

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by the Chair, Mrs. Perrotti, and the following members were present:

Cynthia Perrotti, Chair; Jonathan Harris, Vice Chair; Marilyn King, Clerk; David Croston, Thomas Vadney, Angela Volpicelli, and Sylvia Wedge

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

A motion was made by Mr. Harris to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Job Performance/Personnel Matters, and (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation. Seconded by Mrs. King. So voted 7-0.

The Public Session recessed at 6:30 PM and reconvened at 7:30 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Mrs. Perrotti reported on the following:

- An Executive Session was held at 6:30 PM, and no votes were taken. A motion was made by Mr. Harris to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Seconded by Mrs. King. So voted 7-0.
- Visited PHS last week.
- Our attorneys were consulted and the School Committee Chair does have the ability to appoint non-school committee members to subcommittees. Individuals were appointed to the Superintendent Search Subcommittee at the last School Committee meeting.
- Twelve students (5 juniors and 7 seniors) and one teacher are heading to Ghana from February 18-28. Five of the seniors are basing their senior projects on this trip.

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

- Welcomed teachers, students, and community members to the meeting.
- Congratulated Portsmouth High School seniors Anna Elleman and James Ryan for being selected as candidates for the Presidential Scholars Program.
- Attended a meeting of Aquidneck Island Group yesterday, along with three School Committee members. Discussion centered on regionalization or consolidation. No decisions are coming quickly. There was discussion about further educating the public about reports that have been done and choices that may face us going forward.
- Participated in the Basic Education Plan Performance Measures group on Thursday.
- A meeting on the new UCOA will be held on Friday. Dr. Lusi, Mr. Dunham, and Mrs. Jermain will attend.
- On the Business Agenda, would like to delay Item c) regarding the procedures to Policy #4111 to the March 8th meeting in order to have further discussions with our teachers. Item d) Discussion on Teacher Compensation is being withdrawn.

- a) Teaching and Learning: Assistant Superintendent Jermain reported on the following:
- Dana work continues in Science.
 - Will attend the Regents meeting on high school 3-tiered system and diploma system tomorrow.
 - A lot of Strategic Plan work is underway. The Kindergarten Design Committee met today to come up with a work plan and design for full-day kindergarten in Portsmouth.
- b) Finance and Operations: Mr. Dunham reported on the following:
- The first Finance Subcommittee meeting was held last Thursday. The purpose was to give an overview of the budget. Dates for future meetings need to be established. All information from the Finance Subcommittee meetings will be available on our website.
- c) High School Liaison: Madison Burns reported on the following:
- Two presentations to the Little Compton community were given at PHS yesterday. Mr. Littlefield did a presentation, and students from both Portsmouth and Little Compton gave their perspective. Tours were given to the Little Compton community. They were especially impressed with the Science and Art Departments and the gym. Very positive feedback was received.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to approve the minutes of the meeting held January 11, 2011, and January 18, 2011. So voted 7-0.

4. SPOTLIGHT

- a) 2011 RI Scholastic Art Gold & Silver Key Awards – PHS. A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to commend the following Portsmouth High School students for their accomplishments in the 2011 RI Scholastic Arts Competition: So voted 7-0.
- Sylvia Magleby: American Visions Gold Key Award – Photography (Teacher Rose Escobar); Gold Key Portfolio Award
 - Chaz Aracil: Silver Key Award – Drawing (Teacher Mel Johnson)
 - Amy Komm: Silver Key Award – Drawing (Teacher Mel Johnson)
 - Roger Wilkie: Silver Key Award – Drawing (Teacher Mel Johnson)
 - Grace Perkins: Silver Key Award – Painting (Teacher (Mel Johnson)
 - Lexi Muir: Silver Key Award – Digital Art (Teacher Rose Escobar)
 - Oliver Gill: Silver Key Award – Photography (Teacher Nancy Brandley)

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Donna V. Combra, Grade 2 Teacher at Melville School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.
- b) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Susan Corseri, Speech Language Pathologist at Melville School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.
- c) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Michael Medeiros, Health and Physical Education Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.
- d) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Robert Rutkiewicz, Science Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.
- e) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Denise M. Webster, Special Education Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.
- f) **Teacher Resignation.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation of Deborah Gaines, Grade 8 Math Teacher at Portsmouth Middle School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.
- g) **Teacher Resignation.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation of Thomas Siemel, part-time computer teacher at Portsmouth Middle School, effective with the last day of the 2010-11 school year.
- h) **Request 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.”

A motion was made by Mr. Harris to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Mrs. King. So voted 7-0.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

7. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **PMS Presentation on Statistics, Program Information, and Course of Study.** Mr. Amaral and Mr. Arruda, along with Denise Dvorak, Kristin Borges, Lisa Mello, Christine Homen, Michelle Michno, Lisa Freeman, Lisa Pita, and Mary Surber, gave an informative presentation on the statistics, program information, and course of study at PMS.
- b) **Non-Renewals/Displacements/Terminations.** Dr. Lusi stated that Rhode Island Law requires that the School Department notifies the teachers of the potential non-renewal of their contracts. A copy of the list of teachers was given to the Teachers' Union representatives. She hopes the School Department can rescind as many of these non-renewals as possible. Pursuant to Rhode Island Law, the names of teachers who are non-renewed are not public and do not become public until the actual termination. They will be reported out in numeration only. Dr. Lusi explained the types of non-renewals and displacements and stated that the recommendations would be read into the record. If anyone desired to be heard on an issue, they were to address the Committee after the Committee made a motion on the recommendations. Comments would be allowed at the end, but no identifiable criteria would be allowed.
- **Long-term Substitute Teacher Non-Renewals.** Dr. Lusi recommended that the long-term assignments of Substitute Teachers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 formally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that these substitutes have not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus are not eligible for continuous employment. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.
 - **Teacher Non-Renewals (Part-Time – less than 135 days).** Dr. Lusi recommended that the teaching contract of Teacher 10 not be renewed on June 22, 2011, or the last day of the 2010-11 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that these teachers were appointed to a position for less than the equivalent of 135 full days. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.
 - **Teacher Non-Renewals (1-Year Appointments).** Dr. Lusi recommended that the teaching contract of Teachers 11 and 12 not be renewed on June 22, 2011, or the last day of the 2010-11 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that these teachers were appointed to fill 1-year positions. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.

- **Teacher Non-Renewals (Budget).** Dr. Lusi recommended that the teaching contract of Teachers 13, 14, and 15 not be renewed on June 22, 2011, or the last day of the 2010-11 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department's 2011-12 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, these positions may be eliminated. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.
- **Teacher Non-Renewals (Budget and Programmatic).** Dr. Lusi recommended that the teaching contracts of Teachers 16, 17, 18, and 19 not be renewed on June 22, 2011, or the last day of the 2010-11 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department's 2011-12 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. In addition, the current program in which these teachers are teaching may be reconstituted and/or eliminated beginning with the 2011-12 academic year to improve the educational efficacy of programmatic offerings for Portsmouth students. As a result of this reconstitution or elimination, these positions may be eliminated. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.
- **Teacher Non-Renewals (Declining Enrollment).** Dr. Lusi recommended that the teaching contract of Teacher 20 not be renewed on June 22, 2011, or the last day of the 2010-11 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to declining enrollment. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.
- **Teacher Displacements (Programmatic).** Dr. Lusi recommended that the teaching contract of Teacher 21 be eliminated on June 22, 2011, or the last day of the 2010-11 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that the current program in which this teacher is teaching may be reconstituted and/or eliminated beginning with the 2011-12 academic year to improve the educational efficacy of programmatic offerings for Portsmouth students. As a result of this reconstitution or elimination, this teacher will be displaced. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.
- **Teacher Displacements (Declining Enrollment).** The Dr. Lusi recommended that the teaching contracts of Teachers 22, 23, 24, and 25 be eliminated on June 22, 2011,

- or the last day of the 2010-11 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to declining enrollment. 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. Mr. Harris moved the motion. Seconded by Mrs. King. No public comment. So voted 7-0.
- c) **Approval of Procedures for Policy #4111 – Selection and Appointment of School Personnel, 2nd Reading and Adoption.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee approves as a second reading and adopts the procedures for Policy #4111, Selection and Appointment of School Personnel.” Mr. Croston made a motion to table this item until the March 8th meeting. Seconded by Mrs. King. So voted 7-0.
- d) **Approval of Educator Code of Conduct Policy, 2nd Reading/Adoption.** A motion was made by Mr. Harris to approve as a second reading and adopt the Educator Code of Conduct policy. Seconded by Mrs. King. So voted 7-0.
- e) **Discussion/Action – Teacher Compensation.** This item was removed from the agenda.
- f) **Discussion/Approval – Legislative Agenda.** Dr. Lusi stated that in the past, the School Committee has passed the Legislative Agenda in concept. She read the agenda items. Mrs. Perrotti asked to add Rhode Island General Law 16-16-42, which mandates special, preferential treatment for retired teachers who purchase group life insurance through their public school employer. The goal of this amendment is to have it mirror Rhode Island General Law 45-21-57, the statute that governs retired municipal workers participating in group life programs. Bringing equity to the statutory schemes and helping to reduce costs incurred by our School Members are the laudable goals of this legislation. Mr. Croston also asked to add promoting STEM-based education within the Portsmouth schools and on Aquidneck Island. There was discussion regarding the S-3050 legislative agenda item, but it was concluded that the funding of schools was within the School Committee’s purview. Mr. Croston made a motion to approve the Legislative Agenda as presented, with the additional items added. Seconded by Mrs. King. So voted 7-0.
- g) **Discussion/Approval – December Financial Reports.** Mr. Dunham reported that the December financial reports include several months of information, which allows for a more meaningful analysis and provides more trend data than previous months. In the Revenue area, the Department’s largest revenue sources, the Town appropriation and State aid to Education, are being received as projected. In addition to the small positive variance in tuition (\$1,000), there is also a positive variance being projected for Little Compton tuitions due to three more students than anticipated at this time. There is a \$10,000 negative variance in the Other Financing sources revenue line, which is due to the potential loss of revenue due to down time by the wind turbine. The amount being

projected is one third of the total due to anticipated opportunities to make up the lost revenue. In the Expenditures area, there is not enough appropriated in the snow removal budget line to pay for the snow removal costs that have been incurred this school year. The December report shows a balance available of \$8,300, which is several storms behind. The end of year projection at this time for the snow removal budget line is \$35,000, and transfers will be forthcoming to cover the actual over expenditures. The likely source of transfers appears to be the Special Education Tuition lines which, at this time, are trending toward small potential surpluses. All other budget lines look to be on target at this time. In summary, as we move forward into the year, the budget may be impacted by events such as continued adverse weather conditions, student placement and registration, the difficult financial climate, and the outstanding unsettled labor agreement with the teachers. All these conditions will be continuously monitored and the budget will be managed accordingly. By far, the most significant unknown which will have the largest effect on the budget is the expired agreement with the teachers union (NEA). The manner in which these and similar events occur and are resolved will have an impact on the end of year result of the 2010-2011 budget. A motion was made by Mr. Harris to approve the December financial reports as presented. Seconded by Mrs. King. So voted 7-0.

8. SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

- a) **Alternative Revenue.** Mr. Croston reported that a meeting would be scheduled within the next three weeks. He met with Mr. Schoonover, and their desire is to come forth to the School Committee to form a STEM group of parents, teachers, and members of the community, to try to better define specifically what we are striving for with an aim of instituting a program by 2012. The program may be internal versus regional.
- b) **Aquidneck Island Study Group.** Mr. Vadney stated that a lot of celebrity guests did not appear at the last meeting of the Aquidneck Island Study Group. Senator Paiva-Weed attended, and the timing of any potential decisions was discussed. She recommended a non-binding referendum at our next election to poll the citizens regarding their desire to pursue regionalization.
- c) **Facilities.** No report.
- d) **Finance.** Mrs. Perrotti stated that the first budget meeting was held last Thursday. The projected value of the expenditures exceeds the revenues by nearly \$950,000. She asked the subcommittee to look at the budget as a vehicle to establish our priorities instead of a plan. She wants to focus on student achievement and create environments for students to learn.
- e) **Health and Wellness.** Ms. Volpicelli reported that the Health and Wellness Subcommittee met on Monday, February 7th, at the Administration Building. There was a great

deal of discussion among members regarding the Health and Wellness policy, which speaks to healthy choices for the students in the Portsmouth schools. It was suggested that other alternatives can be offered; however, that cannot be mandated. There was a discussion about some parents feeling that their children had the right to have cupcakes for their birthdays, since they are unable to have them any other time. Another question among the group was whether or not it was necessary to bring more goodies for birthday celebrations to school when the children would be celebrating at home. There are some who disagree with having the school lunch program procure food for celebrations, feeling it is easier to find a volunteer to bring in baked goods or even a cultural dish. Another big struggle mentioned is the teachers who use candy and other treats as a reward. The summary of all comments and concerns from the discussion was: food safety; no banning of foods; do not use food as a reward; strong suggestions on what should be brought in; possible celebrations with sheet cake; recognition in other ways, i.e. pencils, free time/recess, book store, etc.; a need to educate teachers on what is acceptable; principals should lead the mission statement with all faculty and through all teaching staff celebrations. The Health and Wellness Subcommittee wants to spin this concept in a positive way to send the message. Due to local and National concerns, it is felt that Health and Wellness should adhere to National guidelines. Health and Wellness projects for 2012 were discussed. The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 2nd, at the Administration Building.

- f) **Healthcare Commission.** No report.
- g) **Negotiations.** Mr. Harris stated that the first mediation meeting was held last night, and another one will be held this week.
- h) **Policy.** No report.
- i) **Superintendent Search Committee.** Mrs. Perrotti stated that the School Committee wants to meet with the Superintendent Search Subcommittee next Tuesday to work on the Charter.

A motion was made by Mr. Harris and was seconded by Mrs. King to adjourn the meeting. So voted 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for:

Marilyn King, Clerk