

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

**January 14, 2008**

The committee of the whole work session of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, January 14, 2008, was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by President Johnson in the Professional Development Center of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. She welcomed an audience of 13 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Board Trustees Absent: None

**COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS**

President Johnson opened the comments and communications portion of the meeting and asked if there were any citizens that would like to speak to the Board.

Mr. Mark Anthony Martin, 10519 Dandale Street, a citizen, offered his positive reaction to Challenge Day

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

Mrs. Whistler welcomed Julie Mack as the reporter from the Kalamazoo Gazette who will be covering Portage Public Schools.

Mrs. Johnson stated that she had attended Challenge Day at Portage Central High School and that it had been an eye-opening experience. She stated that on January 17, Portage North Middle School will host a workshop related to Martin Luther King activities and is entitled "Let's Talk About Race." There is information about it on the District website.

Mrs. Mazer shared information regarding the Strengths Explorer program in which her child was involved. She was very impressed by the information sent home from the school, and she took the adult survey online. She invited all Board members to take it. Mrs. Kurdys stated that she has the book that goes along with it.

Mrs. Mazer also thanked the Portage Middle School jazz band and director for their performance at the political rally today.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mrs. Kurdys requested that the revised Policies be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed as a discussion item.

**A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda consisting of: meeting minutes of December 17, 2007 committee meeting of the whole work session. Motion carried unanimously.**

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Bond Project Updates.** Mr. Mark Reile, Architect from TMP Associates, provided an update on the design of two District elementary buildings and the potential use of Waylee Elementary. He presented examples of one- and two-story buildings and the positive aspects of each. He also offered a plan in which Waylee Elementary would become the new IT building for the District. Under this plan, the northwest addition and southwest addition would be taken down. The front of the building which borders Waylee would be used for the IT department and the rest of the building could be used for such things as storage, cable and delivery of computers. They would be looking to do this in the 2009-2010 school year, after Waylee has been closed as an elementary school. President Johnson received a consensus from the Trustees for such plan.

**2007/08 Budget Amendments.** The Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Mr. Tom Noverr, presented an overview on Amendment #1 to the General Fund and Amendment #1 to the Building and Site Sinking Fund.

**2008/09 Fiscal Planning.** Mr. Noverr informed the audience of the State Revenue Consensus meeting and, implications to the District budget status.

**Revised Policies.** It was agreed that beginning at the January 28 regular meeting, a few new structures would be put into place to support citizens as they plan to address the Board (Policy 8560).

**A motion was offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the Policy revisions as outlined in the Board packet, revising Policy 8560, Citizens Addressing the Board of Education, to establish a citizen's time to address the Board of 3-5 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**

President Johnson stated that the Board routinely holds a workshop for people interested in running for a Trustee position on the Board. The deadline this year to submit a name as a candidate is February 13. The date for this workshop was set for January 31, 2008, at 5:30 p.m., with as many Board members as possible being in attendance.

### **Public Comments on Agenda Items.**

Mr. Eric VerHey, 50314 Fulton Road, PEA President, spoke about negotiations for a teachers' contract.

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

The Board moved into closed session at 8:54 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 9:55 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Bauman  
Recording Secretary Pro Tem