Carpender stated that other committees have approved this resolution. It is what Senator Levesque’s legislation morphed into. The concern that exists is that binding arbitration takes away our own ability to look at our budgets or raise the levy in our community and puts it in the hands of an arbitrator who could make an award that exceeds our ability to pay. One of the problems with previous legislation was that RIDE’s interpretation was if it stayed in place, teachers would still get their steps. As a result, if you couldn’t afford to give steps, you would have to cut programs. That morphed into this binding arbitration proposal. We are asking to oppose this legislation. Mr. Fitzmorris stated that he is in complete agreement, and the Portsmouth Concerned

Citizens and the Rhode Island Statewide Coalition fully support this resolution. A motion was made by Ms. Wedge to approve the resolution regarding mandatory binding arbitration on monetary matters. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0.

6. **SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

- a) **Facilities.** Mr. Buddemeyer announced that a meeting will take place on October 2nd with Dr. Lusi and RGB to discuss the next steps before we meet with RIDE.
- b) **Finance.** No report.
- c) **Health and Wellness.** Ms. Volpicelli announced that the next meeting will be held on Monday, October 5th. All programs in the schools are up and running. A full report will be given at our next meeting.
- d) **Policy.** Dr. Lusi stated that she and Mrs. Cofield met to review the policies, and a sub-committee meeting needs to be scheduled.

A motion was made by Ms. Wedge and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to adjourn the meeting. So voted 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for:

Mrs. Marjorie Levesque, Clerk