

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 9, 2009**

School Board Members Present:

Peter Mello
Christopher Book
Wayne Cooke
Richard Courcelle
Roberta Dress
Peter Forshay
Rob Towle
Nicholas Ouelette

Members Absent

Hurley Cavacas, Jr.
Peter Fagan
Collin Fingon
Cindy Kilic-Murray

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Wil Cunningham
Peter Amons
Paula Albro
Bob Johnson
Ted Guilmette
Patricia Aigner

Motion by Forshay/Cooke 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 6:55 pm.

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Mello noted the absence of Commissioners Fingon, Kilic-Murray, Cavacas, and Fagan.

MOTION:
MINUTES
5/26/09
MEETING

Motion by Dress/Book to accept the minutes of the May 26, 2009 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

WRITTEN
COMMUN-
ICATION

Written Communication - None

ORAL
COMMUN-
ICATION

Oral Communication - Madeline Sherman commented on Mr. Mello's remarks from the last regular school board meeting regarding relying on the recommendation of administrators. She said she is disturbed that the reason the Board is not reviewing the first grade situation at Northwest is because they are relying on the administrators. She said teachers really know the most about what goes on in the classroom and that it takes a lot for primary school teachers to come before the school board to dispute the decisions made by their administrators. Mrs. Sherman urged the Board to reevaluate their decision and to find a way to give the Northwest first graders the best possible education by keeping classes at no more than 15 students per class. Mr. Mello thanked Mrs. Sherman for addressing the Board.

COMMENTS
FROM
PUBLIC RE:
STAFFING
AT NORTH-
WEST

Recognition of the AFSCME Unions Contribution to the Field - Mr. Mello commended the AFSCME Union for their contributions to the Turf Field. He said their participation is appreciated and he officially thanked them.

RECOGNI-
TION OF
AFSCME
UNIONS
CONTRIBU-
TION TO
THE FIELD

Recognize Outgoing Student Representative - Mr. Mello recognized Nicholas Ouelette for his outstanding service to the Rutland City School Board. He said that Nick has brought the student perspective to the Board and has expressed their opinions. He has been a very good liaison to the high school. Nick thanked everyone for the opportunity and said he learned a lot. Ms. Moran said Nick will be attending Harvard in the fall.

**RECOGNIZE
OUTGOING
STUDENT
REP.**

Welcome New Student Representative - Mr. Mello welcomed new student representative, Daniel Wigmore, who will take office at the next meeting. Dan said he is a junior at RHS and has been in the Rutland City Public School system since kindergarten. He said he participates in a number of clubs and activities and plays three sports. Dan was welcomed.

**WELCOME
NEW
STUDENT
REP.**

Technology Plan - Mr. Mello said the Board needs to formally adopt a Technology Plan. Ms. Aigner said she presented the essential parts of the plan to the Board at the last meeting. There are four major goals: Student Centered Learning, Leadership in a Student Centered Learning Environment, Flexible Learning Environments, and Engaged Community Partners. Each goal has action steps outlined. Ms. Aigner said this is a three year plan. Once the Board and the State accepts it, it will be a roadmap for the department for three years. Commissioner Forshay asked if three years was too long for a technology plan, where things change rapidly. Ms. Aigner said for the purposes of this type of plan, it is appropriate. It does not limit creativity or lock us into anything. She said it will be reviewed and updated as needed.

**EDUCATION
REPORT**

**TECHNO-
LOGY PLAN**

Motion by Cooke/Forshay to accept the Technology Plan for Rutland City Schools as submitted.

**MOTION:
APPROVE
TECHNO-
LOGY PLAN**

Commissioner Book asked if there is any money with this. Ms. Aigner said in the budget, there is \$60,000 for the a network staff person. She said this was in last year's budget proposal but was cut by the Board during the budget planning phase. She included the position as a reminder in the future. Including it is a goal, not a commitment.

Passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**HQT
REPORT**

HQT Report - Assistant Superintendent Bliss said the district must report the number of teachers in the district who are not Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) and the percentage of courses taught by non-HQT teachers. The State provides the information based upon data we submit to them. According to the 2007-2008 data, Rutland City had 8.42% of its individual classes taught by teachers who were not HQT and .82% of the faculty not HQT in the content area in which they were teaching. He said the driver for the high percentage was two-fold:

- Special Education
- Alternative placement settings – Howe and Success.

Mr. Bliss explained the specifics of the HQT law. Ms. Moran said the 8.42% represents individual classes. Mr. Bliss said all non-HQT teachers have been spoken to and have a plan to fix the situation. He said he thinks the 8.42% is a trivial artifact because we have excellent teachers teaching where they should be. The law is precise beyond the ability of any district to meet. He said the district is supporting teachers working to gain

HQT
REPORT,
cont.

additional licensure. Ms. Moran said unless the formula is changed, special educators will always fall under non-HQT. She gave examples: If a special educator is licensed to teach grades 7-12 and part of their work is to teach math or reading, that will never be satisfied because the special educators are not licensed in every subject area. In addition, if a social studies teacher is teaching a specialized geography course they do not have on their own transcript, they would be on the list. Commissioner Towle asked if there are repercussions for having teachers on the list. Mr. Bliss said it is a mandate that the public is made aware of the numbers. It does not speak to the proficiency of the students.

Ms. Moran said it is very labor-intensive to collect data for this report. Commissioner Book asked what it costs us to provide the data and Ms. Moran said she will try to find out. She said a lot of the reporting to satisfy the No Child Left Behind law is manpower-intensive. We do not receive financial support to do these things. There is a dollar cost that is hard to figure. Mr. Forshay said it would be interesting to know what the resources required to supply the data needed to come up with this statistic are as well as the many other state and federal mandates. It was noted the HQT law is federal.

AHEAD OF
THE CURVE
BOOK DISC.

Ahead of the Curve - Mr. Mello said he believes it is important to allocate time for this discussion because it is an opportunity for the Board to have an impact on education policy. It is a chance for the Board to make a policy statement or express strong intentions on what they would like to see. In the absence of four board members tonight and at the last meeting, Mr. Mello postponed discussion of the rest of the book until the board retreat in August. The board expressed an interest in looking into a multi-assessment policy and he said that suggestion might not have come forth without this book discussion. Mr. Forshay asked for models from other school environments which might have innovative approaches and Mr. Mello said he and the administrators will bring information.

PERSONNEL

Motion by Courcelle/Forshay to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 406 dated June 5, 2009, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

MOTION:
APPROVE
PERSONNEL
MEMO #406

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

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

BUSINESS
REPORT

Lease - Financing for Energy Performance Contract - Mr. Amons explained the lease for the energy performance contract. We hired Municipal Leasing Consultants for \$4500 to quote and procure financing for this. The lowest bid came in from Sun Trust Leasing, which bid 5.2% for 14 years. However, the interest rate will not be fixed until two days before the closing. Mr. Amons said unfortunately, rates have increased a bit and today's rate would be 5.74%. He said there is still projected \$500,000 of savings over 14 years. The rate comes in as a bid but then goes up or down based upon an index. The three bidders use the same index. The low bidder came in at 5.2% plus the index. This lease will not be able to be refinanced. Mr. Amons said he expects closing in one to two weeks from now. This is not an action item but informational. The Board and the public have already approved it.

LEASE
FINANCING
FOR
ENERGY
PERFOR-
MANCE
CONTRACT

Announcements

- The May newsletter from the Howe Center Campus was distributed.
- The first edition of the Success newsletter was distributed.
- Board members were reminded of the end of year activities. The reception for the 50th year graduates will be held prior to graduation at RHS at 4 pm.
- Graduation is June 16.
- The year end celebration is June 18.
- Northeast held their annual Picnic with a Book on Friday with more than 25 guest readers. June 11 is the Annual Fun Day and BBQ with athletic events. There are over 50 community members volunteering to help.
- Vermont Secretary of State Deb Markowitz celebrated student winners from Northeast and Northwest for their efforts with the Vermont State Poster Contest.
- RIS 5th and 6th grade bands and orchestra won superior ratings at the Music Festival last week. Promotion ceremonies for 6th graders will be held June 17.
- On June 11 RMS will celebrate the great achievements of its students who received a REAL Award or a Student of the Quarter Award. All of these students are inviting a staff member who made a difference to them in their Kindergarten through 8th grade experience. Each student wrote a tribute to that staff member, to be given to that person on this night.
- June 17 is RMS ESP Exhibition Day.
- June 18 is the RMS annual Awards Ceremony
- At RHS there are many upcoming events. The music and theater departments present Curtains, a murder mystery musical. The show is at the RIS auditorium from June 18 - 20

**SUPERIN-
TENDENT'S
REPORT**

**ANNOUNCE-
MENTS**

**LEGISLA-
TIVE
UPDATE**

**SEARCH
UPDATES.**

Legislative Update - Distributed

Search Updates - Ms. Moran said we are just about finished with administrative searches. One teacher position remains to be filled. She hopes to have all recommendations for the June 23 meeting.

**COMM.
REPORTS**

Policy Committee - Policy 3451 and 7000 Section - Second Reading
Motion by Towle / Forshay to approve the following policies for second reading:

- 3451 - Parent Involvement
- 7491 - Bomb Threats
- 7510 - Co-curricular Activities
- 7512 - Management of Funds
- 7514 - Nonresident Athletic Participation
- 7520 - Student Government
- 7530 - Student Athletics and Activities
- 7531 - Student Athletic Injuries
- 7532 - Athletic Selection Process
- 7540 - Student Contests and Fundraising

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**POLICY
COMM.**

**MOTION:
APPROVE
POLICY 3451
& 7000
SECTION
FOR
SECOND
READING**

**NEW
BUSINESS**

Environmental and Health Team (EHT) Resolution

Motion by Forshay / Cooke for the Board of School Commissioners to adopt the following resolution: "Recognizing the positive correlation between indoor environmental quality and student achievement and the collaborative accomplishments of the

**MOTION:
EHT
RESOLU-
TION**

Environmental health Team in its use of the Environmental Protection Agency's Tools for Schools program, the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners resolves to:

- Encourage and support the work of the EHT in being pro-active in examining indoor environmental health issues being the EPA's program.
- Continue to correct any facility issues as they relate to indoor environmental quality as soon as they are discovered to avoid costly future repairs.
- Promote the education of the entire school community in the work of the EHT and the importance of healthy indoor environments, both at school and at home."

MOTION FOR EHT RESOLUTION, cont.

Mr. Forshay welcomed Ellen Green, President of the Rutland Education Association. He said the Board would make a statement in supporting the ideas of the EHT by adopting the Resolution. The team consists of representatives from each school building as well as John Rice. They are focused on insuring the best environmental quality in each school. Ellen Green said this has been a collaborative approach and she explained the history of the Team and their training. The resolution supports their work. Mr. Forshay said having the support of the Board can help the Team when applying for grants and awards. Commissioner Courcelle said he thinks the language in the second bullet is too strong, not in spirit but the words "as soon as they are discovered." He said there might not be available resources or some issues that are very large and complicated. He feels that the language locks us in and he likes alternative language such as "as soon as it is practical." Mr. Forshay said he is comfortable with a modification. Mr. Book asked that this is tabled so the Board can get a copy in writing. He said that does not indicate that he is not in favor but that he wants to see the wording with the modification.

MOTION: TABLE EHT RESOLUTION MOTION

Motion by Book / Cooke to table the motion. Passed.

Mr. Mello said he is in support of this. He asked for a written redraft for the next meeting.

BOARD RETREAT

Board Retreat - August 11, 2009 - Mr. Mello said it is scheduled for off-site at no charge to the district except for food. Mr. Mello asked for Board members to suggest discussion topics by the end of July. He said the list will be prioritized for discussion of two items in substance in addition to the concepts from the book.

OLD BUSINESS

Old Business - None

Motion by Forshay/Book at 7:55 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session 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.

MOTION: EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board came out of executive session at 8:30 pm.

PUBLIC SESSION

Motion by Book/Cooke to adjourn at 8:30 pm.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak, Recording Secretary