

ZOOM MEETING LINK;

<https://portsmouthschoolsri-org.zoom.us/j/846538831771?pwd=enZtUUw3RGNIMORxRG1CU1RuZ2N5Zz09>

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Ms. Copeland, on Tuesday evening, March 23, 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)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation.

(a)(8)(ii) Sessions exclusively for the purposes of reviewing other matters which relate to the privacy of students and their records.

Chair, Ms. Copeland, reported that an Executive Session had been held prior to the Public Meeting this evening, March 23, 2021. No votes were taken.

2. MOTION TO SEAL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

The Executive Session was recessed so the minutes will be sealed during the public session at our next School Committee meeting on April 13, 2021.

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)	Absent

Let the record reflect that all School Committee members are present this evening, March 23, 2021, either in-person and Ms. McDaid is present virtually.

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 District.

B. Emergency Evacuation Plan

If we have an emergency during the meeting, our plan is to exit the building following the Exit signs and meet at the New Gym.

C. RIASC Chair Update

The RIASC Chair meeting with the Commissioner of Education was held on Friday, March 19, 2021. Many subjects were covered. One of them being the fact that the RICAS testing will be done. The idea being to see the progress or lack of progress this year and districts need to get children who were remote learners into their school buildings in person to take the test. There is not an emphasis on accountability this year because of COVID.

There was discussion about staff vaccines. Portsmouth held a Vaccination Clinic last Wednesday for staff and teachers.

There was an update on the LEAP Task Force and if anyone is interested in full updates, they have a RIDE u-tube channel,

There was a lot of discussion among the School Committees returning to full in-person learning and meeting the CDC guidelines of 3 ft. and bussing. Superintendent Kenworthy will go into this subject during his update later in the agenda.

Discussions also centered around money coming in from the Cares Act II. While the money coming in from the Federal Government is appreciated, it has a lot of strings attached to that.

FY22 Budget Outlooks were presented on how things are looking at the State House. They are flat funding the Categorical Funding. Portsmouth had hoped they would increase that. As of now the funding formula is fully funded but there is worry that that might not hold and also worry about the numbers used for funding formula this year due to COVID changes this school year such as home schooling or families who may not have applied for free/reduced lunch. There is hope the legislature will hold districts harmless but that remains to be seen.

D. Legislative Update

The Field Trip Funding bill we were pushing has now passed the House. It now goes to Senate. Good News.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

A. Capital

Mr. Shers presented the Capital Spending Subcommittee update. The meeting was held on March 16, 2021, and topic centered around a relatively new law that for FY 20-22 budget there has to be a minimum of 2.5% school budget expended towards various building situations such as things related to roofs and the physical plant. In looking at what has been allocated to come up to that \$1,150,000.00, we were somewhat short. It is important because if we don't hit that mark, it throws off our reimbursement from the state and other areas. They have put this in so the systems would have recirculation of the monies back into areas of the physical plant. We looked at getting the most for our dollars was addressing some of the roof at PHS. Four sections have still not been resurfaced and three of them really are all in one area, the Library section, Film Department and Art Department. The subcommittee members discussed this at length and did take a vote during the meeting. The Capital Spending Subcommittee members include Mr. Shers, Mr. Faerber, Ms. McDaid, and Superintendent Kenworthy.

B. Finance

Mr. Faerber presented the Finance Subcommittee update this evening, noting that the committee met on March 17, 2021. They looked at the final expected revenues and expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year in preparation for presentation of the Operating Budget to the Town Council. Two votes were taken that evening. Approval of the Operating Budget to be presented to the School Committee this evening and the Finance Subcommittee concurred with the Capital Budget. Both votes were unanimous.

C. Health and Wellness

Mr. Payero gave the Health and Wellness report this evening. The committee met on Thursday, March 18, 2021. Highlights included updates from all the schools about Wellness Week activities. All the schools were collaborating to assist PHS with its Food Drive. Outdoor classroom activities that are taking place in the elementary schools were noted, and Ms. Alvarnas gave a phenomenal update on our testing and vaccination protocols and activities happening in the district. The committee reviewed some policy updates that came to us from our original submission of the Health and Wellness policy to the Policy Subcommittee. We did go over them and we are going to institute some of them where we can that do not interfere with state law. We will

introduce those changes to the entire Health and Wellness Subcommittee at our next and final meeting of the School Committee on May 20, 2021, and hopefully pass them off to the Policy Subcommittee once they are approved.

D. Safety

Mr. Shers reported that the Safety Committee met on March 18, 2021. This committee is comprised of first responders, interested community members, and all the various administrators in the Town of Portsmouth, concerned about the overall safety issues. Most of the things we are doing cannot be discussed in public but Mr. Shers wants people to know we have meetings and with COVID going on, we have not forgotten the other important issues that we are responsible for. He was reassuring that the cameras the Town Council has voted to put in speed cameras on West Main Rd. across from Melville School. That was discussed and it was thought by all that that was a good item for controlling the speed and more security related to the school that is located right in that area. Mr. Shers wanted to reassure the community that the Safety Committee is actively looking and always trying to better our safety for the town.

5. RECOGNITIONS

A. PHS Boys Basketball Division II State Champions

Superintendent Kenworthy congratulated the PHS Boys Basketball Division II State Champions for the second year in a row. This is quite an accomplishment. You may remember that earlier in the year we congratulated and recognized Coach Occhi as Basketball Coach of the Year. Last season came to an abrupt end due to COVID. They are once again champions. We will be sending out Certificates of Recognition to the following student athletes for the outstanding achievement of winning the Boys Basketball Division II State Championship as a member of the Portsmouth High School Boys Basketball team:

- Jack Bielawa
- Sam Bielawa
- Jeffrey Brady
- Luke Brennan
- Timothy Chlaupek
- Jack Downing
- Marcus Evans
- Owen Gugliotta
- Benjamin Hurd
- Luke Hyder
- Calvin Lucenti
- Andrew Perry
- Neal Tullson
- Vincent Zhuang

The coaches will receive Certificates of Recognition for outstanding leadership of the Portsmouth High School Boys Basketball team to victory in the State Championships. Our outstanding coaches include:

- Mr. Joseph Occhi
- Mr. Mario Occhi
- Mr. Michael Brennan
- Mr. Jake Towers

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment this evening.

7. PHS LIAISON'S COMMUNICATION

A. PHS Liaison Report (Aislinn Sullivan & Reidyn Pardo De Zela)

The PHS Liaison Report given by Aislinn Sullivan & Reidyn Pardo DeZela. The current activities and upcoming events include:

- Plans ongoing for Spirit Week at PHS.
- March 30, 2021, plan for Blood Drive

8. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

A. Personnel Update

Superintendent Kenworthy reported out on his Personnel Updates since the last meeting. The new hires and coaching appointments are as follows:

New Hire

- Christie Mataronas Paraprofessional PMS

Coaching Appointments

- Ryan MacDonald Football Coach (Level 3) PHS
- Keith MacDonald Football Coach (Level 3) PHS
- Matthew McKinnon Football Coach (Level 2) PHS
- Bradley Kelly Assistant Coach Football Level 1 PHS
- Marc Mello Assistant Coach Football Level 2 PHS
- David Hickey Assistant Coach Football Level 3 PHS
- Richard Bonvegna Head Coach Girls Soccer PMS
- Ellen Chilabato Assistant Coach Cross Country PMS

B. District Updates

Superintendent Kenworthy then proceeded with his District Updates for this evening's School Committee meeting. He was pleased to announce this evening that all staff members participated in the third Professional Development session on March 15, 2021, on Racial Equity and Social Justice. The fourth and final session will be held in May and Superintendent Kenworthy will be especially interested in the feedback from all staff members including Administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians to see what direction we want to move in with this work in the future.

The PSD, in collaboration with Lifespan, is able to offer a Youth Mental Health First Aid Training for parents. We do this several times a year for staff. The program takes place in two parts this year. The first session is completed by the participants on their own and then a session with group participation on ZOOM. s. Information is located on our website under District Updates and is free to our parents. It is well worth checking out.

Superintendent Kenworthy reported that he was able to participate in a conference call with all Rhode Island superintendents and the new Governor, Mr. Dan McKee. It was a great initial conversation. Everyone is looking forward to working with Mr. McKee as everyone is focused on our return out of the COVID pandemic and what education will bring for the rest of this year, next year, and future years.

At our last School Committee meeting on March 9, 2021, the School Committee did approve our school calendar for next year. We have one final decision to make for next year and that is in regards to weather emergency days. The Snow Day notice to parents was sent out and one final reminder went out yesterday. Superintendent Kenworthy did say as of now, we have had over 600 responses and it is a virtual tie. The final day for community responses is tomorrow, March 24, 2021, and at our next School Committee meeting, he will share with you a brief update and the results of that survey.

Superintendent Kenworthy noted that we have completed Season II of our Athletic Sports Seasons and are now entering Season III. Season III includes Football, Girls Volleyball and Cheerleading at PHS and at PMS, we will have Boys and Girls Soccer as well as Cross Country. In additional news, the R.I. Interscholastic League, in coordination with the R.I. Department of Health, will be relaxing the restrictions on spectators at school sporting events that were in place for Season II. For Season III, at both PHS and PMS, a limited number of spectators per family for each Season III athlete will be allowed. We do have to maintain certain restrictions due to space but the good news is that spectators will be allowed.

Dr. Kenworthy reported that 120 district staff members participated in the municipal vaccine clinic last week. And this group will have their second does in a few weeks. Other staff members have been able to secure their vaccination from other sources but Dr. Kenworthy anticipates that the majority of our district staff will “be fully vaccinated by April break”.

Superintendent Kenworthy noted that it was one year ago today that our school district made the announcement to close schools and switch to distance learning. It is noteworthy that I make this announcement on the one-year anniversary of the COVID Pandemic which forced the closure of our schools that we are opening to full, in-person learning opportunities for all grades starting on April 26, 2021. Over the past few weeks, the staff at PHS and PMS have been working on final challenges and started transitioning many students back. It is anticipated that we will be fully transitioned by the return from April break. We will, of course, continue with mitigation protocols such as masks, cleaning protocols, symptom screening and many others in full effect. Dr. Kenworthy extended a heartfelt thank you to staff, families, and students for their cooperation during this time. We have accomplished success handling the pandemic in our district and made it possible for our families in this district to learn tonight that we will be returning to in-person learning very soon. For the remainder of this year, we do intend to offer full in-person, hybrid and distance learning opportunities to make sure families have these options as we finish out the school year. Busing is the last challenge, especially at PMS. PMS feels they will be able to work through the challenges and hopefully see busing guidance changes from the R.I. Department of Education soon.

9. TEACHING AND LEARNING

A. RIDE Assessment and STR Middle of Year Update

Assistant Superintendent Vivieros presented the Teaching and Learning presentation this evening on the RIDE Assessment & STAR MOY Update. The Ride Assessment testing is required to be in-person. Each individual school has developed schedules to accommodate the in-person and distance learners and they are reaching out to all of our distance learning families with testing options.

The schedules for testing dates is as follows:

- ACCESS for our English Language Learners took place from January 4 – March 12.
- RICAS Assessment (3rd – 8th)
 - ELA: March 29-May 14
 - Math – April 12-May 28
- RI NGSA (Science): April 26-June 4
- Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessments (ELA, Math Science) – April 5-May 28

SAT/PSAT10:

- PHS in person Digital SAT with Essay for Juniors – April 13, 2021
- PHS in person Digital PSAT 10 for Sophomores – April 13, 2021

- The AT with essay will be administered to all Juniors and the PSAT 10 will be administered to all Sophomores in person during the school day on Tuesday, April 13, 2021. Only Sophomores and Juniors will be in the building on April 13th.

Freshman and Seniors will be asynchronous distance learning on April 13th.

The overview of the PSD 2020 Fall Data Review in Reading showing 46.9% of our students showing proficiency in reading; 35.5% on watch; 10.2% needing intervention and 7.4% needing urgent intervention. The PSD 2020 Winter Data Review in Reading shows the PSD is working towards closing the achievement gap. We now have 54.5% of our students at or above proficient in reading; on watch category is at 31%; the needing intervention category at 8.6%; and the urgent intervention decreased by 1.5% or 5.9% intervention. We are inching our way closer to that 5% or lower target for urgent intervention. We are seeing the pattern we want to see.

As far as 2020 Fall Math percentages data, we see 56.6% at or above proficiency; 30.9% on watch; 8.6% needing intervention; and 4.0% at the urgent intervention level. Similar to our Winter Reading Data Review, the Math Winter Data Review shows we are working again towards closing that achievement gap in Math as well. We now have 66% of our students at or above proficiency in Math; 25% on watch; decrease in needing intervention has dropped by 3.1%; and targeted urgent intervention only at 3.5% needing that level of service in Math.

The schools in Portsmouth are all providing above average solid foundations in our reading and reading intervention areas. All of our schools are providing this same solid foundation in the area of math and math interventions.

This outcome is exciting considering the year of the COVID pandemic. Now that we are returning to the classroom in-person, the outlook for the Spring testing should be something to look forward to in our Portsmouth School District. Assistant Superintendent Vivieros was excited to share this information with the School Committee. It has not been easy for the staff, students and families to achieve such positive results and everyone should proud of this positive accomplishment.

C. March 9, 2021 Executive Session

Chair, Ms. Copeland, requested a motion for approval of the School Committee minutes of February 23, 2021, Executive Session (Amended). Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, JCP=yes, KM=yes, IK=yes.

Mr. Faerber made a motion for approval of both the School Committee minutes and the Executive Session minutes of March 9, 2021. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, FF=yes, JCP=yes, KM=yes, IK=yes

11. BUSINESS

A. Discuss/Action Post Prom Donation of \$1,000

Chair, Ms. Copeland, requested a motion for Item A. on the Business Agenda. Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action Post Prom Donation of \$1,000. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. Mr. Faerber made an amended motion to increase the Post Prom Donation to \$1,500. 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.

The main motion for Discussion/Action Post Prom Donation of \$1,000 passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, FF=yes, IK=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes

Portsmouth School Committee

March 23, 2021

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B. Discuss/Action FY22 Operating Budget

Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action FY22 Operating Budget. 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.

C. Discuss/Action FY22 Capital Budget

Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action FY22 Capital Budget. 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.

D. Discuss/Action Authorization of School Department Attorney to Negotiate a One Year Extension to the Little Compton Tuition Agreement

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item D on the Agenda. Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action Authorization of School Department Attorney to Negotiate a 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, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes, FF-no, AS-no.

E. Discuss/Action Budget Transfer Greater than \$5,000

Ms. Copeland requested a motion on Business Item E. 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.

F. Discuss/Action School Bus Transportation Bid Award

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Budget Item F. Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action School Bus Transportation Bid Award. 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.

G. Discuss/Action Food Allergies/Special Dietary Needs Policy EFAB (Old 5100.2) (Second Read)

Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion/Action Food Allergies/Special Dietary Needs Policy EFAB (Old 5100.2) (Second Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. This agenda item is for discussion only this evening. No vote to be taken this evening.

H. Discuss/Action Naming of School Facilities Policy FF (Old 8020) (Second Read)

Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion Only Naming of School Facilities Policy FF (Old 8020) (Second Read). Mr. Faerber seconded the motion. This policy has very minimal changes and the committee was basically bringing it into alignment with the new way the policies are being organized. No vote to be taken this evening.

I. Discuss/Action School Committee Member Conduct Policy BC (Old 8005) (Second Read)

Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion Only School Committee Member Conduct Policy BC (Old 8005) (Second Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. This policy has very minimal changes and the committee was basically bringing it into alignment with the new way the policies are being organized. No changes to the content of this policy. No vote to be taken this evening.

J. Discuss/Action Committee Member Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy BCAB (Old 8015) (Second Read)

Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion Only Committee Member Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy BCAB (Old 8015) (Second Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. This policy has very minimal changes and the committee was basically bringing it into alignment with the new way the policies are being organized. No changes to the content of this policy. No vote taken this evening.

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12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair, Ms. Copeland, announced that the School Committee members would now be adjourning the Public Session and returning to the Executive Session. She also announced the next School Committee meeting on April 13, 2021, and then there will be a Town and School Budget meeting in that time later in the month.

Mr. Faerber made a motion for the School Committee members to return to the Executive Session.

RIGL 42-46-5 sections:

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

(a)(8)(ii) Sessions exclusively for the purposes of reviewing other matters which relate to the privacy of students and their records.

Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously to return to Executive Session, 7-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, AS-yes, FF-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

Upcoming Meetings:

- April 13, 2021
- May 11, 2021

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