

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

April 25, 2011

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, April 25, 2011, was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by President Hollenbeck in the Media Center at Community High School, 1010 W. Milham Road.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Board Trustees Absent: Joanne Willson

Administration Present: Marsha Wells, Superintendent; Denise Bresson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Ric Perry, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction; Craig Ross, Community High School Administrator; and Tom Vance, Community Relations Manager

Staff Present: Jen Everts, Teacher; Kathy Ha, Teacher; Cory Hinga, Teacher; Andrea Ramsdell, Teacher; Jason Shanafelt, Teacher; Dawn Sylvester, Counselor; Amanda Thorpe, Teacher; Clint Wagner, High School Supervisor; and Krista Wirt, Counselor

PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation on the Community High School - School Improvement Plan. Administrator, Dr. Craig Ross, led a discussion of Community High's target goals for this year, how they were selected, the key strategies taking place and their plans to evaluate progress. Dr. Ross and his building chairs responded to Trustee questions.

The Board called recess at 6:04 p.m.

The special meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, April 25, 2011, was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by President Hollenbeck in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. He welcomed an audience of 40 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Board Trustees Absent: Joanne Willson

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Hollenbeck opened the comments and communications portion of the meeting and asked if there were any citizens who would like to speak to the Board. Mr. Van Antwerp explained guidelines the Board uses for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Jeff Plunkett, 1377 Cliff Barnes, Custodial and Maintenance Union President, informed the audience that Mr. Steve Verburg, Central Elementary School Custodian, was selected as a runner-up for the 2011 C.L.E.A.N. (Custodial Leaders for Environmental Advocacy Nationwide) Award.

Mr. Rich Brien, 2528 Angling Road, a bus driver speaking on behalf of the Portage School Bus Drivers' Association, shared concern for future budgetary reductions, expressed the willingness of their group to assist with the budget challenges and stressed the need to maintain District busing.

Mr. Peter Butts, 1323 West Maple Street, a media specialist, shared concern for future budgetary reductions and stressed the need for media specialists.

Mr. John Baker, 9906 Pineview, a citizen and retired teacher, shared concern for increased class sizes, stressed the need for reading specialists and elementary counselors, he spoke in favor of the Pay To Participate fees, discussed eliminating Athletic Directors and outsourcing Administrators.

Mr. Joel Fletcher, 2687 Glenalmond, a citizen, discussed the Northern and Central High Schools upcoming forensics competition and shared concern for the image of the District.

Ms. Jeanna Walker, 5720 East B Avenue, a media specialist and Chair of the K-12 Media Department, shared concern for future budgetary reductions and stressed the need for media specialists.

Ms. Sara Brown, 1007 Josiane Drive, a media specialist, shared concern for future budgetary reductions and stressed the need for media specialists.

Ms. Jane Hoinville, 3325 Lake Hill Drive, a parent, shared concern for future budgetary reductions and stressed the need for media specialists.

Ms. Marie Ryan, 7145 Arborcrest Court, a citizen, shared concern for future budgetary reductions and stressed the need for media specialists and reading specialists. She also discussed concern for all day Kindergarten.

Ms. Debra Miller, 2104 Eckner Street, an employee and President of the Portage Association of Educational Office Personnel (PAEOP), shared concern for future budgetary reductions, expressed the willingness of their group to assist with the budget challenges and stressed the need for secretaries.

Mr. Bob Schafer, 7667 Cobblewood, a citizen, shared support for reading specialists and concerns for transportation cuts, high school traffic flow should cuts be made to transportation, and agreed with closing the Administration Building.

Ms. Jody Shepard, 214 Dawnlee Avenue, an employee, requested confirmation of her e-mail message and shared concern for future budgetary reductions and stressed the need for secretaries and transportation.

President Hollenbeck summarized the comments received, Mrs. Kurdys encouraged the audience to stay for the budget discussions, Mr. Snyder thanked the community for their input, and Mr. Rathburn thanked the community for their e-mail comments.

ACTION ITEMS

Motion offered by Mrs. Willson, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education approve the five-year proposal from CTS Telecom, Inc., to provide the District with five Primary Rate Interface (PRI) circuits and 41 Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS) lines for a monthly base amount of \$3,064.95, as presented.

Director of Information and Technology Systems, Mr. Dan Vomastek, responded to Trustee questions about bidding and redundancy. Two Trustees expressed concern regarding specifications, vendors and back-up structure.

Motion carried by a vote of 4-2.

Motion offered by Mr. Van Antwerp, seconded by Mr. Howe, that the Board of Education approve the purchase of furniture for the Technology and Training Center for an amount not to exceed \$88,432.75, from 2008 Bond Fund #1, as presented.

Mr. Vomastek responded to a budget related question.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion offered by Mr. Snyder, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education authorize the purchase of Central High School woodshop equipment, in an amount not to exceed \$32,830.00, from the 2008 Bond Fund #1, as presented.

The Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Ric Perry, responded to Trustee questions regarding budgets and specifications for some equipment.

Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2011/12 Budget Development. On behalf of the Quality and Scorecard Committee, Trustee Kurdys suggested three academic goals in order to use as guidelines for the budget development and program reductions: reading, math and college readiness. After much discussion, all Trustees came to a consensus on utilizing two of the suggested goals: reading at or above grade level and foundational math readiness. Members of the Quality and Scorecard Committee reported to the Board that the Committee believed that college readiness should be a metric on the District's scorecard. Mr. Noverr shared an updated financial presentation on the best and worst case scenarios of budget impact analysis assumptions and variables for the 2011/12 school year. Trustee discussions pertained to all day Kindergarten, 2012/13 budget planning drafts, class sizes, additional suggestions that do not appear on the list, personnel costs, teacher equivalent impact analysis, on line learning, curricular streamlining, revenue ideas, an attempted legislative change to the foundation allowance, expansion of the list of possible reductions to include everything in the District, consolidation and outsourcing possibilities, timelines, and community input. Superintendent Wells shared history on the previous concessions made by District employee groups and impressed on the audience the critical decision on May 3 to renew the Regional Enhancement Millage. She noted the District ranks in the lowest 11% for business and administrative costs in the state and is appreciative of the comments made by the leaders of the bus

driver and secretary bargaining groups regarding a willingness to make compensation concessions in order to help address budget concerns. Trustees discussed the possibility of an additional Special Meeting in May in order to incorporate feedback and further process community input.

Resolution in Support of the Kalamazoo County Regional Enhancement Millage. Mr. Van Antwerp outlined the Resolution in support of the Kalamazoo County Regional Enhancement Millage.

Motion offered by Mr. Snyder, seconded by Mrs. Kurdys, that the Board of Education move the Resolution in Support of the Kalamazoo County Regional Enhancement Millage to an action item.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion offered by Mrs. Kurdys, seconded by Mr. Howe, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution in Support of the Kalamazoo County Regional Enhancement Millage, as presented.

Upon a roll call vote, all Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Resolution Opposing School Aid Fund Transfer to Higher Education. Mr. Van Antwerp shared the MASB (Michigan Association of School Boards) Resolution Opposing School Aid Fund Transfer to Higher Education.

Motion offered by Mr. Howe, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education move the Resolution Opposing School Aid Fund Transfer to Higher Education, with two friendly amendments, to an action item.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion offered by Mr. Howe, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution Opposing School Aid Fund Transfer to Higher Education, as presented.

Upon a roll call vote, all Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

The Board discussed an additional optional Resolution Opposing School Aid Fund Transfer to Higher Education.

Motion offered by Mrs. Kurdys, seconded by Mr. Rathburn, that the Board of Education move the Resolution Opposing School Aid Fund Transfer to Higher Education, with a friendly amendment modifying the title, to an action item.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion offered by Mrs. Kurdys, seconded by Mr. Rathburn, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution to Support Adequate Funding for Public Education, as presented.

Upon a roll call vote, all Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

Community Survey and Focus Group Feedback. President Hollenbeck tabled discussions until the May 9th Board meeting.

2011/12 Goals Priorities – Preliminary Development. President Hollenbeck tabled discussions until the May 9th Board meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE
KALAMAZOO COUNTY REGIONAL ENHANCEMENT MILLAGE**

Portage Public Schools, Kalamazoo County, Michigan (the "District").

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the District (the "Board") was held in the Community Room of the Administration Building, on the 25th day of April, 2011, at 6:30 o'clock in the p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Hollenbeck, President.

Present: Members Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Absent: Members Joanne Willson

The following resolution were offered by Member Mrs. Kurdys and supported by Member Mr. Howe:

WHEREAS:

1. Adequate funding is essential to enable the District to maintain high quality educational programs to support the students that it serves; and
2. The voters in the City of Portage and Kalamazoo County have supported the Regional Enhancement Millage in 2005 and 2008; and
3. State funding reductions are anticipated to be \$470 per pupil in addition to increases in retirement funding that equate to \$245 per pupil totaling a per pupil funding shortfall of \$715 per pupil or \$5.6 million for the District in the 2011-12 school year; and
4. Passage of the Regional Enhancement Millage will provide \$2.9 million to the District and \$8.3 million to other school districts in the county annually for the next three years to help provide excellent academic programs so that students can achieve to their highest potential; and
5. The District uses proceeds from the Regional Enhancement Millage to fund instructional programs and to help limit class sizes; and
6. The District ranks in the lowest 11% for business and administrative costs on a per pupil basis; and
7. Teachers and staff of the District have taken voluntary pay cuts and increased contributions for insurance in recent years and administrators have already agreed to salary and benefit cuts for the 2011-12 school year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Portage Public Schools Board of Education supports passage of the three year, 1.5 mills Regional Enhancement Millage Renewal and encourages all eligible voters to vote "yes" to support K-12 education in the District and in Kalamazoo County.

Ayes: Members Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Nays: Members Joanne Willson

Motion declared adopted.


Secretary, Board of Education

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING SCHOOL AID FUND
TRANSFER TO HIGHER EDUCATION**

Portage Public Schools, Kalamazoo County, Michigan (the "District").

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the District (the "Board") was held in the Community Room of the Administration Building, on the 25th day of April, 2011, at 6:30 o'clock in the p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Hollenbeck, President.

Present: Members Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Absent: Members Joanne Willson

The following resolution were offered by Member Mr. Howe and supported by Member Mr. Van Antwerp:

WHEREAS, well-educated students prepared for college and careers is the best investment Michigan can make in the pursuit of a strong economy and a better future for its residents; and

WHEREAS, Michigan's standards for high school graduation have never been higher, with all students completing the Michigan Merit Curriculum and Exam to prepare them for post-secondary education or training; and

WHEREAS, Michigan school funding has increased by less than 1 percent per year during the past decade, failing to keep up with increased costs, mandates and standards, prompting staff and budget reductions to maintain programming; and

WHEREAS, Michigan voters in 1994 approved Proposal A, a measure that eliminated the ability of individual school districts to seek operating funds from constituents and shifted that responsibility to the state through an increase in the sales tax; and

WHEREAS, the ballot language of Proposal A clearly indicated those revenues would be totally dedicated to public schools, as it was crafted to provide tax relief for property owners while maintaining adequate funding for K-12 education; and

WHEREAS, community colleges and institutions of higher education were not included in the ballot language of Proposal A, nor were they mentioned in voter communication stating the intent of the constitutional amendment; and

WHEREAS, community colleges and institutions of higher education are afforded the opportunity to increase tuition and fees to finance operations while school districts are prohibited from seeking additional operating funds to compensate for inadequate state funding; and


WHEREAS, the transfer of funds from the School Aid Fund to community colleges and institutions of higher education will debilitate the School Aid Fund and its ability to adequately fund public schools; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Portage Public Schools Board of Education opposes the proposal to divert dollars from the School Aid Fund to support community colleges and institutions of higher education at the expense of public school districts and the children they serve.

Ayes: Members Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Nays: Members Joanne Willson

Motion declared adopted.


Secretary, Board of Education

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT ADEQUATE FUNDING
FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION**

Portage Public Schools, Kalamazoo County, Michigan (the "District").

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the District (the "Board") was held in the Community Room of the Administration Building, on the 25th day of April, 2011, at 6:30 o'clock in the p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Hollenbeck, President.

Present: Members Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Absent: Members Joanne Willson

The following resolution were offered by Member Mrs. Kurdys and supported by Member Mr. Rathburn:

WHEREAS, The Portage School Board of Education believes that the State of Michigan should fulfill its constitutional responsibility to assure sufficient funding to support quality public education and an equal educational opportunity for all.

WHEREAS, State funding must be sufficient to provide a well-rounded educational program that includes, but is not limited to, the state model core content standards for students in all districts.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Portage School Board supports working with our elected State Legislators in:

- recognition of individual districts progress toward reducing costs through control of health care expenditures, outsourcing non-core functions and consolidation of services
- directed efforts to reduce disparities in per pupil revenue among school districts
- funding for supplemental, categorical programs consistent with the state's obligation to assist students with diverse needs as demonstrated by careful study and research
- establishing full state funding for state-mandated special education programs and services
- determining a basis for "adequate funding" for schools.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that The Portage School Board also supports Michigan Association of School Boards and individual school boards continued efforts to control and reduce spending where possible while preserving programs and practices in support of student learning.

Ayes: Members Kevin Hollenbeck, Geoff Howe, Melanie Kurdys, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder and Randy Van Antwerp

Nays: Members Joanne Willson

Motion declared adopted.


Secretary, Board of Education