

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
MARCH 24, 2015**

School Board Members Present:

Richard Courcelle
Daniel Alcorn
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.
Peter Fagan (6:31 pm)
Rob Kurchena
Alison Notte
Matthew Olewnik
Joanne Pencak
Erin Shimp
Kate Thomas
Christian Wideawake

Members Absent

Lydia Gulick
Brendan Wright

Also Present

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Bill Olsen
Ellie McGarry
Jessica Henderson
Steve Sampson
Kristin Francoeur
Pam Reed
Ted Guilmette
Greg Schillinger

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Courcelle noted the absence of Commissioner Fagan and Student Representatives Gulick and Wright.

**CALL TO
ORDER**

ROLL CALL

Motion by Cavacas / Shimp to accept the minutes of the March 10, 2015 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:
MINUTES
03-10-15**

Written Communications - Mr. Courcelle read a thank you note from Peter Mello.

**WRITTEN &
ORAL
COMMUNI-
CATIONS**

Oral Communications - None

Reorganization:

Swearing in Elected Members - The following Board members all took the oath of office for three year terms: Dick Courcelle, Joanne Pencak, Christian Wideawake.

**REORGANI-
ZATION**

**SWEARING IN
ELECTED
MEMBERS**

Election of Board Clerk - Motion by Shimp / Cavacas to nominate Robert Kurchena for the position of Board Clerk for one year. There were no other nominations. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:
ELECTION OF
BOARD
CLERK**

Election of Board President - Mr. Kurchena called for nominations for Board President. Motion by Cavacas / Thomas to nominate Dick Courcelle for the position of Board President for one year. There were no other nominations. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:
ELECTION OF
BOARD
PRESIDENT**

Committee Assignments - Mr. Courcelle reviewed committees and asked any Board members who would like to change their committee assignment to let him know. He will discuss assignments with the new Commissioner.

**COMMITTEE
ASSIGN-
MENTS**

Preferred Means of Communication - Board members were asked to update their contact information.

Performance Excellence Initiative (PEI) / Progress - to be discussed at the next meeting.

Student Representatives - Ms. Moran said Soup Bowls for Hunger is tomorrow night. The Global Initiative Network Conference is upcoming on April 2. She complimented the students for the Global Initiative and STEM fair held last week.

Howe Center Recognition - Mr. Courcelle acknowledged the 25th anniversary celebration of the Howe Center. Jen Mclemore introduced two founding teachers of the program, Mr. McCullen and Ms. Holt. Mr. McCullen highlighted the beginning of the program, how it got started, and how it has grown. Ms. Holt recognized the Board and their commitment to ensure all students be educated and how the Howe Center enables students to pursue different pathways to earn their diplomas. Ms. Mclemore said the program has a graduation rate of 97%. Mr. Moran reviewed how the Howe Center campus works with students providing flexible learning opportunities and the importance of the support network they provide. Mr. Wilcox is a student who graduated from Howe Center campus in January and he spoke about how the main campus did not work for him and how the Howe Center campus did work for him. He said the program sets students on a path to a secure future.

There were questions and discussion with Board members:

- What is the future of the Howe Center? Mr. Moran said he thinks the program will mirror the great things going on in Rutland City. It will continue to grow and provide. Mr. Wilcox said he thinks the program is good the way it is; he said thanks to the Howe Center and his good teachers, he graduated from high school and has a good job where he has been promoted.
- What is the current enrollment? 37 students. Eight students graduated in Jan.
- What trajectory are the students taking? Ms. Mcelmore said several are looking at college; some pursuing the armed forces; some are working and hope to take it full time; and several are undecided.
- How do we identify the students for the program? Ms. Mclemore said through the guidance office, the school's website and word of mouth. Ms. Moran said students have to apply for acceptance. Ms. Holt said guidance counselors and administrators approach students and present this as an option. But the student has to be ready to take the step.
- What is the typical day like? Ms. Mclemore said each student's education is individual. Students have contracts to fulfill. There are community service commitments. There are career and physical education components.
- How do the academics compare to the main campus? Delivery? Content? Ms. Mclemore said Howe offers all the same curriculum although it is offered over the whole year rather than a semester. There are small groups and information is delivered in smaller bits. They administer all the same assessments.
- Can students begin at Howe in 9th grade? Ms. Mclemore said they like students to be at least one semester into the high school before they apply.
- Mr. Courcelle said the Board loves to hear about how lives are being changed. He read the Board's vision statement adopted a couple of weeks ago and

commented on how it relates to the Howe Center campus and the work being done there.

**SCHOOL
CHOICE
REPORT**

School Choice Report - Superintendent Moran addressed the 2015-2016 School Choice Report and reviewed the background of the program. There are 34 inbound students at RHS now. There is a limit of 40 students. There are currently eight outbound students. Ms. Moran noted trends over time and the analysis of where things are headed. There continues to be a question of funding. Commissioner Fagan said there is a legislative bill in the Education Committee that would require "the money to follow the student."

**CENTRAL
OFFICE
REPORTS**

Superintendent - Ms. Moran noted a legislative text of the House Concurrent Resolutions where Mr. Mello is honored. Board members also received a "Sugar Packet" pamphlet which shows an interdisciplinary unit on maple sugaring. Ms. Moran said there is already activity of the major renovation of the RHS Library and it is very exciting. Mr. Courcelle said this is a fantastic project which will open up opportunities for learning. He asked for a schematic to be made more public.

**SUPERIN-
TENDENT**

Legislative Report - Mr. Fagan said the controversial portion of House Bill 361 is the proposed caps on spending; there have been some changes of the proposal and he read them and recapped what they are attempting to do. Ms. Moran said from a public policy point of view, she does not like the idea of a hard cap although the proposal has been changed somewhat to allow for some flexibility and adjustments. The continuance of unfunded mandates, such as the implementation of pre-K, is also problematic. She explained how the potential cap could impact the RCPS budget in an upcoming year and the jobs that could potentially be impacted. Ms. Moran touched on another issue in education ongoing in the legislature. All these issues will continue to be monitored.

**LEGISLA-
TIVE
REPORT**

Facilities and Finance - None

**FACILITIES
& FINANCE**

Motion by Fagan / Cavacas to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 514 dated March 20, 2015, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

PERSONNEL

**MOTION:
PERSONNEL
MEMO #514**

The appointment, retirement, and transfer were reviewed by Superintendent Moran. They are attached.

Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Cavacas asked how many positions will be open for next year and Ms. Moran reviewed the openings. They are working on appointments.

**COMMIT-
TEE
REPORTS**

Committee Reports - Policy - Mr. Courcelle said there has been a request for the Policy Committee to review the district's Member to Member Agreement (MTM). Commissioner Shimp asked Board members to consider if they feel there is a compelling reason to change Policy 7514. Mr. Bliss included the steps the Policy Committee has taken regarding an analysis of the MTM Agreement, taking into account VPA's rules. He reviewed the analysis, a summary of the Policy Committee discussion prepared by Commissioner Thomas on behalf of the committee, and copies of input received from Bob Johnson, the VPA Director of Athletics and Activities.

POLICY

**MEMBER TO
MEMBER
AGREE-
MENTS
DISCUSSION**

Mr. Bliss said the district has had the policy in place stating that RCPS will not enter into MTM Agreements. The policy was reaffirmed in 2009. He reviewed potential participation numbers and trends. He said speaking for the Administration, there does not appear to be a need to change the policy nor enter into an MTM Agreement.

There were questions and discussion with Board members. There was discussion about potential displacement of RCPS students and limitations of MTM Agreements, which are agreed upon for one school / one sport / one year at a time. Mr. Courcelle said the Board is looking at the existence of the policy but the application of it would be up to the Administration. The Policy Committee and Board have been charged with evaluating the policy as it stands now.

The public was invited to comment. Tom Valente, a Rutland resident and member of the MSJ School Board, introduced other MSJ personnel and Board members and the Tommola family, who are asking for the MTM Agreement for their daughter to play ice hockey. Mr. Valente said the request is about community and opportunity. He said the VPA rules are meant 1) to help struggling programs and / or 2) to provide opportunities for the students who do not have the opportunity at their school. Other schools in the area have been cooperating with MSJ and agreeing on MTM Agreements. RHS is the only local school with a hockey program and their participation numbers are less than the maximum of 24 now and in the foreseeable future. He said a student who lives in Rutland and who has parents who pay taxes here would like to play. He asked for the opportunity for her and the community. Scott Tommola spoke on behalf of his daughter who would like to attend MSJ but play ice hockey for RHS. He reviewed the upcoming numbers in the sport and said he feels there is room. Mr. Tommola explained his discussion with Mr. Johnson of the VPA and said he interprets the information from Mr. Johnson differently than Mr. Bliss interpreted the information. He thanked the Board for their time and asked that they consider all the viewpoints. Ms. Tommola spoke about her desire for the opportunity to continue playing hockey with the girls she has been playing with for years through RAHA while continuing with her faith-based education. Peter Giancola said MSJ writes agreements like this with many schools because they do not have enough students to support the expensive sports. He said they appreciate a candid review of the policy change that would need to happen. Paul Gallo, a resident of Rutland Town said he works on many community and educational projects in the area. He said this is an adult decision that could benefit a young adult.

Ms. Shimp asked for Board comments and all Board members provided input, stated opinions and some members asked for additional time or information before rendering an opinion. Mr. Courcelle said Board members are tasked with looking at a policy but not micromanaging. If the policy is changed, it does not mean the practice will be changed. He said it has been a healthy and rigorous discussion and he appreciates the participation from our MSJ friends. Ms. Moran said policy changes come from the Policy Committee and then they go to the full Board for for two readings.

MOTION:
REFER
MEMBER TO
MEMBER
AGREE-
MENTS TO
POLICY
COMMITTEE

Motion by Fagan / Notte to refer Member to Member Agreements to the Policy Committee so they can amend the policy to reflect a Member to Member Agreement status for RCPS.

Mr. Cavacas said he is fine with referring this back to the Policy Committee but not the inference that it be changed. Mr. Olewnik suggested the decision to refer to the Policy

Commission be tabled until the next meeting. Mr. Cavacas said as it is worded, he will vote against this motion because it is telling the Policy Committee what to do. He would like the Committee to look at it again but to recommend a change if it is warranted.

**MOTION:
AMENDMENT
TO MOTION
REFERRING
MEMBER TO
MEMBER
AGREE-
MENTS TO
POLICY
COMMITTEE**

Amendment to the motion by Fagan / Notte that the Board refer the Member to Member Agreements to the Policy Committee for a recommendation back to the full Board.

Mr. Courcelle asked for the recommendation from Policy to be made prior to the April 7 Board meeting.

Vote on amended motion passed unanimously.

New Business - None

**NEW
BUSINESS**

Old Business

**OLD
BUSINESS**

Ms. Notte asked for a status on the discussion about RMS and foreign language. Ms. Moran said this is being looked at along with student enrollment. No decisions have been made and it is hoped to have an update at the next meeting.

**RMS &
FOREIGN
LANGUAGE**

Mr. Courcelle said Board members received information on Vermont Open Meeting Law. It is important for board members to know what it says.

**VT OPEN
MEETING
LAW**

Motion by Thomas / Wideawake at 8:30 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session for the purpose of discussing a 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 8:50 pm.

**PUBLIC
SESSION**

Motion by Fagan/ Alcorn to adjourn at 8:51 pm. Passed.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak
Recording Secretary

TO: Board of Education
 FROM: Mary E. Moran, Superintendent
 DATE: March 20, 2015
 RE: Personnel Memorandum – Licensed and Non-Licensed

RESOLVE: That the LICENSED and NON-LICENSED SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 514 dated March 20, 2015, be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A. LICENSED SECTION

1. Retirement

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
John Rice	Director of Building, Grounds and Transportation/District	6/30/15

2. Appointment

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Geoffrey Bloomer	Physical Educator/RMS	\$34,822.00	8/21/15

3. Transfer

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location From/To</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Lorin Gides	From: Special Educator/RIS To: Career & Technical Education Special Needs Coordinator/STC	\$61,174.00	8/14/15

B. NON-LICENSED SECTION

1. Resignation/Retirement

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Gary Whittemore	Facilities Worker/NW	6/05/15

2. Coaching Appointment

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Stipend</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Mike Smith	JV Boys' Lacrosse Coach	\$2,068.71	Spring Season