

P O S I T I V E L Y

**PORTSMOUTH
CITY SCHOOLS**

CHARACTER CURRICULUM CAREER COMMUNITY

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OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 21, 2005

VIA FACSIMILE & U.S. MAIL

Bob Mollette, Third Ward Councilman
1705 Franklin Blvd.
Portsmouth, OH 45662

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your letter of September 14, 2005 and the invitation to speak at the next Portsmouth City Council meeting regarding an option to develop the current Portsmouth High School for city government office space. At this time, I must decline the invitation but I remain open to future dialogue with the entire council or a council-appointed committee relative to options regarding the site of the high school following demolition.

The Ohio School Facilities Commission (OSFC), in their original assessment of the high school conducted in February, 2000, stated: "Portsmouth High School is 177,653 square feet with a rebuild cost of \$139.20 per square foot; therefore, the cost to replace this building is \$24,729,298. The assessed cost for renovation/repair/replacement of systems to bring the existing building to the standards of the Ohio School Facilities Commission is \$19,052,848 (77% of the value of a new building). Therefore, the recommendation for Portsmouth High School is to abandon." If the OSFC, one of the largest developers in the State of Ohio, determines that Portsmouth High School should be abandoned and is too costly to renovate, then we as a school district, looking for the most cost efficient ways to spend taxpayer's money, must strongly consider their recommendation when determining the final disposition of the high school building.

As a result of the OSFC's original assessment and yet desiring to give the citizenry of Portsmouth an opportunity to suggest sustainable, viable options for the high school building for consideration by the Portsmouth Board of Education, we conducted a series of four (4) open public forums from April 2003 through January 2004. The conclusion of the Board committee who facilitated the public forums was that "after hearing all proposals, the committee is disheartened to report that it has not been presented with a viable and sustainable proposal for the renovation and reuse of the Portsmouth High School Building."

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In conclusion, the Board of Education and I are willing to discuss with the full Council or a Council-appointed committee options for the existing Portsmouth High School site, which will be available following demolition of the building.

I wish you, your fellow Council members, and Mayor Kalb much success with the City Government Office Space initiative, and a speedy resolution to this controversial issue for the taxpayers and citizens of Portsmouth.

Cordially,



Jan Broughton
Superintendent

JB:pd

Cc: Portsmouth City Board of Education
Portsmouth City Council
Mayor James Kalb
Auditor Trent Williams