

**Portland Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 5, 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

Sharon Peters, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

Sharon Peters handed over the meeting to Laurel Steinhauser, Board Secretary.

BOE Members Present: Laurel Steinhauser, Lauren Christensen, Tim Lavoy, Stacey Benham, Dave Murphy, and Sharon Peters via zoom. Meg Scata was absent.

Administration Present: Superintendent Dr. Charles Britton, Dawn Davis, Director of Student Services, Stephanie Fragola, Assistant to Superintendent for Business and Financial Affairs, Kathryn Lawson, PHS Principal, Allison Hine, BIS Principal, Ryan Walstrom, Gildersleeve Principal, Cynthia Laverty, PHS Health Education, Elisha M. Lewis, Library Media Specialist, Dylan Bernard, CTE Technology Education Teacher.

Student Representative: none

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Agenda

T. Lavoy moved to approve the agenda for the April 5, 2022 Board meeting as presented, seconded by D. Murphy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Board of Education Meeting Minutes.

1. March 15, 2022 Regular Meeting

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

5. Audience of Citizens - none

6. Portland Public Schools Spotlight – Portland High School Musical “The Little Mermaid”

Elisha Lewis and Dylan Bernard reviewed the rehearsal schedule. Faculty and parents helped-out in all phases. Presented video clips and pictures of rehearsals and performances. The middle school, Brownstone, Valley View and Gildersleeve students were able to see an abbreviated version on the play. L. Steinhauser commended the efforts to involve all the schools to view performances.

7. Student Representative Report – none

8. Communications and Updates

- A. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Britton received resignations from Sarah Lippincott, special education teacher and Charlotte Gionfriddo, paraprofessional. Enrollment update submitted. Covid report shows low numbers, 6.9 per 100,000. Only five positive cases since winter break. All students will be sent home with a covid kit for April break. Bonding for the track has been received. RFQ will go out for architecture firms, with bid to follow. RFP will go out thereafter. Hopeful for March 2023 to begin. Testing season is upon us to include smarter balance testing, SAT and PSAT. Contract negotiations for custodians complete, nurses contract was completed last night, and administrative assistants contract is in the works. Paraprofessional negotiations will start in April. Parent/Teacher conferences are this Friday. Next week will start April vacation.
- B. Business and Financial Affairs
1. District Financial 3rd Quarter Report – S. Fragola stated that they are still doing well in all accounts. Financial report submitted.
- C. Update on Substance Use and Prevention in the Portland Public Schools –K. Lawson/C. Laverty – Kathryn and Cynthia gave an update of where we are now for substance abuse. Many technological changes have made it difficult to detect (i.e. vapes being odorless). The model has switched to a restorative framework for discipline. In place are counseling and education when possible. Technology and legislation policy has made acquisition of drugs easier. Actions in place for schools are bathroom monitors, alternative options for kids by way of open gym, outdoor time, special programs, staff awareness and diligence. Both outlined the intervention and support measures. Cindy reviewed student-learning experience for Brownstone, middle school and high school. She outlined the high school curriculum key standards. The best method for tracking issues is student feedback. Ryan Walstrom stated their partnership with Youth Services has been incredible. Allison Hine stated the prevention piece at the 5th and 6th grade level is instrumental. *chuck Hershorn*
- D. Director of Student Services Report – D. Davis updated current numbers, 245 IEP students, 31 referrals outstanding, 49 English language learners, and 12 outplacements. Birth to three suffered the most with lack of access during COVID. The Bridge and Harbor program have 40 students combined. CT alternative assessments are in progress. The new IEP model has been incorporated into the state toolbox. There will be eight experts coming in to train staff. Paraprofessional day is tomorrow. Three more paraprofessionals are needed from now until the end of the school year, two for Brownstone and one for birth to three. The personnel committee has been updated. S. Fragola stated there is still IDA grant funding that can be used. *pre-k*

9. New Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

- A. Paraprofessional Staffing for the 2021-2022 School Year – covered in 8.D
- B. Middletown Stage Company Building Usage – Dr. Britton received a request from the Middletown Stage Company to use the school facilities again. This request requires Board approval due to being a non-Portland group. The district will receive approximately \$10k for the use. Twenty-five percent of the play's enrollment are Portland students.

T. Lavoy moved to recommend that the superintendent be authorized to enter into contract with the Middletown Stage Company to use the school facilities for their musical, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

C. Leave of Absence Requests

S. Benham moved to approve extended maternity leave for Jen Vissicchio, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

L. Christensen moved to approve maternity leave for Suzanne Verrastro, seconded by S. Benham. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

D. Ratification of 2022-2025 Contract between AFSCME-Council 4, Local 1303-44 and Portland Board of Education – to be discussed in Executive Session

10. Old Business (Discussion/Possible Action)

A. Portland Board of Education FY 2023 Budget Modifications – Dr. Britton met with the Board of Selectmen and they decreased the BOE budget by \$40k. No cuts have been identified at this point. They may be able to absorb the cut in new revenue. Open choice will be approximately \$10k per student at 57 students. There is ESSER funding available as well. Discussion on fuel prices. Time line for students in open choice for next year discussed. Discussion on cut amounts by the BOS.

11. Committee Reports

A. Curriculum – L. Christensen/S. Peters – need to determine consistent day/time for meetings.

B. Policy – M. Scata – no report

C. Personnel – S. Peters – reviewed during meeting

D. Buildings and Grounds – M. Scata – no report

E. Liaison

1. CREC – M. Scata – no report

2. Selectmen – D. Murphy – no report

3. Committee on Solidarity – T. Lavoy – next meeting 4/19

4. Equity and Inclusion Coalition – ~~S. Benham~~ *L. Christensen* – first meeting in person this Thursday

5. School Facilities Study Committee – M. Scata – D. Murphy reported there are 6 to 7 options with architectural teams. At the next meeting, they will narrow down the vision for the district. Focus groups will be formed to gather input.

6. Youth Services Advisory Board – S. Benham – no report

12. Audience of Citizens - none

13. Board of Education Member Comments

D. Murphy asked about the school absentee rates. Dr. Britton stated attendance has been better but he will follow up with more detail at the next meeting.

L. Christensen thanked Kathryn and Cindy on their presentation.

L. Steinhauer asked if there has been a BOS member assigned as liaison to BOE. D. Murphy will check into this.

14. Executive Session - For the Purpose of Collective Bargaining – AFSCME Council 4, Local 1303-44

T. Lavoy moved to enter into executive session and invite Dr. Britton, seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Entered Executive Session: 8:35 p.m.

T. Lavoy moved to return to Regular Session at 8:44pm, seconded by S. Benham. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

15. Executive Session Action

L. Christensen moved to recommend to the full Board that the Portland Board of Education approve the 2022-2025 contract between the AFSCME-Council 4, Local 1303-44 and Portland Board of Education, seconded by T. Lavoy. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

16. Adjournment

T. Lavoy moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m., seconded by L. Christensen. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tricia Dean, Clerk