

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL AND REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

**August 22, 2011**

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, August 22, 2011, was called to order at 5:17 p.m. by President Snyder in the Instructional Services Conference Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

Board Trustees Present: Tom Eddy, Ted Hartridge, Geoff Howe, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder, Randy Van Antwerp and Joanne Willson

Board Trustees Absent: None

Administration Present: Ric Perry, Interim Superintendent; Karla Colestock, Business Manager; and Tom Zahrt, Director of Human Resources

**CLOSED SESSION**

**Motion offered by Mrs. Willson, seconded by Mr. Rathburn, that the Board of Education move into closed session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategy [Section 8 (c) of the Open Meetings Act].**

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

The Board moved into closed session at 5:17 p.m.

The Board returned to open session and recessed at 6:22 p.m.

The regular business meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, August 22, 2011, was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by President Snyder in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. He welcomed an audience of 75 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Trustees Present: Tom Eddy, Ted Hartridge, Geoff Howe, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder, Randy Van Antwerp and Joanne Willson

Board Trustees Absent: None

**DISTRICT RECOGNITIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Community Relations Manager, Mr. Tom Vance, introduced Portage Mayor Strazdas who presented a City Proclamation honoring Central and Northern High Schools for being ranked as top high schools in the nation. Mayor Strazdas noted the City Council looks forward to working together with the Board.

Mr. Vance introduced the Portage Education Foundation (PEF) President, Ms. Dorilee Schieble. Ms. Schieble presented the District with a PEF donation of \$35,000 to fund technology integration for the

2011/12 school year. She also acknowledged the PEF has allocated \$7,500 in matching grant funds for the PTO's (Parent Teacher Organizations) for media center materials.

Mr. Vance introduced the Business Manager, Mrs. Karla Colestock. Mrs. Colestock recently renewed her Michigan School Business Officials Business Manager Certificate, requiring more than 90 hours of professional development. President Snyder congratulated and presented a recognition certificate to Mrs. Colestock on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Vance also announced the Michigan Association of School Boards honored Northern High School for its Directed Learning Room receiving the Excellence in Education Award.

## **REPORTS**

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Perry briefed the Board on a recent Response To Intervention (RTI) training session and thanked the 60 staff members that participated.

Dr. Perry shared an open invitation to attend the Central High School Open House, scheduled for Friday, August 26 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. He noted there will be brief remarks and a balloon launch at 4 p.m. as well as tours of the new facility.

Dr. Perry shared an update on the Pay-to-Participate program being on-line and recommended anyone with questions to contact the building Principal or the Athletic Director with questions.

Dr. Perry reported on the State of Michigan data regarding the Michigan School Report Cards and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the 2010-2011 school year. He noted all schools in Portage received an "A" and a "Met AYP" status with the exception of Central High, Community High and Northern High. Dr. Perry provided background information as to why the three high schools did not meet AYP.

In a personnel update, Dr. Perry informed the Board that new teacher orientation was scheduled to begin on Wednesday, August 24.

Dr. Perry informed the audience that the Administration Building would only be accessible from South Westnedge (parking at the McCamley Field lot) beginning August 24. This change is due to demolition of the Technology Wing and parking lot reconstruction.

Dr. Perry introduced and welcomed the Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Mr. Rob Olsen.

**Financial Report:** Mrs. Karla Colestock presented a financial report for the twelve month period ending June 30, 2011, and provided background information on the excess funding.

## **COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS**

President Snyder 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. Hartridge explained guidelines the Board uses for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Christy Gaines, 8033 West PQ Avenue, a teacher, shared concern for reading specialists and the reading intervention/recovery program.

Ms. Jan Lynch, 6622 Morningstar, a teacher, shared concern for reading specialists and the reading intervention/recovery program.

Ms. Angela Little, 7587 Dunross Drive, a parent, shared concerns for elementary class sizes at Moorsbridge Elementary.

Mr. Eric VerHey, 50314 Fulton Road, President of the Portage Education Association, welcomed Mr. Olsen and shared concern about beginning a new school year without a teacher contract. He discussed comparable districts; critical program cuts, keeping the focus on the students, invited Trustees to join the next bargaining session and the need for a fair and equitable contract.

Ms. Cindy Hunter, 8979 West F Avenue, a teacher, discussed the increased burden placed on teachers due to class sizes and less planning time.

Dr. Millie Taraszka, 410 Marylynn Court, a citizen, sympathized with the teachers and shared concern for the fiscal realities the District is facing.

President Snyder opened the floor to comments from fellow Board members.

Mrs. Willson informed the audience that secretaries are back in all the school buildings, noted the last scheduled Kindergarten screening would take place on August 25 and urged parents to register their students.

Mr. Eddy provided a brief review of the July Policy Governance Retreat and thanked Dr. Perry and President Snyder for attending the recent Michigan Association of School Boards Board President Workshop.

Mr. Van Antwerp thanked the District teachers for their dedicated efforts during the summer months attending trainings, curriculum work and classes.

Mr. Hartridge acknowledged his pride for the teaching staff and wished all a successful year.

Mr. Rathburn echoed Mr. Eddy's comments on the Policy Governance Retreat noting the Board is moving in the right direction. Mr. Rathburn also shared pride and appreciation for the District teaching staff.

Mr. Howe shared thanks and appreciation to the District teaching staff for all their efforts.

President Snyder acknowledged the need for a contract with the teachers that will balance the fiscal realities the District is facing. He informed the audience that the Board intends to hold quarterly Policy Governance Retreats this year and shared Board Committee structure and charges for the current year.

President Snyder opened the floor to Board Committee reports.

Mr. Eddy reviewed criteria and processes to move forward with the Superintendent Search.

Mr. Rathburn noted the first Central High School home football game would be played on Friday night, August 26, at McCamley Field after the Open House ceremony.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**President Snyder presented the following Consent Agenda items for approval by the Board of Education: The minutes of the June 20, 2011, Special and Regular Business Meetings, July 11, 2011, Organizational Meeting, July 12, 2011, Policy Governance Retreat, July 13, 2011, Policy Governance Retreat and July 29, 2011, Special Meeting. There being no objections to any items, motion carried unanimously.**

## **REQUIRED APPROVAL ITEMS**

**Motion offered by Mrs. Willson, seconded by Mr. Rathburn, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of the following new teachers: Ms. Nancy Jaswik, Ms. Darcie Martin, Ms. Kathryn Oldham, Mr. Chris Palmer, Ms. Kaitlyn Paynich and Ms. Teela Troth-Renda, as presented.**

Mr. Tom Zahrt, Director of Human Resources, provided background information on this recommendation.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion offered by Mr. Eddy, seconded by Mr. Hartridge, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of Mr. Justin Walker to the position of High School Assistant Principal, as presented.**

Mr. Tom Zahrt provided background information on Mr. Walker and Mr. Walker addressed the Trustees.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion offered by Mrs. Willson, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education approve the following recall from layoff: Mrs. Ann Alburtus, Mr. Josh Bartz, Mr. James Carrow, Ms. Jessica Clark, Ms. Katie Eichstaedt, Ms. Julie Fischhoff, Ms. Kally Graham, Ms. Kayleen Grand, Mr. Brett McNeal, Ms. Dawn Merasco, Ms. Michelle Middlebrooks, Ms. Stacy Reinhart, Ms. Julie Scheeler, Ms. Kristen Shook, Mr. Daniel Stahr, Ms. Lisa Trott, Mr. Eric Tundevold, Ms. Aimee Wendland and Ms. Nicole Zielonka, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Tom Zahrt provided background information on this recommendation.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

## **APPROVAL ITEM**

**Motion offered by Mr. Rathburn, seconded by Mr. Van Antwerp, that the Board of Education approve Regulation #4620, Assignment, Transfer, Layoff and Recall, as presented.**

Mr. Tom Zahrt and Dr. Perry provided background information on the legislative changes that prompted this revision.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent  
Recording Secretary