

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS' BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL RM #1136, 8135 S. WESTNEDGE, PORTAGE, MI 49002
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 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 – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

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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 – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page


III. Reports

1. Superintendent's Report
 - a. Presentation of 2027 Proposed Student Trip to Puerto Rico

 - b. Bond Project Update

 - c. Financial Report

Janet Johnstone
Coordinator of Instructional Services
Phone: 269.323.5140
fax: 269.323.5141
jjohnstone@portageps.org

TO: Johnny Edwards
DATE: February 3, 2026
FROM: Janet Johnstone/Dr. Michael Pascoe 
SUBJECT: Central High School 2027 field trip to Puerto Rico

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend the approval for Portage Central High students to travel to Puerto Rico as described in the attached material. The trip dates are tentatively set for June 15-21, 2027. **There is no travel advisory as Puerto Rico is a United States territory.**

BACKGROUND:

Rachele Reidel is proposing a student trip to Puerto Rico for June 15-21, 2027. They will spend 7 days out-of-state. The purpose of this trip is to allow students the opportunity to use the Spanish language in an authentic setting. Curriculum standards are covered in the trip proposal provided. The families involved will be responsible for the cost. The students will not miss any instructional time. Chaperones will be a ratio of approximately 1 adult to every 6 students (number attending: Approx. 18 students, 3 adults).

I have reviewed this proposal and support it.

JJ/MP
Attachments

Portage Public School District
Advanced Activity Trips Custom Report

Trip Type Name	Trip ID	Account Name	Description	Start Date	End Date	Requested Adults	Requested Students	Purpose of Trip Event Description Educational Goals	No PPS Transportation Alternate Method	Overnight Trip must include attachments and costperson
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StartDate: 6/15/2027, EndDate: 6/21/2027

Field Trip Only (No PPS Transportation)

AT-04581 CHS External Billing - Puerto Rico

6/15/2027

3

18

Yes

The purpose of this trip is to allow students the opportunity to use the Spanish language in an authentic setting while being able to experience the culture firsthand.

Airplane

Proposal for Trip to Puerto Rico Summer of 2027

By: Bonnie Moss, Rachele Reidel, and Kate Twichell

Documents included:

Page 1: Cover page

Page 2-4: Tentative Itinerary

Page 5-6: Specific Educational Goals

Pages 7-9: Why travel abroad enhances learning

Pages 10-14: Information about the travel company World Strides

Day 1 Hola San Juan

Meet your tour director and check into hotel

San Juan city walk: Museo de Casa Blanca, La Muralla, La Fortaleza
This afternoon we will embark on a tour exploring Puerto Rico's rich history.

Day 2 San Juan

San Juan guided sightseeing tour: Plazas San José y Colón, Calle de Cristo, Castillo San Felipe del Morro visit, El Capitolio, Teatro Tapia, and San Juan Museum visit

LEAP Experience sustainable farming in San Juan

Jump into the buzzing capital of Puerto Rico. San Juan's 16th-century historic district offers up a taste of Renaissance Spain, while the modern hotels, busy cafés, and traffic-packed streets in the new sections give the city a distinctly 21st-century energy. Start your invasion at El Morro, one of the oldest standing forts in the Caribbean. The fort rises 140 feet above the sea and contains ramparts, tunnels, and dungeons open for exploration. Thick city walls connect this fort with the similar fortifications of El Castillo San Cristobal and La Fortaleza, and the heavy wooden doors of the San Juan Gate were once the only way for visitors to pass into the heavily fortified city. See the less militaristic side of colonial life at the Casa Blanca, an elaborate house originally built for town founder Ponce de Leon. The beautiful 16th-century Catedral de San Juan soars up nearby. Find harmony at the Pablo Casals museum, dedicated to the world-famous cellist (and containing a rather eerie cast of his hands), and relaxation at the Condado, San Juan's answer to Miami Beach. Known as El Morro, this fortification built between 16th and 18th centuries, was designed to protect the island from seaborne enemies. El Capitolio is the center of government for Puerto Rico. Please note that guided tours and visits are not available, this is a photo-stop only.

Day 3 San Juan

El Yunque Caribbean National Forest visit

Luquillo beach free time

Bioluminescent Bay excursion

Surrounded by millennium-old trees, catching the barest glimpse of the bright feathers of the Puerto Rican parrot and listening to the distinctive chanting of the coquí frogs (said to stop singing if ever taken away from the island), you'll understand why native Puerto Ricans considered this forest the home of the god of happiness. El Yunque is the only tropical forest within the U.S. National Forest Service and is a fantastic place to experience all the animal and plant riches that a rainforest has to offer.

Day 4 San Juan

Ponce tour director-led sightseeing: Parque de Bombas, Lions Fountain, Ponce Cathedral, Casa Alcaldia

Picturesque Ponce is quite possibly the prettiest city in Puerto Rico. Colonial architecture, colorful balconies, horse-drawn carriages, and marble-lined sidewalks all combine to give Ponce its unbeatable charm. The town's elegant cathedral rises from the main square, across from the almost gaudy former firehouse -- the building's bright red and black stripes contrast with the surrounding edifices' calm pastels. Step inside and check out the museum honoring the bravery of the city's firemen and showcasing antique fire engines.

Day 5 San Juan

Visit a local cave and Caguana Ceremonial Indigenous Park and Heritage Center visit

Visit one of Puerto Rico's many caves such as Cueva Ventana ("Window Cave") or the Río Camuy Cave Park. Learn about the Indigenous people who lived in Puerto Rico before the arrival of the Spanish. At the Heritage Center, operated by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, you'll see artifacts, petroglyphs, and a number of stone-lined ball courts that archaeologists have uncovered. This is one of the most important Taino-culture archaeological sites in the world.

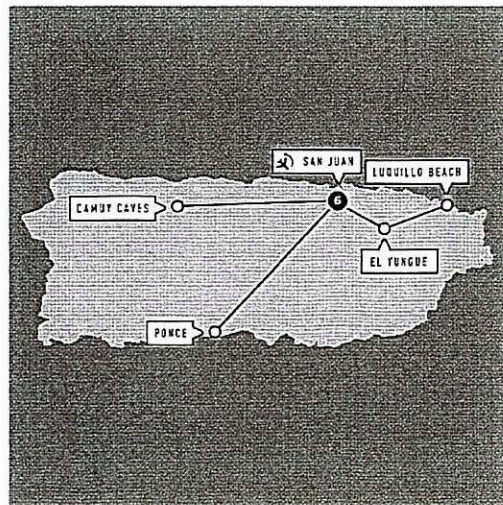
Day 6 San Juan

Free time in San Juan

LEAP Salsa Time!: The tradition of salsa dancing awaits you! Locals show you how to move to Latin American rhythms.

Day 7 Flight home from San Juan

Travel home



Tour Cost Breakdown

Total Fee:* \$3,490.00

Program Quote Breakdown

The following fees apply to your full-paying participants:

Program Fee*	\$3,687.00
On-Tour Tipping	\$28.00
** Early Enrollment Savings	\$ -225.00

Total Fee* **\$3,490.00**

OR 14 monthly payments of \$242.21

After initial payment of \$99.00

*** Last day for this Program Fee is Feb 24, 2026.**

**** Only valid with voucher code Travel5J**

Additional Adult Fees

The following additional fees apply only to full-paying participants 23 and older and are not included in the total price listed above.

Adult Supplement	\$125.00
Twin Room Upgrade	\$270.00

Additional Adult Fee **\$395.00**

Free Chaperones

6 Travelers = 1 Free Chaperone

Your free place ratio is such that your group will fully contribute towards 3 free place(s), and partially contribute to an additional free place. We reimburse this partial contribution to you as a Cash Stipend.

3 Free Chaperones

Specific Educational Goals of the Trip to Puerto Rico:

C1.1N.SL.i

Ask for and obtain information in everyday situations in the target language about time, place, price, size, relating to restaurants, stores, transportation, and services

C1.2.A.L.b

Understand interpersonal communication, spoken messages, interviews, group discussions and lectures in the target language on a variety of familiar and unfamiliar topics

C2.2.M.C.a

Describe the significance of current cultural icons (arts, architecture, music, literature, and the creators of these products)

C2.2.M.F.b

Compare the products that are native to a community, region or country with those of one or more other communities, regions, or countries

C2.2.M.G.b

Identify and describe major geographic features (rivers, mountains, deserts, forests) of additional countries or regions in which the language is spoken

C4.1.A.c

Recognize that register/honorifics reflect culture, and use this knowledge to adjust language accordingly and strengthen the understanding of both languages

C4.1.A.d

Recognize that phonological features (such as pronunciation, intonation, and tone) reflect culture, and use this knowledge to adjust language accordingly and strengthen the understanding of both languages

C4.2.A.a

Describe the institutions, values, beliefs, and perspectives that serve as the foundation of the target culture practices and compare them to one's own

C5.2.A.a

Seek opportunities and use the target language in real life situations within the community

Language, culture, and connections:

How travel abroad enhances student learning

El Castillo San Felipe del Morro, el Museo de San Juan, el Yunque Caribbean National Forest, Rio Camuy Cave Park, Caguana Ceremonial Indigenous Park and Heritage Center, bioluminescent bay visit, dancing salsa, and experiencing sustainable farming: these are all experiences that students will have if they seize the opportunity to travel to Puerto Rico with Portage Central High School in June 2027. While having these amazing experiences, students will also fulfill many state standards and enrich their IB learner profile. They will be enhancing their linguistic and cultural knowledge, as well as making connections to their own culture(s).

Students will have countless opportunities to improve their Spanish language skills in an authentic context. This trip is designed for those who have completed at least Spanish II. They will have the base knowledge to be able to communicate and to add to their linguistic skills.

The following state of Michigan World Language standards will be met during this trip, relating to improving language skills:

- C1.1N.SL.i Ask for and obtain information in everyday situations in the target language about time, place, price, size, relating to restaurants, stores, transportation, and services
- C1.2.A.L.b Understand interpersonal communication, spoken messages, interviews, group discussions and lectures in the target language on a variety of familiar and unfamiliar topics
- C4.1.A.c Recognize that register/honorifics reflect culture, and use this knowledge to adjust language accordingly and strengthen the understanding of both languages
- C4.1.A.d Recognize that phonological features (such as pronunciation, intonation, and tone) reflect culture, and use this knowledge to adjust language accordingly and strengthen the understanding of both languages.
- C5.2.A.a Seek opportunities and use the target language in real life situations within the community

By participating in this trip, students will also be enriching their knowledge of the target culture and making connections to their own culture(s). Studying Spanish in the classroom provides students with many learning opportunities, but experiencing it in an authentic situation makes the language more meaningful and the culture comes to life right before the students' eyes. The first time you kayak in the world's brightest bioluminescent bay, visit the massive river cave park, talk with a native speaker entirely in Spanish, or see and learn how to dance salsa: these are experiences that will change you and will change your perspective of your own background and culture. The United States of America is an amazing country, but it is important to see what it is like to live in other countries. Puerto Rico is a place that is rich in history, art, tradition, flora and fauna.

While on this trip to Puerto Rico, students will be meeting the following state of Michigan World Language standards relating to culture and connections:

- C2.2.M.F.b Compare the products that are native to a community, region or country with those of one or more other communities, regions, or countries
- C4.1.A.c Recognize that register/honorifics reflect culture, and use this knowledge to adjust language accordingly and strengthen the understanding of both languages
- C4.1.A.d Recognize that phonological features (such as pronunciation, intonation, and tone) reflect culture, and use this knowledge to adjust language accordingly and strengthen the understanding of both languages
- C4.2.A.a Describe the institutions, values, beliefs, and perspectives that serve as the foundation of the target culture practices and compare them to one's own.

Travel abroad will not only strengthen the curriculum based on the state of Michigan's standards for World Languages, but will also enhance the learner profile based on the International Baccalaureate curriculum. Traveling to Puerto Rico will make IB learners:

- *Better inquirers:* Students' natural curiosity will be nurtured and encouraged while traveling abroad. Students will actively enjoy learning and will be engaged participants throughout the trip.
- *More knowledgeable:* They will gain in-depth knowledge of not only monuments, attractions, flora, and fauna, but also the history, culture, and importance of preservation that surround those attractions.
- *Better communicators:* Students will have the opportunities to practice their Spanish and to understand the nuances of true communication, verbal and nonverbal.
- *More open-minded:* Students will see how differing values, perspectives, and traditions are expressed in another society, as well as how to better understand and appreciate their own culture(s) because of this. They will appreciate both cultural points of view.
- *More reflective:* Students will better understand their culture(s) and themselves. Throughout the trip students will be asked to reflect on similarities difference between the Puertorican culture and the students' own cultures.

While experiencing the language, culture, and biodiversity of Puerto Rico, students will apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the world around them. The students will consider different future paths of study, and perhaps more globally-minded occupations. They will be more academically motivated because they have experienced the language in authentic situations and see its value. As a result, their classroom learning will be enhanced, and these students will be able to return and enrich the classroom experiences of their peers as well. By extending the classroom beyond the four walls, students will learn more and become better IB learners!



Supporting Educational Travel A Guide for School Administration

WorldStrides At a Glance

Our History

In 1964, a middle school history teacher from Chicago discovered the incredible educational experience of traveling to Washington, D.C. with his students. He was so encouraged by the powerful effects travel had on his students' eagerness and ability to learn that he left teaching in 1967 to start Lakeland Tours. His vision to make educational travel easy, fun, and safe for teachers and students came to fruition as Lakeland Tours grew and became the leader in educational student travel.

Who We Are Today

Over the years, Lakeland Tours joined forces with other leaders in the student travel field to form WorldStrides, setting us apart as the premier educational travel organization in the nation. We're specialists in providing educational travel and experiences for students of all ages across their lifetime learning journey, delivering high-quality and high-value learning opportunities that support students' growth and development over time. Each learner's journey is different, which is why we offer a broad range of program categories for groups and individuals, including educational travel, performing arts, career exploration, study abroad, language immersion, sports, and service-learning tours.

Our Mission

All WorldStrides programs are united under one mission: to create experiences that enable participants to view the world and themselves in new ways. We help learners grow as people by developing independence, leadership, problem-solving skills, worldliness, and maturity; and we help them grow as citizens by building compassion, understanding, connections, and perspectives that transcend boundaries and borders.



When planning group travel, it's critical that your travel provider has the resources and experience necessary to smoothly and efficiently coordinate a student travel group in the areas that you will visit. We are confident that our decades-long history as student travel specialists provides us with this level of experience.

Educational travel requires special skills that go far beyond making simple hotel and airline reservations. When emergencies arise, this experience is critical. We also realize that price is important, and our prices consistently provide the highest value for your student travelers' investment. Not all companies have the same priorities or experience, and WorldStrides sets the bar high. In terms of safety, education, and passion for student travel, our team consistently beats all other competitors. WorldStrides is the standard by which every other company measures themselves.

Experience with Educational Travel Groups

Number of years in student travel business	✓ 50+
Number of participants during this period	✓ 9 million+
Number of participants per year	✓ 450,000
Number of educators that partner with us each year	✓ 50,000+
Number of full-time staff dedicated to educational travel programs	✓ 1,000+

Qualifications to Coordinate Your Program

Does your travel provider have a single point of contact for all on-program issues?	✓ Yes
Does your travel provider employ and train its own Tour Directors?	✓ Yes
Will a Tour Director stay at the hotel with the group?	✓ Yes
Does your travel provider arrange detailed training for its staff on how to best work with students?	✓ Yes

Educational Focus

Does your travel provider employ a full-time Curriculum and Academics team?	✓ Yes
Does your travel provider offer students the opportunity to earn high school and college credit?	✓ Yes
Does your travel provider offer teachers the opportunity to earn professional development?	✓ Yes
Is your travel provider accredited by regional accrediting bodies across the United States?	✓ Yes

Who issues accreditation for the organization?

– Western Association of Schools and Colleges	✓ WASC
– Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools	✓ MSA
– Cognia	✓ Cognia

Insurance and Consumer Protection

Does your travel provider maintain liability insurance?	✓ Yes
Does this coverage apply to the Program Leader (teacher)?	✓ Yes
What are the limits of this policy?	✓ \$50 million
What is the cost for supplemental medical and dental insurance?	✓ \$0
Does your travel provider pay if an emergency mandates an itinerary change?	✓ Yes
Does your travel provider maintain USTOA consumer protection coverage of \$1 million?	✓ Yes
Does your travel provider comply with all Federal and State regulations, including all U.S. Seller of Travel Laws?	✓ Yes

The Safety of our Travelers is our #1 Priority

Planning for a Safe Experience Before Departure

BEHAVIOR CONTRACT

Safety is the number one priority at WorldStrides. All participants are expected to demonstrate high standards of conduct, courteousness, and consideration toward others. Students and their parent/legal guardian must agree to adhere to the behavior and conduct rules established by the Program Leader and a code of conduct may be required.

MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

A parent/legal guardian for each participant must complete a medical release form and provide emergency contact information and authorization for treatment in the event of an emergency.

TRAVEL SMART, TRAVEL SAFE

Compiled by our travel experts, 'Travel Smart, Travel Safe' is designed to share some best practices based on our experience sending more than 100,000 students to international destinations. Each group receives a document with information pertinent to their trip and specific to their destination.

Students' Safety While on the Program

ADULT SUPERVISION

With our default chaperone-to-student ratio of 1:6 (customizable), students receive proper attention and supervision. The Program Leader will identify the chaperones for the program. WorldStrides suggests selecting adults who are flexible, helpful, and comfortable with the students.

TOUR DIRECTORS

A specially-trained Tour Director guides each group throughout your program. Tour Directors devote 100% of their attention to the students, challenging them to assess and apply what they learn through firsthand experience, so they take the most away from the program.

ON TOUR SUPPORT

Our WorldAssist team can be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week, because safety is our first priority. Should your group require an extended stay due to an airline problem or weather-related issue, WorldAssist will make arrangements to accommodate your group (hotel, meals, re-booking airline seats, and providing additional bus usage).

DOCTORS ON CALL PROGRAM

WorldStrides has an exclusive partnership with The George Washington University Department of Emergency Medicine. A George Washington University doctor serves on our staff as the WorldStrides Medical Director, overseeing medical response planning for the organization and providing direct case management in the event of a medical response issue anywhere in the world. Our partnership gives us access to doctors who are available 24 hours a day to provide consultations to all our traveling students, parents, and teachers.

AXA MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

WorldStrides also has a partnership with AXA, one of the world's leading providers of behavioral health assistance programs. Travelers have direct access to confidential and immediate support from an experienced, U.S.-based healthcare provider while traveling. This service also provides coordination with local professionals for referrals to provide additional support, if needed.

Other Industry-Leading Safety Measures

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

WorldStrides travelers stay in 3- and 4-star quality hotels located in safe, central locations. They'll enjoy plentiful breakfasts each morning and hearty, three-course dinners that provide an authentic taste of the local cuisine.

EMERGENCY MANUAL

We have developed an extensive emergency manual that details how we deal with all types of emergency situations, and all of our on-site staff members have been trained to carry out these plans. Set procedures, checklists, and immediate access to emergency phone numbers results in faster and more accurate responses, which is critical when dealing with an emergency situation.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

We maintain an industry-leading multi-million-dollar level of liability coverage. Our insurance automatically covers teachers, chaperones, and the school. WorldStrides' insurance is truly geared to protect you. Additionally, accident, illness, and accident-related dental insurance coverage are provided for WorldStrides program participants. Limits per single occurrence are \$7,500 for accident, \$1,500 for illness, and \$750 for accident-related dental.

CERTIFIED STUDENT TRAVEL ORGANIZATION

WorldStrides is a Certified Student Travel Organization (CSTO), verified by the Student & Youth Travel Association (SYTA). This certification highlights our commitment toward meeting and exceeding safety and risk management standards for student travel safety as defined by SYTA.

Flexibility and Assurance

The WorldStrides Team

Our passionate and professional team of travel experts will work closely with your group from the time you decide to lead a WorldStrides program until your group returns home safely. Our primary goal is to provide a safe and secure travel experience. We strive to enrich lives by taking students beyond classroom walls and inspiring student travelers by providing a unique and experiential educational program. WorldStrides has a staff of more than 700 professionals, many of whom are former educators, and all of whom are dedicated to making sure every aspect of your program is a success.

Travel with Confidence

When you travel with WorldStrides or participate in one of our programs, you can rest assured knowing that we have spent five decades putting a network of support in place to safeguard your group and your experience. The world has thrown us lots of curveballs over our 50+ years in business, and we have and will continue to refine our best practices for safety to fit the current environment, and to match the age and stage of life for all of our students. Our resources are deep and our team is prepared. This detailed and challenging work behind the scenes lets educators and students focus on what's most important—learning and enjoying the experience at hand!

We have developed a comprehensive approach to ensure each group's comfort and safety, and your peace of mind. WorldStrides can be reached 24 hours a day, both in the United States and overseas. In the event of an emergency, every participant is covered by an international network that provides medical referral, medical translation, medical monitoring, repatriation, and other emergency services.

50+ Years of Trusted Travel

WorldStrides is by your side every step of the way. If something doesn't go as planned on tour, we've got you covered. Just take it from our Program Leaders and school administrators that we supported during the COVID-19 pandemic:

“

Worldstrides is an amazing company. Not only do they take care of everything while abroad, but they are also the kindest people. From those who helped set up the trip, to those who helped during the trip, I was in complete awe. They really take care of our students and teachers.

Whitney M., Program Leader

”

We recognize that WorldStrides went above and beyond to accommodate our families. Our administration, faculty, and trustees are beyond grateful.

Genifer R., School Administrator

“

You all have been helpful, open, communicative, and understanding in a time that I'm sure has been chaotic and stressful for you. I have talked to many other teachers and families that were supposed to have traveled with other companies, and hands down, you guys had the best refund policy and were the most understanding and helpful of them all.

Liz K., Program Leader

The Educational Value of Student Travel

Learning through personal experience takes education beyond the classroom. Through educational travel, students use knowledge acquired in the classroom to analyze the world around them and make a personal connection by applying their knowledge to their understanding and view of the future.

Educational Innovation

WorldStrides programs are designed to build on your students' natural curiosity while encouraging them to grow through live exploration. Our educational philosophy, LEAP (Learning through Exploration and Active Participation), brings contemporary teaching strategies, used by excellent teachers in the classroom, to the environments encountered while traveling.

LEAP is the entire relationship between each student, the places they encounter, and their Tour Director acting as a cultural mediator, not just a series of activities. Students learn best when they are engaged, and challenged, and in any group, a multitude of learning styles and social skills will be represented, each student deserving an opportunity to shine. LEAP is designed specifically to replace the old-fashioned lecturing style of traditional tour guides with a dynamic, inclusive, and constructivist approach.

Accreditation Sets WorldStrides Apart

In 1996, WorldStrides became the first accredited student travel organization in the nation. Accreditation recognizes educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality and entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public. WorldStrides is accredited through multiple regional accrediting bodies across the nation, including Cognia (formerly AdvancED, parent organization for North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, Northwest Accreditation Commission, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement), Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.



Professional Development for Teachers

WorldStrides' professional development is unique—it is far removed from the time spent in the school's library listening to an "expert" talk for hours. Instead, our professional development opportunities allow teachers to consider the specific needs of their classes, their students, and their school. By working closely with WorldStrides staff from start to finish, teachers gain valuable skills and tools that can be implemented beyond the travel program. Teachers earn professional development certificates that can support teaching license renewal or be used as evidence of program participation.

Academic Credit for Students

Through our Discovery for Credit Program, students have access to courses that will allow them to reflect upon many of the themes and topics explored during their travel program. Students in grades 6-12 at the time of travel can earn free elective high school credit upon successful completion of both the travel program and online course. Through our university partner, George Mason University, eligible students in grades 9-12 at the time of travel can also earn up to three college credits upon successful completion of both the travel program and online course. Students have six months to complete their courses after travel. Upon successful completion, they will receive a transcript directly either from George Mason University or WorldStrides. Students who earn credit with WorldStrides will find this gives them a competitive advantage on college applications, distinguishes them as online learners, and gives them a jump-start on their path to a successful higher education experience.

Educational Travel Programs vs. School Field Trips

Because WorldStrides programs are typically non-school-sponsored, they do not follow the traditional model of a school field trip. When you let your administration know about your plans to travel, it may be helpful for you to highlight the points outlined below.

NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED STATUS

Unlike a school field trip, a WorldStrides educational travel program is not sponsored by the school and does not require the school or school district to allocate funds.

PROGRAMS DON'T OCCUR DURING SCHOOL TIME

Just like a part-time job or sporting activity, a WorldStrides program does not result in lost class time for students. Additionally, there is no need for a substitute instructor when a teacher leads a travel program.

VOLUNTARY STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Since the trip is not paid for by the school and does not take place during school time, neither the school nor the students are obligated to participate. Similar to summer camp, this program is available for all students, but only some will decide to go.

Summer camps, supplemental enrichment programs, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and even the Little League are all non-school-sponsored programs that are embraced by the community and promoted in schools. Most administrators are very supportive of WorldStrides educational travel programs.

**Portage Public Schools
General Fund Budget Progress Report by Function
2025-2026 Fiscal Year**

	Seven months ended January 31, 2026				Seven months ended January 31, 2025			
	Preliminary Budget 2025- 2026	% of total	Year-to-date activity	% of budget	Preliminary Budget 2024- 2025	% of total	Year-to-date activity	% of budget
Revenue:								
Local	19,978,649	16%	18,485,679	93%	19,002,147	15%	18,616,775	98%
State	89,415,376	73%	37,337,875	42%	91,538,661	74%	35,905,851	39%
Federal	1,203,264	1%	15,108	1%	1,901,369	2%	1,051,583	55%
Local payments-other districts	12,127,368	10%	5,963,568	49%	11,437,997	9%	5,518,501	48%
Other/Transfers in	<u>130,000</u>	0%	<u></u>	0%	<u>120,000</u>	0%	<u>22,202</u>	19%
Total Revenue	122,854,657	100%	61,802,230	50%	124,000,174	100%	61,114,912	49%
Expenditures:								
Instruction								
Basic Programs	62,290,929	49%	29,461,966	47%	62,518,724	49%	29,268,180	47%
Added Needs	<u>12,339,549</u>	10%	<u>5,650,155</u>	46%	<u>12,103,721</u>	10%	<u>5,229,747</u>	43%
Total Instruction	74,630,478	59%	35,112,122	47%	74,622,445	59%	34,497,927	46%
Supporting Services								
Pupil Support	11,461,290	9%	5,398,993	47%	11,194,306	9%	5,136,288	46%
Instructional Staff	8,457,575	7%	4,378,308	52%	8,530,940	7%	4,309,499	51%
General Administration	873,106	1%	542,814	62%	846,509	1%	539,288	64%
School Administration	6,601,287	5%	3,573,577	54%	6,387,409	5%	3,365,318	53%
Business	1,309,382	1%	783,367	60%	1,268,317	1%	762,712	60%
Operations and Maintenance	11,051,081	9%	7,007,876	63%	11,996,894	9%	6,386,456	53%
Transportation	5,707,490	5%	2,442,915	43%	5,102,480	4%	2,411,014	47%
Central Support Services	3,531,171	3%	2,467,378	70%	3,202,032	3%	2,280,562	71%
Other Support Services	1,942,324	2%	1,278,986	66%	1,837,507	1%	1,199,652	65%
Community Services	23,468	0%	13,138	56%	173,243	0%	53,858	31%
Childcare Services	<u>270,287</u>	0%	<u>183,486</u>	68%	<u>1,129,446</u>	1%	<u>665,053</u>	59%
Total Supporting Services	51,228,461	41%	28,070,838	55%	51,669,083	41%	27,109,700	52%
Other Financing Uses/Capital Outlay	<u>142,928</u>	0%	<u>121,928</u>	85%	<u>21,000</u>	0%	<u>20,956</u>	100%
Total Expenditures	<u>126,001,867</u>	100%	<u>63,304,888</u>	50%	<u>126,312,528</u>	100%	<u>61,628,584</u>	49%
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	(3,147,210)		(1,502,658)		(2,312,354)		(513,672)	

**Portage Public Schools
General Fund Budget Progress Report by Object
2025-2026 Fiscal Year**

	Seven months ended January 31, 2026				Seven months ended January 31, 2025			
	Preliminary Budget 2025- 2026	% of total	Year-to-date activity	% of budget	Preliminary Budget 2024- 2025	% of total	Year-to-date activity	% of budget
Salaries	61,276,322	49%	29,994,865	49%	59,014,191	47%	28,010,873	47%
Benefits	<u>44,529,686</u>	35%	<u>20,939,288</u>	47%	<u>45,351,879</u>	36%	<u>20,794,827</u>	46%
Total Salaries and Benefits	105,806,008	84%	50,934,152	48%	104,366,070	83%	48,805,700	47%
Purchased Services	13,999,493	11%	7,877,653	56%	12,227,500	10%	7,366,861	60%
Supplies	5,957,628	5%	3,536,557	59%	6,443,777	5%	4,096,565	64%
Capital outlay/Other	<u>238,738</u>	0%	<u>956,526</u>	401%	<u>3,275,181</u>	3%	<u>1,359,457</u>	42%
Total Expenditures	126,001,867	100%	63,304,888	50%	126,312,528	100%	61,628,584	49%

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page

VI. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes
 - a. February 9, 2026 Committee of the Whole Work Session

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

The Committee of the Whole Work Session of the Board of Education of Portage Public Schools held on Monday, February 9, 2026, was called to order at 6:30 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. Rohwer, seconded by Mrs. Novaria, that the Board of Education approve the agenda as printed.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Bond Project Update

Mr. Russ Gerbers, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, presented images showing construction progress at the new Woodland Elementary site.

BOARD EDUCATION

MTSS Update

Dr. Anne Gordon, Director of Educational Supports and Interventions introduced her team of presenters - Ms. Effie McCarren, Special Education Supervisor, Ms. Becky Moon, West Middle School Counselor, Ms. Aja Kaylor and Ms. Tama Salisbury, Central High Assistant Principals, and Ms. Bailey Chapman, School Psychologist. The team presented on Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), which covered the three tiers of positive behavior supports, mental health supports, and trauma informed practices, restorative practices, family engagement, social emotional learning and 21st Century career skills, community engagement and conflict resolution in partnership with Gryphon Place

The presenters addressed questions from Trustees. Board members were appreciative of the in-depth report.

COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS

President Van Antwerp opened the floor to public comment.

Colin Theobald spoke to the Board about concerns related to the student drop-off lane at Central High School.

President Van Antwerp thanked Mr. Theobald for his remarks and opened the floor to Trustee comments.

Mrs. Rohwer noted how much she enjoyed the recent high school productions.

Mr. Van Antwerp reminded everyone of the KRESA Career Connect open house on February 10 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Larson shared her enthusiasm about the Career Connect program.

Mr. Snyder provided a committee update. At the recent Linkage Committee meeting, the idea of “coffee with trustees” was discussed. The concept will be shared with the full board at their upcoming Policy Governance Retreat.

CONSENT AGENDA

President Van Antwerp presented the following Consent Agenda item for approval by the Board of Education: minutes from the January 26, 2026 Policy Governance Retreat & Regular Meeting.

As there were no objections, the consent agenda was adopted as presented.

ASSURANCE OF DISTRICT PERFORMANCE

Monitoring Report 1.5, Ends

Superintendent Edwards shared highlights from his report.

Motion offered by Dr. Stevenson, seconded by Mrs. Novaria, that the Board of Education accept Monitoring Report 1.5 Ends, as a reasonable interpretation and evidence of compliance with policy.

The motion carried unanimously.

Monitoring Report 2.4, Financial Planning/Budgeting

Superintendent Edwards provided an overview of key points from his report.

Motion offered by Mrs. Novaria, seconded by Mrs. Crawford, that the Board of Education accept Monitoring Report 2.4 Financial Planning/Budgeting, as a reasonable interpretation and evidence of compliance with policy.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

MASB Board of Directors Election

President Van Antwerp reviewed the candidate bios for Trustee consideration. The Board will take action at its February 23, 2026 meeting to select the candidate it will support.

2025-26 Budget Amendments

Ms. Paula Johnson, Director of Finances, and Ms. Samantha Stevens, Business Manager, provided a presentation on the first amendment to the 2025-26 budget. They reviewed the current school year budget adopted in June 2025, state aid funding, historical blended FTE data, revenues and expenses, and fund balance assumptions.

Trustees appreciated the presentation.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Atkinson
Recording Secretary

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

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VIII. Required Action Items

1. MASB Board of Directors Election (MASB)

RECOMMENDED MOTION

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education cast its vote for candidate (*state name of one candidate*) to represent MASB Region 6 in the 2026 MASB Board of Directors Election, and authorizes Barb Atkinson to cast the Board’s vote via the online ballot provided by MASB.



Johnny Edwards
Superintendent
Phone: 269.323.5182
jedwards@portageps.org

To: Board of Education
From: Johnny Edwards, Superintendent *J.E.*
Date: February 4, 2026
Re: 2026 MASB Board of Directors Election

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

For the 2026 MASB Board of Directors Election, the Board of Education wishes to vote for candidate *(state name of one candidate)* to represent MASB Region 6, and authorizes Barb Atkinson to cast the Board's vote via the online ballot provided by MASB.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Active members of the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) are divided into regions designated according to their ISD (RESA) boundaries and then into groups based on pupil membership. Portage Public Schools is in MASB Region 6 and Group V.

This year for Region 6, three (3) candidates are running for one (1) seat, for a term of three years:

- Charlie Fulbright - Battle Creek Public Schools, Calhoun County
- TiAnna Harrison - Kalamazoo Public Schools, Kalamazoo County
- Elizabeth O'Dell - St. Joseph County ISD, St. Joseph County

Enclosed is the election booklet containing candidate bios to help you make an informed decision.

The Board will need to take action at its February 23, 2026 regular meeting to decide on one candidate and authorize Barb Atkinson to cast the vote on behalf of the Board. Ballots are submitted online and due by 1pm on March 11, 2026.

Enclosure



MASB
MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS

★ ★ ★
**BOARD *of*
DIRECTORS
ELECTIONS**
2026

MASB Bylaws – Article IV – Membership

Section 2. Active Members. The board of education of any public school district in Michigan may become an active member of the Association. Active members of the Association shall be divided into eight regions. The regions shall be designated according to intermediate school district boundaries. The regions shall be as follows:

Region 1. Copper Country ISD, Delta-Schoolcraft ISD, Dickinson-Iron ISD, Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD, Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD, Marquette-Alger RESA and Menominee County ISD.

Region 2. Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona ESD, Charlevoix- Emmet ISD, Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle ESD, COOR ISD, Iosco RESA, Manistee ISD, Northwest Education Services and Wexford-Missaukee ISD.

Region 3. Ionia County ISD, Kent ISD, Mecosta-Osceola ISD, Montcalm Area ISD, Muskegon Area ISD, Newaygo County RESA, Ottawa Area ISD and West Shore ESD.

Region 4. Bay-Arenac ISD, Clare-Gladwin RESD, Clinton County RESA, Gratiot-Isabella RESD, Midland County ESA, Saginaw ISD and Shiawassee RESD.

Region 5. Genesee ISD, Huron ISD, Lapeer County ISD, Sanilac ISD, St. Clair County RESA and Tuscola ISD.

Region 6. Allegan Area ESA, Barry ISD, Berrien RESA, Branch ISD, Calhoun ISD, Heritage Southwest ISD, Kalamazoo RESA, St. Joseph County ISD and Van Buren ISD.

Region 7. Eaton RESA, Hillsdale County ISD, Ingham ISD, Jackson County ISD, Lenawee ISD, Livingston ESA, Monroe County ISD and Washtenaw ISD.

Region 8. Macomb ISD, Oakland Schools and Wayne RESA.

Active members shall also be divided into the following seven groups based on pupil membership.

Group I All intermediate districts;

Group II School districts with a pupil membership of 0 - 1,400;

Group III School districts with a pupil membership of 1,401 - 2,500;

Group IV School districts with a pupil membership of 2,501 - 5,000;

Group V School districts with a pupil membership of 5,001 - 11,000;

Group VI School districts with a pupil membership of 11,001 - 40,000; and

Group VII School districts with a pupil membership more than 40,000.

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Region 1 (Three-Year Term)

Brad Baltensperger	Houghton-Portage Township Schools, Houghton County	5
JJ Johnson-Reeves	Escanaba Area Public Schools, Delta County	6

Region 5 (Three-Year Term)

Richard Hill	Kearsley Community Schools, Genesee County	7
James Johnson	Carman-Ainsworth Community Schools, Genesee County	8

Region 6 (Three-Year Term)

Charlie Fulbright	Battle Creek Public Schools, Calhoun County	9
TiAnna Harrison	Kalamazoo Public Schools, Kalamazoo County	10
Elizabeth O'Dell	St. Joseph County ISD, St. Joseph County	11

Note: Incumbents are **bolded**

Board of Directors' Elections – Candidate Information and Email Voting Procedures

This year, six seats on the MASB Board of Directors are up for election.

The MASB Board of Directors is comprised of 23 members, including three at-large directors. Sixteen directors shall be elected from the eight regions, with two elected from each region; and one director per group shall be elected from Groups V, VI and VII. Directors are elected by active member school boards and, each year, several seats are up for election. The MASB President will nominate a member to serve as an at-large director, subject to Board approval.

Board Limitations:

Article VIII, Section 6 of the MASB Bylaws permits only one director to be elected or appointed from any one local or intermediate school district board.

According to MASB Bylaws Article VIII, Section 8, if any nomination for the Board of Directors is unopposed, the Board of Directors shall declare the unopposed candidate elected without conducting an election for the uncontested group or region.

This year, the following seats on the MASB Board are up for election (one seat each, three-year terms unless otherwise noted): Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. If you're unsure of your district's region or group, please see the list on page 2.

- **Region 2 will continue to be represented by Kenneth Stahl, McBain Rural Agricultural School, (unopposed, no ballots will be sent)**
- **Region 3 will continue to be represented by Jill Fennessy, Tri County Area Schools, (unopposed, no ballots will be sent)**
- **Region 4 will continue to be represented by Matthew Showalter, Gratiot-Isabella ISD, (unopposed, no ballots will be sent)**

Voting in Regions 1, 5 and 6 will take place via an online ballot. No local district/ISD funds can be used to campaign for anyone running for a seat. To help your board make an informed decision, the following pages contain background information and statements from each of the candidates.

Each district received ONE ballot, which was emailed to the superintendent secretary on record with MASB on **Friday, Jan. 23, 2026**. These ballots **CANNOT** be forwarded to anyone else. Once your board makes a decision on which candidate it wishes to vote for, please convey this information to your superintendent secretary.

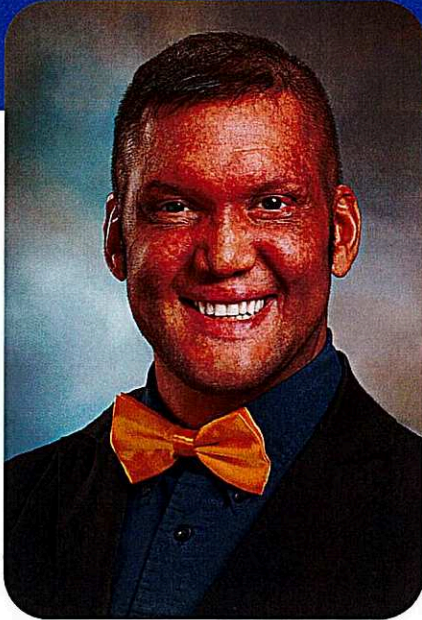
Completed ballots must be cast and confirmed by the superintendent secretary by **1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 11, 2026**.

Unofficial election results will be available by calling 517.327.5915 after 2 p.m. on the deadline date. They will also be sent out via email that afternoon. Official results will be approved at the March 20, 2026, Board of Directors' meeting, which newly elected directors should plan to attend.

To summarize:

- Ballot deadline is **1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 11, 2026**.
- MASB would like to remind all candidates for the MASB Board of Directors that no school district funds can be used for campaigning during the election. This rule prohibits a candidate from using their school district email account to send messages to other school board members. Therefore, a personal email account must be used for campaigning purposes when running for the MASB Board of Directors. If you have any questions about what may or may not constitute an expenditure of school district funds, please contact MASB's Legal Counsel **Brad Banasik, J.D.**, at bbanasik@masb.org or **517.327.5929**.
- An electronic file containing the physical addresses and email addresses for the voting group or region shall be made available to each candidate running for election to the board of directors. The revokable license to use the addresses shall be limited to contacting school board members to share information about the MASB Board of Directors' election.
- Have questions? Contact **Brooke Wooley** at **517.327.5915** or bwooley@masb.org.

Region 6 (Three-Year Term)



Charlie Fulbright INCUMBENT

Battle Creek Public Schools, Calhoun County

**Time served
on this board:**

7 years

Offices held:

President, Vice
President, and
Treasurer

MASB Certification:

Certified Boardmember Award

Award of Merit

Award of Distinction

Master Boardmember

Master Diamond

Advocacy Skills Specialty Certification

Community Relations Certification

Data Skills Specialty Certification

Finance Certification

Leadership Certification

Election Statement:

I am interested in being a Director of MASB for Region 6 because I believe public education is fundamental in our state and country. Especially in this last year, and the next three years, I feel it is important to have not only diversity on local and state boards, but strong leaders. I believe my experience and dedication are just that.

I have been on my local board for 7 years and on the MASB board for two years. During my time on my local board, I have been a Trustee, Treasurer, Vice President and President. I have continued my own personal learning from day one of being on the board, and I have achieved the Level 5 Master Diamond Award, as well as all five Specialty Certifications. I have also been a committee member of the Government Relations Committee and Resolutions and Bylaws Committee for MASB and in the 2025 Annual Leadership Conference I was a counter for the delegate assembly.

I am willing and able to step up when needed to better our public education community. I have attended the National School Board Association (NSBA) to expand my knowledge and growth to bring back tools and ideas for not only my local board, but MASB and our state. I feel I bring a perspective that no one else can bring as an out gay man. I would love to continue my advocacy, growth and leadership by being your Region 6 Director.

Region 6 (Three-Year Term)



TiAnna Harrison

Kalamazoo Public Schools, Kalamazoo County

**Time served
on this board:**

12 years

Offices held:

President, Vice
President, Secretary
and Treasurer

MASB Certification:

Certified Boardmember Award

Award of Merit

Award of Distinction

Master Boardmember

Master Diamond

Master Platinum

Advocacy Skills Specialty Certification

Data Skills Specialty Certification

Election Statement:

My name is TiAnna Harrison, and I currently serve as Board President of Kalamazoo Public Schools. Since my appointment to the board in 2014 and reelection in 2020, I have served in every officer role, including Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

As a board leader in a diverse, urban district, I have worked alongside my colleagues to strengthen governance practices, ensure financial stability, advance equity-centered policies, and support student achievement and well-being. These experiences have reinforced my belief that strong, well-trained boards are essential to strong public schools.

I am deeply aligned with MASB's mission to promote effective governance, board member development and advocacy for local control. I believe school boards must be equipped with the tools, training and policy support needed to meet the unique needs of their communities while navigating complex statewide challenges. I am seeking a seat on the MASB Board of Directors to contribute my experience, collaborative leadership style and commitment to equity in support of school boards across Michigan. I am passionate about advancing policies that empower locally elected boards, support educators, and improve outcomes for all students.

Thank you for your consideration.

Region 6 (Three-Year Term)



Elizabeth O'Dell **INCUMBENT**

St. Joseph County ISD, St. Joseph County

**Time served
on this board:**

28 years

Offices held:

President, Vice
President, Secretary
and Treasurer

MASB Certification:

Certified Boardmember Award

Award of Merit

Award of Distinction

Master Boardmember

Master Diamond

Election Statement:

The MASB is our collective voice on education at the state level, and it allows board members to be informed about educational issues. I think the Director for the Region's role is to ensure that our voice is heard as the MASB discusses issues and concerns.

I have been an active St. Joseph County ISD member for 28 years. I have held various positions, from member to president. Each position has allowed me to grow.

I have worked with the parent-teacher association, band, and athletic booster clubs. I have served on the special education advisory committee. I have enjoyed serving as a delegate to MASB membership meetings in my county. Through this process, I have learned what various boards are concerned about as they present resolutions and amendments to the Board of Directors, which has deepened my understanding of how our collective needs are connected.

My children and I are products of public education. I obtained my bachelor's degree from Ball State University and my graduate degree from Western Michigan University. I am not new to service, advocacy, and listening. I have and will continue to strive to assist others to make positive change. I am a retired CEO of St. Joseph County Community Mental Health, I use my time to volunteer in my church, for the American Red Cross Disaster Relief, as a substitute teacher, as well as working with a variety of social action services through my sorority, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.

After serving for one year, I am convinced that the position is to advocate for the needs of our small and large communities. I am a champion for public education, and with your vote, I can continue to serve this region at the next level.

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page

IX. Action Items

1. 2025-26 Budget Amendments (OP 6231)

Recommended Motion

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education approve the General Fund Budget Appropriations Resolution 2025/26 Amended Budget #1, as presented.

To : Johnny Edwards, Superintendent
From : Paula Johnson, Director of Finance
Sammi Stevens, Business Manager
Date : February 6, 2026
Subj : General Fund Budget Amendment #1 Resolution for 2025/26

Recommendation

That the Board of Education approve the attached budget amendment resolution to the General Appropriations Act (General Fund) for the 2025/26 year at the February 23, 2026 Board meeting.

Background Information

This amendment to the District's operating fund represents the first of two planned revisions during this school year. Typically, the budget is amended each year in February and June. The extensive amendment process demonstrates our commitment to maintaining a continuous budget cycle and providing the Board and community with updated, more accurate information as it becomes available.

The modifications incorporated in this document are the result of a number of factors that we have previously discussed:

1. This amendment shows where the district financials landed on June 30, 2025. Audited financials show an increase in total fund balance of \$3.9 million. This addition of \$3.9 million brings the district's total fund balance to just over \$31 million dollars. Of that approximately \$31 million dollars, approximately \$6.23 million is committed funding; leaving \$24.8 million in unassigned fund balance, approximately 20% of total expenditures for the 2024/25 fiscal year.
2. Other revisions come from a detailed account analysis of the budget to actual during the last school year along with individual meetings with department heads.
3. Budget changes were made based on actual enrollment, staffing, and program adjustments. The preliminary budget was based on a blended enrollment of 8,541.37 students, but after the October 2025 count, the District's blended enrollment decreased to 8,539.60. However, enrollment still remains lower than pre-COVID-19 levels.
4. Information received after the budget was adopted in June, 2025 are reflected in this amendment.

Typically, the first budget amendment is the most extensive one completed during the year. This is certainly the case again this year. Foundation grant revenues have been adjusted to reflect the results of our Fall membership count combined with the previous Spring count using the 90/10 blend as in previous years. In addition, salaries and fringe benefits have been adjusted to actual staffing levels and reflect negotiated contracted settlements. The resolution attached that will be passed on February 23rd is provided at the functional level.

Attached is the Comparison by Major Categories and Fund Balance Schedule, similar to the format used during budget adoption. It shows both projected total and unassigned fund balances. After the amendment, the unassigned fund balance is projected to be 17.09%, down from 20.36% as of 6/30/2025. This ensures compliance with Board Policy Executive Limitations 2.4 and 2.5, keeping the unassigned fund balance above 7%.

Revisions	Amount
Revenues:	(rounded)
Local: Property tax collections increased due to a rise in taxable values. Athletic gate receipts are up and the District has received a few new grants from local funding sources. Additionally, investment interest was adjusted.	\$569,961
State: The increase is a reflection of the GSRP grant, section 27I(4) MPSERS Healthcare Offset, 31aa Mental Health Safety and Security carryover funds and the new MEWI Teaming Grant.	\$1,165,824
Federal: All federal grants were adjusted to the 2025/26 awards along with carryover from the 2024/25 year.	\$24,022
Transfers & Other Transactions: Adjustments were made to reflect the actual sale of school property items along with Set-Seg insurance claim revenue.	\$117,304
Revenue Subtotal -	\$1,877,111

Expenditures:

Salaries for all groups have been adjusted since the preliminary adoption to reflect any changes in staffing and settled contracts. Contractual changes affecting eligibility criteria have influenced staffing patterns, resulting in fluctuations in salary numbers. \$530,929

All benefit costs have all been updated to reflect current employee elections. Mandatory benefit costs (FICA & retirement) have also been updated to reflect current costs based on the contractual changes made. The preliminary budget did include a higher UAAL rebate amount than actual. \$(1,281,587)

Purchased service expenses have been updated to align with current year trends and planned expenditures. Much of this increase is due to ongoing District initiatives, such as 31n6 counseling, 31aa funded projects. The District has also been fortunate to receive funding from other sources to provide additional professional learning opportunities. \$133,217

Much of this increase is due to carryover from state categoricals received in the 2024/25 fiscal year such as Section 35j & 31aa and planned District initiatives using those funding sources. Expenses were also updated based on current trends and needs of the District. SOAR carryover has also been allocated across the District by building leadership. \$3,278,443

Expense Subtotal: \$2,661,001

Total revisions accounted for in these items: \$(783,890)

After all of the proposed changes are considered, the revised budget reflects excess expenditures over revenues of \$(3,931,100) for the year, as compared to \$(3,147,210) which was adopted in June and reflects a negative difference of \$(783,890).

For the County Wide Special Education Millage funds, although K/RESA submitted a revised budget to the District where all costs would be reimbursed, the district only receives 90% of the estimated allocation in the current year, with the estimated 10% balance remitted to districts in the subsequent year after all actual costs are determined.

The Governor will release her Executive budget recommendation on February 11th, 2026 for the State's 2026/27 fiscal year. This will start the budget process for the District's 2026/27 budget cycle as it moves through the House and Senate before reaching a final consensus through the Conference Committee with hopes of receiving the final State budget by June 30, 2026.

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GENERAL FUND BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS RESOLUTION
2025/26 AMENDED BUDGET #1**

Be it resolved that this resolution shall be the General Fund appropriations of Portage Public Schools for the fiscal year 2025/26. A resolution to make appropriations; to provide for the expenditures of appropriations; and to provide for the disposition of all revenue received by Portage Public Schools.

Be it further resolved that the total unappropriated fund balance and total revenues to be available for appropriations in the General Fund of Portage Public Schools for the fiscal year 2025/26 is as follows:

	Actual 2024/25	Adopted Budget 2025/26	Amended Budget #1 2025/26
Total Fund Balance, Beginning of Year, July 1	27,151,123	26,270,652	31,052,457
REVENUES:			
Local Sources	32,296,970	32,106,017	32,675,978
State Sources	91,445,465	89,415,376	90,581,200
Federal Sources	1,832,272	1,203,264	1,227,286
Incoming Transfers and Other Transactions	258,523	130,000	247,304
Total Revenues and Other Transactions	125,833,230	122,854,657	124,731,768
Total Available to Appropriate	152,984,353	149,125,309	155,784,225

Be it further resolved that \$128,662,868 of the total available to appropriate is hereby appropriated in the amounts and for the purposes set forth as follows:

EXPENDITURES:			
Instruction:			
Basic Programs	60,851,869	62,275,661	63,412,023
Added Needs	11,568,157	12,339,549	12,325,149
Total Instruction	72,420,026	74,615,210	75,737,172
Supporting Services:			
Pupil	10,789,943	11,482,290	11,800,719
Instructional Staff	7,784,989	8,472,843	8,625,006
General Administration	833,711	873,106	895,398
School Administration	6,386,760	6,601,287	6,675,446
Business Services	1,356,270	1,309,382	1,288,671
Operations and Maintenance	10,349,799	11,051,081	11,720,062
Transportation	4,573,282	5,707,490	4,777,826
Central Services	4,022,801	3,531,171	4,320,467
Athletics	2,098,571	1,937,324	2,410,719
Total Supporting Services	48,196,126	50,965,974	52,514,314
Community Services	1,315,744	298,755	289,454
Other Financing Use - Debt Service	0	121,928	121,928
Total Expenditure Appropriation	121,931,896	126,001,867	128,662,868
Excess (Deficit) of Revenues over Expenditures	3,901,334	(3,147,210)	(3,931,100)
Total Fund Balance (Assigned and Unassigned), End of Year, June 30 (Estimate)	\$ 31,052,457	\$ 23,123,442	\$ 27,121,357

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GENERAL FUND BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS RESOLUTION
2025/26 AMENDED BUDGET #1**

Be it further resolved that no board of Education member or employee of the School District shall expend any funds or obligate the expenditure of funds except pursuant to appropriations made by the Board of Education and in keeping with the budgetary policy statement previously adopted. Changes in the amount appropriated shall require approval by the Board of Education.

Be it further resolved that the Superintendent is hereby charged with general supervision of the execution of the budget as adopted by the Board of Education and shall hold the directors and department heads responsible for performance of their responsibilities within the amounts appropriated.

PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2025/26 AMENDED GENERAL FUND BUDGET
COMPARISON BY MAJOR CATEGORIES AND FUND BALANCE INFORMATION

	<u>Actual 2024/25</u>	<u>Adopted Budget 2025/26</u>	<u>Amended Budget #1 2025/26</u>	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>
Revenues				
Not Program Related	102,117,233	101,734,554	101,359,523	(375,031)
Program Related	23,715,997	21,120,103	23,372,245	2,252,142
 Total Revenues	 <u>125,833,230</u>	 <u>122,854,657</u>	 <u>124,731,768</u>	 <u>1,877,111</u>
Expenditures				
Salaries	59,172,023	61,276,322	61,807,250	530,928
Fringe Benefits:				
FICA **	4,213,863	4,723,041	4,810,562	87,521
Retirement **	24,867,265	26,654,861	25,906,386	(748,475)
Health Insurance	10,059,659	11,167,641	10,550,472	(617,169)
Dental Insurance	737,583	823,187	884,432	61,245
Vision Insurance	132,961	200,131	153,234	(46,897)
Long-Term Disability	187,102	190,780	184,467	(6,313)
Life Insurance	48,818	51,890	56,317	4,427
Other Fringe Benefits	563,425	718,155	702,229	(15,926)
 Total Fringe Benefits	 <u>40,810,676</u>	 <u>44,529,686</u>	 <u>43,248,099</u>	 <u>(1,281,587)</u>
(Note: ** Mandated fringe benefit)				
Purchased Services	12,454,636	13,999,493	14,132,710	133,217
Supplies, Materials, Other	8,302,479	5,957,628	8,507,061	2,549,433
Capital Outlay	1,192,082	115,310	844,320	729,010
Debt Service	0	123,428	123,428	0
 Total Expenditures	 <u>121,931,896</u>	 <u>126,001,867</u>	 <u>128,662,868</u>	 <u>2,661,001</u>
 Excess (Deficit) of Revenues over Expenditures	 <u>\$ 3,901,334</u>	 <u>\$ (3,147,210)</u>	 <u>\$ (3,931,100)</u>	 <u>\$ (783,890)</u>
Total Fund Balance Information				
Fund Balance Beginning	27,151,123	26,270,652	31,052,457	
Income (Deficit) - Allocated to Unreserved	3,901,334	(3,147,210)	(3,931,100)	
 Estimated Ending Fund Balance	 31,052,457	 23,123,442	 27,121,357	
Estimated Non-Spendable and Assigned				
Fund Balance Restrictions	2,176,882	750,000	1,000,000	
Curriculum Committed Funds	2,905,913	2,207,527	2,285,676	
Extended Learning Funds	1,150,279	1,161,109	1,128,836	
Instructional Initiative Funding	0	0	713,800	
 Estimated Ending Unassigned Fund Balance	 <u>\$ 24,819,383</u>	 <u>\$ 19,004,806</u>	 <u>\$ 21,993,045</u>	
	42			
As a Percentage of Expenditures	20.36%	15.08%	17.09%	

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GENERAL FUND AMENDMENT #1
PROGRAM LEVEL SUPPORTING DETAIL**

	<u>Adopted Budget 2025/26</u>	<u>Amendments/ Transfers</u>	<u>Amended Budget #1 2025/26</u>
REVENUES:			
From Local Sources:			
Property Tax Levy (17.5695 mills)	18,225,001	726,269	18,951,270
Regional Enhancement Millage (1.5 mills)	4,203,600	30,794	4,234,394
Earnings from Investments and Deposits	177,500	32,500	210,000
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	14,000	0	14,000
Reimbursements from Other Funds:			
Accounting Services and Indirect Costs	120,000	0	120,000
Other Local Sources	205,803	117,200	323,003
From State Sources:			
Foundation Grant Allowance	66,733,464	(1,586,018)	65,147,446
Other State Categoricals/Foundation Adjustments	12,843,189	208,325	13,051,514
From Federal Sources:			
Medicaid Administrative Outreach Program	50,000	5,000	55,000
Program Related Revenues:			
31N6 Funding - Mental Health Support Svcs	416,500	345,700	762,200
At Risk Grant	3,360,161	(88,939)	3,271,222
Athletic Gate Receipts and Contributions	149,400	172,986	322,386
Childcare and Preschool Fees	654,978	(272,807)	382,171
County Special Education and State Categoricals	12,900,985	(264,256)	12,636,729
Contributions for Instructional Programs	0	5,925	5,925
Enrichment Class and Advertising Fees	3,500	(120)	3,380
Great Start Readiness Program	0	915,955	915,955
Maintenance and Operations Facility Rental Fees	50,000	0	50,000
Online Class and IB/AP Test Fees	94,350	(15,670)	78,680
Other Grants	120,504	239,959	360,463
Section 31AA Funding - Safety, Security & Mental Health	623,279	1,111,318	1,734,597
Technology Services	365,020	0	365,020
Title 1 Grant	777,273	(12,108)	765,165
Title 2 Grant	236,325	(1,438)	234,887
Title 3 Grant (English Learner & Immigrant Students)	66,165	20,715	86,880
Title 4	73,501	11,583	85,084
Section 35j Funding - PD, Curriculum & Supports Grant	301,159	107,731	408,890
Transportation Special Education Categoricals and Billings	89,000	66,507	155,507
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>\$ 122,854,657</u>	<u>\$ 1,877,111</u>	<u>\$ 124,731,768</u>

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GENERAL FUND AMENDMENT #1
PROGRAM LEVEL SUPPORTING DETAIL**

	<u>Adopted Budget 2025/26</u>	<u>Amendments/ Transfers</u>	<u>Amended Budget #1 2025/26</u>
EXPENDITURES:			
Instructional Services			
Amberly Elementary	4,351,870	(113,314)	4,238,556
Angling Road Elementary	3,455,081	(200,963)	3,254,118
Central Elementary	4,084,350	80,196	4,164,546
Haverhill Elementary	4,165,439	38,288	4,203,727
Lake Center Elementary	4,571,664	(131,668)	4,439,996
Moorsbridge Elementary	4,841,235	59,613	4,900,848
12th Street Elementary	4,534,213	238,702	4,772,915
Woodland Elementary	4,013,939	6,997	4,020,936
Central Middle	5,718,279	175,401	5,893,680
North Middle	6,079,633	26,617	6,106,250
West Middle	6,021,735	25,359	6,047,094
Central High	12,004,479	146,152	12,150,631
Northern High	10,932,418	(25,025)	10,907,393
Community High School	2,133,512	21,128	2,154,640
Auditorium Management	190,799	9,874	200,673
Childcare and Preschool Program	883,049	(199,117)	683,932
Career Tech Education	1,203,323	(145,110)	1,058,213
Education for the Arts	88,934	(9,075)	79,859
Great Start Readiness Program	0	915,955	915,955
High School Athletics	1,703,549	365,380	2,068,929
Homebound Services	15,268	(7,463)	7,805
Instructional Services Administration	1,572,095	5,885	1,577,980
Middle School Athletics	349,775	102,356	452,131
Non-Public Schools- Shared Time Program	759,851	238,846	998,697
Technology and Student Information Systems			
Media Services	267,796	(12,440)	255,356
Technology Services	3,670,403	8,089	3,678,492
Educational Supports & Intervention			
Special Education Program	14,016,675	148,189	14,164,864
At Risk Grant	3,360,161	(88,939)	3,271,222
Title 1 Grant	777,273	(12,108)	765,165
Section 31n6 - Mental Health & Support Services	416,500	345,700	762,200
Curriculum and Professional Development			
Curriculum Development	1,888,797	(198,089)	1,690,708
Curriculum Committed Funds	628,075	(7,838)	620,237
Extended Learning Committed Funding	7,500	13,943	21,443
Instructional Initiative Funding	0	96,200	96,200
Section 35j Funding - PD, Curriculum & Supports Grant	301,159	107,731	408,890
Professional Development	196,003	30,484	226,487
Title 2 Grant	236,325	(1,438)	234,887
Title 3 Grant (English Learner & Immigrant Students)	66,165	20,715	86,880
Title 4 Grant	73,501	11,583	85,084
Other Grants	363,390	176,142	539,532
Operations			
Budget and Finance	1,809,840	(16,015)	1,793,825
Central Services	118,839	210	119,049
Maintenance and Operations	5,744,132	54,311	5,798,443
Transportation	5,486,740	(946,573)	4,540,167
147g MPSERS Health Reimbursement	0	199,850	199,850
Section 31AA Funding - Mental Health Svcs & Prgms	623,279	1,111,318	1,734,597
Community Relations			
Communications	520,267	29,035	549,302
Community Enrichment Program	10,938	3,715	14,653
Human Resources	911,013	(58,603)	852,410
Administration	832,606	20,815	853,421
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ 126,001,867</u>	<u>\$ 2,661,001</u>	<u>\$ 128,662,868</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIT) REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ (3,147,210)</u>	<u>\$ (783,890)</u>	<u>\$ (3,931,100)</u>

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

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IX. Action Items

2. National School Breakfast Week Proclamation

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education approve the National School Breakfast Week Proclamation, as presented.



**PROCLAMATION
NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK
March 2-6, 2026**

WHEREAS, we recognize March 2–6, 2026, as National School Breakfast Week and honor the dedication of Portage Public Schools’ food service staff. This observance highlights the important role breakfast plays in helping students stay alert, strengthen memory and problem-solving skills, and achieve academic success; and

WHEREAS, each day, 27 food service employees prepare and serve an average of more than 1,800 breakfasts while managing ordering, storage, delivery, and strict food safety and nutrition standards, all with care and attention to student needs; and

WHEREAS, these skilled and caring professionals make meaningful contributions to student well-being and education, and this week provides an opportunity to express our gratitude for their service. Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION that we proudly commemorate March 2–6, 2026, as National School Breakfast Week and commend all who contribute to the success of our breakfast program. Together, we make a positive difference in the lives of our students.

Proclaimed this 23rd day of February, 2026
Portage Public Schools Board Of Education

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

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X. Discussion Items

1. TWL Lighting (OP 6230)

To: Johnny Edwards, Superintendent
From: Russ Gerbers, Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Cc: Paula Johnson, Director of Finance
Date: February 23, 2026
Re: 12th Street Lighting Project

Recommendation

I recommend the Board of Education authorize Owen-Ames-Kimball Co. to issue a Notice of Pending Award, for the 12th Street Lighting Project, to Esper Electric, in accordance with the amount identified in the bid tabulation, pending confirmation that all requirements of the contract documents have been satisfied. Furthermore, upon receipt and verification of all required documentation by Owen-Ames-Kimball Co., Portage Public Schools will enter into a contract with Esper Electric in the base bid amount of \$572,965. The total project cost, inclusive of fees and related expenses not-to-exceed \$739,463. Funding for this project will be provided through the 2019 Building and Site Sinking Fund.

Background Information

During the 2024–2025 school year, the lighting control system at 12th Street began experiencing communication failures. These issues limited our ability to properly schedule and manage lighting throughout the building. Since that time, the system has continued to deteriorate.

Efforts to repair the system have been unsuccessful due to the equipment being obsolete and no longer supported by the manufacturer. As a result, a significant number of lighting fixtures remain on 24 hours per day, seven days per week, leading to increased energy consumption and operational inefficiencies.

The proposed replacement system will be consistent with the lighting systems recently installed in the District's new elementary schools and at Lake Center.. The new fixtures will maintain a similar appearance to the existing lighting; however, they will utilize LED technology, which provides improved energy efficiency and reduced operating costs. In addition, the system will allow for dimming capabilities in classrooms, corridors, and large instructional spaces, improving both functionality and flexibility.

Lighting upgrades at 12th Street Elementary School are anticipated to be addressed during the summer construction season.

Bidding Process

The project was competitively bid in accordance with District policy. Esper Electric submitted the lowest qualified bid. A bid tabulation sheet is included for the Board's review.

I would be happy to respond to any questions the Board may have.



Bid Category No. 01 - Electrical				
Contractor	Bid Bond	Addendum	Base Bid	Notes
Esper Electric (Kalamazoo, MI)	Y	1,2	\$572,965	
Parkway Electric & Communications (Holland, MI)	Y	1,2	\$732,000	
Hi-Tech Electric (Portage, MI)	Y	1,2	\$865,800	

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

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XI. Closed Session

1. Consult with Attorney on Pending Litigation - Driver vs Portage Public Schools (OMA 15.268, Section 8(e))
2. Consider the Purchase of Property (OMA 15.268, Section 8(d))

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education move into closed session for two purposes (1) to consult with its attorney on pending litigation, specifically Driver vs Portage Public Schools, and (2) to consider the purchase of property as allowed under the Open Meetings Act 15.268, Sections 8(e) and 8(d) respectively.

ROLL CALL VOTE

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM #1136
FEBRUARY 23, 2026, 6:30 P.M.**

Note Page

XII. Post-Closed Action

1. Purchase of Property (OP 7240)

Recommended Motion:

Motion offered by _____, seconded by _____, that the Board of Education approve the Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Property, as presented.