

ZOOM MEETING LINK;

<https://portsmouthschoolsri-org.zoom.us/j/87083070482>

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Ms. Copeland, on Tuesday evening, December 15, 2020. The meeting is all virtual tonight. 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. No votes were taken

2. MOTION TO SEAL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

Ms. Copeland requested a motion to seal the 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, FF-yes, TV-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes, IK-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		

Let the record reflect that all School Committee Members are present this evening, December 15, 2020.

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

B. RIASC Meeting Update

RIDE gave a presentation at the Chair's Meeting of RIASC on R.I. Education Accountability Act, Site Case Management. Ms. Copeland sent all members a power point presentation of this report. A lot of this, we have heard about before in terms of what the law entails and the School Improvement Teams but they do have a slide that talks about School Committee responsibilities and the need to establish and review regarding School Improvement Teams and some discussion about that, additional training and going back to the legislature this coming January to elaborate on some more of the responsibilities. The full implementation of this is to be in Fall, 2022, but obviously in February, 2021, is when they are hoping to release some more guidance on the Spring, 2021, regarding training modules. It was an update on the next steps and what to expect. For School Committees, it is going to fall on the Policy Subcommittees to be sure the policies stay in line with the new legislation.

C. Newly Elected Town Officials Swearing- In Ceremony

Ms. Copeland reported that we have had three members of the School Committee sworn in for four-year terms and one individual sworn in for a two-year term by the Town Council on December 7, 2020. Congratulations to Ms. Karen McDaid, Mr. Juan Carlos Payero, Ms. Isabelle Kelly, and Ms. Emily Copeland for being sworn in for another term. Very nice ceremony. Ms. Copeland also welcomed Ms. Kelly to the School Committee. Ms. Kelly briefly spoke regarding looking forward to working on the committee and being happy to have been appointed to the team.

D. Welcome to new School Committee Member – Isabelle Kelly

Ms. Copeland welcomed Ms. Isabelle. Kelly to the School Committee. Ms. Kelly briefly spoke regarding her appointment to the School Committee. She looks forward to being on the team and working where she can be the most useful and helpful.

ORGANIZATIONAL AGENDA

4. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION

A. Election of Chair

Mr. Faerber nominated Ms. Emily Copeland for Chair. Mr. Payero seconded the nomination. Per School Committee policy, the request for nominations must be made three (3) times. Ms. Copeland made the request three (3) times with no other nominations made. There was one nomination, Ms. Emily Copeland. The vote was taken and Ms. Emily Copeland was elected as the Chair of the School Committee by a unanimous vote of 7-0. FF=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, IK=yes, EC=yes

B. Election of Vice Chair

Mr. Faerber nominated Mr. Juan Carlos Payero (who goes by Carlos) as Vice Chair. Mr. Shers seconded the nomination. Ms. Copeland made the request (3) three additional times for other nominations. None were made and the vote was taken. Mr. Payero was elected unanimously for Vice Chair, 7-0. EC=yes, FF=yes, TV=yes, IK=yes, AS=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes.

C. Election of Clerk

Mr. Shers nominated Mr. Thomas Vadney for the position of School Committee Clerk. Mr. Payero seconded the nomination. Ms. Copeland requested additional nominations three (3) times with no other nominations brought forward. The vote was taken with Mr. Vadney was unanimously elected School Committee Clerk, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, FF=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, IK=yes.

D. Establishment of Meeting Date and Time

Ms. Copeland reported that the School Committee needed to establish meeting dates and times this evening. She requested a move to adopt the calendar as scheduled for the remainder of the academic year. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded. Ms. Copeland requested any discussion from members regarding this calendar. No discussion and a vote was called. The calendar as scheduled for the remainder of the academic year was unanimously approved, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, FF=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, IK=yes,

Ms. Copeland noted that, according to policy, on or before the third School Committee meeting, the members need to adopt bylaws, appoint legal counsel, and appoint subcommittees. We will do that at our next School Committee Meeting

REGULAR AGENDA

5. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

A. Racial Equity

Mr. Payero reported on the Racial Equity Subcommittee. The meeting was held on December 3, 2020, at 3:30 pm via ZOOM. Discussion centered around the PD Day discussion and debriefing held for staff on distance learning day. On December 17, 2020, there will be another meeting via ZOOM. The main focus of this meeting is our Mission Vision and formalizing objectives as well as documents we will be introducing to the entire committee. Everyone is invited to join to work throughout our district.

B. Health and Wellness

Mr. Payero gave the Health and Wellness Subcommittee report. Two meetings were held in the last week. One because of an omission in the initial agenda and another yesterday as well as another one this afternoon to continue the work. We voted for recommendation and updated version of the Health and Wellness Policy which will be going to the Policy Subcommittee for their review. The vote was unanimous. Next meeting will be held March 18, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. It is undetermined as of this date whether that meeting will be in person or via ZOOM.

C. Safety

Mr. Shers reported out on the Safety Subcommittee. The Safety Subcommittee met on December 10, 2020, meeting quarterly and when needed. The committee is made up of fifteen (15) representatives of the school system, first responders and other members of the community. Mr. Shers could not get into the specifics of this committee as far as actions but suffice to say they look into all issues related in this area such as equipment, the times and various other aspects that are warranted. The meeting was productive and we have the safety of students, staff and administration in mind.

D. Capital

Mr. Shers reported that the Capital Planning Subcommittee met today, December 15, 2020. They had six (6) members there which consists of three (3) School Committee voting members and 3 other administration and staff members in attendance. They unanimously passed an issue as far as spending a certain amount which we will be recommending later in the meeting. This is for work in the Administration Building and is a smaller amount. We meet at various times and look at various expenditures to get the "\$1.50 worth of each \$1.00 spent".

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment this evening.

7. PHS LIAISON'S COMMUNICATION

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

- Promoting another Pajama Day or Ugly Sweater Day to boost School Spirit during virtual learning to promote the holiday spirit.
- Another Blood Drive is planned in January. We are trying to increase our participation % up from the previous participation of 30%. It will be taking place on January 26, 2021, at St. John's Lodge after school. We are hoping that by holding the event in the middle of the week, that more teachers will be able to participate by donating.

8. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

A. Personnel Update

Superintendent Kenworthy noted one resignation – Ms. Julie Pfister, Paraprofessional/PMS. He then welcomed Mr. Iain Krissiouk into that position, Paraprofessional /PMS.

Superintendent Kenworthy noted another staff change in the PHS Student Assistance Counselor position. Ms. Terri Gregg has served in that position for a while, working with our students through a contracted service agency. She has taken another position within the agency and Ms. Cayla DiSarro has taken over the Student Assistance Counselor position at PHS. She comes highly recommended and is making herself known to both students and staff.

B. Ad Hoc Committee Updates – Building and Transportation

Superintendent Kenworthy reported on two committees that are not regular subcommittees but they meet on an Ad Hoc basis and support some important work we have going on. The Building Committee has met quite a bit over the past few years. This committee helps in initial stages of our Stage II Capital Improvement Plan. Everyone knows that last year we did put together a big plan but had to pull back because of some unforeseen developments including COVID. This fall, the committee did start meeting again because we do have to get a Capital Plan moving forward. We met on November 19, 2020, with representatives from various stake holders in the PSD, Town representatives, Dr. Copeland, and Mr. Shers (both on this committee also). In our recent meeting, we were joined by representatives from Colliers, our School Committee approved Owner's Project Management Firm, that will help in the development of our Stage II Application, and Studio JAED, our architectural firm that helped develop our previous Stage II proposal and have knowledge of the previous aspects of our plan which will be helpful as we move forward. At the last Building Committee meeting, this group agreed to designing a condensed Stage II proposal that would focus on health and safety items but still include projects at all four of our schools. The group is set to meet again on December 16, 2020, to finalize the list of projects. Once that project list is finalized, it will come back before the full School Committee and then the Town Council again, which are required steps for approval in the Stage II development process.

Another Ad Hoc Committee that Superintendent Kenworthy reported on was the Transportation Committee, newly formed this year. This group met on December 1, 2020, and consists of a various group of members of the PSD as well as a few parents and School Committee member, Mr. Vadney. Our transportation contract is due for bid this year and it has been a number of years since we made any substantial changes. We want to decrease the number of busses overall but meet the demand in a safe manner. We want to increase overall proficiency, particularly with drop off times at the high school and the middle school in the morning. Superintendent Kenworthy noted that later in the Business Agenda, he would be asking for the School Committee to approve the hiring of a Transportation Routing Consultant because all of the goals really cannot be achieved unless we take a hard look at our transportation routes and that does require some expertise so we will talk about that more in the Business Agenda.

Some of our buses are older than 10, because our contract expired and we did a one-year rollover with the existing contract. This will be rectified in the new contract.

C. District Updates. PSD Holiday Celebrations

We are seeing cases increase in our COVID case count but relatively manageable. Other communities are seeing a significant increase. We will increase a pause and go to full distance learning from December 21 thru at least January 8, 2021. We fully intend to start full in-person learning on Monday, January 11, 2021, for Pre-K thru Grade 6 and Hybrid schedule for Grades 7 thru 12. If school has to be cancelled for weather, districts have the ability to go to full-distance learning. We will try to do that with advanced notice and the benefit is that we do not have to make those days up at the end of the year.

We want to make it known that we are trying to keep the holiday spirit going with our students during these current time. Melville School in the hallways playing music, dressed festively. At Hathaway School, student's activity for the month involving snow and hopefully we can check that out before the end of this week. PMS was involved in planning and executing the Winter Wonderland festivities. Our PHS representatives indicated several endeavors taking place at the high school and Mr. Rauch prepared a virtual concert with a link ready for next week. Our Administration staff adopted a family and raised over \$700.00 to support a local family through the holidays. We may not have been able to celebrate in our traditional ways but the holidays were celebrated in new and different ways in our district

E. Fall/Winter Athletic Update

Superintendent Kenworthy has received many questions about the Winter Athletic Season. As we experience state pauses, that also affects the athletic schedule going forward. Our Athletic Director, Mr. Trezvant reported out on this subject at the request of Superintendent Kenworthy. During the Fall, the state approved low and moderate risk sports that our students have an opportunity to participate in. These included Boys and Girls Cross Country, Boys and Girls Soccer, Girls Tennis, and side-line Cheer. We had almost 200 athletes participate in the fall which began in September and wrapped up in mid-November, 2020. Much thanks to the coaches, the PHS staff, the game workers, our officials, the PSD Maintenance Department, and the Athletic Trainer, Mr. Jake Towers, who helped keep our student athletes safe during this pandemic. Out of 5,000 students who participated in sports throughout the state during the Fall Athletic Season, only 20 contracted COVID. Through contact tracing, it was learned that none of these cases occurred at a practice or game. The Girls Tennis Team went undefeated during the regular season all the way to the semi-finals in Division II. Our Boys Soccer Team captured the #1 seed going into the playoffs and lost in a tough game in penalty kicks to a very good Tolman team. Our Boys and Girls Cross Country Teams both progressed to the state championships. The girls finished in 7th place and the boys in 11th place. Everyone worked very hard and we are very proud of them. As far as the Winter Athletic Season goes, we have had several pushbacks. Right now our hopes are for some sort of season in January but we are waiting for the word from the Interscholastic League to receive word from the RIDEM on youth sports guidance. The sports initially approved for the Winter Season are basketball, Ice Hockey, Swimming, Gymnastics and Indoor Track. Wrestling and Competitive Cheer have moved to other seasons due to the nature of their close contact. When we receive the word from the State, we will sit down with administrators from PHS, PMS, with upper administration and determine how to proceed with a Winter Athletic Season. We have open registration now for sports, encouraging students to do their paperwork, so when given the date, we can move forward with our winter season. We have our safety protocols on line which was devised by the Sports Medicine Committee on Athletics. We are working to make this as safe as possible.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

A. November 17, 2020

B. November 17, 2020 Executive Session

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for approval of the School Committee Minutes of November 17, 2020, and the Executive Session Minutes of November 17, 2020. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0 and 1abstention. EC-yes, AS-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes, IK-abstention

10. CONSENT AGENDA

A. 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, JCP=yes, IK=yes

11. BUSINESS

A. Discuss/Action PHS Program of Studies

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Discussion/Action PHS Program of Studies. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, TV=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, IK=yes.

B. Discuss/Action – One-year Contract Extension for Council 94 Local 2669

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Discussion/Action – One-year Contract Extension for Council 94 Local 2669. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, TV=yes, JCP=yes, KM=yes, IK=yes.

C. Discuss/Action Authorization of Funds to Hire a Transportation Routing Consultant

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Discussion/Action Authorization of Funds to Hire a Transportation Routing Consultant. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, TV=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, IK=yes.

D. Discuss/Action One Time Waiver of Family Sick Time Limit in District Contracts

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Discussion/Action One Time Waiver of Family Sick Time Limit in District Contracts. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, TV=yes, AS=yes, FF=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes, IK=yes.

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

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

F. Discuss/Review Budget Transfers Less than \$5,000

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Discussion/Review Budget Transfers Less than \$5,000. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. This is not an item that needs to be approved. Minor transfers in the course of business.

G. Discuss/Review District Town Natural Gas Contract

Ms. Copeland requested a motion for Discussion/Review District Town Natural Gas Contract. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. Mr. DiIuro reported out that the School Department takes the lead in securing the Town and PSD Natural Gas Contract. That three-year contract was expiring the end of December. We contacted Direct Energy, who has pre-bid RIASC contract, and learned the increase for the contract for three years was 35%. We did find a consultant who would help us but we did not like the % quoted and recently we bid again with an 18% increase. We have decided to extend this contract for 16 months rather than the 3 year contract we normally do, which gives us two winters, and then we can go out to bid again. The Town followed our lead and did the same contract for 16 months.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair, Ms. Copeland, requested a motion for adjournment of the meeting this evening. Mr. Faerber made a motion for adjournment of the meeting of December 15 ,2020. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. EC=yes, FF=yes, AS=yes, TV=yes, KM=yes, JCP=yes IK=yes.

Upcoming Meetings:

- January 19, 2021
- January 25, 2021 Joint Town Council/School Committee Meeting

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