

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS' BOARD OF EDUCATION
 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
 CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL RM #1136, 8135 S. WESTNEDGE, PORTAGE, MI 49002
 SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, 6:30 PM
 AGENDA**

VISION STATEMENT
 We are inspired to be an exceptional community grounded in fostering strengths, growth, and lifelong learning. Every student. Every future.
 MISSION STATEMENT
 Portage Public Schools will educate all students to achieve their potential.

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**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page

II. Revisions/Approval of Agenda

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education approve the Agenda as printed (or as amended).

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
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III. Reports

1. Superintendent's Report
 - a. Bond Project Update

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page

VI. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes
 - a. August 18, 2025 Special Meeting, Closed Session & Regular Business Meeting

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**SPECIAL & REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS
AUGUST 18, 2025**

SPECIAL MEETING

The special meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, August 18, 2025, was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Van Antwerp. The meeting was held in Conference Room #1 of the Administration Building.

Board Trustees Present: Emily Crawford, Kimberly Larson, Terri Novaria, Mary Lou Rohwer, Bo Snyder, Mark Stevenson, Randy Van Antwerp

Board Trustees Absent: None

Executive Leadership Present: Johnny Edwards, Superintendent

Others Present (via speakerphone): Attorney Austin Munroe of Thrun Law Firm

REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion offered by Dr. Stevenson, seconded by Mrs. Crawford, that the Board of Education approve the agenda as printed.

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

There were no comments or communications.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion offered by Mrs. Novaria, seconded by Dr. Stevenson, that the Board of Education move into closed session under Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act, to consider attorney-client privileged material.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The Board entered into closed session at 5:03 p.m. and returned to open session at 6:25 p.m.

The special meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

The Regular Business Meeting of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, August 18, 2025, was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Van Antwerp. The meeting was held in Room #1136 of Portage Central High School. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Board Trustees Present: Emily Crawford, Kimberly Larson, Terri Novaria, Mary Lou Rohwer, Bo Snyder, Mark Stevenson, Randy Van Antwerp

Board Trustees Absent: None

REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion offered by Mrs. Novaria, seconded by Mrs. Crawford, that the Board of Education approve the agenda as printed.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Bond Project Update

Superintendent Johnny Edwards provided an update on elementary bond work.

For both the new Central Elementary and Haverhill Elementary, some exterior work continues on the sidewalks and striping the park lots. Inside, teachers have been unboxing and preparing their classrooms. Inspections take place this week; all looks well! Open houses are this week.

Woodland Elementary teachers are also busy unboxing and preparing their classrooms.

The opening day kickoff for staff is this Thursday at Central High with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. followed by a program. Educators will take part in professional development at their schools in the afternoon. Superintendent Edwards will hold two meet and greet sessions that day – one for staff at 3:00 p.m. in the commons of Central High and the other for the public at 6:00 p.m. at the Zhang Senior Center.

Update on Summer Programs

Ms. Michelle Karpinski, Community Relations Manager updated the Board on the many camps that took place over the summer. Fifty-three sessions were held involving 2,199 students ages K-12. There were 13 sports camp offerings plus three camps through the Portage Education Foundation – Air Zoo, Art and KRESA Future Me.

President Van Antwerp was appreciative of the updates.

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Van Antwerp opened the floor to public comment.

Diana Smith addressed the Board regarding the lack of restrooms, running water, and drinking fountains at the Northern tennis courts.

President Van Antwerp thanked Ms. Smith for her remarks and opened the floor to Trustee comments.

Mr. Snyder thanked his fellow board members for good discussion at their special meeting/closed session held earlier today.

Mrs. Rohwer attended an antisemitism event hosted by the Michigan Department of Education and others. The purpose was to share resources, best practices and encourage inclusiveness. Mrs. Rohwer remarked the event was interesting and worthwhile.

Mrs. Novaria welcomed everyone back from summer break.

Ms. Lawson is looking forward to the new school year.

President Van Antwerp thanked Trustees for their comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

President Van Antwerp presented the following Consent Agenda items for approval by the Board of Education: minutes from the July 21, 2025 special meeting, regular business meeting and closed session and the August 7, 2025 special meeting.

There being no objections, the motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Approve Nursing Services Contract for 2025-26

Mr. Brad Galin, Director of Human Resources, reviewed the contract renewal recommendation.

Motion offered by Dr. Stevenson, seconded by Ms. Larson, that the Board of Education approve, as presented, renewing the contract for nursing services between Portage Public Schools and Healthbar LLC in the amount of \$320,616.00 using funding from 31aa for the 2025-26 school year.

The motion carried unanimously.

New Teacher Appointments

Mr. Galin reviewed the teacher appointment recommendation and shared highlights about the appointees.

Motion offered by Mrs. Rohwer, seconded by Dr. Stevenson, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of the following teachers for Portage Public Schools:

- **Monica Violante – Engagement Specialist, Angling Road Elementary**
- **Justin Rose – French Teacher, Central High & Central Middle Schools**
- **Faith Dennis – First Grade Teacher, Angling Road Elementary**
- **Jessica Folkert – Music Teacher, Angling Road Elementary**
- **Christopher Enders – Math Teacher, Northern High**

The motion carried unanimously.

New Administrator Appointment

Mr. Galin reviewed the professional and educational background of Ms. Elizabeth Eves.

Motion offered by Mrs. Novaria, seconded by Mrs. Crawford, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of the following administrator for Portage Public Schools for the 2025-26 school year – Elizabeth Eves, Supervisor for Educational Supports and Intervention for the Southern Service Area of KRESA.

The motion carried unanimously.

School Meal Prices for 2025-26

Ms. Paula Johnson, Director of Finance, went over the recommendation for student meal prices. For the past two school years, we did not need to charge for student meals because of the free Michigan School Meals funding program. Funding for this program will expire on September 30, 2025. The state has not set their budget so we do not know if the free school meals funding will continue. Therefore, we need to be prepared and set our meal prices.

Motion offered by Dr. Stevenson, seconded by Mrs. Rohwer, that the Board of Education approve the student meal prices for the 2025-26 school year as presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

MASB Delegate Assembly Representatives

President Van Antwerp briefly reviewed information regarding the upcoming Michigan Association of School Boards' Delegate Assembly. He volunteered to be the Board's voting delegate and asked board member to consider serving as the alternate.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Atkinson, Recording Secretary

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page

VII Assurance of District Performance

1. Monitoring Report 2.6, Asset Protection (GP 4.4)

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education accept Monitoring Report 2.6, Asset Protection, as a reasonable interpretation and evidence of compliance with policy.

**Portage Public Schools
Monitoring Report**

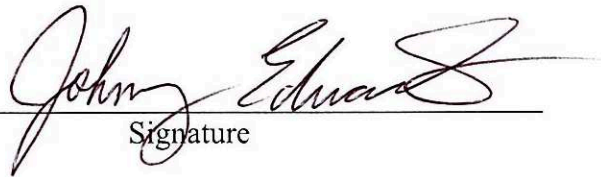
Policy Type: Executive Limitation
Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

Global Board Policy

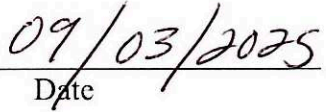
The Superintendent shall not allow corporate assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained or unnecessarily risked.

Certification

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitation, 2.6, "Asset Protection" in accordance with the monitoring schedule established by the Board. I certify that the information provided in this report is true as of September 3, 2025.



Signature



Date

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

2.6 GLOBAL POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not allow corporate assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained or unnecessarily risked.

Interpretation

I submit that the Board's Policy is comprehensively interpreted in the succeeding sections. My interpretations of those sections, the report and conclusion statements are presented below. There have been no revisions to this Executive Limitation since the last report and my interpretations remain unchanged.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.1 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not assume property or casualty risk unnecessarily, including risk against liability losses to board members, staff and the organization.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that insurance contracts and policies are in place with the appropriate level of protection, and all loss claims against the policies, less deductibles, are recovered.

That insurance contracts are in place to replace, repair or provide remuneration for District assets exceeding \$1,000 and that the level of coverage restores the District to an equal or similar position prior to the loss or damage to the asset, less deductibles. The insurance replaces assets stolen, damaged or destroyed with a minimum value that meets or exceeds the deductible limitations of the coverage and includes the replacement of real estate, facilities, fixtures, furniture, vehicles, equipment, and consumable assets owned or leased by the District and valued greater than \$1,000.

That appropriate policies are in place and all claims against the policies are resolved and that such policies cover acts of litigation, settlements, judgments and staff inquiries resulting in financial remuneration by the District. These policies provide coverage for these acts to the extent available through insurance contracts. Also, there are certain acts that are not insurable.

As required by law, our annual audit is conducted by a qualified audit firm whose service fees are included in the board-approved budget.

Monitoring Report

Page -3-

Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

That appropriate policies are in place to compensate the employees and providers of services for needs arising from the incident leading to submitted claims (Workers Compensation coverage).

Report

The District has in place the following insurance contracts with SET/SEG:

- Property
 - Property and Vehicles
 - Crime
 - Employee Dishonesty Blanket Bond
 - Equipment Breakdown (Boiler & Machinery)
 - Inland Marine
 - Cyber Liability/Data Breach
 - Safeguard Program (Terrorism & School Violent Acts)
- Liability
 - Commercial General Liability
 - Excess Liability
 - Safeguard Program (Terrorism & School Violent Acts)
- Fleet
 - Automobile Liability and Physical Damage
 - Garage Coverage
- Educators Legal Liability Errors and Omissions
- Builders Risk Insurance
- Workers Compensation

In addition, the District has a catastrophic student accident medical insurance policy with 1st Agency, Inc.

Coverage limits are reviewed annually with our insurance provider(s) to determine adequacy and/or appropriate levels of coverage.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

2.6.2 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not allow unbonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.

Interpretation

Only bonded personnel will be allowed access to District funds. “Material amounts” is that amount that would have a significant impact on achieving the Board’s Ends.

Report

All employees, including the Superintendent and members of the Board, are covered by a blanket bond of up to \$1,000,000 per occurrence. Per SET/SEG, based on their experience with submitted claims, this level of coverage is considered adequate on a per occurrence basis.

Internal controls are in place to prevent a single individual from being able to complete an unauthorized transaction.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.3 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not subject facilities and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that facilities and equipment, including buses and other vehicles owned or leased by the District, be used in a way that allows for sufficient and timely cleaning and that resources are allocated to ensure proper maintenance and replacement of equipment as necessary.

Report

The District has comprehensive facilities use policies and guidelines which govern facility scheduling and use. A facility use fee structure is in place and is reviewed periodically to support maintenance, operation, and cleaning of facilities.

The Maintenance Department utilizes a maintenance plan for mechanical systems in the District to ensure proper upkeep and replacement of parts. Custodians are on-site during times of facility use to ensure proper cleaning, support, and service in a timely manner.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

The Maintenance Department uses an annual plan for the maintenance of and/or replacement of windows, roofing, carpeting, drives, parking areas, etc., using the voter-approved Building and Site Sinking Fund. The maintenance staff reviews campus needs with building principals on an annual basis.

A system is in place for the periodic improvement and replacement of furnishings and other loose equipment. Funds for this mostly come from the General Operating Fund and vary depending on other demands on the budget. At times, voter-approved bond funds are used to replace or supplement furnishings and other equipment.

An Energy Management System is in place to maintain the most efficient usage of energy resources to maximize cost avoidance. Since initiation of the system in 2009, we have avoided \$12.6 million (through May 2025) in energy costs.

Our Transportation Department employs two certified mechanics to maintain the District's 61 buses and 11 vans used to transport students. The bus fleet also undergoes annual inspections by the Michigan State Police. The latest inspection, conducted during the 2024-2025 school year saw 100% of our buses receiving a "green tag" – the highest rating given. Kudos to our transportation team for keeping our bus fleet in great working order.

Our buses are on an approximately 11-year replacement cycle which results in about 10 percent of our fleet being replaced each year. Five buses (three regular 77-passenger buses, one regular 77-passenger bus with air conditioning, and one wheelchair lift bus with air conditioning) were purchased during the 2024-2025 school year with proceeds from the 2019 Bond sale. To date, 52 buses have been purchased from the 2016 & 2019 Bond proceeds.

The District routinely inspects and performs routine maintenance to District-owned technology. In those cases where there is unusual wear and tear, the Technology Department will engage the services of outside staff.

The District currently utilizes Grand Rapids Building Services, Inc. (GRBS) to provide the majority of custodial services (second shift) Our contract with GRBS was renewed in June 2025 through the 2026-2027 school year.

Additionally, the District employs one full-time Operations Coordinator who is responsible for monitoring the quality of the second-shift cleaning crew and working directly with GRBS to ensure that the buildings are properly cleaned. This person also oversees the implementation of procedures to improve services, coordinates facility use, and supports administrative needs.

In addition, PPS has hired a floating custodian to address any needs that may arise during the school day. To strengthen oversight, quality-control measures were implemented at the start of the 2022–2023 school year.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

We continue to monitor the expenses associated with operating our pools, stadiums, and multi-use fields so that we maintain a reasonable fee structure for the usage of those facilities. These facilities in particular contain highly technical equipment and represent a considerable investment by our community. As anticipated, requests for the use of these facilities continue to increase. Our goal is to allow for reasonable access while at the same time making sure we fully understand the implications of increased use, cost to operate, and our ability to adequately supervise and protect these assets. Facility use district-wide has reached approximately the same levels as during pre-Covid times.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.4 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not unnecessarily expose the organization, its board or staff to claims of liability.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that District administration provides clarity in terms of expectations and/or standards of conduct for its employees so that they act in a manner which is not likely to cause harm to persons, property or both.

Report

Clear policies exist for the Board and Superintendent in terms of conduct and avoidance of conflict of interest.

Expectations for staff conduct exist in Operational Policies and Administrative Guidelines as well as in staff handbooks.

Staff members are asked to report any conditions or practices which could be considered a liability.

Supervisors review expectations on at least an annual basis.

The District had minor student injury liability claims that were paid by the District's insurance policy.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.5 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not make any purchase: (a) wherein normally prudent protection has not been given against conflict of interest; and (b) where the amount exceeds five times the number of dollars over which the State of Michigan requires the letting of bids without following a stringent method of assuring the balance of long term quality and cost. Orders shall not be split to avoid these criteria.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that (a) a conscious effort is made by the Business Office staff and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to determine if a conflict of interest exists for any purchase; and (b) purchases in excess of approximately \$150,000 will receive a substantial administrative review and justification with respect to its long-term value. Purchases involving a like product from the same vendor will not be split to avoid scrutiny or to avoid the bidding process.

Report

Proposed purchases from any vendor that may have a connection/relationship with an employee or Board member of the District are reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for undue favoritism and competitive pricing.

Proposed purchases over approximately \$150,000 receive additional scrutiny from the ELT, which may include the use of pilot programs and consultation with outside consultants/specialists in the field (architects, construction managers, engineers, curriculum specialists, etc.).

The Business Office tracks and reviews all purchase orders directed to the same vendor to determine compliance with the splitting of orders, the bidding process, and required approval by the Board for such purchases.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.6 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not allow intellectual property, information and files to be inadequately protected from piracy, loss, theft, electronic data breach or from suffering significant damage.

Interpretation

I interpret this wording to mean that:

1. All data is stored on fault tolerant storage systems located on at least two sites. Data backups are completed daily with 98% automated and 100% manual success rates. The district maintains state of the art security systems, including but not limited to firewalls and filters, to prevent inappropriate access to, or corruption of, sensitive and/or private information. This measure is reasonable because it is necessary to meet Federal Regulations, it aligns with industry best practice, and prevents rework due to loss of data.
2. The District has systems in place to detect and prevent attempts to gain access to District systems that would corrupt, damage, or provide access to proprietary, confidential, or sensitive information. Proprietary, confidential, or sensitive information is defined as the programs and data systems used to support district operations. Examples include student data, employee data, payroll data, security systems, and general business operations data. This interpretation is reasonable because the information protected is sensitive, private, and/or critical to the mission of the district, which if accessed inappropriately, lost, or damaged could potentially harm the district or individuals.
3. Other non-electronic data will be stored in a manner which provides maximum protection.

Report

1. All data is initially stored on a high-fault tolerant array of disk drives located in our secure data center. Should one or more of these drives fail, the data is automatically redistributed across the cluster to ensure fault tolerance. The failed drive(s) can then be replaced during a maintenance schedule. At least nightly, all data is replicated to another high-fault tolerant array of disk drives located at our secondary data center.

These two data centers are located on different physical sites to mitigate against damage caused by fire or acts of God. Depending on the nature of the data, routine snapshots are also made, allowing us to restore data to a previous time when required. Industry standard security systems, hardware and software based, are used to monitor, secure, and maintain the District's data.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

2. The District security includes firewall protection and security systems, which scan for malware (including, but not limited to, adware, spyware, trojans, viruses, worms and rootkits). The systems are updated on a regular basis via automated and manual processes as a part of standard district operations. The District has implemented 2-factor authentication for access to critical business office, human resources, and student data.
3. This District has a fire-resistant vault room which includes a safe to maintain critical non-electronic data. Locked, fireproof filing cabinets are available for storage of documents. The District also has a safety deposit box at one of the local banks. Procedures are in place to restrict access to non-electronic data information.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.7 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not receive, process, or disburse funds under controls which are insufficient to meet the Board-appointed auditor's standards.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that procedures are in place to provide sufficient safeguards over the receipt, processing, and disbursement of District funds. The internal control procedures in place are audited annually by the Board-appointed auditing firm, in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

Report

The most recently completed fiscal year audit (FY 2024) by the Board-appointed auditing firm - Rehman Robson – verified the reasonableness of the District’s qualitative aspects of the internal controls used in its accounting practices. The report did not identify any material weaknesses with respect to the fair representation of the District’s financial statements and the federal programs administered by the District.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

2.6.8 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not invest or hold operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds of less than AA rating at any time, or in non-interest-bearing accounts except where necessary to facilitate ease in operational transactions, within reason.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that regulations and procedures are in place to ensure that the Business Office will not invest in or hold operating capital in insecure or non-insured financial instruments, except for ease of operations, within reason.

Report

Cash management and investment regulations and procedures are in place which maximize return on investments through quality certificates of deposit, pooled investment accounts, money market accounts, and prime commercial paper rated one or two by more than one rating service.

A specific "Investments" Operational Policy is in place which the Business Office utilizes in its cash management and investment procedures. As a result, the FY2024 District Audit verified that the total District interest income was \$3,668,572 with an average yield of 4.07% for all funds as of June 30, 2024.

The Business Office utilizes Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC as its Investment Advisor to ensure that the investment rating information is current on the financial institutions with which it conducts business in order to minimize risk if an institution is in a declining state.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.9 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not endanger the organization's public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder its accomplishment of Ends.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that actions or behaviors shall not be permitted to occur which would reflect poor fiscal management in the operation of the District, commit to expenditures without reliable funding sources, jeopardize operational integrity or detract from the Boards stated Ends.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.6) Asset Protection

Report

Financial procedures are in place to ensure adequate financial operations of the District. Budgetary and accounting controls are in place to assure that errors or irregularities that could be material to the financial statements are prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Information contained in the most recent District financial audit supports this claim.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.6.10 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not change the organization's name, logo or substantially alter its identity in the community.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the organization continues to be referred to as Portage Public Schools and that tag lines and other visual depictions of the District are in line with the Mission, Vision and Ends, as adopted by the Board.

Report

The District continues to be referred to as Portage Public Schools, with the tagline of "Every Student, Every Future." This is a new tag line developed from a recommendation of the 2023 NSPRA Communications Audit. Working with branding and marketing consultant Rick Chambers we explored district identity which informed the development of the new tag line, color scheme and logo. The Board received periodic updates, and ultimately approved the final branding package. The new color scheme, tag line and logo were fully implemented over the summer 2025.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

Monitoring Report Evaluation Form

Policy: _____

Is the Superintendent's interpretation reasonable? Yes No

Comments:

Is evidence of compliance reasonable? Yes No

Comments:

For Ends Policies: Comments about long-term achievement of Ends Policy

Comments Regarding Further Policy Development

1. Do you have a concern that is not addressed in this policy?

2. What policy language would address your concern?

Evaluation submitted to Board President By: _____

Adopted: 9/22/08

Revised: 5/25/09, 3/22/10, 2/26/18, 11/20/23

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page

VII Assurance of District Performance

2. Monitoring Report 2.10, Communication & Support to the Board (GP 4.4)

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education accept Monitoring Report 2.10, Communication and Support to the Board, as a reasonable interpretation and evidence of compliance with policy.

**Portage Public Schools
Monitoring Report**


Policy Type: Executive Limitation
Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

Global Board Policy

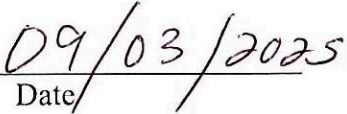
The Superintendent shall not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

Certification

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitation, 2.10, "Communication and Support to the Board" in accordance with the monitoring schedule established by the Board. I certify that the information provided in this report is true as of September 3, 2025.



Signature



Date

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

2.10 GLOBAL POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

Interpretation

I submit that the Board's Policy is comprehensively interpreted in the succeeding sections. My interpretations and data are presented with those sections below.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.1 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not neglect to submit monitoring data required by the Board (see Policy 4.4 on Monitoring Superintendent Performance) in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of the policies being monitored.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that monitoring reports are to be submitted to the Board within the timelines and in a manner consistent with Policy 4.4 unless the Board agrees to a revised schedule.

Report

The Board and Superintendent have completed the 11th year of creating, presenting and approving monitoring reports. All reports were accepted by the Board. Follow-up meetings with the Board President were held throughout the year to provide the Superintendent feedback regarding the reports. The Board's Policy Committee addressed policy language concerns raised through the monitoring process. At the July 2025 Board retreat, the Superintendent made the commitment to keep the monitoring report schedule the same for the 2025-2026.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.2 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not let the Board be unaware of an actual or anticipated noncompliance with any policy of the Board as soon as possible; in the case of noncompliance that could significantly impact the ability to meet organizational Ends, as soon as it is discovered.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

Interpretation

I interpret actual violation to mean that a Board-approved policy has not been followed or that an action has caused a policy to be violated. An anticipated violation means that a strong likelihood exists that an existing or planned practice will violate a Policy if the practice is initiated or continues.

Potential violations of Board Policy will be reported to the Board at the first available meeting after it has been discovered. Actual violations of Board Policy will be reported to the Board President as soon as possible.

Report

Weekly meetings of the Executive Leadership Team allow for discussion and understanding of Board Policies and for the surfacing of any violations or anticipated violations. No such non-compliance issues have occurred since the Superintendent July 1 start date.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.3 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not let the Board be unaware of potential non-compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Superintendent Linkage, particularly in the case of Board behavior which is detrimental to the work relationship between the Board and the Superintendent.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that Board members, either individually or collectively, are informed in writing, electronically or verbally if patterns of Board or individual Board member behavior deviates from established Policies, Board Norms or the Board Code of Ethics.

Report

Neither the Board nor any of its members have been out of compliance during this monitoring cycle.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

2.10.4 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not let the Board be unaware of relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage, threatened or pending lawsuits, material external and internal changes, particularly changes in the assumptions upon which any Board Policy has previously been established.

Interpretation

I interpret “relative trends” to be those most directly related to the Board Global Ends Policies. I interpret anticipated “adverse media coverage” to be a significant event or circumstance that is not routine in nature which could generate substantial negative news for the District.

I interpret “material external and internal changes” to mean those which adversely affect the financial stability of the District or the District’s ability to achieve its Global Ends.

Report

The Board receives periodic updates from the Superintendent via e-mail, phone calls, rounding, or through updates at Board meetings. Furthermore, the Board has four Committees: Policy, Facilities, Audit, and Owner Linkage which receive information. These committees, in turn, report to the full Board.

Monthly updates are provided regarding the Bond Project, Bond Budget, and Project Change Orders (when applicable).

Our voice messaging system, website, PPS app, inserts in “The Portager” and periodic news releases convey additional information to the Board.

Our initial Board retreat allowed for additional communication and conversation around communication to the Board.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.5 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not deny the Board access to, or be uninformed by, a range of relevant perspectives, including staff and external viewpoints, as needed for fully informed board choices.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that before recommendations come before the Board for action, administrators consider diverse viewpoints on any given subject. These viewpoints will consider parental, student, staff and community perspectives, where appropriate.

Report

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) serves as the final sounding board for recommendations being brought before the Board. This allows for a wide variety of perspectives and thoughtful discussion. Because the ELT represents all aspects of operations, the impact of making recommendations in isolation is avoided. Going through this body also provides a checks and balances to make certain that appropriate input has been sought through advisory committees and other established groups such as Curriculum Instructional Council (CIC), building level leaders, and subject area committees.

During the past 12 months the Board heard about many relevant issues affecting operations, including the following.

- School safety
- Food services- contract renewal
- Federal Funds
- Financial Audit
- Technology purchases
- Strategic Commitments
- Our continuous improvement work with Studer Education
- Building and Site Sinking Fund
- Communications Audit Update
- Bus purchases
- Auditor services
- Custodial services - contract renewal
- Curricular purchases
- Collective Bargaining
- NEOLA operational policy revisions
- Board Member School Visits
- Elementary facility planning
- Career and Technical Education
- MTSS/PBIS
- Project Enhancements (Bond)
- Budget Planning for the 2025-2026 School Year

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.6 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form or in a form that fails to differentiate among information of three types: monitoring, decision preparation, and other.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that information being presented is concise and easy to understand. Monitoring reports will be clearly labeled and present data at high levels. Decision preparation information/rationale will be included with recommendations.

Report

Monitoring reports and recommendations made to the Board have been well received and appear to contain the appropriate degree of information in an understandable format. Board members have the opportunity to ask for clarification of other information.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.7 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not cause the Board to operate without appropriate mechanisms and support for official board, officer or committee communications.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the Superintendent provides effective ways to communicate and support the work of the Board and its various work groups through the central office.

Report

Board members have a variety of communication vehicles which include:

- Periodic updates from the Superintendent
- Individual phone calls, meetings, or e-mails
- Board packet information
- Board meetings, work sessions, and retreats
- Agenda planning meetings with the Board President

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

- Updates and alerts from the District's Communications Manager

The Superintendent's Executive Assistant serves as the primary support person to assist the Board with communications and activities such as coordinating dates for meetings, arranging for meeting space, providing meeting materials, and other activities as requested.

Members of the Executive Leadership Team are available, when needed, to provide information and other resources to the Board and/or its Committees.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.8 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not communicate substantive governance information to an individual or segment of the Board except when (a) fulfilling individual requests for information or (b) responding to officers or committees duly charged by the Board.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the Board as a whole will be kept as fully informed as possible on matters of substance except as noted in (a) and (b) above.

Report

At various times throughout the year, work with the Policy Committee and Owner Linkage Committee involved processing information at a committee level. Much of that information was then reported out to the full Board via Committee Reports at Board meetings and retreats and through email communications.

Since the Superintendent July 1 start date, the superintendent is committed to responses to individual Board members, which I believe to be of interest to the entire Board, will be copied to all Board members.

The Board's commitment to Policy Governance, its policies governing requests for information, and its Code of Ethics is appreciated.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

2.10.9 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not allow the Board to be non-compliant with legal or contractual requirements for Board approval on delegated activities of the organization or offer such items on the consent agenda without providing the relevant monitoring assurance pertaining thereto.

Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the Board is provided sufficient background information on action items coming before the Board, whether they be required by Board Policy, local/state/federal law, or upon recommendation of legal counsel or other external authority.

Report

Board agendas include a cover memo outlining some of the key issues facing the Board to assist with meeting flow and anticipated issues of concern. Each action item, including those on the consent agenda, contains the pertinent background information for that item.

Prior to the development of the agenda, the key items for the agenda are reviewed with the Board President and members of the Executive Leadership Team to verify validity and accuracy.

Appropriate staff are available to the Board at its meetings to clarify information and answer questions that arise.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

2.10.10 POLICY LANGUAGE

The Superintendent shall not deny the Board access to requested incidental information which, while not part of the Board's work, will allow it to understand the context of that work. That information will include:

- a. A monthly summary of financial performance presented at the monthly Board meeting.
- b. The Superintendent will at least annually provide to the Board a report on safety.
- c. An annual report of Niche rankings for all KRESA and contiguous school districts.

Interpretation

I interpret "incidental information" to mean information that is not monitoring information or not relevant to decision preparation but may be of interest to the Board.

Monitoring Report

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Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy Title: (2.10) Communication and Support to the Board

Report

In regards to 2.10.10a: On each regular meeting agenda there is a financial update with an opportunity for the Board to ask questions. These updates are provided by staff from the Business Office.

The Board also hears financial updates about the existing Bond Projects. Bond budget updates previously were provided on a monthly basis. Also, a summary of Bond Project change orders has been provided to the Board as they occur throughout the school year.

In regards to 2.10.10b: A report on safety will be provided during the Superintendent's evaluation.

In regards to 2.10.10c: A report on Niche rankings will be updated in the spring after the conclusion of M.R. 1.1.

On each agenda the Superintendent has an opportunity to provide incidental information that may be of interest to the Board.

Conclusion Statement

The organization met expectations.

Monitoring Report Evaluation Form

Policy: _____

Is the Superintendent's interpretation reasonable? Yes No

Comments:

Is evidence of compliance reasonable? Yes No

Comments:

For Ends Policies: Comments about long-term achievement of Ends Policy

Comments Regarding Further Policy Development

1. Do you have a concern that is not addressed in this policy?

2. What policy language would address your concern?

Evaluation submitted to Board President By: _____

Adopted: 9/22/08

Revised: 5/25/09, 3/22/10, 2/26/18, 11/20/23

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, 6:30 P.M.**

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VIII. Required Action Items

1. MASB Delegate Assembly Representatives

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education certify the following delegate, Randy Van Antwerp, and as alternate, _____, for the 2025 Michigan Association of School Boards Delegate Assembly.

Johnny Edwards
Superintendent
Phone: 269.323.5182
jedwards@portageps.org

To: Board of Education
From: Johnny Edwards, Superintendent 
Date: August 18, 2025
Re: 2025 MASB Delegate Assembly

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Education certify the following delegate(s): _____ and alternate(s): _____ for the 2025 Michigan Association of School Boards Delegate Assembly, as presented.

BACKGROUND:

The Board of Education participates annually in the Michigan Association of School Boards' Delegate Assembly. This year the event will take place on Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Grand Traverse Resort. Based on the District's student membership, Portage is allowed to send four voting delegates and an equal number of alternates to the Assembly. Delegates and alternates must be school board members. Districts must certify their delegate/alternate selections with MASB by no later than Thursday, October 2, 2025; therefore, board action to confirm these representatives must take place prior to that.

Delegates selected by boards of education across the state will decide on MASB's positions on a wide variety of issues affecting education. Board certified delegates/alternates may offer motions and vote on issues.

Please consider serving as a delegate or alternate for this upcoming event. This item will return to the Board for action at the September 8, 2025 board meeting.

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, 6:30 P.M.**

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IX. Action Items

1. New Teacher Appointments (OP 3120)

Recommended Motion

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education approve the appointment of the following teachers for Portage Public Schools:

- **Shannon SaintAmour – Healthy Living Teacher at North Middle School**
- **Caroline Wildasin – Fourth Grade Teacher at Amberly Elementary**
- **Jennifer Leone – PE Teacher at Kalamazoo Country Day School & St. Michaels**
- **Alexus Keen – Third Grade Teacher at Woodland Elementary**
- **Heidi Thorpe – Speech Language Pathologist at Lake Center Elementary**

Bradley D. Galin, MBA, SPHR
Director of Human Resources
Phone: 269.323.5152
bgalin@portageps.org

To: Board of Education
From: Bradley D. Galin, MBA, SPHR
Date: September 8, 2025
Re: Teacher Appointment Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the appointment of the following teachers for the Portage Public Schools:

Shannon SaintAmour– (NMS Healthy Living Teacher) – Shannon comes PPS from Three Rivers Community Schools. Shannon has a bachelor’s degree from Kalamazoo College and a Master’s degree from Wayne State University.

Caroline Wildasin– (AMB 4th Grade Teacher) – Caroline graduated from Olivet Nazarene University with a bachelors in Elementary Education.

Jennifer Leone– (KCDS/SML PE Teacher) – Jennifer holds a bachelors and Master degree from Western Michigan University.

Alexus Keen– (WOD 3rd Grade Teacher) – Alexis holds a bachelors degree in Elementary Education from Western Michigan University.

Heidi Thorpe – (LCE Speech Language Pathologist) – Heidi is rejoining PPS after working with several private agencies. Heidi has both her bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees from Western Michigan University.

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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XI. Closed Session

1. Discuss Collective Bargaining Strategy (OMA)

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education move into closed session to discuss collective bargaining strategy, as allowed under the Open Meetings Act 15.268, Section 8(c).

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
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XII. Post-Closed Action

1. Approve Agreement with Portage Education Association

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education

_____.