

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by the Chairman, Mr. Carpender, and the following members were present:

Mr. Richard Carpender, Chair	Mrs. Marge Levesque, Clerk	Mrs. Marilyn King
Ms. Sylvia Wedge, V. Chair	Mr. Michael Buddemeyer	Mrs. Cynthia Perrotti
	Ms. Angela Volpicelli	

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

A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and was seconded by Mrs. King to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exception (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation. So voted 7-0.

The Public Session recessed at 6:05 PM and resumed at 7:00 PM.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Mr. Carpender reported on the following:

- An Executive Session was held prior to this meeting on a motion made by Ms. Wedge and seconded by Mrs. Levesque. No motions were made, and no votes were taken. A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Wedge and was 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.

2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi reported on the following:

- Attended a Race to the Top meeting with Mrs. Jermain that the Commissioner put on last week. Working on Portsmouth's application which RIDE will review and provide comments.
- Enrollment update. We do not have our certified October 1st enrollment from the State yet; however, as of October 4th, we had 2,778 students in the systems. NESDEC projected 2,773. When the official October 1st report is available, Dr. Lusi will bring it forward.
 - a) Teaching and Learning: Asst. Supt. Jermain reported that NECAP testing is ongoing. This year we are implementing work that was completed in our first year of strategic planning: co-teaching tools, teacher evaluation system pilot, and 5-year curriculum re-view in all content areas. A lot of the work we are already doing greatly aligns with the initiatives of the transformation of education in Rhode Island. We are in very good shape.
 - b) Finance and Operations: Mr. Dunham stated that an application was submitted to the US Department of Health and Human Services, and we were successful. We will be participating in a \$5 billion program scheduled to last until July 1, 2014. It's a program for our retirees that we provide health insurance for and their spouses. If they

have claims between \$15,000 and \$90,000, we are eligible to receive up to 80 percent of the claim, if we submit an application to the Federal Government. These are for people who are 65 but are not eligible for Medicare.

c) High School Liaison: Absent.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Wedge to approve the minutes of the meeting held September 28, 2010. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 6-0-1. Ms. Volpicelli abstained due to her absence from that meeting.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a) **Teacher Resignation.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation of Cheryl DelSanto, Technology Education Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective October 12, 2010.”
- b) **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 2010-11 school year for students HS #23 and #24-10/10, as listed in the confidential memo dated October 4, 2010, in accordance with the provisions of R.I. Law 16-19-2.”

A motion was made by Ms. Wedge to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT**: Nothing.

6. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Agenda Item Request – Sponsor for PMSABC Basketball Tournament.** Dr. Lusi stated that she doesn’t see any issues with this request; however, School Department policy isn’t clear about seeking sponsorships. Mr. Carpender stated that in the past, the soccer tournament was sponsored by MetLife. Ms. Wedge made a motion to approve the request for a sponsor for the PMSABC basketball tournament. So voted 7-0.
- b) **Approval – Seeking Planning Grant for Science Academy at PHS.** Dr. Lusi stated that Mr. Croston brought this request forward a week ago. He would like to seek a planning grant from the Newport County Fund for a Science Academy at Portsmouth High School. The proposal is to explore and establish an AIM Academy at PHS, which would be open to students from across Newport County. It would build on our strong

work in the sciences, both in our school and community, with regard to Raytheon and the Naval Base, and the STEM initiatives. It is also a way to attract students and revenue from other communities, which is important in these challenging fiscal times. Mr. Croston stated that this project has been three years in the making. This is a Newport County effort. Little Compton and Tiverton have already expressed interest. The deadline for submission is Thursday. Dr. Lusi stated that Mrs. Jermain spoke with her colleagues in the other communities last week, and she reached out this week. Other Newport County communities are being encouraged to join. A motion was made by Ms. Wedge to approve seeking a planning grant for a Science Academy at PHS. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0.

- c) **Budget Approval.** Mr. Carpender explained that last Tuesday's budget referendum did not pass, meaning that the voters voted to not increase the School Department budget. Therefore, Ms. Wedge made a motion to approve an FY'10-11 budget of \$35,527,720, as appropriated by the Town Council. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0.

Item e) was addressed before Item d).

- e) **Approval – Deficit Reduction Plan.** Mr. Dunham explained the Deficit Reduction Plan 2010-2011 Operating Budget spreadsheet and the Structural Effect on the 2011-12 Operating Budget spreadsheet. He stated that this is a use of 1-time money, which will get us through this year but has a tremendous impact on next year. Mr. Carpender made it clear that the three 1-time revenues listed on the spreadsheet are monies we have been talking about for some time, not new-found monies; and our goal was to try to hold onto that to reduce a structural deficit going into the next year. He stated that this year, we are looking at a reduction in sports. He recommended for the School Committee's consideration that monies in the Gate Receipts account, which are monies received from different events, be moved to the athletic budget line items, enabling us to restore middle school and JV sports for this year. By policy, the Gate Receipt money is supposed to go to athletic expenditures; and right now, there is approximately \$50,000 in that account. He recommended that the School Committee uses that \$50,000 as a 1-time revenue, which would increase the revenue to \$430,000. He also recommended putting \$30,000 into art and music to have it for a longer period of time in the school year. Dr. Lusi stated that by reducing art and music to half year, it would save \$60,000. By doing Mr. Carpender's recommendation, we could offer three-quarters of a year of art and music; but she would need to look into how that would be scheduled. Mrs. Perrotti stated that the Gate Receipts money did not come up at the September 1st meeting. Dr. Lusi stated that by School Committee policy, Gate Receipts are reserved for athletic purposes only; and we were focusing on federal and state restricted funds. Dr. Lusi stated that the Gate receipts are restricted by School Committee policy as opposed to having to comply with state and/or federal requirements. She doesn't foresee any additional revenue, and she cautioned the School Committee that we could have unforeseen expenditures coming

down the pike. By adding that \$50,000, it adds another \$50,000 to the 1-time revenue. We would need to go to cap just to fill in the 1-time revenues. A motion was made to approve the deficit reduction plan with the recommended changes in place. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 6-1. Mrs. Perrotti was opposed.

- d) **Approval - Legal Notifications of Potential Deficit.** Mr. Carpender read a draft letter to the Town Council President regarding the potential deficit. The letter would serve as the School Committee's Corrective Action Plan consistent with R.I.G.L. 16-2-9(f), informing the Town of an anticipated shortfall in the FY2010-11 budget of \$765,301 resulting from the failed budget referendum of October 5th. As a result of the budget shortfall, the School Committee approved a deficit reduction plan. To implement the plan, the School Committee would be using \$430,000 of additional 1-time revenues in support of its FY2010-11 budget, as well as making \$335,301 in net budget reductions in the areas of materials and supplies, transportation, art and music, and contractual adjustments. The \$430,000 of additional 1-time revenues comes from Medicaid, fund balance, 2010 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funds, and the Athletic Gate Receipts account. Use of these funds will increase the bottom line of the School Department's budget to \$35,957,720. This increase, along with the budget reductions outlined, will bring the School Committee's FY2010-2011 budget into balance. The School Committee will vote the new bottom line budget at its meeting of October 26th. The use of the additional 1-time funds increases the School Department's projected revenue gap for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. The School Committee will request that the Auditor General review and approve this plan, in accordance with R.I.G.L. 16-2-9(f). Mr. Larry Fitzmorris, 50 Kristen Court, was concerned that the School Committee was adopting a deficit budget, which is not permitted by state law according to R.I.G.L. 16-2-21(c). Mr. Carpender stated that our legal counsel was consulted on this matter. Dr. Lusi read R.I.G.L. 16-2-9-25(f). Much discussion took place. Mr. Buddemeyer moved the question. Ms. Wedge made a motion to proceed with legal notifications of our potential deficit. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 6-0-1. Mrs. Perrotti abstained because she doesn't understand.
- f) **Approval – Entering Negotiations with Little Compton for Contract Renewal in 2012.** Dr. Lusi stated that our current contract with Little Compton goes through the 2011-12 school year. She read a letter from Little Compton's Superintendent, Kathryn Crowley, regarding their School Committee's desire to initiate a discussion with Portsmouth (and other neighboring districts) regarding educating their high school students. Mr. Carpender recommended putting together a separate committee to negotiate a contract. Ms. Wedge made a motion to inform Little Compton that we are interested in discussing contract renewal in the year 2012. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 7-0.
- g) **Revote of 6/22/10 Action Retaining Atty. Robinson for the Purpose of Investigating the Caruolo Process.** Mr. Carpender stated that a number of budget actions took place

on June 22, 2010. Following that meeting, an Open Meetings complaint was filed. The School Committee was not woeful or underhanded, but they determined that it needs to be revoted in public session. Mr. Buddemeyer made a motion to authorize Dr. Lusi to retain Attorney Robinson for the purpose of gathering information on the Caruolo process, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000. Seconded by Ms. Wedge. Mrs. Perrotti asked how much was expended. Dr. Lusi said little, but she would have to check the bills to give an exact amount. So voted 6-1. Mrs. Perrotti was opposed.

- h) **Update – Race to the Top.** Dr. Lusi stated that she and Mrs. Jermain attended a state-wide meeting last week on Race to the Top (RTTT). This plan, as Commissioner Gist has explained, is one of the key levers in realizing our State’s Strategic Plan as passed by the Board of Regents. The State’s Strategic Plan aligns very well with our own Strategic Plan. The key areas of RTTT are Standards & Curriculum, Instructional Improvement, Educator Effectiveness, Human-Capital Development, and School Transformation and Innovation. Mrs. Jermain stated that \$75 million is what is in the State’s Strategic Plan for RI. This will help us change ways we have always done things. Dr. Lusi stated that our initial estimate was to receive \$49,000 per year for 4 years, but it looks like it may be less than that now, so we are looking into it. The funds cannot be used to balance operational budgets. It is supposed to be short-term money that levers systemic change.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Facilities.** Mr. Buddemeyer reported that he, Dr. Lusi, and Mr. Dunham met with Steve Hughes from RGB last Thursday to review the Stage 1 submittal.
- b) **Finance.** No further report.
- c) **Health and Wellness.** Ms. Volpicelli reported that the first Health and Wellness Committee meeting of the 2010-11 school year was held on Monday, October 4th. The main focus of the meeting was the concern about baked goods being brought to school from home. The following resources and information have been shared by Carole Toselli and Karin Wetherill, both Healthy Schools Coordinators: Health and Wellness has been invited by RIDE to attend a 2-hour workshop that will help them understand how to qualify and apply for the Healthier Us School Challenge (HUSSC) award. Mary Joan McLarney, a national specialist from USDA, will provide easy to understand strategies and tools to achieve HUSSC goals. The event will be held on Wednesday, November 17th, at the CCRI Warwick Campus. Health and Wellness has also been invited to register for a 2-day free RI Department of Health Regional We Can! Training (with breakfast and lunch included) on November 3rd and 4th. We Can, which stands for “Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity and Nutrition,” is a fast-growing national movement of families and communities coming together to pro-mote healthy weight in children ages 8-13 through improved good choices and increased physical activity. A Got Breakfast? Foundation Silent Heroes grant has been established. This program encourages schools and non-profit organizations to expand the reach of underutilized child nutrition programs, most

notably the National School Breakfast Program. The program recognizes, encourages, and rewards those silent heroes who help children start their day off right by serving breakfast. The maximum award is \$5,000. Those eligible are public schools, non-profit public schools, and non-profit 501(c)3 organizations, particularly in the National School Breakfast program. The deadline to apply is October 15th. Plans for the coming year were discussed. The next meeting will be held on Monday, December 6th, at the Administration Building.

d) **Policy.** No report.

A motion was made by Ms. Wedge and was seconded by Mrs. Levesque to adjourn the meeting. So voted 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for:

Mrs. Marjorie Levesque, Clerk