

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS  
MARCH 12, 2013**

**School Board Members Present:**

Peter Mello  
Richard Courcelle (6:55 pm)  
Douglas Gage  
Peter Fagan  
Rob Kurchena  
Jamie Pemrick (6:32 pm)  
Erin Shimp  
Kate Thomas  
Rob Towle

**Members Absent**

Hurley Cavacas, Jr.  
Wayne Cooke  
Lena Cohen

**Also Present:**

Superintendent Mary Moran  
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss  
Peter Amons  
Bill Olsen  
Sharon Napolitano  
Susanne Engels  
Jay Slenker  
Ellie McGarry  
Wil Cunningham  
Ted Guilmette  
Steve Sampson  
Glenn Olson  
Pam Reed  
Nicole Carter

---

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Mello noted the absence of Commissioners Cooke, Pemrick, Courcelle, and Cavacas and Student Representative Cohen.

Motion by Towle / Shimp to accept the minutes of the Feb. 26, 2013 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Written and Oral Communications - None

Education Report

EEE Report - Ms. McGarry presented information on Early Essential Education (EEE), which serves three to five year old students with developmental disabilities. She explained the school system relationship with Rutland County Head Start and the eligibility for EEE. We do evaluations for children aged birth - 2 y 11 mo although we do not service them. Ms. McGarry reviewed the number of students in some of the programs. There were questions and comments from Board members:

- Commissioner Pemrick said one important issue which she would like to see improved upon is diagnosis. There is a lot of improper diagnosis, not necessarily from the school system, and then parents need to fight for proper support. The longer it takes to get the support, the harder it is. She would like the school system or Head Start to look into different ways of evaluation. Ms. McGarry described one of the assessments we are using. She said the earlier the students are diagnosed, the better it is.
- What is the funding for EEE? Ms. McGarry said EEE has no reimbursement. We do receive a grant based upon the number of first graders we have. Otherwise it is all local funds.
- What is the percentage of overall students in need of services? Can that information be presented whenever we are given numbers like this.

**CALL TO  
ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

**MOTION:  
MINUTES  
02/26/13  
MEETING**

**WRITTEN &  
ORAL  
COMMUN-  
ICATIONS**

**EDUCATION  
REPORT**

**EEE  
REPORT**

- Where is the Park Street location? Ms. McGarry said she believes at VAC.
- How do people hear about Children Integrated Services? Ms. McGarry said through pediatricians, well child clinics, Head Start, day care centers – all these folks in our community let parents know. Ms. McGarry said we are seeing the evaluations rise, and she thinks there are few children we miss.
- Is there a process followed in the EEE program? Ms. McGarry said starting when students are identified in the birth - 2 yr 11 m category, there are family plans. When they enter EEE at age 3, we do a formal IEP and that is same system we use for K-12 IEPs.

Assessment and Accountability Report - Mr. Olsen said this is part of the report on school improvement. The Board had asked for a comprehensive report on how we measure school progress. He introduced two teacher members of the data team: Deborah Rodolfy and Ellie Davine. Mr. Olson will show how the team uses the information not only to work on school improvement but also for teachers so they know how to change instruction in the classroom. They evaluate skill based assessments, content based assessments, and reading levels. Ms. Davine and Ms. Rodolfy reviewed ways in which the data team uses the information. Some specific methodologies include the pyramid of interventions: tutorial, study assistance, and the guidance department. Ms. Rodolfy said if a problem seems more systemic, teachers will reteach an assignment to revisit a concept and then reassess. Mr. Olsen gave an example of how the English Department measured comprehension and made changes at the 12th grade level using assessments. Mr. Bliss said he used data information to send to the Rutland Police Chief who was writing a grant and needed information on social issues such as discipline referrals, drop out rates, etc. The information became a tool we used to support the community as a whole.

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- Having data is one thing, but it is useful only when it is information. Great that we are using it to help students in the middle of the year.
- How often are assessments being used to pinpoint groups which need more help? Ms. Rodolfy said in some areas, it can happen daily, in other areas, weekly. Mr. Olson said RHS assesses a minimum of three times a semester.
- At some point, can this “get too much real time?” Have teachers have identified one need and then the following week identify another? “Does that drag you off track?” Ms. Rodolfy said teachers make a thousand decisions a day -- it is not a problem. Mr. Olson said at the data team level, they are looking at a variety of data sources.
- Are we taking the information based off reading comprehension and sharing with other schools to see what we can do better with younger students, to bring them up to par? Mr. Bliss said the common assessment is a benchmark three times a year. We track K-8 students many times in the year so we hope to have a better understanding of where the students are. We can track cohorts as they go along through school. The pyramid interventions are at every school. We see every student progressing through the school year.
- Mr. Mello said he is impressed with the level of questions from the Board. He is also impressed with teachers collaborating and using that data to change their classroom practice. He said we should strive to have all K-12 teachers collaborate like that; it will make a big difference for the students.

- Do you see this incorporated with parent teacher conferences? Mr. Olsen said Lena Cohen is head of the Student Senate and teachers have worked with the students so the data is not just a teacher tool but also used for student goals. When we talk about skills like reading, writing, critical thinking – the students are seeing what that means in chemistry, physics, etc. What do they need to do to be better? Mr. Bliss said there will be student led parent teacher conferences in the middle school. Student control and understanding of their own data is the number impact on their ownership and learning.

**ASSESS-  
MENT &  
ACCOUNT-  
ABILITY  
REPORT,  
cont.**

Motion by Towle / Fagan to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 478 dated March 8, 2013 and Addendum No. 478 dated March 12, 2013, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

**MOTION:  
PERSONNEL  
MEMO &  
ADDENDUM  
#478**

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

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Business Report - Mr. Mello said he is pleased that the budget had a favorable vote by a significant margin. He thinks it is a tribute to the leaders in the school district and that people have confidence in the schools. He thanked the administration. He was personally contacted by two prominent community individuals complementing us on the brochure mailed home. Ms. Moran thanked the core team of the Budget Buddies, parents, teachers, friends, and others who helped.

**BUSINESS  
REPORT**

**THANKS TO  
VOTERS**

Foundations and Boosters Plan - Mr. Amons referred to the memo and said this is not new information for the Board but we now have the opinion from legal counsel of the Department of Education saying it is fine. He said the Boosters Club understand these changes and are willing to see it through. Ms. Moran said the foundation is a way for us to receive scholarships and people have been waiting for this.

**FOUNDA-  
TIONS &  
BOOSTERS  
PLAN**

Motion by Courcelle / Towle that the Superintendent or the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to instruct our attorneys to prepare the necessary papers for the establishment of non-profit corporations for RPS Boosters Association and the RPS Foundation, in accordance with the Memorandum dated March 7, 2013 from our attorneys (attached) and to take all such other action as Superintendent or Chief Financial officer deem necessary to implement the formation of these corporations. Motion passed by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:  
ESTABLISH  
FOUNDA-  
TIONS &  
BOOSTERS  
PLAN**

**Announcements**

- John Halligan, a nationally recognized speaker, will be conducting a bullying and cyber bullying assembly at the middle school and the high school on April 2. Later that evening there will be a parent presentation at 6 pm at RIS.
- Congratulations to Captain David J Sly, Vermont Army National Guard and staff member at the Allen Street Campus who has been announced as winner of a General MacArthur Leadership Award. This program recognizes officers who demonstrate the ideals for which General MacArthur stood - duty, honor, country.
- There has been a lot of work establishing an Operation Military Kids chapter in Rutland County to help children of military members, both current, deployed and

**SUPERIN-  
PENDENT'S  
REPORT**

**ANNOUNCE-  
MENTS**

returned. There is a camp during April vacation for OMK children and their friends. Complements to everyone involved.

- Ms. Moran complemented the art from all schools on display in Longfellow. She said there have been spectacular concerts in the last few weeks also.
- At Northwest , the spring fundraiser begins next week. Spring picture day is March 22. There was a wonderful March PBIS assembly last week, with special guest hero “Dodie Webster”.
- At RIS, Ms. Daley’s, Ms. Dick’s and Mrs. Gides’ third grade classes hosted Mrs. Russo’s and Mrs. Coloutti’s Kindergarten classes from Northwest School for a Dr. Seuss Reading Café. Also at RIS, congratulations to Peter Cassarino, Jacob Henderson and Caitlin French for successful auditions and participation in the Green Mountain Music Festival held last week. RIS reminds parents about Parent-Teacher conferences this week. These are student lead in which the student facilitates the conversation about their progress this year. Congratulations to the RIS Unified Snowshoeing Team for their participation in the state-wide tournament held last Friday.
- Congratulations to the RHS Cheerleading Team for winning as State Champs and to the boys and girls basketball teams who performed well in play-offs.
- Ms. Moran pointed out a letter from the Rowland Foundation’s Executive Director, complementing our Rowland Scholars, Jen Kravitz and Adam Rosenberg. She thanked Barry and Wendy Rowland for support of our school.

LEGISLA-  
TIVE  
REPORT

COMM.  
REPORT

PENSION  
COMM.

Legislative Report - Ms. Moran said there are a lot of education issues we are watching and she reviewed several education-related bills. Commissioners Fagan and Gage also commented on legislative activity.

Mr. Fagan said regarding the Pension Committee, in light of the City Team on the municipal side, they finished the process with the firefighters and came to an agreement. He said the agreement bodes well for the future when other units come in for renewal of contracts. He said the city pension will improve its level of funding and benefit, which is good for the people in the units and also for the city taxpayers.

NEW  
BUSINESS

New Business

Old Business

OLD  
BUSINESS

VARIOUS

- Mr. Fagan commented on Vermont Tech magazine and an article stating that companies are looking for increased focus on students who can write, reason and collaborate to solve problems.
- Mr. Towle said the Rutland Region Workforce Investment Board has a vacancy for a Youth Counsel chair. He said anyone who is interested should talk with him or Mr. Jepson.
- Mr. Fagan asked for a briefing on Common Core at some point in the future.
- Mr. Mello recognized the dedication and service epitomized by Doug Gage, exiting Board member. Mr. Gage previously served on the Board for seven years. Mr. Mello said he has maintained his interest and he thanked him for his dedication and service.

Motion by Towle / Fagan at 7:37 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 8:25 pm.

**PUBLIC  
SESSION**

Motion by Fagan / Gage to adjourn at 8:26 pm. Passed.

**ADJOURN**

Respectfully submitted


---

Janet Mondlak  
Recording Secretary



6 Church Street, Rutland, VT 05701  
Phone: **802-773-1900**  
Fax: **802-773-1927**  
Web: **www.rutlandcitypublicschools.org**

Mary E. Moran, Superintendent  
Robert S. Bliss, Assistant Superintendent  
Peter P. Amons, Chief Financial Officer  
Eloise S. McGarry, Director of Support Services

Date: March 7, 2013  
To: Mary Moran, Superintendent  
From: Peter Amons, CFO   
Subject: **Formal vote for Independent Boosters Club and Foundation**

We have completed the required research into creating a foundation and making the Boosters Club independent from the school district. The chief legal counsel of the Agency of Education has reviewed our proposal and indicated it does not conflict with Acts 60 and 68. Therefore, whenever the board chooses to begin to implement the programs, the following board vote should be taken.

**Recommendation for vote:**

I hereby move that the Superintendent or the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to instruct our attorneys to prepare the necessary papers for the establishment of non-profit corporations for **RPS Boosters Association** and the **RPS Foundation**, in accordance with the Memorandum dated March 7, 2013 from our attorneys (copy attached hereto) and to take all such other action as Superintendent or Chief Financial Officer deem necessary to implement the formation of these corporations.

The Superintendent or Chief Financial Officer are authorized to attend to all the details for the formation and organization of the corporations, including, but not limited to, interfacing with members of the Boosters Club, choosing the names of the corporations, designation of incorporators and initial directors, designation of registered agent, filing Articles of Incorporation with the Secretary of State, filing for tax exempt status, conducting organizational meetings, and to take all such other steps as may be necessary to carry out the intent of this Resolution.

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** March 7, 2013  
**To:** Mary Moran, Superintendent  
**From:** Peter Amons, CFO  
**Subject:** Legal organization of RHS Boosters Club and RPS Foundation

### General

The purpose of this memorandum is to recommend that RPS legally create two separate nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations. One organization would take over the activities of the RHS Boosters Club that today exists as an informal group of citizens and a second organization would serve as a foundation to receive and hold donations for scholarships and other major endowed uses for the school district. Much of the following information has been supplied by the schools' attorney and the law firm has reviewed this memorandum.

### Formalize the Boosters Club

RHS has a dedicated Boosters Club that sells items and receives donations that ultimately benefit the high school, most typically in athletics and music. The current informal organization is not optimal because a non-school entity has its own checking account and controls its own funds yet RPS offers its tax deductible status for donations despite not personally controlling the monies. The district does not want to add to its workload or have the responsibility/liability or the task of managing or controlling the numerous small financial transactions involved in the Boosters Club activities. Therefore, administration proposes that the Boosters Club become their own, free-standing Vermont non-profit corporation such that RPS is no longer responsible for any of their activities and no longer permits donors to receive federal tax deductions for donations to the Boosters. People would be entitled to tax deductibility because the organization itself was qualified.

We have discussed with the Boosters members the following operating principles:

- Boosters would incorporate themselves.
- Name could be Rutland Schools Boosters Association, Inc. (RSBA) or something similar.

- Initial legal filing would be by 3 citizen incorporators who immediately become initial directors.
- Initial directors would adopt Bylaws.
- Boosters would have their own board of 5-7 directors.
- Board should be made up of the current citizen members.
- Boosters would apply for 501(c)(3) status so that donations could be tax deductible. Deductions are deductible as long as the application is in and you eventually get certification. The organization should be able to get certification.
- Boosters would operate themselves.
- Boosters will have at least two committees - one for athletics and one for activities and the arts.
- Bylaws will provide that there will also be two non-voting Board Members from RPS appointed by the Superintendent. Initially, RPS would designate the CFO and a RHS staff member to the Board.
- RSBA would sign an agreement with RPS about various duties, responsibilities, liabilities, etc. and provide protection for RPS.
- RPS would pay for the initial setup and creation of all documents for RSBA using the schools' law firm. Estimated legal set up costs of RSBA are about \$1,500.00 not including the application for 501(c)(3) status which could be done by RPS staff.

### **Create a Foundation**

The purpose of a Rutland Public Schools Foundation (RPSF) would be to accept and hold donations for scholarships or other school based charitable purposes and to enable a managed endowment for that purpose. The legal organization would be very similar to the Boosters above except that the Foundation would be controlled by the school district yet separate from State Education Fund monies. It would be a vehicle to accept larger and longer term tax deductible gifts from graduating classes and alumni.

The Foundation would generally work as follows:

- RPSF would be a Vermont non-profit corporation that would seek 501(c)(3) certification with its own board of 5-7 directors (hereinafter the Board).
- Board would be composed of local citizens, including school board members, including people with investment expertise (for endowment).
- The Superintendent and RPS CFO would be automatic voting and permanent members of the Board.
- RPSF would have a separate IRS Tax ID number, VT/IRS filings, Articles of Incorporation and policies/practices.
- RPS would pay for the initial setup and creation of all documents for RRPSF using RPS's law firm.
- Ongoing costs would be an expense of RPSF.