

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION**

September 10, 2007

The committee of the whole work session of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, September 10, 2007, was called to order at 6:29 p.m. by President Johnson in the Professional Development Center of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. She welcomed an audience of 15 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Trustees Present: Tom Eddy, Shirley Johnson, Deb Polderman, Dale Posthumus, and Jennifer Whistler

Board Trustees Absent: Melanie Kurdys and Wendy Mazer

President Johnson informed the audience the Board Governance discussion will be postponed to a meeting when all Trustees are present. She also removed the Discussion Item pertaining to review of high school attendance policies until after the upcoming Policy Committee meeting. President Johnson opened the meeting to comments or communications from the Board. Hearing no comments from Trustees, she then opened comments to the public.

Ms. Joanne Willson, 7122 Leawood, a citizen, discussed bussing issues she would like to see resolved.

There being no further comments, President Johnson moved to the action items portion of the agenda and informed the audience of a revision in the formal minutes from August 27, 2007 and an additional new teacher recommendation added to tonight's agenda.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda consisting of: minutes of the August 27, 2007 special meeting; and the appointment of the following new teachers: Ms. Kimberly Louis, Ms. Allison Patrick, Mr. Daniel Stevens, and Ms. Suzanne Buckley. Motion carried unanimously.

The Human Resource Manager, Ms. Vickie Herzberg, presented background information on the new teachers approved in the consent agenda, adding that Ms. Suzanne Buckley will teach at Amberly Elementary, and informed the audience that two teaching positions still remain open in the District.

President Johnson informed the audience that Waylee Elementary playground equipment is mobile and will be moved to another location should the Bond be successful. She also clarified that if Proposal 1 does not pass, the District will not move forward with Proposal 2, even if Proposal 2 passes. She explained that the highest priority in all the community survey feedback has been safety, technology, and high school preparation – making Proposal 1 the most critical. Without Proposal 1, there would not be a need for a new 12th Street Elementary School and the Board would need to seek further community feedback before it would consider issuing any bonds.

The Communications and Marketing Manager, Mr. Tom Vance, discussed plans for District communications pertaining to the Bond. He focused on voter registration, the proposals, District web site, construction of a Question and Answer section that will appear on our web site and portions of it printed every week in the Gazette until the November elections. He discussed disseminating information in school newsletters, public forums (three open houses planned in October), a mailing in early October to all District households, utilizing building marquees, Cable Access is planning to run a community informational piece, meetings with Parent Teacher Organizations and service clubs, and the District Bulletin to communicate with staff. Mr. Vance also informed the audience the architects are revising the display boards. Several Trustees clarified questions and President Johnson pointed out the "YES" committee that is not associated with the District may also send out additional information pieces. Mr. Eddy suggested a tour of our educational facilities so citizens get an opportunity to evaluate current educational space and to educate the public how improved facilities foster student achievement. When Mrs. Whistler asked if the Board and Administrators should be attending all the meetings, Superintendent Wells responded those details are still being finalized.

Superintendent Wells discussed work completed by the District Advisory Council (DAC) pertaining to attendance boundaries and that she is looking for a response from the Board regarding forming a Committee and establishing a timeline for this process. She asked Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, Mr. Ric Perry, to explain further details about the attendance boundary study.

Mr. Perry presented an overview of the redistricting study conducted by the DAC and shared goals, and parameters used to prepare simulations and noted that was where the DAC left off in its discussions earlier this year.

Superintendent Wells requested Trustee comments on the attendance boundary study and after numerous questions and answers, she acknowledged the District would move forward with planning.

Mr. Perry presented background information regarding the Northern High School Wind Ensemble trip to Carnegie Hall, New York City, New York, from March 19-22, 2008, and responded to comments and questions from Trustees.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education move the permission for Northern High School Wind Ensemble to plan a trip to Carnegie Hall, New York City, New York, from March 19-22, 2008 to an action item. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the permission for Northern High School Wind Ensemble to plan a trip to Carnegie Hall, New York City, New York, from March 19-22, 2008. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bob Schafer, 7667 Cobblewood, a citizen, discussed the Bond proposals.

Ms. Joanne Willson, 7122 Leawood, a citizen, voiced concern about the District debt levy millage rate and ranking comparison on recent information made available to the public.

Ms. Mildred Taraszka, 410 Marylynn, a citizen, discussed decommissioning Waylee and questioned several costs.

Superintendent Wells responded to Ms. Willson regarding bus schedules. She informed Ms. Taraszka the District is looking at all possibilities to utilize the Waylee building and responded to other concerns she had raised.

A motion was offered by Mr. Eddy, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education move into closed session for the purpose of discussing negotiations. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board moved into closed session at 7:36 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 8:10 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary