

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
OCTOBER 27, 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
Daniel Wigmore (7:02 pm)

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Peter Amons
Kristen Hubert
Lyle Jepson
Ellie McGarry
Bill Olsen
Kristin Francoeur
Bob Johnson
Jay Slenker
Glenn Olson
Cathy Farman
Christy Coloutti
Jessica Henderson

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Mello noted the absence of Student Representative Wigmore.

CALL TO ORDER

Motion by Towle / Cooke to accept the minutes of the Oct. 13, 2009 regular school board meeting as written.

ROLL CALL

**MOTION:
MINUTES
10/13/09
MEETING**

Commissioner Kilic-Murray said the message regarding Budget Buddies read at the last meeting was supposed to state that people interested in helping should watch tonight's board meeting on PegTV.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Written Communication - None

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral Communication - Shawn Connolly, a Rutland City resident and mother of a RMS student, submitted a letter to the Board. She said the issue needs immediate attention and she would like a decision in a regular time period. Ms. Connolly read her letter, attached. Mr. Mello asked for clarity from Ms. Connolly on what she wanted from the Board. She said she wanted a review of health and safety policies. Mr. Mello said the Board will look into the issue and research it to make sure they have the most accurate information. Through policy review, they will look at the policies regarding minimum temperatures and alternatives. Mr. Mello said they will get back to Ms. Connolly in writing in a timely way. Commissioner Fagan asked the current status of the boilers. Ms. Moran said they are all running and the temperature is where it should be.

RMS PARENT CONCERN

School Action Plans (Part I - EEE-6) - Mr. Johnson, Ms. Hubert and Ms. Coloutti presented the elementary school actions plans. They highlighted three major initiatives which are consistent between Northwest and Northeast:

EDUCATION REPORT

- Co-teaching
- Student Support Team and Response to Intervention
- Head Start - EEE Collaborative

**SCHOOL ACTION PLANS
EEE-6**

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- Fountas and Pinnell explanation? Mr. Johnson said literacy assessment is done three times a year. Amesweb is a skilled based assessment used for short term intervention on specific skills. Fountas and Pinnell shows where a student is on an ability continuum. The state discontinued the DRA assessment.
- Both Northwest and Northeast show they are above proficient in reading and math. Can you add in the total number of proficient and above proficient students and delineate those numbers in the action plan?
- What is the four block framework in literacy? Ms. Hubert said that is the literacy instruction approach. The four blocks include guided reading, working with words, self-selected reading and writing. Each block has a set point in time. It is a balanced approach to literacy.
- What is the Vermont Reading Initiative? Ms. Hubert said it is a state wide program for teachers and literacy coaches to fine tune their literacy instruction. Both schools' literacy coaches are part of the initiative which includes help from consultants.
- Do we still have book fairs? Yes.
- There is a goal for a reduction in unexcused student absences in K-2. Is there a trend or is the goal just for control? Ms. Hubert said both.
- Is there a bus problem? Ms. Hubert said we are continuing with the Safe Bus Program which helps keep incidents of bullying low.
- Please explain the Fountas and Pinnell assessment. Mr. Johnson said every student is assessed three times year. The assessments are done by classroom teachers. Literacy coaches were instrumental in the transition. This is a time consuming assessment. The Fountas and Pinnell gives an ability level. The Amesweb does a fine tune approach to the skills a child has. As teachers become more proficient and comfortable with the Fountas and Pinnell assessment, they will be able to balance it within the classroom.
- With co-teaching, are IEP goals being achieved? Mr. Johnson said very much so; the special education teachers are much more aware of what is happening with the children because they are in the classroom. It eliminates the disconnect for the student, as compared with taking the child out of the classroom. Special education approaches are fine tuned to exactly what is going on in the classroom.
- Is there feedback with the tier II versus tier I students? Ms. Hubert said at the tier I level, there is often a boost. The tier II is a targeted intervention. Progress monitoring is happening for those students and then tracked by the Student Support Team. At the end of the 4-6 week monitoring period, everyone comes back, assesses, and takes the appropriate course of action.
- Are the seven Head Start / EEE classrooms all homogenous? Ms. Coloutti said they are; they are a mixture of Head Start and EEE eligible students.
- How is the increased technology at the primary level? Ms. Hubert and Mr. Johnson said the SmartBoards are wonderful and teachers are very excited about them. There has been a big increase in technology over the past few years. They are very pleased with the direction of Ms. Aigner.
- Thank you for the materials and the list of action plan team members.

RIS - Jay Slenker highlighted three parts of the RIS action plan:

- Restructured student day to increase instructional time and decrease transitions
- Added Professional Learning Communities
- Looked at and restructured NECAP administration practices

Mr. Slenker gave an update on previous RIS action plan items:

- Co-teaching has been implemented
- Continuing E-block
- Special educators are being trained in Amesweb; grades 3-4 teachers will be trained soon and eventually so will grades 5-6 teachers.
- Technology emphasis on SmartBoards

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- Did the math and literacy faculty 90 minutes of professional development in Aug.? Mr. Slenker said yes.
- How is the five minute decrease in the lunch period and the later dismissal working? Mr. Slenker said they have not seen a difference in the lunch period cut. They are tight at the end of the day and they have to assist some students pack up before the last block. He said they will see the end of the day schedule work better.
- Lunches at RIS are very orderly.
- The sharing and collaboration of the Professional Learning Communities both at the teacher and administrative level is appreciated.
- Was moving E-block to the end of day successful? Mr. Slenker said it is working out well. Every student goes someplace. E-block stands for Enrichment.
- Is Responsive Classroom being used at RIS? Mr. Slenker said it is a mainstay of the Intermediate School and teachers build it into their schedules.

Mr. Mello thanked the principals for the well-thought-out presentations.

Preliminary Enrollment Analysis and Staffing Pattern - Superintendent Moran presented an actual 2009-2010 and projected 2010-2011 enrollment analysis. The statistics also included actual classroom sizes up to grade 8 and high school average sizes. Mr. Mello said the numbers will be important for the Board to consider during budget planning. He asked for information on high school course offerings for the budget process.

PRELIMINARY
ENROLLMENT
ANALYSIS &
STAFFING
PATTERN

Budget: Acts 60 / 68 / 82 Presentation - Mr. Amons reviewed the laws which govern education finance. He presented Act 60 and 68 school funding information prepared by the state and customized to reflect Rutland City's numbers. Board members asked questions to help understand the methods. Mr. Amons said the Act 82 two vote provision began in FY2010 and is not relevant to Rutland City because we are not an above-average spender.

BUDGET:
ACTS 60 / 68
AND 82

Motion by Fingon / Forshay to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 412 dated Oct. 22, 2009, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

PERSONNEL

MOTION:
PERSONNEL
MEMO #412

The non-licensed resignations were reviewed by Superintendent Moran. They are attached.

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

**BUSINES
REPORT**

Business Report - none

**SUPERIN-
TENDENT'S
REPORT**

Announcements

**ANNOUNCE-
MENTS**

- Congratulations to Shauna Eastman of Success, who received the Employer of the Year award at Community Care Network. She works for Rutland Mental Health.
- Revised dates for vaccination clinics were distributed.
- An anonymous gift of \$10,000 was given to the Howe Center Alternative Education program. We received a similar sum two years ago from member(s) of the class of 1957. It is much appreciated.

**SCHOOL
CHOICE
REPORT**

School Choice Report - postponed

**COMM.
REPORTS**

Policy Committee

Motion by Book / Forshay to approve the following Policies for first reading.

**POLICY
COMM.**

- 6420 - Leaves of Absence
- 7310 - Student Placement, Retention and Acceleration
- 7320 - Promotion and Retention (being deleted and added to 7310)
- 8470 - Animal Dissection

**APPROVE
POLICIES
FOR FIRST
READING**

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Mr. Fagan asked about the policy for a Guardsman who volunteers? Mr. Bliss said whether a volunteer or not, the key is that if they are active, we accommodate that. Mr. Book said the policy is from the state.

**BUILDING
COMM.**

Building Committee - Postponed until the next meeting.

**NEW
BUSINESS**

New Business

Mr. Fagan requested a temporary policy procedure in case a school closure is needed due to H1N1 and also regarding the citizen's request in the event of a "cold school." This will give the policy committee more time to develop a full policy. Mr. Mello asked Mr. Book and Mr. Bliss to talk about it at the next policy committee meeting.

**TEMPOR-
ARY
POLICY ON
H1N1 FLU
AND
SCHOOL
CLOSINGS
REQUESTED**

Ms. Kilic-Murray went to the Vermont School Board Conference and she gave the Board information on workshops she attended.

**CONFER-
ENCE
MATERIALS**

Old Business

**OLD
BUSINESS**

Mr. Mello said a first meeting of the study committee between Rutland City, Rutland Central and Rutland South Supervisory Unions is upcoming. There will be representation from each district and he will keep the Board informed about the discussion.

**STUDY
COMM.**

Motion by Towle / Book at 9:09 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session for the purpose of discussing contractual matters and the evaluation of the superintendent, 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 10:00 pm.

**PUBLIC
SESSION**

Motion by Book / Courcelle to adjourn at 10:01 pm.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak
Recording Secretary