Portland Board of Education
Special Meeting
Minutes of Tuesday, October 14, 2025 @ 7:00 pm
Portland High School Media Center

Board Members Present:
Laurel Steinhauser, Chair
Stacey Benham (arrived at 7:35 p.m.)
Kim Nagy-Maruschock
Dave Murphy
Karen Renner
Meg Scata
Sarah Spear

Board Members Absent:
None

Administration Present:
Dr. Charles D. Britton, Superintendent of Schools

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Laurel Steinhauser, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

She thanked Dr. Britton, Bob Shea, and all custodial staff for their quick response and hard work during the facilities emergency at the secondary school last Tuesday.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Approval of September 16, 2025 Board of Education Meeting Minutes
B. Approval of The Studio Building Usage Application

M. Scata moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by K. Nagy-Maruschock. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

4. Audience of Citizens - none

5. Assistant to the Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs – Stephanie Fragola

The Authorized Spending Report was submitted and reviewed. Due to a lower number of Open Choice students enrolled, S. Fragola reviewed the impact on the LEA budget and the portion being absorbed by the SEED grant. Dr. Britton explained the Open Choice enrollment process and discussed possible factors contributing to the decline in enrollment.

6. New Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

A. Two FTE Paraeducators

L. Steinhauser stated that this proposal was vetted by the personnel committee. Dr. Britton explained that there are two new students in the district who require one-to-one paraprofessional support. One paraprofessional position will be funded through the SEED grant, while the second will be funded partially by the SEED grant and partially by the mental health grant. He noted that these two new hires will not create a deficit in the budget.

M. Scata moved to approve the addition of two FTE paraeducators, seconded by S. Spear. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

B. 30-hour Floater Custodian Position

K. Nagy-Maruschock recused herself from the discussion and vote.

This proposal was vetted by the personnel committee. Dr. Britton explained the change from the originally budgeted 20-hour position to the current proposal, noting that this will add only 10 additional hours of funding. He stated that, compared to covering the additional hours through overtime, this change will result in significant cost savings.

M. Scata moved to approve the 30-hour floater custodian position as presented, seconded by D. Murphy. 5 in favor, with one abstention by K. Nagy-Maruschock. MOTION CARRIED

C. Approval of Friar Architect Contract Extension and Prowda Demographic Study

Dr. Britton reviewed the need for a demographic study and explained the reasoning behind extending the contract with the district's previous architect, Friar. He noted that the target is to begin community engagement in January, making it imperative to start the process now. The approximate cost for Friar's contract extension and the demographic study is $41,000. Dr. Britton outlined potential funding sources, noting the hope that the town will contribute half of the total cost. M. Scata requested that separate motions be made for Friar and Prowda. There was discussion regarding the scope of the demographic study and the informational component to be shared with the community. S. Spear expressed her hope that the town would be willing to cover the entire cost.

M. Scata moved to approve the Friar Architect contract extension, pending identification of funding, seconded by K. Nagy-Maruschock. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

M. Scata moved to approve the Prowda Demographic Study with the addition of the birth to three data, pending identification of funding, seconded by K. Renner. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

D. 2025 CABE Board Recognition Award

L. Steinhauser reviewed the application that was submitted, noting that it provides aspirations for how the board can continue working toward goals that have not yet been completed. She also noted that the board received this award last year as well.

M. Scata moved to approve sending the application to CABE for the 2025 Board Recognition Award, seconded by K. Nagy-Maruschock. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

E. Portland Public Schools and M&J Bus Transportation Tentative Agreement (discussed under Executive Session)

(S. Benham joined the meeting at 7:53 p.m.)

7. **Executive Session –** for the purpose of the M&J Bus transportation tentative agreement

M. Scata moved to enter into executive session and invite the superintendent and the assistant to the superintendent for business and financial affairs, seconded by S. Spear. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

Entered Executive Session: 7:53 p.m.
Exited Executive Session: 8:38

8. Executive Session Action

M. Scata moved to authorize the superintendent to request a bid waiver for the transportation contract 2026, seconded by S. Benham. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

9. Adjournment

S. Spear moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm, seconded by K. Nagy-Maruschock. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tricia Dean
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk