

ZOOM MEETING LINK:

<http://portsmouthschoolsri-org.zoom.us/j/89794439498?pwd=RnlTVkNwLONyQ3ZmN1JEcFE0OTczQT09>

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair, Ms. Copeland, welcomed the School Committee members and the public to the Virtual Meeting of Tuesday, November 17, 2020. She then 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

2. MOTION TO SEAL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES (September 22, 2020)

Chair, Ms. Copeland, reported that an Executive Session had taken place prior to the virtual public session. No votes were taken. She then requested a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, TV-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

3. CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

A. Roll Call

Emily Copeland:	Present	Thomas Vadney	Present
Juan Carlos Payero	Present	Fred Faerber	Present
Allen Shers:	Present	Karen McDaid	Present

Let the record reflect that all School Committee members are present this evening, November 17, 2020.

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

B. Emergency Evacuation Plan

Meeting this evening is virtual status from each member's home.

C. Remembrance of Kathy Melvin

Ms. Copeland took a moment to remember Ms. Kathy Melvin. For long term Portsmouth community members, Ms. Melvin was a long-time fixture at School Committee meetings and Town Council meetings. She ran and was elected to the School Committee in 1980 and ran again in 1984. She recently passed away and we wanted to take a moment to recognize all that she did. She worked on the behalf of our kids and her heart was in the right place. Thank you and sending condolences to her family.

D. Elections Update

The election will be certified at the end of November in R.I. and according to our Town Charter and our School Committee Policy, once the election is certified, the swearing in of newly elected or re-elected members will take place. That will happen on December 7, 2020, virtually via the Town Council. The first meeting in December will be our organizational meeting to be held on December 15, 2020.

E. Town Charter Changes

We had several items to the Town Charter that were up for approval by the voters. About a year and half ago, the School Committee met and reviewed the Town Charter as it related to the School Committee. We then voted to approve an amendment. Superintendent Riley, at the time, and Ms. Copeland then presented to the Town Charter Review Committee. They accepted our recommendations and the Town Council accepted our recommendations and now the voters have accepted our recommendations. Now it is up to the Policy Subcommittee to see that we implement those Town Charter changes into our policy. They were all passed and thank you to the voters for doing that.

F. School Committee Vacancy Update.

Prior to the election, The Town Council sent out a procedure to fill the vacancy on the School Committee and have applicants submit letters of interest, due by last Friday, November 13, 2020. There were four applicants who submitted a letter of interest. The Town Council, at their Monday meeting, November 23, 2020, will interview those candidates and hopefully appoint one of them to fill the two-year vacancy so that candidate can be sworn in on December 7, 2020, and join us for their first meeting on December 15 2020.

G. RIASC Meeting Update

Ms. Copeland turned this agenda item over to Mr. Faerber for presentation. Ms. Copeland was unable to attend this meeting and Mr. Faerber attended in her place. Mr. Faerber reported that he had sent all School Committee members a copy of the power point presentation given at the RIASC Meeting from RIDE. There were eighteen attendees at this meeting. The purpose of the presentation was to show how districts and schools were going to be measured going forward on academic achievement and being awarded the stars on the 5-Star system. All the districts and schools have to prepare a 3-Year Strategic Plan with the measurements they intend to use and then achieve those improvements. RIDE will provide their data base of information and measure the schools and district and their achievement based on their goals.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

A. Negotiations

There was a subcommittee meeting of the Negotiations Committee but nothing to report out on that.

B. Personnel

The Personnel Subcommittee met on November 4, 2020. The subject was upcoming contract renewals that would need to take place this year and whether the committee wanted to change the format for the Superintendent's Evaluation and the subcommittee recommended, particularly this year, just staying with the old system. They did discuss passing on the various options to other members of the committee and to look at and elaborating a little more on them this year. The vote was to keep the format the same for this year.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment this evening.

6. PHS LIAISON'S COMMUNICATION

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

- This week has been Spirit Week which is an attempt to unify the school and the students. A Blood Drive was held first and followed during week with Dress Up Day and running a Food Drive.
- Traditionally the Student Council has coordinated a Thanksgiving Basket Food Drive for families in need. The baskets will be delivered later on Tuesday and Wednesday of next week. The baskets are usually accompanied by a pie but because of the pandemic we are not able to bake and give pies. Instead, along with the baskets, we are giving recipe cards and the ingredients for the pie we would normally provide.

- The Boy's and Girl's Cross Country Teams did very well in the State Championships. Shout out to them as well.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

A. Personnel Update

Superintendent Kenworthy presented his Personnel Update this evening. During the last meeting, he announced the resignation of a couple employees for various personal reasons. A pending retirement notification has also been given. The appointed new employees for these positions are as follows:

Certified

- Samantha Dupere Sp. Ed. Teacher/Melville
- Amy Hart 0.5 SLP going to 1.0 SLP/Melville
- Lauren Buress Benevides 0.6 SLP/Melville

Non-Certified

- Shanik Pimentel Paraprofessional/PMS

Retirement

- Christine Vuolo Fecteau School Nurse/Hathaway

B. Adhoc Transportation Committee Update

During the last School Committee Meeting, there was discussion about forming an Adhoc or temporary Transportation Committee. Our contract with our district transportation provider is expiring at the end of this school year. We will need to go out to bid. We want to bring a committee together of various stake holders to help us finalize the RFP (Request for Proposal) that will go out for those bids and the review of our Transportation Policies before they make their way to a Policy Subcommittee. The participants have been identified at this point and we are making our way to finalizing the first meeting. An update should be available by our next School Committee Meeting.

C. District Updates

District updates were reported out by Superintendent Kenworthy during his presentation this evening. State-wide Professional Development Day was held yesterday, Monday, November 16, 2020. This is also a state-wide distance learning day and counts as part of the 180-day school year. Our students participated in activities designed by the teaching staff and the teachers themselves participated in professional development. A highlight was the launch of the first of a four-part series on our Racial Equity and Social Justice Training for staff. This Connects to the Racial Equity and Social Justice Subcommittee that we formed with Mr. Payero as the Chair and Mrs. Vivieros as the Co-chair. They have been working hard meeting along with a dedicated group. They have done a lot of good work for us. One of the things they have done is identify the trainer we are using for this series. We had the first of these sessions on Monday, November 16, 2020. Mr. Marco Williams, a highly respected leader in the areas of racial equity and social justice, kicked that session off for us. Superintendent Kenworthy reported that a lot of positive feedback had been received regarding the first session and looking forward to the rest of the sessions.

We continue to see COVID 19 cases in our district and continue to update our COVID Dashboard. We have had 17 total cases among students and staff of COVID and currently have 7 active cases. Most of those individuals have mostly returned including anyone listed as a close contact. The RIDH is getting overwhelmed with cases throughout the state. They set up separate mechanisms for K-12 districts and several of us are getting too good at the contact tracing part of this and identifying who some of the contacts may be. Therefore, they have asked

districts to take more of an active role in the beginning stages of the contact tracing process. It is not a huge change for us. One of the advantages of being a district of our size is that we had already been operating that way and able to manage the cases we have had. I think it is a different story for some of the larger districts around the state whose case count is quite larger than ours, as well. We are continuing with the procedures we have in place and once we have all the information, we turn it over to the RIDH. Our first initial steps often will include asking classrooms, a group of students, or staff to work from home until the RIDH makes a determination on the close contacts. I want to thank my core team for helping in these efforts.

Superintendent Kenworthy continued with his remarks by noting that we are getting ready for the transition to our Second Quarter marking period. A couple things will be happening here. Families in the upper grades, 7-12 grade range, could request a change to their learning preference, either in-person/ hybrid model or completely in-person. Also, for families choosing in-person/ hybrid model, we have worked hard to increase that in-person learning time. We have worked hard with our staff with input from students and families. We have settled on for second quarter at PMS is Mondays each grade will alternate with week one, Grade 7 will be in-person and the following week, Grade 8 will be in-person. There is a schedule worked out and will be made available to parents. At PHS, they are keeping the virtual Mondays which have become an important part of their routine and the work they are able to do through the MTSS program. There are going to be revised schedule opportunities to bring students back in-person between Tuesday and Friday every day for students who could benefit. We will be making sure we stay within the health and safety guidelines, example 6 ft. social distancing. Schools will be reaching out to families with this latest information.

The Fall Sports season is wrapping up and for us that means Boys and Girls Cross Country and Boys and Girls Soccer. They all had a good season. We have not heard as yet what the Winter Sports season will look like at the PMS or PHS level. As you remember, there we no sports at the PMS for the Fall Season through the Athletic Association and at PHS it was limited sports participation.

Reminder, next week we are rolling into the Thanksgiving break. There will be school on Monday, November 23 and Tuesday, November 24, 2020. Starting on Wednesday, November 25, 2020, our schools will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday and reopening on Monday, November 30, 2020. We have been advising our staff as directed by the RIHD regarding non-essential travel, particularly international travel or states with a greater than 5% infection rate. We realize that some families may need to travel just be aware that we do need to follow the 14-day quarantine and they will be able to distance learn during that time of quarantine.

8. TEACHING AND LEARNING

A. PHS AP Testing Results 2020

Mr. Amaral and Ms. Paige Kirwin-Clair presented this evening PHS AP Testing Results 2020. Ms. Kirwin-Clair stated that this presentation is a little different than what they might have done due to the shifting in standardized testing last spring. A power-point presentation was done with showing Advanced Placement – 3 Year Summary. One of the shifts was from expectation that students take AP courses and exams to presently we are encouraging them to take the courses and exams. We want students to want to take these exams. 90% of our students are now taking AP courses. Students are taking advantages of the opportunities and doing their best on the exams. Ms. Kirwin-Clair was proud to point out the jumps in biology and chemistry. Students individual scores were noticeably improved. Due to COVID, students have access to information on-line that has helped with preparedness immensely. The Physics course is probably one of the more difficult courses to pass but looking at the pool of students, we had a couple who did very well and went to their college of choice. PHS is trying to offer EEP courses for students and we have more students who are participating in this program this year. Our teachers have to do a lot of extra training in order to teach those courses. They need Master's Degrees and additional training and certified at each college as an Adjunct Professor. Our CTE Programs presently have 191

students and 24 students from out-of-district enrolled in our CTE programs. These programs are making our students marketable for good, high paying careers.

The PSAT/SAT 2019-2020 schedule took place in the Fall. The schedule is as follows:

- Freshman to the PSAT during the school day in November, 2020
- Sophomores will take the PSAT 10 digital test during the school day in April, 2021
- Juniors took PSAT/MNSQT test during school day in October, 2020
- Juniors will take the SAT test during the school day in April, 2021
- Current seniors took SAT in October, 2020, rescheduled from March, 2020

The results of our SAT scores started coming in after this presentation was prepared. We had 182 seniors participate and that is about 82% of our students. Evidence Based Reading and Writing mean score was 553 and last year only 546. This score shows 77% of our students reaching or exceeding the benchmarks. Math section overall mean score was 550 with 59% of our students reaching or exceeding the benchmarks. As more of the results come in, we will prepare a presentation to go over all the results with the School Committee at a later date. This is a significant increase in performance. This is a tribute to our teachers who are working so hard to make this work and also the students who are working so hard to take advantage of everything that is offered to them. We continue to look for opportunities for our students at colleges who may want to work with our students and teachers.

9. APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

A. October 27, 2020

B. October 27, 2020 Executive Session

Chair, Ms. Copeland, requested a motion for approval of the School Committee minutes of October 27, 2020, and the Executive Session minutes of October 27, 2020. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, AS-yes, FF-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Homeschool Requests

Chair, 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, 6-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

11. BUSINESS

A. Discuss/Action Allocation of School Safety Capital Funds

Mr. Faerber made a motion for Discussion/Action Allocation of School Safety Capital Funds. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, FF-yes, TV-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes

B. Discuss/Review PMS Emergency Generator Replacement

Motion for discussion and not a vote for Discussion/Review PMS Emergency Generator Replacement. Superintendent Kenworthy reported on this Emergency Generator Replacement at PMS which has already been identified as being old and coming up on the end of his life. Mr. DiIuro wanted to give out information that we have been approved for reimbursement for this replacement project. The hope is to have this out for bid in January and completed before June. It is about \$337,000.00 budgeted project and we should get 40% reimbursement. If the district should need a generator before this project is completed, we could rent an emergency generator to make sure the building is safe.

C. Discuss/Action Reporting Board Meeting Business Policy BEDK (Final Read)

Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion/Action Reporting Board Meeting Business Policy BEDK (Final Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. Mr. Payero made a motion to change the wording from Board Meeting Business Policy to School Committee Meeting Policy for all policies on the agenda this evening. Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes. There were no changes made on the policy itself. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, TV-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

D. Discuss/Action Minutes Policy BEDG (Final Read)

Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion/Action Minutes Policy BEDG (Final Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, FF-yes, TV-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

E. Discuss/Action Board Member Professional Development Opportunities Policy BIB (Final Read)

Ms. McDaid made a motion for Discussion/Action Board Member Professional Development Opportunities Policy BIB (Final Read). Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, TV-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

12. REPORTS

A. Financial Reports

1. Monthly Financials – October, 2020

Mr. DiIuro gave the Financial Report – October, 2020, this evening. In Revenue Section, we had almost no revenue to report. That was the Town managing its cash position and we did not receive state aid or town appropriation for the month. That was not a mistake but rather purposeful cash revenue decision. We will receive those funds in November. We do have some expenditures over budget. The one Mr. DiIuro brought to attention of School Committee members this evening was the potential for state-wide transportation. We did receive a projection from the state. RIDE contract also going out to bid and based on ridership and less students riding due to COVID, price is going up. No vote needed on this.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chair, Ms. Copeland, requested a motion for adjournment of tonight's meeting. Mr. Faerber so moved and Mr. Shers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0. EC-yes, TV-yes, FF-yes, AS-yes, KM-yes, JCP-yes.

Upcoming Meeting

- December 7, 2020 – Swearing in Ceremony
- December 15, 2020 – School Committee Meeting and Organizational Meeting
- January 19, 2020 – School Committee Meeting

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