

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING**

May 27, 2010

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Thursday, May 27, 2010, was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by President Whyte in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge. He welcomed an audience of 5 people and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Melanie Kurdys, Deb Polderman, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder (via phone), Randy Van Antwerp, and John Whyte

Board Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: Karla Colestock, Business Manager; Tom Noverr, Assistant Superintendent of Operations; Ric Perry, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction; Marsha Wells, Superintendent; and Tom Zahrt, Director of Human Resources

CLOSED SESSION

Motion offered by Mr. Van Antwerp, supported by Mrs. Kurdys, 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 4:03 p.m. in the Instructional Services Conference Room.

The Board returned to open session at 5:26 p.m. and called a recess.

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools reconvened at 5:32 p.m. in the Community Room of the Administration Building, 8111 S. Westnedge.

Board Trustees Present: Kevin Hollenbeck, Melanie Kurdys, Deb Polderman, Rusty Rathburn, Bo Snyder (via phone), Randy Van Antwerp, and John Whyte

Board Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: Karla Colestock, Business Manager; Tom Noverr, Assistant Superintendent of Operations; Ric Perry, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction; Tom Vance, Community Relations Manager; Marsha Wells, Superintendent; and Tom Zahrt, Director of Human Resources

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Whyte opened the comments and communications portion of the meeting and asked if there were any citizens who would like to speak to the Board. Seeing no citizens come forward, President Whyte closed the comments portion of the meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2010/11 Financial Discussion:

State Revenue Forecast and District Implications. The Business Manager, Mrs. Karla Colestock, discussed 2009/10 budget adjustments and an update from the State Revenue Estimating Conference. Mrs. Colestock stressed she is cautious about the estimates projected at the Conference. Mrs. Colestock and the Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Mr. Tom Noverr, responded to questions regarding the voluntary severance payments, Building and Site Sinking Fund, grant income, and cost cutting options.

Revised 2010/11 Budget Proposal Overview. Mrs. Colestock shared a proposed listing of 2010/11 budget adjustments. Trustee discussions pertained to the extended listing of possible budget adjustment options, prioritizing the options, and areas to avoid. Superintendent Wells urged Trustees to digest the information for further discussion at the Work Study Session in June and contact Mrs. Colestock with questions.

Proposed Budget Detail and Key Elements:

Extra-curricular Activity Fee Proposal. The Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Dr. Ric Perry, reviewed the revised draft of the Pay To Participate (PTP) and Activity Fee (AF) proposal. He noted Version One was the original recommendation and shared background on Version Two, containing a lower fee structure. Trustee questions pertained to: comments received from the Portage Athletic Foundation, assistance for low income students, payment system, listing the District survey and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) on the web site, the community support for sports, benchmarking fees against similar Districts, and concern for a loss in participation and students. Dr. Perry provided feedback from the Michigan High School Athletic Association survey regarding participation fees. Superintendent Wells noted this proposal will be discussed further with various groups and requested that Trustees contact Dr. Perry with additional thoughts, questions, and feedback.

Custodial Services Bid Proposal. Mr. Noverr provided detailed information on the proposal for first shift custodial services. The Director of Human Resources, Mr. Tom Zahrt, and Mr. Noverr responded to Trustee questions regarding bargaining with this employee group and contracts.

Human Resources Staffing Update:

Anticipated Lay Offs. Mr. Zahrt, provided detailed information on the anticipated District lay offs, reduced contracts, reassignments, the impact of the State retirement plan, and responded to Trustee questions.

Process for Certified Staff Replacements. Mr. Zahrt shared an update on Principal, Assistant Principal, and Athletic Director replacement progress and responded to Trustee questions.

Other Factors for Consideration:

Future Budget Reduction Options. Superintendent Wells shared a draft document of future budget reduction options that will continue to be reviewed and revised.

Potential Future Liabilities. Mr. Noverr and Mrs. Colestock discussed potential post election cuts, the Regional Enhancement Millage and grant funding.

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Joanne Willson, 7122 Leawood, a citizen, inquired about the District projected fund balance. Superintendent Wells commented Mrs. Colestock would respond to Mrs. Willson.

Mr. Randy Borden, 2421 Waite Ave., a teacher and Portage Education Association Representative, inquired about the three percent increase to teacher health benefits. Superintendent Wells commented that Mrs. Colestock would respond to Mr. Borden.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edna Kent
Recording Secretary