



C. Report from PMS PTO Meeting

Superintendent Kenworthy, Assistant Superintendent Vivieros, and School Committee Chair, Ms. Copeland, were invited by the PMS PTO to join their meeting. It was a chance to introduce themselves and talk about the work. It was really nice meeting over ZOOM and they would be very happy to attend other PTO meetings if invitations were extended.

D. RIASC Chairs Meeting Update

Ms. Copeland reported that this afternoon there was a RIASC Chairs meeting with the Commissioner of Education. Five topics discussed and she would be sending out a power point presentation on the topics as soon as it is received. An update was given on the COVID testing initiative that is going on. Superintendent Kenworthy will be discussing that during his presentation this evening. Ms. Copeland did share that 47 out of 54 school districts are participating in testing of some sort and many are doing the more expansive option and private schools can participate also. She did announce exciting news that the RI Dept. of Education has partnered with the KAHN Academy. R.I. is one of two states to have access to this program. It is a free, live tutoring program, SAT preparation and English and Math and 6<sup>th</sup> grade in-person math class. RICAS and teacher evaluations were discussed. Commissioner feels that R.I. should have good RICAS scores this year. No exemption from RICAS testing this year. Everyone in the district has to take the test and see where we might need assistance. The hope is to get the data back to districts earlier in summer or at least by October. Districts will be made whole by February. The state has been paying out at 91% but the state promises to pay up the money they have not been paying the districts. Legislative updates included a bill by the Senate putting a 3-Year Moratorium on new Charter Schools. This bill will be taken up on January 27, 2021. In the House, the Rules Committee looks like they are going to split up the HEW Committee into an Education Committee and a Human Service Committee which will impact how education issues are handled. The Oversight Committee is supposedly going to have an increased focus on DCYF. This also has an impact on schools. The budget is going to be delayed until March and the real question is with this \$500,000,000.00 short fall they are predicting, are they actually going to go back and look at anything to do with the funding formula. They might have a joint committee of the House to look at some of the recommendations of the Senate reviewing the funding formula from last year.

E. Newly Elected Members Forum Update

Newly elected member, Ms. Isabelle Kelly, gave an update on the Newly Elected Members Forum held by the Hassenfeld Institute. The orientation was held last week. Topics included:

- RI Ethics Code
- Open Meetings Act
- Financial Oversight and Fiduciary Responsibilities

While each speaker spoke in depth on their subject, the overall theme was:

- Transparency and how to best honor the responsibilities faced by elected officials
- Avoiding and disclosing any conflicts of interest
- Assuring that all business is conducted in public view
- Financial procedures

On Saturday of the meetings, there were two case studies presented:

1. Governments challenges in Bay Village, a small Rhode Island town
2. 1981 Providence Budget Crisis

The attendees broke into small groups to discuss the case studies. The themes were transparency and communication between School Administration, the Town, the School Committee and the Town Council.

According to Ms. Kelly, the topic most impressionable to her was the importance of avoiding any appearance of opacity.

**2. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**A Racial Equity**

Mr. Payero and Assistant Superintendent Vivieros were presenters for the Racial Equity Subcommittee this evening. Mr. Payero noted that their meeting was held on January 7, 2021, on the day of the event at the U.S. Capital. The group discussed that event at length during the meeting as well as some discussion about what they are doing and some housekeeping items. Ms. Vivieros added that on Friday, January 22, 2021, she and Mr. Payero will be meeting with Mr. Marco McWilliam, who has been leading the professional development we have been providing to our staff. The PD will be taking place on January 25, 2021.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Edward Fitzmorris, 50 Kristen Court, Portsmouth, asked a question during the Public Comment portion of the meeting. His question “What is the main objective of the Racial Equity Committee?” Ms. Copeland said this subcommittee was formed to look at the districts approach to issues of racial justice and equity particularly after the aftermath of the events of the summer. The committee has been looking at things like curriculum, student safety, and professional development. It is really being treated as a sounding board to see what work needs to be done in the district. Ms. Vivieros, our Assistant Superintendent, and Mr. Payero are the Co-Chairs of this Racial Equity Committee. The goal for the first year is to provide professional development of our staff, looking then at current curriculum and next step will be to provide a more comprehensive curriculum and then implementing that to each of our grade levels.

**4. PHS LIAISON’S COMMUNICATION**

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

Student Liaison Report was presented by Aislinn Sullivan and Reidyn Pardo De Zela. The planned activities include:

- Blood Drive located at St. John’s Lodge, across from PHS, on January 25, 2021
- Candy sale is planned for Valentine’s Day
- Student Council discussing ideas for planning the School Spirit Week and hosting the Spirit of Portsmouth Mr. and Miss. Portsmouth Pageant for later in Spring. Two subcommittees are working on Spirit Week and Mr. & Miss Portsmouth Pageant with virtual protocols and another subcommittee looking at “better case scenarios” following safety protocols for both events.

**5. SUPERINTENDENT’S UPDATE**

**A. Personnel Update**

Superintendent Kenworthy reported out that there have been no changes in Personnel since our last School Committee meeting. However, he does have a list of coaching appointments in anticipation of our Winter Sports Season:

**Portsmouth Middle School**

Jared Conheeny	Head Coach	Boys Basketball
Tara McCarthy	Head Coach	Girls Basketball

**Portsmouth High School**

Risha Pellegrino	Head Coach	Girls Basketball
David Gesmondi	Assistant Coach	Girls Basketball
Bryan Kriner	Head Coach	Boys Ice Hockey
Arthur Wood	Assistant Coach	Boys Ice Hockey
Joe Occhi	Head Coach	Boys Basketball

**Portsmouth High School Coaching Appointments (continued)**

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Mario Occhi	Assistant Coach	Boys Basketball
Michael Brennan	Assistant Coach	Boys Basketball
Melissa Gendreau	Head Coach	Gymnastics
Jeff Rose	Head Coach	Girls Indoor Track & Field
Robyn McFetters	Assistant Coach	Girls Indoor Track & Field
Shaun Horgan	Head Coach	Boys Indoor Track & Field
Alex Briggs	Assistant Coach	Boys Indoor Track & Field
Evan Denard	Head Coach	Boys & Girls Swim Team
Sara Russell	Assistant Coach	Boys & Girls Swim Team

B. District Updates

Superintendent Kenworthy continued with his District Updates at this point. As everyone is aware, our district returned to in-person models on Monday, January 11, 2021. During the pause and holiday break, we did see an increase in our numbers but they seem to have settled down and we hope that downward trend continues to be the case. The follow-up of our district cases continues to confirm what is happening on the state and national level. It is driven by individuals engaging in close contact out of their home without masks. Inside our school environment, we are stressing mask wearing, distance between students, handwashing and any and all safety protocols to enable us to move forward with in-person learning.

Positive news is that our School Nurse Teachers were eligible in the first group to receive their COVID 19 vaccination and are very near ready for their second dose of the vaccine.

The Winter Athletic Season is underway at PMS and PHS. We are following all guidelines for the sports that we are offering that are approved by the Interstate Scholastic League in conjunction with the R.I. Department of Health. An additional precaution we took here in Portsmouth that any student athlete participating in winter athletics had to produce a negative PCR test taken no sooner than 1 week prior to their season starting. Parents/Guardians must provide consent for their student to participate in our asymptomatic testing program. Our goal is weekly testing of our winter athletes. This Winter Athletic Season is just practice for now with no actual games scheduled at this time. We are providing asymptomatic testing for teachers and students starting next week for anyone who would like to get tested at PHS. This is voluntary testing coordinated by our District COVID 19 Coordinator, Ms. Lynn Alvarnas. This asymptomatic testing program will be rolled out to all schools very soon.

Ms. Allison Arruda, Physical Education teacher at Howard Hathaway Elementary School, was awarded the RHID and Golden Apple Award. She was nominated by several of her colleagues for her efforts to keep physical education engaging for her students during this COVID pandemic. This award was presented to her from the previous award winner, who was our own Ashley Adamson. The Commissioner of Education, Ms. Infante-Green, was present for this award as was Ms. Patrice Wood from NBC television, faculty and students of Hathaway School, along with Ms. Arruda's family. The airing of this award will take place on February 4, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. on NBC Channel 10 News. We are very proud of Ms. Arruda as a recipient of the Golden Apple Award.

Next Monday, January 25, 2021, will be our next Professional Development Day for staff and in keeping with the state-wide district calendar, that is also full distance learning day for all students. In the morning that day, each school has a schedule, the staff will check in to their classes and get students up and running for the day. For the remainder of the day, students will participate in asynchronous activities planned and scheduled for them. The staff will participate in the second part of the series on Racial Equity and Social Justices and second part of day transition to school day activities for professional development.

C. January is National School Board/Committee Recognition Month

Superintendent Kenworthy wanted to take this opportunity this evening to recognize January as National School Board/Committee Recognition Month. The School Board and the School Board members are the largest group of elected officials in our country. Members are volunteers from their communities who shoulder critical responsibilities and often have to make decisions in the best interest of their districts. Their contribution cannot be overlooked in this critical time. We thank our School Committee Members for their work and dedication. We thank our members who include Ms. Emily Copeland; Mr. Fred Faerber; Mr. Allen Shers; Mr. Tom Vadney; Ms. Karen McDaid; Mr. Juan Carlos Payero; Ms. Isabelle Kelly; Ms. Rita Kinnehan (Little Compton).

**6. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**A. MTSS Update**

Assistant Superintendent Vivieros reported on the MTSS Update this evening. MTSS stands for Multi-Tiered System of Supports. MTSS is used as a framework to support our struggling students. Both Melville and PHS began their journey in the Fall of 2014 with the collaboration of MTSSRI. Hathaway followed and PMS is on year 2. MTSS District Goals for 2020/21 include:

- All school leaders will utilize a district data collection document for collecting and analyzing student data: BOY, MOY, EOY.
- All schools will have appropriate MTSS teams
- All schools will have set criteria for qualifying students for academic and social-emotional interventions.
- All schools will use the district RTI Planning form in Aspen for consistency among schools and easy transition.
- All schools will utilize Aspen to track minor and major behaviors.

We have MTSS Coaches based in each school. There are teams in place at the district level at each of our schools. They include:

- District Leadership Team
- Building Leadership Team
- Academic Target Team and Behavior Target Team
- Student Focused Target Team
- Evaluation Team
- IEP Team

The district holds meetings and reviews the universal test data. These meetings bring together all the leadership involved in supporting and developing intervention for our students. During the meeting, we reflect on data as a group and we also push each other's thinking allowing schools to receive feedback they may not have recognized by their colleagues. We then break up into school-based teams at which time a short term goal is developed at each school to support their efforts.

The PSD is currently at 86% at Tier I which is the on watch, proficient and above proficient category. Tier II 125 of our students or about 5% with 14 of these students being distance learners. Our Tier III Urgent Intervention is at 9% or 224 distance learning students. This data is from the beginning of the year data, but we are currently testing for mid-year data.

Principal Amaral presented a review of the areas of concern and what they are doing to remedy this situation.

Mr. Amaral noted that our high school students are going through a very difficult stage right now in the life of students, particularly those doing distance learning, those who are not engaged. We are tracking that data and seeing what is the root cause and what can we do to get students to maximize their learning. The RTI data is showing us that we need to do more individualized learning. The teachers and students are meeting regularly every Monday to try to create individual plans. We know one size does not fit all and we are trying strategies to get our students at a higher level after this quarter and ongoing. How are we going to measure that? We are going to see students pass each of their courses. We are going to see a better passing and attendance rate. 90% of success comes from just being in school. This is a challenge for teachers and parents and students need to meet their learning half way. It is not going to be an easy job but the teachers at PHS are willing to take on during this most difficult of times.

Mr. Arruda from PMS echoed the same challenges at PMS. It is a difficult task but it is going to require a lot of collaboration between the school and the community. One of the things we need to change is the number of students in Grade 8 receiving D's and F's. We have looked into this very profoundly and establish a goal of reducing the number of students through proper intervention. Services to these students will help them to reach academic success. We are going to establish a list and review the data. After the data is reviewed as a team, we have to establish patterns from that data. We will meet with these students and try to find out how it is that we have gotten to this point. We will dialogue with student outcome and reach out to parents concerning not only the grade outcome for the quarter but how are we as a team going to find a successful outcome for these students. There are social and emotional components that need our help also.

Ms. Little from Howard Hathaway Elementary School focused on foundational skills and we are concerned with the number of RTI in Grade 1. This grade needs more focus. Due to the pandemic, more students need support now. The middle of the year goal for RTI and Tier III intervention and Grade 1 will be reduced from 24 to 19 students.

Ms. Lauri from Melville Elementary School SMART Goals focus on Grade 1 students also as is the case at Hathaway School. She noted that it was determined that 25% of the current Grade 1 needed support. Teams worked to bring that goal of lowering the percentage down and have met it with a lowering to 15% of Grade 1 needing support. Teams continues to work with intervention. Students have take-home reading materials and many other resources provided to them. After the testing which is beginning now, there will be updates on all the goals later in the year. The School Committee will receive updates at the end of this year after testing and we will see where we are at the end of the pandemic and starting next year.

## **7. APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

### **A. December 15, 2020**

### **B. December 15, 2020 Executive Session**

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for the Approval of School Committee minutes of December 15, 2020, and Approval of Executive Session minutes of December 15, 2020. 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.

## **8. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **A. Home School Requests**

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

## **9. BUSINESS**

A. Discuss/Action Legislative Priorities

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Discussion/Action Legislative Priorities as presented. Mr. Faerber so moved 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.

B. Discuss/Action Budget Transfers Greater than \$5,000

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item B. Mr. Faerber made the motion for Discussion/Action Budget Transfers Greater than \$5,000.00. 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.

C. Discuss/Action Stage II Submission Date

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item C. Mr. Faerber made the motion for Discussion/Action Stage II Submission Date. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, FF=yes, KM=yes, AS=yes, IK=yes, JCP=yes.

D. Discuss Emergency Generator Bid Award

No motion needed on Budget Item D – Emergency Generator Bid Award. Superintendent Kenworthy reported that a bid opening was held on this project with the lowest bidder but also a company the Administration feels comfortable working with.

E. Discuss Meeting Procedures/Bylaws Policy BED (Second Read)

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Business Item E. Ms. McDaid made the motion for Discussion Meeting Procedures/Bylaws Policy BED (Second Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. No vote on this item this evening.

F. Discuss Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy GBAA (Second Read)

Ms. McDaid requested to move to table Discussion Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy GBAA (Second Read). Ms. Copeland announced that Item F is removed from the agenda for further consideration.

**10. REPORTS**

A. Financial Reports

1. Monthly Financials – November & December, 2020

Mr. DiIuro gave the Monthly Financials – November & December 2020. Mr. DiIuro noted that the financials look like they are on budget for November & December, 2020. He also confirmed again the information that the State of Rhode Island did pass its budget and will be making districts whole again the end of February. They have been paying at 91% but will pay out the amount due. Star testing update was given by Assistant Superintendent Vivieros. Our district applied and received a grant for Star testing through the state. What we are working on now is sharing our beginning, middle and end of year data with the state. We are getting the Star funding so the funding we had put towards the Star testing for this year will be held by the company that runs the Star testing to be used for next year. In December, when our audit was completed, we did move \$720,103.00 into the local special revenue fund which we are using for our COVID expenses.

**11. 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

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Ms. Copeland announced that the public meeting would not be adjourning but rather the School Committee members will be moving into Executive Session. We will continue to meet virtually. Ms. Copeland requested a motion to enter into the Executive Session. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, TV-yes, IK-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes

## **12. MOTION TO SEAL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES**

## **13. ADJOURNMENT**

Upcoming Meetings:

- January 25, 2021, Joint Town Council/School Committee Legislative Meeting
- February 9, 2021
- February 23, 2021