

**ZOOM MEETING LINK;**

**<https://portsmouthschoolsri-org.zoom.us/j/86842739991?pwd=aklCbGtGNDNOTExMa0hZWktDRXNQdz09>**

**CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Ms. Copeland, on Tuesday evening, May 11, 2021. Ms. Copeland, led the group in the pledge of allegiance and requested a moment of silence in honor of our armed forces in harm's way.

**1. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

RIGL 42-46-5 sections:

(a)(1) Any discussions of the job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person or persons provided that such person or person affected shall have been notified in advance in writing and advised that they may require that the discussion be held at an open meeting (advance notice has been provided);

(a)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation.

Chair, Ms. Copeland, reported that an Executive Session had been held prior to the public meeting this evening, May 11, 2021. No votes were taken.

**2. MOTION TO SEAL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES**

Ms. Copeland requested a motion to seal the Executive Session Minutes. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 7-0. EC=yes, FF=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, KM=yes, IK=yes, JCP=yes

**3. CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

**A. Roll Call**

Emily Copeland:	Present	Thomas Vadney:	Present
Fred Faerber:	Present	Karen McDaid:	Present
Juan Carlos Payero:	Present	Isabelle Kelly:	Present
Allen Shers:	Present	Rita Kenahan (LC)	Present

Let the record reflect that all School Committee Members are present this evening, May 11, 2021.

**Also Present:** Dr. Thomas Kenworthy, Superintendent; Ms. Elizabeth Vivieros, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Christopher DiIuro, Director of Finance; Dr. Lisa Colwell, Director of Pupil Personnel, Mary Ann Carroll, Attorney for the Portsmouth School Dept.

**B. Emergency Evacuation Plan.**

Ms. Copeland instructed that should an emergency occur this evening, evacuation through the exit doors and the meeting spot is in front of the old gym.

**C. Member Professional Development Update**

Ms. McDaid reported out on the Hassenfelt workshop she attended on the funding formula. This was led by RIASC and held on April 21, 2021. The list of proposed revisions to the funding formula were described. Those proposed revisions are still in Committee since COVID hit and put everything on hold. Of importance is that in an effort that there be a minimum requirement for localities to contribute so that you can't have situation as state contributions go up, the town cuts their funding and with no net gain to the education system. They are working to correct that. Also, in the past, only English language learners that qualified were those who also qualified for

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free and reduced lunch. They are working to change that so that English language learners are included who do not qualify for free and reduced lunch. Thirdly, to revise the education costs that are in consideration now to include transportation costs.

#### D. RIASC Conference Report

Ms. Copeland reported that RIASC Annual Conference was held and Mr. Faerber, Mr. Vadney, and Ms. McDaid attended that meeting. Mr. Faerber reported that the meeting was about Racial Equity and Inclusion. Four speakers gave talks and made a very interesting presentation. There were questions and answers and very informative.

#### E. NSBA Conference Report

Superintendent Kenworthy reported on the NSBA Conference. This is a national conference with great speakers. It was held over a three-day span, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, April 8 thru April 10, 2021. Dr. Kenworthy attended the opening session on Thursday, and tried to stay as connected as he could over the next few days. He followed the Racial Equity sessions as we are trying to do some important work in our district in that area. He attended a session on Dismantling Racism in Schools and on final day a Signature Equity speaker. Other districts are struggling with the same work we are doing and sharing best practices with other areas. We want to have policy on Racial Equity and we should be seeing work done in that area in the next few months from our Policy Subcommittee. He also attended a session on Senior Exhibitions. We have that requirement for seniors in Portsmouth and it was interesting to see how other districts approach this requirement and the ideas and methods they have implemented. We really want students to begin thinking about what they want to do when they finish high school.

Ms. McDaid attended the NSBA Conference and she reported that the sessions she attended were from the policy connection. They discussed doing an analysis of the policies to make sure that some populations were not overly affected by the policies. One session concerning racial equity had to do with equity of leadership, as well as the normally thought of race, religion, neighborhoods. It opened up the thoughts of diversity in all types of areas. She also attended legislative sessions and guidelines. She was inspired panels on positive psychology.

Ms. Kenahan attended the conference and wanted to congratulate the committee members who have done so much in Professional Development. They were recognized during the conference and it was very impressive. Congratulations as members of the Leadership Academy dedicated to Professional Development.

Ms. Copeland attended sessions at the conference that focused on governance issues with School Committees and districts. The topics of some of the sessions included High Performing School Committees, Superintendent Evaluations, Best Practices, Goal Setting Links to the Strategic Plan. She attended Positive Psychology presentation with the Happiness Advantage. It was such an inspiring and powerful presentation. She suggested the possibility of this book being considered a district read for the Administrative Workshop held in the district during the summer. Ms. Copeland also suggested that a topic for the workshop to be considered we take School Committee performance and put that on the agenda and really go through the list of some of their best practices and see if there are things there we may want to adopt for the coming year. Goal setting and linking it to the Strategic Plan was another topic. Next year, I am suggesting we make an effort to include on our meeting agendas links to the Strategic Plan. This would not have to be at every meeting, but a way to keep the Strategic Plan front and center and everyone informed of how we are doing.

#### **4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE**

##### **A. Personnel**

Ms. Copeland reported on the Personnel Subcommittee. The members reviewed the contracts coming before the committee this evening. Also talked about considering the idea of merit as a potential bonus. We don't have a policy but more open for discussion.

##### **B. Policy**

Ms. McDaid reported on the Policy Subcommittee. The group met yesterday, May 10, 2021, and discussed three different policies. The policies are:

- Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policy
- Title 9 Sexual Harassment policy
- Policy regarding health examinations, screenings and immunizations

Revisions were made to these policies and voted to move all three to the School Committee at our next meeting.

#### **5. RECOGNITIONS**

##### **A. Margie Brennan – USDOE Green Ribbon Award**

Ms. Brennan was recognized for spearheading the effort for our district as a whole to be awarded the USDOE Green Ribbon Award given out by the Rhode Island Department of Education in conjunction with Earth Day. The Portsmouth School District, one of only two winners in Rhode Island and the only full district winner, and the only award winner in the Northeast region to win this award. More people are familiar with the Blue Ribbon Award given for academic excellence but the Green Ribbon is in the area of environmental education and sustainability. It represents a lot of hard work. Ms. Brennan spearheaded this effort but she has more people she would like to recognize. However, Ms. Brennan is the driving force for this endeavor and collected the information and evidence to make this possible. There is a recognition in the Fall in Washington, DC to receive a certificate from the White House. The other people instrumental in making this recognition possible include:

- Rachel Marciano
- Matt Murphy
- Sara Churgin (parent)
- Jim Dean
- Lisa Little
- Danielle Laurie
- Joao Arruda
- Erika Magilton
- Karen Moore
- Jason Spitalnik (parent)
- Karen Aghinetti
- JP Arsenault
- Nicole Pascoe
- Donna Powell
- Nelia Almeida

#### **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment this evening.

## **7. PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. Portsmouth Prevention Coalition**

An informative Portsmouth Prevention Coalition presentation was given by Ms. Esther Hurlock. Ms. Nancy DeNuccio first thanked the Portsmouth School District and the Portsmouth School Committee for their support of the Portsmouth Prevention Coalition. Everyone is very supportive and much appreciated. The report this evening centers on the survey sent out to the community during December of last year. The purpose of the survey was to get a feel for the community awareness around prevention, about who the Coalition is, how people see their own mental health behavior, the perception of substance abuses as well as their own. The survey was completed by 119 people and the Coalition was very happy with that number of participants. The community participants included:

- 81% Female – 19% Male
- 22.9% Part of Military Family
- 33.9% Work in Portsmouth
- 80.7% Parents of Portsmouth Students
- 78.9% Bachelors Degree or Higher

The plan is to compare these numbers with the survey of 2019 trying to see some trends. The Prevention Coalition cares about the community and what they are thinking about substance abuse. They want to be able to target their message and see where they need to focus in the future. It was noted that some abuse was up due to COVID influences. Parents, of course, were strongly against substance abuse by their youth. Abuse of alcohol and binge drinking is highly unacceptable as is smoking. However, it should be noted that the disapproval of marijuana use is going down. General attitude and the acceptance due to the process of legalization of marijuana probably being approved in the next year. Overall, a lot of disapproval and the Coalition wants to keep that disapproval rate high. They, understandably, will need to do more work regarding marijuana and get that point across to parents and community members. The Coalition is also concerned about adults. The disapproval rates did go down for adults regarding binge drinking and noting that the disapproval of marijuana went up for adults in the survey. It appeared from the survey that more people were struggling during COVID and that is really not surprising. It will be interesting to see if that outcome changes next year after the survey and the less influence of COVID or if it remains the same. The Coalition is interested in people's well-being, which is just as important as substance abuse. The survey confirmed alcohol abuse did increase during COVID 19 and community members are also engaged in stress management during post COVID-19.

The Prevention Coalition is looking for a new Director. Ms. Hurlock is leaving her position. The position is posted and hopefully will have it filled by the end of June. The Coalition is also looking for a Youth Coordinator. They want to continue to service and provide for the community and the students of Portsmouth.

## **8. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

### **A. Personnel Update**

Superintendent Kenworthy reported out on his Personnel Updates since his last meeting. The appointments, resignations, and retirements are as follows:

#### **Appointments:**

- |                   |     |     |
|-------------------|-----|-----|
| • Annie Heffernan | RBT | PMS |
|-------------------|-----|-----|

#### **Coaching Appointment:**

- |                   |                           |     |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| • Ryan Soares     | Softball Head Coach       |     |
| • Nancy Medonca   | Track & Field Head Coach  | PMS |
| • Ellen Chilabato | Track & Field Asst. Coach | PMS |

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• Kevin Weaver	Baseball Head Coach	PMS
• Jonathan Lewis	Baseball Asst. Coach	PHS
• Michael Schuermann	Baseball Asst. Coach	PHS
• Tyler Angers	Assistant Golf Coach	PHS
• Evan Denard	Boys Track & Field Assist. Coach	PHS
• Mark Hedden	Boys Tennis Coach	PHS
• Christine Higgins	Softball Asst. Coach	PHS
• Shaun Horgan	Boys Track & Field Coach	PHS
• Robyn McFetters	Girls Track & Field Asst. Coach	PHS
• Matthew McGuire	Baseball Head Coach	PHS
• Mario Occhi	Softball Head Coach	PHS
• Jeff Rose	Girls Track & Field Coach	PHS
• Gary Sykes	Golf Coach	PHS

Retirements:

• Robin Fricchione	Special Education Teacher	PMS
• Michelle Medeiros	Clerical B	Melville

B. District Updates (PHS US News and World Report Ranking-Graduation and End of Year Activities)

Superintendent Kenworthy reported on his District Updates since the last meeting. Welcome to our students returning for full in-person learning. We have 95% of our students in-house. We are also continuing to plan for the next school year. As more information becomes available, Dr. Kenworthy will bring that information forward to the School Committee.

Thank you to the volunteers on the Town side and those in the Portsmouth School Department and community volunteers. Each high school in the state was asked to host a vaccine clinic for 16-18 year olds. We have been able to open this up to family members as well as students. 100 individuals were vaccinated while this clinic was open. Thank you to all who helped with the effort. We may be asked to host clinics for other age groups, specifically students age 12- 15 years old. If we are requested to work with the Town officials to make these clinics possible again, we will be happy to work with them.

Congratulations to Portsmouth High School. Last week, we received the great news that US News and World Report Rankings for high schools came out and Portsmouth High School, as we have for the past few years, held a solid ranking of 4 in the state of Rhode Island. This is a reflection of our entire district K-12 efforts and achievements as student's progress through our grades and reach PHS. Only Barrington, East Greenwich and Classical were ahead of us and this is good company to be with. We deal with one aspect that these other schools do not and that is our military population. We appreciate these families and our collaboration with them, they do bring an aspect to our district that the others do not have. We have about 20% military families in our district which means that every three years, we have a turnover of students, either leaving or coming in, which other districts do not. It is a lot of effort and hard work but we have maintained our position and are proud of this district.

Plans are continuing for the elementary and PMS level end of the year activities. They will be both virtual (since they had already been planned) and outdoor activities as we get closer to the end of the school year. At the high school, we have three key in-person events that the high school is working hard to make sure we are meeting all of the Rhode Island Department of Health requirements. On May 26, 2021, we will have our annual induction into the National Honor Society. That will be held in a safe, in-person, and socially distanced ceremony. The PHS is pleased to be able to offer an in-person Senior Prom on June 9, 2021, for our senior class, held at the

Atlantic Resort in Newport, and of course, graduation for the class of 2021, held Friday, June 11, 2021, held outdoors on the grounds of Portsmouth High School.

### **APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

#### **A. April 13, 2021**

#### **B. April 13, 2021 Executive Session**

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Approval of School Committee Minutes and Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of April 13, 2021. Mr. Faerber made the motion and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, FF=yes, IK=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes

### **9. CONSENT AGENDA**

#### **A. Teacher Non-Renewals**

#### **B. Homeschool Requests**

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for approval of the Consent Agenda as written. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, KM=yes, IK=yes, JCP=yes

### **10. BUSINESS**

#### **A. Discuss/Action FY2022 Operating Budget with Town Council Adjustments**

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item A. Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action FY2022 Operating Budget with Town Council Adjustments. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-1. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, IK=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, AS=no.

#### **B. Discuss/Action FY2022 Capital Budget with Town Council Adjustments**

A motion was requested by Ms. Copeland for Business Item B. Mr. Faerber made the motion for Discussion/Action FY2022 Capital Budget with Town Council Adjustments. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-1. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, IK=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, AS=no.

#### **C. Discuss/Action One Year Extension to the Little Compton Tuition Agreement**

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item C. Mr. Faerber made the motion for Discussion/Action One Year Extension to the Little Compton Tuition Agreement. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 5-2. EC=yes, TV=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, IK=yes, FF=no, AS=no.

#### **D. Discuss/Action One Year Contract Extension for NEA Portsmouth**

Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action One Year Contract Extension for NEA Portsmouth. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, IK=yes, JCP=yes, KM=yes

#### **E. Discuss/Action Hathaway Outdoor Classroom**

Mr. Faerber moved for Discussion/Action Hathaway Outdoor Classroom. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, IK=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes.

#### **F. Discuss/Action Budget Transfer Greater Than \$5,000**

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item F. Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action Budget Transfer Greater than \$5,000. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, IK=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes.

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G. Discuss/Action Approval of Contract Renewal for HS Director of Student Services

A motion was requested by Ms. Copeland for Business Item G. Mr. Faerber made the motion for Discussion/Action Approval of Contract Renewal for HS Director of Student Services. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, AS-yes, FF-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

H. Discuss/Action Approval of Contract Renewal for PHS Director of Freshman Academy/Student Services

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item H. Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action Approval of Contract Renewal for PHS Director of Freshman Academy/Student Services. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

I. Discuss/Action Approval of Contract for Director of College and Career Readiness

A motion was requested for Business Item I. by Ms. Copeland. Mr. Faerber made the motion for Discussion/Action Approval of Contract for Director of College and Career Readiness. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-1. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes, AS-no.

J. Discuss/Action Family Medical Leave Act Policy GCCAC (Old 4111.3) (Second Read)

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item J. Ms. McDaid made the motion for Discussion/Action Family Leave Act Policy GCCAC (Old 4111.3) (Second Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. This is a second read of the policy and no vote is needed this evening.

K. Discuss/Action Educational Philosophy/School District Mission Policy AD (Old 6000) (Second Read)

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item K. Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion/Action Educational Philosophy/School District Mission Policy AD (Old 6000) (Second Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. This is a second read of the policy and no vote is needed this evening.

L. Discuss/Action Annual Budget Policy DB (Second Read)

A motion request was made by Ms. Copeland for Business Item L. Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion/Action Annual Budget Policy DB (Second Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. This is a second read of the policy and no vote is needed this evening.

M. Discuss/Action Removal of Policy 5128 which is replaced by Policy IKF (Final Read)

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item M. Ms. McDaid made the motion for Discussion/Action Removal of Policy 5128 which is replaced by Policy IKF (Final Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

N. Discuss/Action Support/Opposition to Pending Legislation

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item N. Mr. Faerber made motion for Discussion/Action Support/Opposition to Pending Legislation. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. Formal vote on this motion will take place at the next School Committee meeting on May 25, 2021.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

A request for a motion for Adjournment was requested by Ms. Copeland. Mr. Faerber made a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting of May, 11, 2021. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patricia Massarotti, Recording Secretary for:  
Thomas Vadney, Clerk