

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

September 22, 2008

The special meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, September 22, 2008, was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Johnson in the Professional Development Center of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

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

Board Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: Marsha Wells, Superintendent

The Board discussed the Policy Governance Manual updates.

The Board recessed at 5:50 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Portage Public Schools held on Monday, September 22, 2008, was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by President Johnson in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. She welcomed an audience of 10 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Board Trustees Absent: None

President Johnson reminded the audience that this meeting would end at 6:45 p.m. so the Trustees can attend the Portage Community Call To Action meeting to address the youth substance abuse in Portage.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Wells discussed the strong start to this school year evidenced by the outstanding parent turnout at building open houses.

She shared news of an outstanding opportunity for three Northern High School seniors. They participated in the Michigan Youth in Government Program presenting to the State House Committee on Education on Michigan High School Graduation Requirements and shared ideas for improving or altering the Michigan Merit Curriculum. The students were invited back to present in front of the State Senate Committee on Education and are now working on a Bill for our State Legislature.

Superintendent Wells also commented on moving forward with the Bond technology funds addressing the need to replace dated technology in the District. Later this year, the District will provide a report to the Board about how these computers are assisting teachers in the classrooms in reference to boosting academic achievement.

Treasurer's Report: Mrs. Polderman presented the Treasurer's Report of Bills Approved for Payment as of August 20, 2008, September 4, 2008, and September 10, 2008, General Fund bills in the amount of \$4,954,436.59, Building & Site Fund bills in the amount of \$26,761.80, and Bond Construction Fund bills in the amount of \$1,385,483.58, for a grand total of \$6,366,681.97. President Johnson informed the audience that in compliance with our new governance procedures, the Treasurer's Report will be given by the Superintendent.

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Johnson opened the comments and communications portion of the meeting and asked if there were any citizens who would like to speak to the Board. Mrs. Polderman explained guidelines the Board uses for this portion of the meeting.

There being no citizens come forward to speak to the Board, President Johnson opened the floor to comments from fellow Board members.

Mrs. Kurdys clarified that the handouts and from the citizens who participated in the local preference conversation discussed at the August 18, 2008 meeting are public documents, should someone want to see them.

President Johnson invited the audience to join in the Portage Rotary Scholarship dinner scheduled for October 10 just before the Central High and Northern High football game. Contact a Rotary member for tickets to this event that is a fundraiser for scholarships benefiting Portage students.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda items, as presented. Included on the Consent Agenda was the approval of Minutes of August 18, 2008 Governance Retreat Meeting; Revised August 18, 2008 Regular Meeting; August 25, 2008 Governance Retreat Meeting; and September 8, 2008 Committee Of The Whole Work Session; and Wireless Laptops For Elementary Classrooms. Motion carried unanimously.

REQUIRED APPROVAL ITEMS

Motion offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mr. Posthumus, that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution to participate in the Michigan School Readiness Program, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, all Trustees present voted in favor of the motion.

ACTION ITEMS

Motion offered by Mrs. Polderman, supported by Mrs. Whistler, that the Board of Education approve the Bus/Maintenance Facility Bid Award, as presented.

The Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Mr. Tom Noverr, provided further background information, acknowledged Pfizer for their property donation, and responded to numerous Trustee questions pertaining to the project, Cornerstone Construction, Owners Representatives, expenses, deadlines, and local contractors.

Motion carried unanimously.

President Johnson shared comments regarding adoption of the Policy Governance Manual, the time commitment by the Board during this transition, and how this “living” document will serve as a guide as the Board moves forward. She discussed the four sections contained in the Policy Manual as follows: Ends Policies – define District targets for accomplishment; Executive Limitations – describe the methods not allowed in pursuit of District targets, yet encourage creative problem solving; Governance Process – the Board’s expectations of itself; and Board-Superintendent Linkage – describes how the Board will work with the Superintendent to accomplish the Ends Policies. President Johnson reinforced continuing to raise the bar and keeping the Board focused on the big picture of advancing the school District. She also commented on the importance of staying connected and allowing for additional methods to obtain feedback from the community.

Motion offered by Mrs. Whistler, supported by Mrs. Polderman, that the Board of Education approve the Policy Governance Manual, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Kurdys commented on the new level of strategic leadership for the Board, which brings specific accountability for the District and community for the best value.

President Johnson encouraged community members to share thoughts with the Board on the new governance process. She also informed the audience with this approval, the Board will no longer have a Treasurer position but a Board Secretary position has been created. The role of the Board President and Vice President remain the same.

Motion offered by Mr. Rathburn, supported by Mr. Posthumus, that the Board of Education elect Mrs. Polderman for the position of Board Secretary. Motion carried unanimously. President Johnson announced that Mrs. Polderman will assume the office of Board Secretary.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary

Michigan Department of Education
2008-2009 Michigan School Readiness Program

Participating Resolution

WHEREAS, the Legislature continues to acknowledge the importance of improving school readiness by providing quality preschool education for four-year-old children who may have extraordinary need of special assistance and the importance of providing parenting education programs for families of all children birth to kindergarten entry; and

WHEREAS, Sections 32d and 37 through 40 of the State School Aid Act provide for comprehensive compensatory education for these children and families; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of Section 38 of the State School Aid Act, **Portage Public Schools** is eligible to receive an allocation of **\$108,800** for fiscal year 2008-2009 to operate a school readiness program for a maximum of **32** children and/or to provide comprehensive parent involvement and education programs for all families of children birth to kindergarten entry; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED that **Portage Public Schools** certifies that it will provide **Half-Day** preschool education for **32** eligible four-year-old children, and that **\$108,800** of the allotted amount, based on the approved per capita allowance of **\$3,400**, will be used specifically for this purpose: and

Portage Public Schools further certifies that more than 50 percent of the children enrolled in the school readiness program will meet the income eligibility guidelines outlined in Sections 32d and 37 through 40: and therefore be it

RESOLVED that any unallocated funds, as a result of this resolution, shall be redistributed to the other eligible districts.

ADOPTED: _____
Date Signature of School Board President

ADOPTED: _____
Date Signature of Superintendent of Schools