

**Portland Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 20, 2023 @ 7:00 pm**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Laurel Steinhauser, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

BOE Members Present: Laurel Steinhauser, Meg Scata, Tim Lavoy, Kim Nagy-Maruschock, Stacy Benham, Dave Murphy

Members Absent: Sarah Spear

Administration Present: Superintendent Dr. Charles Britton, Stephanie Fragola Assistant to the Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs, Eric Martin Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology

Student Representative: none

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Agenda

M. Scata moved to remove agenda items #9B Restructure of IT Department, #9D Update on Kindergarten Enrollment, and #9E Discussion of Special Education Need at the High School from executive session to regular New Business items, seconded by T. Lavoy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Approval of June 6, 2023 Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes

M. Scata moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by S. Benham. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

5. Audience of Citizens

Debbie Law, Bell Court – spoke regarding the food pantry and asked the Board to be cognizant of any mill rate increase.

6. Portland Public Schools Spotlight - none

7. Student Representative Report – none

8. Communications and Updates

A. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Britton reported he received two retirements, one from Linda Martin, District Lead and Head Custodian, and the other from Nisar Mian, IT Technician. Graduation was successful, congrats to all the graduates. Two correspondences received

from Jennifer Pickett and Christopher Pickett regarding the school facilities plan and in favor of consolidation. Eric Martin, Ryan Walstrom and a State Dept of Education representative met and the state discouraged us to continue the application process for the Commissioners Network primarily due to the potential reorganization of the district. We will not pursue the opportunity at this time. BOS hearing followed by a Town Meeting will be held 6/21/23 to vote upon town funding to purchase radios for our schools. This would enable interschool communication as well as instant access to first responders through this radio system. Grant funding will also be utilized. Master class for science and reading, Eric Martin will discuss during his report. M. Scata gave an update from the CABA legislative meeting on all bills passed and signed. The list was distributed to members. CABA will send a list to the district on what needs to be revised or adopted. Dr. Britton asked for interest in changing date and/or time of meetings. Can discuss more thoroughly on July 11th meeting.

- B. Assistant to Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs – S. Fragola - \$180,000 deficit, increase from last report due to student services outplacements starting earlier. Dr. Britton explained the reasoning for ESY starting earlier. D. Murphy asked if there is a special education cost and reimbursement report that may list out amounts for review to get a better understanding.
- C. Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology – E. Martin - submitted report. Acknowledged the many years of service from IT Technician Nisar Mian and his dedication to the work. Distributed chrome book devices that were on backorder. 2025-2026 will be an important year in the replenishment cycle as the grant funding will have ended. Powerschool transition is going well. SecondStep, School-Connect curriculum fully implemented. K-3 literacy science and reading, and right to read legislation explained. The Master Class is to help have an instructional understanding to be able to lead the district in the science of reading. Application to participate has been submitted. Guidebook on hate and bias has been delayed due to administrative feedback. L. Steinhauser would like to hear at a future meeting about the workshops attended on educator diversity.

9. New Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

- A. Board of Education Retreat Date – Goal setting with administrators will be conducted. Thereafter, Dr. Britton would like to meet with the Board on goals and initiatives to implement or sunset. He would like to identify the date for after the goal setting with administrators. Tentative hold Monday, August 21, 2023 at 8am-noon. Ed Spec report benchmark school identified, more information to follow on location and date.
- B. Restructure of IT Department – IT Technician has retired. This is an opportunity to restructure IT dept and meet some emergent needs. E. Martin proposed new job descriptions and salary amounts. Hardware in the district has grown immensely, and the most advanced network infrastructure we have had previously. Proposed (2) Full time Level 1 IT Technicians. Adding a full time Level 2 IT Technician (not a managerial role), but with added responsibility of cyber security, perform network administration tasks, and managing the district inventory. With the restructure, will save \$13,514.61 overall in the IT dept. This will be a tremendous improvement for the district. Looking for action at the July 11th meeting to approve new job description that match reconfiguration. No union or managerial positions. Looking at August 1st hire date if approved.

C. 2023-2024 Stipends (*discussed under Executive Session*)

D. Update on Kindergarten Enrollment – enrollment at 91 students. Currently have five kindergarten sections (four classes with 18 students, one class with 19 students). Would like to add a section but need to identify closing budget amount and ESSER funds available for funding source to acquire 6th section. If ESSER funding is depleted for the deficit, Dr. Britton will come back with other recommendations. Possible action on July 11th.

E. Discussion of Special Education Needs at the High School – Large number of special education students at the high school. Considering how we can provide additional certified special education teachers to spread out the case load. Report submitted with status of caseloads and projection for next year. Recommended solution is to increase special education teacher by one for next year and monitor for upcoming year. Teacher could be .5 FTE but we know this may be difficult to fill. Identifying funding sources will be shared at July 11th meeting when we have a better idea of funding available. Possible action on July 11th.

10. Old Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

A. Discussion of School Facilities Recommendation – The Board of Selectmen is vested with the authority to make a decision. Currently Dr. Britton hasn't heard when this would be happening. The Board does have an important task of the Ed Spec report. D. Murphy has the hope that the BOS and BOE can work together to come up with a plan and to make a unified decision. Dr. Britton spoke about the importance of the Ed Spec report. Discussion on suitability of Brownstone. Discussion on what is included in an Ed Spec report. Dr. Britton directed members to view the facilities report which has links to examples of Ed Spec reports. L. Steinhauser asked that FRIAR present to the Board their findings so far on the space ability and limitations.

B. Superintendent of Schools Evaluation (*discussed under Executive Session*)

C. Board of Education Self-Evaluation (*discussed under Executive Session*)

11. Committee Reports

- A. Curriculum – L. Steinhauser – no report
- B. Policy – M. Scata – next meeting 7/12/23
- C. Personnel – L. Steinhauser – met last week
- D. Buildings and Grounds – M. Scata – no report
- E. Liaison
 - 1. CREC – M. Scata – next meeting 6/21/23 at 11:30a
 - 2. Selectmen – D. Murphy – town meeting 6/21/23
 - 3. Committee on Solidarity – T. Lavoy – next meeting 7/11/23
 - 4. Equity and Inclusion Coalition – T. Lavoy- no report
 - 5. School Facilities Study Committee – M. Scata – no report

12. Audience of Citizens

Debbi Law, Bell Court – spoke to science of literacy and not to overlook replacement for technology dept.

13. Board of Education Member Comments

K. Nagy-Maruschock – kudos on graduation ceremony

L. Steinhauser – Juneteenth celebration 6/24/23, Public Hearing and Town Meeting 6/21/23 at 6:30p.

14. Executive Session – for the purpose of Superintendent of Schools Evaluation, Board of Education Self-Evaluation, and 2023-2024 Stipends

M. Scata moved to enter into executive session for the purpose of Superintendent of Schools Evaluation, Board of Education Self-Evaluation, and 2023-2024 Stipends, seconded by S. Benham. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Entered Executive Session: 9:41 pm

Exited Executive Session: 10:10 pm

15. Executive Session Action

M. Scata moved to accept the evaluation of the superintendent for 2022-23 school year as presented, seconded by T. Lavoy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

16. Adjournment

K. Nagy Maruschock moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 pm, seconded by D. Murphy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tricia Dean, Clerk