

**Portland Board of Education
Building & Grounds Subcommittee
Minutes of Tuesday, February 23, 2025 @ 3:30 pm**

Committee Members Present:

Dave Murphy
Kim Nagy-Maruschock

Committee Members Absent:

Meg Scata

Administration Present:

Dr. Charles D. Britton, Superintendent of Schools
Bob Shea, Director of Facilities

Others Present:

Stephanie Fragola, Assistant to the Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

K. Nagy-Maruschock called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm

2. Update on all Schools' Current Building Needs and Improvements

B. Shea reviewed staff accomplishments and completed projects, including the painting done over the summer. He provided an update on the boiler, noting it remains on schedule and within budget. He highlighted many improvements at the elementary school, especially related to safety. Roof issues are still ongoing, but they are being addressed as problems arise.

B. Shea reviewed the need for a 30-hour custodian, explaining that, given the square footage of the buildings, the current staffing levels are difficult to maintain. Previously, a 25-hour custodian was used to complete fill-in projects and duties, but that individual has since moved into a full-time position. Due to the ongoing need – and the lack of candidates interested in the 25-hour role – he recommended changing the position to 30 hours. This adjustment would be included in the union and is expected to reduce overtime costs. Dr. Britton added that the district would benefit from the position both in terms of coverage and overall savings. The proposal will move forward to the Personnel Committee for review.

3. Consolidation Plan

Dr. Britton reviewed the role of the Building & Grounds Committee and its involvement in the district's strategic planning work. With the other committees now concluded, this committee will take on the responsibility and meet more regularly to focus on strategic planning. Dr. Britton also reported that he reached out to two demographers for quotes on a new demographic study. He received two proposals and recommended moving forward with Prowda, as their quote was lower.

4. Review State Funding

Dr. Britton reviewed the PreK Trust Fund program and recommended creating four or five full-day PreK classes with tuition charged to families. He outlined the payment structure and eligibility for use of the fund. Questions were raised regarding projected enrollment numbers. K. Nagy-Maruschock noted that her understanding is that the Office of Early Childhood will conduct the enrollment projections. She also expressed concern that five classes may be ambitious and shared additional considerations for the program. The committee further discussed cost comparisons with other PreK programs and whether tuition revenue would fully cover expenses.

5. DRIPP Program

B. Shea reviewed the program, noting that it is funded on a per capita basis. Approximately \$85,000 is available to support projects related to small HVAC upgrades, energy conservation, and air quality improvements. He is exploring ways to use these funds to benefit the schools. Dr. Britton added that Mike Sorano will work with the district to review the demographic study and develop a plan for PreK. At the same time, he will need to create a plan and scope for major alterations at GS to transition it into a grades 3-5 school, while also mapping out HVAC improvements at the secondary schools. This plan will include DRIPP and state bonding considerations. Dr. Britton expressed hope that the educational specifications, budget, and drawings will be ready for Board submission before Thanksgiving.

D. Murphy suggested creating a calendar to outline tasks and corresponding deadlines. The committee discussed establishing a potential deadline date and considered the need for a traffic study related to the consolidation plan. Additional discussion focused on timelines, budget, reimbursement, and the importance of communication and partnerships with the town.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:44 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Tricia Dean
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk