

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
APRIL 7, 2009**

School Board Members Present:

Peter Mello
Christopher Book
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.
Wayne Cooke
Richard Courcelle
Roberta Dress
Peter Fagan
Collin Fingon
Peter Forshay
Cindy Kilic-Murray
Rob Towle
Nicholas Ouelette

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Peter Amons
Christy Coloutti
Lyle Jepson
Ellie McGarry
Bill Olsen
Kristin Francoeur
Glenn Olson
Kristen Hubert

Motion by Forshay/Kilic-Murray to convene to executive session at 6:15 pm for the purpose of discussing personnel matters, the premature release of information regarding those subjects which would place the Board at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimously passed by those in attendance.

**EXECUTIVE
SESSION**

**PUBLIC
SESSION**

The Board came out of executive session at 6:50 pm.

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Mello noted that all Commissioners were present.

Motion by Towle/Forshay to accept the minutes of the March 24, 2009 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:
MINUTES
3/24/09
MEETING**

Written Communication - None

**WRITTEN
COMMUN-
ICATION**

Oral Communication - None

**ORAL
COMMUN-
ICATION**

School Board Committee Assignments - Mr. Mello distributed a list of Board assignments. He said there is one correction on the list – the Chair of the Staff Relations Committee is Mr. Forshay. He reinforced the importance of the committees and assignments and their input back to the Board.

**BOARD
COMM.
ASSIGN-
MENTS**

PPLC Plan - Superintendent Moran said Pierpoint has been open for ten years. She reviewed the program over the years and why it was established as well as some of the challenges it has faced. The memo outlines the plan for shifting the building use to house three EEE classrooms. By putting the K-2 students all into Northwest, it will make it easier to concentrate services. There might a staffing savings over time. Ms. Hubert said there are now three classrooms at Pierpoint and three EEE classrooms at Northwest. They would swap. She reviewed the changes and the proposed configuration of the classrooms for next year at Northwest. Ms. Hubert reviewed looping and multi-age classrooms. Ms. Moran said for next year, there are already +80

**EDUCATION
REPORT**

PPLC PLAN

kindergarten students registered for Northwest. There are usually about 55 at this time. If there are too many students at Northwest, there could be some students shifted to Northeast. Ms. Hubert reviewed some of the advantages of multi-age classrooms. Ms. Moran said the shift from Pierpoint to Northwest will require a lot of logistics and John Rice will work with the staff to facilitate the move. Mr. Mello said he thinks this is good for efficiency and consolidation.

PPLC PLAN.
cont.

EARLY
ESSENTIAL
EDUCATION
PLANNING
REPORT

Early Essential Education Planning Report - Ms. McGarry said we have been working on finding more ways for inclusion, especially since the collaboration with Head Start. The State audit report on special education says we do have inclusion and we continue to work towards what else can be done. Ms. McGarry praised Christy Coloutti for her work with Head Start. Their regulations require that individuals with disabilities be included with non-disabled peers. Ms. McGarry described the proposed changes and building changes and said the proposal will allow the classroom at Dana to close. She said the EEE teachers will be working and covering different classrooms but the students will benefit from being with non-disabled peers. Ms. Moran said closing Dana will be better for the students and there will hopefully be some savings from it. Ms. McGarry said the goal is to keep Northeast students at that site but some will probably have to be at Meadow St and Pierpoint. Ms. Hubert will be the administrator at Pierpoint and Mr. Johnson will be the administrator at Meadow St. and Northeast. She said there are about 70 disabled students being served now and that will not change. There will be about four or five disabled students per classroom. The EEE teachers will also provide services to the other sites. Mr. Towle asked if these sites could be incorporated into the co-teaching pilot. Ms. McGarry said now there will be only one special educator for three classrooms so in order to do that, there would have to be an addition in staff. It is not a proposal now. She said we have been working with Head Start to support some at-risk students without putting them through the evaluations. Ms. McGarry said there will be a non-Head Start classroom with a lot of supports in place. It will have a lot of young students with intensive needs but it will not have a Head Start teacher.

ADEQUATE
YEARLY
PROGRESS
REPORT

Adequate Yearly Progress Report - Assistant Superintendent Bliss presented the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Report. He said the system the state uses to determine AYP is an index-point system. Schools need to meet an Annual Measurable Objective, which is based on NECAP testing results. Mr. Bliss reviewed the index and subgroups. He said all our schools meet AYP for all students. We do not meet AYP in all schools in some of the subgroups. Mr. Bliss reviewed the individual schools' results and spoke about the mandated Corrective Actions for the schools that did not meet AYP. Ms. Moran said by 2014, all students in all schools nationwide must achieve the standard or the school will not meet AYP. Mr. Bliss reviewed the continued remedies for schools in multiple years of Corrective Action. He said the state encourages the district to take steps to meet the needs of all students. They introduce more interventions and continue to work with the schools to keep them in an on-going improvement cycle.

Ms. Moran said we are working hard with the State to have them recognize the work we are doing, such as with Professional Learning Communities. Mr. Bliss said RHS' percentage of free and reduced lunch is about 25%. As students get into the high school the percentage goes down because of a pride factor and because there are

tuition students. The percentage of Northwest students on free and reduced lunch is 73% and Northeast's is 53%. Both of these numbers are at an all time high. Mr. Bliss reviewed the AYP verification and discussed tracking cohort groups. Mr. Moran said the difference between RIS and RHS is that RIS tested every student in four grades and RHS only tests in grade 11. At RHS, there are less than 40 students in a subgroup but not at RIS. Ms. McGarry said 11th grade students take the test once, even if they are in 11th grade for more than one year. Mr. Bliss said IEP students might have accommodations for testing written in their plan. Mr. Towle asked about the liability challenge in Corrective Action and Title 1. Mr. Bliss said there could be a financial impact if more students choose to access supplemental educational services. There are some Title I funds shifted to the high school for professional development and tutoring but not a lot. We are analyzing the potential advantages in making the high school be a Title school. Mr. Fingon asked how the test is presented to the high school students. Mr. Bliss said it does not weigh in to graduation or grades. It is not "high stakes" like in other states. Nick Ouelette said it is made clear to students it will not effect grades so it is hard to motivate them to do well. Ms. Moran said we try to motivate students. It is "high stakes" for schools but not for students. Mr. Mello said it is important for the Board to be aware of the testing and to realize that they are one assessment measure.

**AHEAD OF
THE CURVE
BOOK
DISCUSSION**

Ahead of the Curve - Intro and Chapter 1 - Mr. Mello said the Board and Administrators are all reading the same book and will be using it for discussion purposes. Mr. Bliss presented a question to Board members to start the discussion. "The bell curve sits in stark contrast to the very essence of standards based education, in which the fundamental purpose of assessment is not to rate, rank, sort and humiliate students, but rather to provide meaningful feedback that leads to improved performance." He asked Board members, "How does this quote cause you to think about the purpose of assessment and education for learning as opposed to assessment of learning?" Discussion ensued. Mr. Mello summarized the discussion and encouraged everyone to persist in finding ways to make more students successful and engaged. He assigned Chapter 3 of the book for the April 28 meeting.

**PERSONNEL
MOTION:
PERSONNEL
MEMO #402**

Motion by Fingon/Kilic-Murray to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 402 dated April 3, 2009, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

The appointments and resignations were reviewed by Superintendent Moran. They are attached.

**MOTION:
APPROVE
DIRECTOR
OF
INSTRUC-
TIONAL
TECHNOL-
OGY JOB
DESCRIP-
TION**

Motion passed unanimously.

Director of Instructional Technology Position Description - Mr. Moran reviewed the minor changes in the job description and explained the reasons for the changes.

Motion by Fingon/Book to adopt the revised Director of Instructional Technology job description as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Ratification of the Rutland City School District Administrator's Association Contract - Mr. Forshay, Chair of the Staff Relations committee summarized the changes. He highlighted the three key points in the new agreement.

RATIFICATION OF ADMIN. ASSOC. CONTRACT

- This is a two year agreement for FY2010-2011.
- The agreement reflects a total compensation package annual increase of 3.2%. New money represents total new costs for all salary and benefits including health insurance, dental insurance, pension and FICA.
- The Association has agreed for FY11 to participate in a new three tiered benefit for city pension including increased employee contributions in tiers two and three.

Employees covered are the Principals and Assistant Principals at Northeast, Northwest, RIS, RMS and RHS and the STC Director and Assistant Director.

MOTION: APPROVE CONTRACT WITH ADMINISTRATOR'S ASSOC.

Motion by Cavacas/Fagan to accept the contract agreement between Rutland City Public Schools and Rutland City School District Administrator's Association effective July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2011 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

The contract was signed by Mr. Mello and Mr. Jepson.

BUSINESS REPORT

Business Report - None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Announcements

- Invitation to the Board was extended for the 80th Induction Ceremony of the Rutland High Chapter of National Honor Society on May 3.
- Ms. Hubert's informational letter to parents about Pierpoint was distributed.
- Congratulations to the 2009 Vermont State Science Fair Awards Winners from RHS: The VT Principle's Association Silver Medal for Excellent Science Fair Project: Rachel Giffin, Otis Gray, James Hughes, Edward Ingerman, Claire Maass, Kelsey Norman, Jay Schwalbe. The VT Principle's Association Gold Medal for Superior Science Fair Project: Ellen Osowski. The St. Michael's Scholarship for Exceptional Science Project which is \$5000 per year for all four years at St. Michael's College: Kelsey Norman. The Entergy award: Ellie Briggs \$150. The Ethical Treatment of Animals: Madeleine Slack. The International SWEEP (International Sustainable Wind, Energy, Engineering, & Environment Project) Fair in Houston, Texas, VT Representative: James Hughes, who wins a free trip to Texas. Congratulations to teachers: Ann Marie Mahar & Tim Gilbert.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Legislative Update - Ms. Moran said there has been a lot of activity in the House and Senate. Everyone is still learning about the stimulus package. There are some concerns in education about the politicization of the intent of the stimulus. She said we will continue to watch in a pro-active way.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Search Updates - Ms. Moran said three searches are winding down. It is her hope to bring three candidates to the Board on April 28.

SEARCH UPDATES

Policy Committee - Section 7000 - Second Reading

POLICY COMM.

Motion by Forshay/Cooke to approve the following policies from the Student (7000) section of the Policy Manual for second reading:

- 7410 Conduct and Discipline
- 7440 Tobacco Use
- 7452 Interrogations

Passed unanimously.

**MOTION:
APPROVE
SECTION
7000
POLICIES
FOR 2ND
READING**

Mr. Mello asked Nick Ouelette for feedback from the Student Senate. A few board members went to the student meeting for their input about travel, field trips and YES plan. Nick said the general consensus from students is they want international trips and they are willing to work with the Board to see that happen. The students that attended the meeting feel that if a student is caught drinking during an international trip, and they had signed a contract and knew the consequences, that the student should not be allowed to walk during graduation. Commissioners Dress and Book said they were impressed with the students and appreciated their input. Mr. Mello said the group was honest and open. He said the students understand the consequences and they were unanimous in thinking that what is in place is fair. Mr. Book said there was talk about screening the students going on trips. Mr. Mello said the issue about the trips has not yet been resolved but the discussion provided the Policy Committee with feedback. He thanked Nick and the students.

**FEEDBACK
FROM
STUDENT
SENATE**

New Business - Ms. Moran said the puzzle piece pin is the symbol of autism awareness. A pin was prepared for all board members by Tori Tobin of the Autism Awareness Project.

**NEW
BUSINESS**

**AUTISM
AWARE-
NESS**

Old Business - None

**OLD
BUSINESS**

Motion by Book/Towle at 8:45 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel and contractual matters, the premature release of information regarding those subjects which would place the Board at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimously passed by those in attendance.

**MOTION:
EXECUTIVE
SESSION**

The Board came out of executive session at 9:45 pm.

**PUBLIC
SESSION**

Motion by Book/Towle to adjourn at 9:45 pm.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak
Recording Secretary