

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

October 9, 2006

The special meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, October 9, 2006, was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Shirley Johnson in the Professional Development Center of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

Board Trustees Present: Tom Eddy, Kathy Howland, Shirley Johnson, Linda Lueth, Wendy Mazer, Deb Polderman, and Jennifer Whistler

Board Trustees Absent: None

The Board received presentations from two superintendent search firms.

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, October 9, 2006, was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Johnson in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. She welcomed an audience of 60 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board received an introduction by the Angling Road Elementary Principal Mrs. Karen Witvoet, music teacher Mrs. Darlene Sang, and a choral presentation by the 5th grade choir.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Howland, that the minutes of the September 25, 2006 special meeting and the September 25, 2006 special and regular meetings be approved. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was offered by Mrs. Lueth, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the tenure recommendation for Ms. Georgia Boyle in accordance with Public Act 59 of the State of Michigan. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Johnson recognized School Bus Safety Week with the following proclamation.

**PROCLAMATION
SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK
October 15-21, 2006**

WHEREAS, It is with great respect for the accomplishments of Portage's professional school bus drivers, mechanics, office staff, and manager that we commemorate October 15-21, 2006 as School Bus Safety Week. During this special observance, we encourage all citizens to recognize the dedication and skill of school transportation employees; and

WHEREAS, Each day, more than 5,000 Portage students ride on 60 school buses, traveling over 800,000 miles annually. Driving so many miles, coordinating the countless routes, and supervising

the dozens of students on each vehicle requires an outstanding effort. Fortunately we have exemplary professionals who have devoted their careers to transporting our children safely; and

WHEREAS, On behalf of our young people, it is a pleasure to commend the women and men who accept and meet the challenge of school transportation. The observance of School Bus Safety Week is a welcome opportunity to thank these patient, skilled, and caring public servants. Those involved in this pursuit should be very proud of their contribution to education; and

WHEREAS, This special week serves as a fitting time to urge all drivers to become more aware of school bus safety regulations. Serious injuries and deaths occur when motorists fail to stop for school buses. Now that the school year has begun, we remind drivers to be cautious and attentive around school buses. It is also an appropriate time to ask students to listen to their bus drivers and pay close attention to bus safety rules; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, That we proudly commemorate October 15-21, 2006 as School Bus Safety Week, and we commend everyone who has contributed to the successful operation of our school buses. We also encourage all citizens to drive carefully and to be alert around school buses. By working together, we can make this the safest school year ever.

Proclaimed this 9th day of October, 2006
Portage Public Schools Board of Education

Mrs. Polderman recognized Red Ribbon Week with the following proclamation.

**PROCLAMATION
RED RIBBON WEEK**

WHEREAS, tobacco, alcohol and other drug usage among young people is a serious concern; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that visible, unified prevention education efforts by community members be launched to reduce the demand for drugs; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth, the Michigan Communities In Action for Drug-Free Youth, and the Portage Public Schools are sponsoring the National Red Ribbon Campaign offering citizens the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to drug-free lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, the National Red Ribbon Campaign will be celebrated in communities throughout America during "**Red Ribbon Week**", October 23-31, 2006; and

WHEREAS, business, government, law enforcement, schools, religious institutions, service organizations, youth, physicians, senior citizens, the military, sports teams, and individuals will demonstrate their commitment to drug-free, healthy lifestyles by wearing and displaying red ribbons during this week-long campaign; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools does hereby proclaim October 23-31, 2006 as **RED RIBBON WEEK**, and encourage Portage citizens to participate in drug prevention education activities, showing our commitment to a drug-free community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools encourages all citizens to pledge: **My Choice . . . Drug-Free**.

Proclaimed this 9th day of October, 2006
Portage Public Schools Board of Education

Mrs. Whistler recognized National School Lunch Week with the following proclamation.

**PROCLAMATION
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK
October 9-13, 2006**

WHEREAS, It is with great respect for the accomplishments of Portage's school food service managers, servers, cashiers and driver personnel and substitutes that we commemorate October 9-13, 2006 as National School Lunch Week. During this special observance, we encourage all citizens to recognize the dedication and skill of our school food service employees; and

WHEREAS, Each day, a total of 70 food service employees prepare and serve over 6,200 lunches a day. This is in addition to ordering, storing, and expediting each menu item to each location, adhering to food safety, sanitation, and nutritional guidelines as well as giving each customer the time and consideration to listen, hear and deliver what they are looking for each day. Fortunately we have exemplary professionals who have devoted their careers to providing high quality service to our children and staff; and

WHEREAS, On behalf of our young people, it is a pleasure to commend the women and men who accept and meet the challenges of school food service. The observance of School Lunch Week is a welcome opportunity to thank these patient, caring, skilled public servants. Those involved in this pursuit should be very proud of their contribution to education. Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, That we proudly commemorate October 9-13, 2006 as the National School Lunch Week, and we commend everyone who has contributed to the successful operation of our lunch program. By working together, we can make a difference in every student's life.

Proclaimed this 9th day of October, 2006
Portage Public Schools Board Of Education

A motion was offered by Mr. Eddy, supported by Mrs. Howland, that the Board of Education approve the Board member classes and conferences as presented. President Johnson noted her

conference fees were reimbursed as she served on a discussion panel during the conference. Motion carried unanimously.

This concluded the action portion of the agenda. Mrs. Johnson then opened the meeting for comments.

Mrs. Mazer recognized and congratulated the marching bands from Central and Northern High for their recent competition success. She thanked everyone involved for their devoted efforts with band camp and all the practice sessions. She also informed the audience of the upcoming Northern High and North Middle Schools choir performance.

Mr. Eddy extended thoughts and prayers to our nation's school districts, administrators, and families that have recently suffered tragic loss of life.

President Johnson congratulated the Community Education Center Administrator Mr. Craig Ross and the Community Education Center staff for receiving the 2006 School District of the Year Award from the Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education (MACAE). She informed the audience that the Board approved a 2 percent pay increase for Superintendent McFarlane. President Johnson announced several Board meeting date changes as follows: October 23, 2006 will only hold a Special Meeting, October 30, 2006, will hold a Special and Regular Meeting, the November 6th meeting has been moved to November 13, 2006 for a Special and Regular Meeting, and the November 20th meeting has been moved to November 27, 2006 for a Special and Regular Meeting. She also informed the audience that the Board and the Portage City Council have scheduled a joint meeting on Tuesday, November 21, 2006, at 5:30 p.m. in the District Administration Building. President Johnson thanked Mayor Strazdas for the invitation and noted the District appreciates this communication opportunity.

Mr. Bob Schafer, 7667 Cobblewood, a parent, spoke about science course concerns.

Ms. Melanie Kurdys, 2267 Preserve Blvd., a parent, discussed MEAP scores.

Initiating the reports portion of the meeting, Mrs. Lueth presented the Treasurer's Report of Bills Approved for Payment as of September 20, 2006, General Fund bills in the amount of \$3,176,322.65, and Building & Site Fund bills in the amount of \$8,413.00, for a grand total of \$3,184,735.65.

Superintendent McFarlane announced the first Community Update newsletter for 06/07 was being mailed to 24,000 homes in Portage with information on our facilities planning, District Goals, the Portage Education Foundation Endowment Campaign, and curriculum. He thanked the Community Relations Manager Mr. Tom Vance for his efforts to bring this publication to the community. The Superintendent explained that the District received a Western Michigan University flag from Mr. Bob Miller, Association Vice President for Community Outreach, as a gesture of unity and support for the college and community. The flag was delivered by the City Manager, Mr. Maurice Evans, and this support event is also backed by the Portage Chamber Advisory group. He explained that three cases of books relating to Chinese culture recently arrived and the Director of Curriculum and Professional Development Ms. Denise Bresson will be

reviewing the items for our District. The Superintendent discussed the writing curriculum meeting he attended noting the work and follow-up going into the development of curriculum expectations and he commended all involved for their diligent efforts.

Board Committee reports were presented by Mr. Eddy regarding the Facilities and Technology Committee, Mrs. Whistler regarding the Policy and Personnel Committee, and Mrs. Lueth regarding the Finance Committee.

A report on the 2005/2006 audit was presented by Mr. Stephen Blann of Rehmann & Robson. The Board and the auditors offered thanks and accolades to the Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Mr. Tom Noverr, the Business Manager, Mrs. Karla Colestock, and the Business Office staff for a job well done.

The Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, Ms. Denise Bresson updated the Board on the math program which was followed by discussions.

Mrs. Whistler explained updates to the following Policies: 3000 series Policies pertaining to Business and Non-Instructional Operations; Policy 1120, Conflict of Interest – Board of Education and Employees; Policy 1460, Major Gifts to Schools; Policy 1580, Use of Swimming Pools; and Policy 1630, Smoke/Tobacco Free Environment.

A brief legislative update was received from Mrs. Whistler pertaining to Senate Bill 1397 regarding school food allergy policies currently in discussion.

President Johnson announced the Board would reconvene in a special meeting to discuss the Superintendent search.

The special meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, October 9, 2006, was called to order at 9:01 p.m. by President Shirley Johnson in the Professional Development Center of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

The Board discussed and evaluated earlier presentations by two search firms.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary