

**Portland Board of Education  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, September 6, 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, Tim Lavoy

Members Absent: - Stacey Benham

Administration Present: Superintendent Dr. Charles Britton, Stephanie Fragola, Assistant to Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs, Dawn Davis, Director of Student Services, Ryan Walstrom Principal Gildersleeve

Student Representative: Leah Masal and Dorothy Riley

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**L. Steinhauser motioned to move agenda item #8 to #4 and renumber remaining items accordingly, seconded by M. Scata. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. Portland Public Schools Spotlight – Portland High School Boys Golf Team**

Coach Santavenere reported that this is their 5<sup>th</sup> state championship. Introduced golf team members and highlighted their season achievements. Thanked everyone in the community for helping the team be in a position to be successful.

**5. Replacement of Board of Education Member**

Kim Nagy-Maruschock resume was reviewed.

**M. Scata moved to appoint Kimberley Nagy-Maruschock as replacement Board member, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

Recessed to swear in new Board member at 7:08 pm

Returned to session at 7:15 pm

Kim Nagy-Maruschock joined the meeting

**6. Election of Board of Education Chairperson**

Dr. Britton called the vote for Board Chairperson

M. Scata moved to nominate L. Steinhauser as Board Chairperson, seconded by L. Christensen. Hearing no other nominations the Board voted via paper ballot.

Vote was unanimous to elect L. Steinhauser as Board Chairperson. MOTION CARRIED.

L. Steinhauser took over the meeting.

L. Christensen moved to nominate M. Scata as Board Secretary, seconded by L. Steinhauser. Hearing no other nominations the Board voted via paper ballot.

Vote was 5 in favor: L. Christensen, K. Maruschock, L. Steinhauser, M. Scata, D. Murphy, with one abstention: T. Lavoy. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

## 7. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Approval of August 9, 2022 Board of Education Meeting Minutes.

B. Approval of Out-of-State Field Trip PHS Band to Big E, West Springfield, MA September 23, 2022

**M. Scata moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED**

## 8. Audience of Citizens – none

9. **Student Representative Report-** Leah Masal reported the first week of school went well with fall spirit day and fall pep rally. Dorothy Riley listed the fall sports available. Freshman orientation was well attended

## 10. Communications and Updates

A. Superintendent's Report

### 1. Opening of the 2022-2023 School Year

Dr. Britton reported he received letter of resignations from N. Bakos administrative assistant to student services, A. Sadd teacher, M. Maniscalco paraeducator, H. Macomber special education teacher, M. Iannello high school counselor, and L. Restrepo ELL teacher.

Enrollment report reviewed. Kindergarten teacher added. Still registering students, number will tick up a few more into October. L. Steinhauser inquired if exit interviews of outgoing staff is being done to get a feel for why they are leaving. Dr. Britton stated they are and what the reasoning was behind most of the resignations. Open Choice slots is currently at 74. Dr. Britton stated that the quality of new teachers is phenomenal. Video of new staff presented. Reviewed current open positions, all classroom positions have been filled. Leadership team did a great job of choosing new staff, orientations went well. Transportation is at 9 routes. Off to a great start to a new school year.

B. Business and Financial Affairs Report – Stephanie Fragola

1. 2021-2022 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report – memo submitted. Highlights discussed included upcoming purchases, transportation, and purchase services savings. L. Steinhauser inquired about encumbrances.

2. 2023 Financial Report – report submitted. \$80,000 negative to date. Tough to do any projections at this point and too early to tell whether there will need to be more of a freeze. D. Murphy would like an analysis of grant money funding and budgetary funding that is utilized for job positions. Discussion on being able to continue funding in the budget for grant funded positions as well as potential need. Dr. Britton explained what the process would look like.

C. Director of Student Services Report – D. Davis reported staffing is a high priority item. Hired a new administrative assistant. Replaced all four-teacher vacancies. School psychologist has been hired. Occupational therapist contract being reviewed as discussed in a later agenda item. Current relationship with Cheshire Fitness to work with students as needed for speech pathology and occupational therapist. Her recommendation is to continue to pursue the relationship with them. TESOL teacher has resigned the matter will be discussed in a later agenda item. Still filling remaining para positions. CT SEDS up and running. EL student numbers will be distributed to Board members once determined. Discussion on additional paras needed.

#### 11. New Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

A. Gildersleeve School Interventionist –

Dr. Britton reviewed the CSDE grant and would like to add a one-year only grant funded interventionist. The grant needs to be used this year as it can't be rolled over. Ryan reviewed position specifics and grant funding.

**M. Scata moved to approve applying a portion of the CSDE grant funding to hire a one-year reading interventionist at Gildersleeve, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

B. Increasing TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Support

Dr. Britton reviewed the need for a full time vs part time and funding of the position.

**T. Lavoy moved to approve hiring a full-time position 1.0 from .5 for a teacher of English as a second language, which will be funded by Open Choice attendance grant, seconded by M. Scata. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

C. Additional Paraprofessional Staffing to the 2022-2023 School Year

44 positions previously up to 57 positions currently based on need. D. Murphy expressed his surprise that there is a 30 percent increase, especially with declining enrollment. D. Davis explained that these needs are for health and safety reasons, and our district makes this pledge to keep these students in district vs out placement for the benefit of our students and our community. Discussion on funding.

**M. Scata moved to approve hiring six additional paraprofessionals to support identified students as presented, seconded by K. Nagy-Maruschock. Discussion. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

D. Discussion of Occupational Therapist Certified Position

Dr. Britton is pulling this discussion. They did the analysis and found working with Cheshire Fitness would be a viable option. Will leave this item as Professional Service.

E. 2022-2023 Board of Education Goals

As part of Board Retreat these goals were determined. Leadership team has given input and support these goals.

**M. Scata moved to adopt the 2022-2023 Board of Education goals as presented, seconded by T. Lavoy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

F. 2022 Board of Education Committee Assignments

L. Steinhauser asked the Board to review committees and think about if they want to keep current committees or select new ones. Will discuss at next meeting.

**12. Old Business (Discussion/Possible Action)**

A. Substitute Teacher and Substitute Paraprofessional Compensation for 2022-2023 School Year

Dr. Britton stated substitutes are an integral part of the school. For the purpose of stability, he would like to work on transportation, along with this issue. Reviewed current situation and challenges of securing and retaining substitutes. Reviewed recommendations for pay, along with hours for each position. ESS contract is up for renewal. Discussion on increased amount specific to each position.

**T. Lavoy moved to approve increasing compensation rates for substitutes to the following;**

**Substitute Paraprofessionals \$14.60 per hour**

**Daily Substitute Teachers \$15.60 per hour**

**Building Substitute Teachers \$16.60**

**Nurse Substitutes no change**

**seconded by M. Scata. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

**13. Committee Reports**

A. Curriculum – no report

B. Policy – M. Scata -meeting next week

C. Personnel – L. Steinhauser – items discussed tonight, no additional report

D. Buildings and Grounds – M. Scata - 8/22/22 met and received update by B. Shea. Schools ready for opening. Oil tank project postponed due to start of school, rescheduled to Columbus Day.

E. Liaison

1. CREC – M. Scata – next meeting 10/22/22

2. Selectmen – no report

3. Committee on Solidarity – T. Lavoy - next meeting 9/13/22

4. Equity and Inclusion Coalition – no report

5. School Facilities Study Committee – M. Scata – next meeting 9/12/22. Focus group upcoming 9/14.

6. Youth Services Advisory Board – no report

**14. Audience of Citizens – none**

**15. Board of Education Member Comments**

M. Scata – pleased with stability message in the last Rivereast. Also nice piece on Sharon Peters. Cabe getting ready for convention in November.

L. Christensen – welcomed Kim

T. Lavoy – welcomed Kim and congrats to Laurel on chairperson

K. Nagy-Maruschock – honored on being appointed

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L. Steinhauser - Attended summer leadership training. Meg ran a panel on student voice and did a really nice job.

**16. Executive Session - none**

**17. Executive Session Action - none**

**18. Adjournment**

**L. Christensen moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m., seconded by T. Lavoy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Tricia Dean, Clerk