

**Portland Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, August 9, 2022 @ 7:00 pm**

Note: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, attendees participated via in person and Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

L. Steinhauser, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

BOE Members Present: Laurel Steinhauser, Meg Scata, Dave Murphy, Lauren Christensen, and Tim Lavoy

Members Absent: Stacey Benham

Administration Present: Superintendent Dr. Charles Britton, via zoom, Eric Martin, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology

Student Representative: none

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Agenda

T. Lavoy moved to approve the agenda for the August 9, 2022 Board meeting as presented, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Approval of July 12, 2022 Board of Education Meeting Minutes.

B. Approval of August 2, 2022 Board of Education Retreat Minutes

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

5. Audience of Citizens – Debbie Law, Bell Court – expressed her feeling of educational negligence for not teaching foreign languages in grades K-5.

6. Portland Public Schools Spotlight – next report will be in September

7. Communications and Updates

A. Superintendent's Report – letter of resignation from Sharon Peters due to employment in public office. The Board will appoint a replacement at the September meeting; they will then elect a new chair. Resignations received from L. Ventrelli school psychologist, S. Carr special education, G. Daughenbaugh fourth grade teacher, M. Cyr paraprofessional, K. Pike math teacher, J. Crook language arts teacher, and L. Anderson paraeducator. Dr. Britton and staff have been working hard to fill these positions. There has been a very good pool of candidates. Confident that we should be fully staffed at the start of the school year. Extended

appreciation to Bob Shea, Stephanie and custodians for their wonderful work on maintaining the schools in preparation for the new school year. Looking at bids to remove oil tanks. Bid came in lower than expected, so much lower that all three will be able to be replaced. HVAC control system at high school is prepped and ready to be updated before opening of school. Air handling unit at secondary school waiting for part to come in, should be done before start of school year. Working with DEEP on track project and funding has been awarded. Opening bids from RFP this week. Hopeful by September meeting Dr. Britton will have an update on time line for the Board. Last legislative session included grant funding approval for upgrades for HVAC systems. Plan is to focus on the secondary school due to not dehumidifying the air. Received \$147,847 from school meals assistance revenue for transition funding from the federal government. The district can continue to offer free breakfast and lunch to students until funding runs out, which is projected around January 2023. Board retreat is next Tuesday and Back to School Convocation is August 24, 2022 at 8:30am.

- B. Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology Report – video presentation by Eric Martin for his monthly report. Will provide written reports ahead of the meeting, along with relevant documents. In person summer learning and enrichment opportunities reviewed along with enrollment stats. Universal summer learning online program for all students reviewed. Summer curriculum writing work explained. All programs came under budget. Extended school year program will be reviewed by Dawn at the next meeting. Update on new teacher orientation on Aug 22-23, 2022. Part of orientation will be a bus tour around town. Portland Public Schools Leadership team was impactful. Firm improvement plans organized for the next school year. Middle and high school based initiatives to advance restorative practices. Hit all benchmarks for advancing effort and therefore received incentive funding of \$13,500. Still in line through the connectivity grant to receive chrome books. First day of school August 29, 2022. Eric has relocated his office to Brownstone.

8. New Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

- A. Substitute Teacher and Substitute Paraprofessional Compensation for 2022-2023 School Year – Dr. Britton stated they reviewed substitute data. It was a bad year due to not a lot of people who are able or willing to substitute and many people contracted COVID. Principals did a magnificent job to accommodate and facilitate keeping the schools running. Dr. Britton is hopeful this year will improve. He met with the personnel committee and discussed that our district pays our subs less than area districts as shown in a report by ESS. His recommendation is to increase pay to an additional \$10/day. This would bring teacher substitute rate to \$110.50 and substitute para to \$97.50. His hope is to attract a larger substitute pool. M. Scata asked for this funding to be a separate line item as part of teacher salaries, for more clarification when reviewing the budget. Discussion on payment structure of managing substitutes. Plan discussed on how to cover deficit in the budget for additional substitute funding. Open choice will provide additional funding and if a soft freeze is needed that will be looked at as well. Different models of pay structure discussed to address longevity.

T. Lavoy moved to recommend the Board approve the increase of compensation for teacher substitutes to \$110.50 and substitute paraprofessionals to \$97.50, seconded by L. Christensen, with one abstention by D. Murphy. Discussion. Dr. Britton will return to September meeting to bring forward additional numbers and information for clarification. T. Lavoy withdrew his motion. NO ACTION

B. 2022-2023 School Lunch Prices – Dr. Britton stated school lunch prices that have not been reviewed in two years. Suggested price for this year presented. Question on school pricing difference. Dr. Britton will find out why as he does not have the information at present.

T. Lavoy moved to recommend the Board approve the 2022-2023 school lunch prices as presented, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

C. Leave of Absence Request – A. Pietraroia

M. Scata moved to approve the leave of absence request for A. Pietraroia through October 31, 2023, seconded by D. Murphy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

D. Additional Paraprofessional Staffing for the 2022-2023 School Year – Dr. Britton stated two additional paras are needed for additional students needing services. These paras save us significant funding because we are able to provide support in house vs out placement.

M. Scata moved to approve two additional paraprofessional positions for the 2022-2023 school year for special education services, seconded by T Lavoy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

9. Old Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

A. Superintendent of Schools Evaluation (*Discussed under Executive Session*)

10. Committee Reports

A. Curriculum – no report

B. Policy – no report

C. Personnel – L. Steinhauser - Discussed many items covered this evening.

D. Buildings and Grounds –M. Scata - will talk soon about HVAC

E. Liaison

1. CREC – M. Scata - meeting in Sept.

2. Selectmen – D. Murphy – discussed facilities presentation. Town funding received, discussed where funding was being utilized between senior center and land use.

3. Committee on Solidarity – T. Lavoy – meeting today.

4. Equity and Inclusion Coalition – no report

5. School Facilities Study Committee – M. Scata – next meeting Sept. 12th. Focus groups continue.

6. Youth Services Advisory Board – no report

11. **Audience of Citizens** – Debbie Law, Bell Court - supports implementing a nutrition committee

12. Board of Education Member Comments

M. Scata thanked Middletown theatre group, they did a fabulous job.

L. Steinhauser expressed gratitude to Sharon for her years of service. Leadership conference next week and in November will be the convention.

13. Executive Session - For the Purpose of Superintendent of Schools Evaluation

**T. Lavoy moved to enter into executive session and invite Superintendent Charles Britton, seconded by M. Scata. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.
Entered Executive Session: 8:38 p.m.**

T. Lavoy moved to return to Regular Session at 8:42 p.m., seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

14. Executive Session Action – No action

15. Adjournment

M. Scata moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m., seconded by T. Lavoy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tricia Dean, Clerk