

**Portsmouth School Board
Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

Minutes of the May 28, 2002 Meeting

A meeting of the Portsmouth School Board was held on Tuesday, May 28, 2002 in the Amphitheatre at Little Harbour School.

Attendance

PRESENT: Mr. Kent LaPage (Chair), Mr. John Lyons, Jr. (Vice-Chair), Mr. Raimond Bowles, Mrs. Nancy Novelline Clayburgh, Mrs. Nansi Craig, Mrs. Colleen Montminy, Mr. Carvel Tefft, Mr. Charles Vaughn

ABSENT: Mr. Clay Hayward

PARTICIPATING: Dr. Lyonel B. Tracy (Superintendent of Schools); Dr. Robert J. Lister (Assistant Superintendent); Mr. W. Peter Torrey (Business Administrator); Mr. Alan Robinson (Student Representative); and Mrs. Ann Walker (Employee Representative)

Non-Public Session

Prior to the regular meeting, a non public session was held in the Board Room in accordance with RSAs 91-A:3 II. (a) and (b) to discuss negotiations and the hiring of personnel.

Call to Order

Chair LaPage called the regular meeting of the Portsmouth School Board to order in the amphitheatre at Little Harbour School at 7:12 p.m. He asked Mr. Robinson to introduce the new student representative to the School Board. Miss Sarah Sanger was introduced to replace Mr. Robinson on the Board. Miss Sanger and Mr. Robinson explained the selection process. Miss Sanger said the application included three essay questions and an interview with some of the student class officers. Mr. Robinson said each secondary grade level was represented. After the vote was taken, Miss Sanger's name was presented to Miss Foley and Dr. Tracy. Dr. Tracy said the process was student driven, and the students made the decision.

The Chair called for a moment of silence, and asked people to remember the students who will be graduating and participating in senior week activities, as well as those who are less fortunate throughout the world. Mr. Robinson and Miss Sanger led the Pledge of Allegiance.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes Approved The Chair called for approval of the minutes of the May 14, 2002 meeting. Mr. Lyons moved, seconded by Mrs. Montminy, the minutes be accepted as written. The motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY SESSION

There was no one in attendance that wished to address the Board.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF/STUDENTS

Recognition of Student Representative Chair LaPage said the School Board has been fortunate to have had Alan Robinson serve as Student Representative for the last two years. Mr. LaPage said that, in his nine years on the School Board, Alan has been the most effective student representative he has observed. Mr. Robinson has been prepared to speak on behalf of his peers on almost all subjects. The Chair presented Mr. Robinson with a certificate of appreciation and a gift from the Board.

Introduction of New Staff Building Principals introduced staff members who have been new to their school since the start of the school year and teachers who have been hired to teach beginning next year:

Mr. John Stokel, Middle School Principal, introduced two new teachers for next year: Andrea Bishop (6th grade) and Peter Latchaw (grade 7 math).

Mr. Richard Gremlitz, High School Principal, introduced the following people who have joined the high school staff this year: Mike Rowe (math teacher); Barbara Amergian (grade office secretary); Kristina Reilly (social studies teacher); Bekki Felix (resource room teacher); Deb Heath-Barlow (home/school coordinator); Liz Schlacter (athletic trainer); and Doug Bates (work-based learning coordinator). Mr. Gremlitz introduced Jim Andrews, who return to Portsmouth High School next year as a computer teacher.

Mrs. Constance Carmody, Principal of New Franklin School, introduced Dr. Cindy Matthews (reading specialist), and Christina Cook Bates (grade one teacher next year). Mrs. Carmody said John Marlowe (grade 3 teacher next year) was unable to attend this evening.

Mrs. Robin Burdick, Principal of Little Harbour School, introduced

Introduction of New Staff (con't.) Karen Henebry and Karen Adams-Stadig, paraprofessionals at Little Harbour School.

Mrs. Jill LeMay, Principal of Dondero School, introduced Kate Hosse (paraprofessional); Andrea Bishop (permanent sub for the remainder of the year); Alison Kellerman (guidance counselor for the remainder of this school year); and Linda George (elementary computer teacher beginning next school year).

Mrs. Paulette Hoeflich, Principal at PASS (Portsmouth Alternative Secondary School), introduced Christine Stilwell. Christine has worked as a paraprofessional at PASS this year, and will be a teacher at PASS next year.

The Chair welcomed all staff and invited them to come forward to meet the Board. He then declared a brief recess at 7:35 p.m. to allow time for people to meet. The meeting was reconvened at 7:45 p.m.

Report on Special Education

Mr. Bruce Boley, Student Services Director, and Mrs. Paulette Hoeflich, PASS Principal and Special Education Director-elect, presented a report of the year-long study of programs and services for students with emotional disabilities. Mr. Boley said a committee of 19 people, facilitated by Camille Weete (a retired Portsmouth speech pathologist) met for two hours each month and then held a one-day retreat. Ms. Weete was assisted by Maryclare Heffernan (technical consultant from SERESC).

Mr. Boley said there are presently 50 students within the school district who are coded emotionally disturbed. Twenty-five of these students have severe emotional issues. The committee looked at how to improve programs for these students, and came up with the following initiatives: (1) Provide training to all staff in working with students who have emotional and behavioral needs; (2) lead the formation of a community task force to address the integration of services from school to post school age groups; and (3) review current programs with the intention to restructure and redesign programs where needed.

Mr. Boley said the KIDS Program at New Franklin School is at least 25 years old. At one time the program received many out-of-district students as well as Portsmouth students. In the last few years, there have been very few out-of-district students and very few students from Portsmouth. And, there have been no referrals for next year from either in-district or out-of-district. Therefore, it has been decided to close the KIDS Program at New Franklin School and to initiate a series of trainings/meetings with Outreach staff and elementary principals. Mr. Boley and Mrs. Hoeflich reviewed the programs that will be available to district students.

Special Education Report (con't.)

The committee also decided to establish a work group to form an Outreach Program the High School. Mrs. Hoeflich said this program would, basically, be one step before sending a student to PASS. And, at the Middle School, the committee has recommended redefining the program model to include a two-tier program for behavior problem students.

Both Mr. Boley and Mrs. Hoeflich stressed that services will continue to be available for Portsmouth students. They answered questions from the Board. Dr. Tracy commended the committee and the special education staff for their efforts. He said Portsmouth has an outstanding special education that is respected, and he does not take that for granted. He stated that Mrs. Hoeflich will give regular reports to the School Board as these initiatives unfold.

PERSONNEL

Transfer

Dr. Lister presented the transfer of Susan Girardin from family and consumer sciences teacher to computer teacher/integrator at Portsmouth Middle School. Mr. Vaughn moved the Board approve this transfer; Mr. Lyons seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Percentage Increase

Dr. Lister presented the contract increase from 40% to 100% for Sherry Carver, media teacher at Portsmouth High School. Mr. Vaughn moved the increase be approved; Mrs. Montminy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Professional Resignations

Dr. Lister presented the following professional resignations effective the end of the 2001-02 school year: Greg Noble (science teacher at Portsmouth High School); Susan Mitchell (50% second grade teacher at Dondero School); and Steve Nason (60% media teacher at Portsmouth High School). Mr. Vaughn moved the resignations be accepted with regret; Mr. Bowles seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Joint Building Committee

Chair LaPage stated the Board usually tries to keep committee reports to the first meeting of the month; however, because of the school renovations and construction, a report from the Joint Building Committee will be included on every agenda. The Board received minutes of the committee's May first meeting, and he said the committee met again on May 15. Mr. LaPage said the Joint Building Committee approved a motion to limit the High School construction costs to \$30,000,000. Mrs. Clayburgh stated that during the

***Joint Building
Committee (con't.)***

meetings, the Superintendent and Board Chair have emphasized that the educational narrative not be compromised due to the need to reduce the construction budget. The Chair stated that a groundbreaking ceremony has been planned for the high school on June 13, 2002 at 5:15 p.m.

Mr. Torrey reported the construction is progressing at New Franklin School; the brick is on the side of the walls and the roof is in place. He is confident the building will be ready by August 15.

NEW BUSINESS

***Amendment to
Paraprofessional
Agreement***

Mrs. Montminy moved the Board approve the amendment to the paraprofessional agreement as presented; Mr. Lyons seconded the motion. Mr. Torrey stated the amendment refers to the health plan that, otherwise, would be "School Care" for the final year of the contract. The motion was unanimously approved in a roll call vote.

***State
Representatives***

Chair LaPage commended the State Representatives from Portsmouth who have not missed a single roll call vote: Raimond Bowles, Jackie Pitts, and Mary Ann Blanchard.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

***Negotiation
Committee
Assignments***

Mr. Tefft moved the Board approve the negotiation committee assignments as presented; Mr. Lyons seconded the motion. In a roll call vote the motion was unanimously approved. The Chair stated he will ask the Board to meet informally with the negotiating teams prior to the start of negotiations to break the ice.

***Senate Bill
Affecting Free and
Reduced
Reimbursement***

The Chair and Business Administrator Torrey explained the impact of Senate Bill 140 in that the City of Portsmouth loses about \$376,000. Mr. Torrey explained the formula was changed. He stated this does not affect the reimbursement that the Food Service Department receives from the Federal Government for free and reduced lunches, yet does affect the City's Adequate Education allotment. Mr. LaPage expressed dismay that Governor Shaheen chose to sign the bill, even after she was made aware of the financial implications to cities and towns throughout the State. Mr. Bowles said he was under the impression the bill contained a hold harmless clause. He did not know it presented a danger to the City of Portsmouth. He further stated that Legislators did not have the financial information available to them at the time of the vote. Mr. Bowles said it is certainly possible for the bill to be revisited so that a hold harmless provision may be included.

FINANCIAL

***Accolades to
Business
Administrator***

Mr. Tefft said the Board owes its respect to Business Administrator Peter Torrey for the excellent job he does in bringing the School Department within budget year after year. He said this is no easy job. Mr. Vaughn agreed, and stated that people do not realize how difficult it is to make the budget come at or below budget.

***Review of April
2002 Financial
Report***

Mr. Torrey reviewed the April 2002 financial report, specifically account 144 (safety and good order). He said they were made aware the account would be overspent due to a shift in personnel for the School Resource Officer positions.

OTHER

***Future Meetings
and Events***

Chair LaPage reminded the Board of a non-public session this Thursday, May 30, at 6:00 p.m. He also reviewed a list of meetings and events that will occur over the next two weeks as the school year and fiscal year come to a close.

List of New Hires

Mrs. Montminy requested a list of new hires, including the position and location, for next year.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment

There was no further business to come before the Board. Mr. Vaughn moved the Board adjourn its meeting; Mrs. Montminy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyonel B. Tracy, Ed.D.
Executive Secretary