

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
SEPTEMBER 11, 2012**

School Board Members Present:

Hurley Cavacas, Jr.
Wayne Cooke
Richard Courcelle
Douglas Gage
Peter Fagan
Robert Kurchena
Jamie Pemrick
Erin Shimp
Kate Thomas
Lena Cohen

Members Absent

Peter Mello
Rob Towle

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Wil Cunningham
Patricia Aigner
Bill Olsen
Steve Sampson
Susanne Engels
Jay Slenker
Ellie McGarry
Nicole Carter
Sharon Napolitano

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Clerk Courcelle noted the absence of Commissioners Mello and Towle.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Motion by Fagan / Cavacas to accept the minutes of the Aug. 28, 2012 regular school board meeting as written.

**MOTION:
MINUTES
08/28/12
MEETING**

- Commissioner Gage said that with regard to the discussion on the second page of the minutes, he would like to see names attached to the discussion; to show who was saying what. He asked for this for the future. Mr. Courcelle said he would like to discuss this under New Business.

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**WRITTEN &
ORAL
COMMUN-
ICATIONS**

Written Communication - None

Oral Communication - None

**INTRODUCE
NEW
MEMBERS
OF THE
LEADER-
SHIP TEAM**

Superintendent Moran introduced two new members of the Leadership Team:

- Nicole Carter - the new Director at the Allen Street Campus.
- Sharon Napolitano - the Coordinator of Student Services, Birth-Grade 2
- Susanne Engels is in a new position as principal at Northeast School.

Opening of School Report - Ms. Moran congratulated and thanked all members of the school community for the terrific opening. Open houses have begun as has the fall athletic program. Thanks to all faculty and staff and students and their families for being supportive and involved.

**EDUCATION
REPORT**

**OPENING
OF SCHOOL
REPORT**

School Improvement Plan - Assistant Superintendent Bliss spoke on major initiatives and data related to it and the future of school improvement. There are six major initiatives district-wide and he explained what they mean and how they are used. Mr. Bliss explained technology, how it is being integrated in classrooms, professional development opportunities, and the impact of cloud collaboration. He also discussed

**SCHOOL
IMPROVE-
MENT PLAN**

initiatives such as Brain Based and Differentiated Instruction (DI) and Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS), which is attributed for a 62% reduction in behavior referrals since the 2009-2010 school year. The district is making more Data Based Decisions based on progress monitoring and Aimsweb K-8 behavior and skills in literacy and math. Co-Teaching has had a positive impact with a 16% drop in the Special Education count between FY09 - FY11. Response to Intervention (RTI) is being used in every RCPS school. We are a Professional Learning Community (PLC) using the DuFour model. The big goal is to improve student learning. Mr. Bliss said every school is on the AYP list. We are provided with a "Coach Grant" from the State Department of Education which allows for extra support. We are also Green Mountain Star which is a continuous improvement tool based on 65 Vermont core indicators of school improvement. It is a two year improvement plan.

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- Does Global Classroom give the ability for students and parents to go on-line and look at lesson plans or further instruction? Ms. Aigner said Global Classroom is a learning management system. Students are given course materials in a variety of formats, such as videos like Khan Academy or designed by teachers. Materials can be adjusted for students at different levels, if they are struggling or if they are excelling. Students can get data 24/7. They can even get quizzes late at night.
- Mr. Bliss described COWS, which are Computers on Wheels. Labs are rooms with computers. In the lower grades, classrooms each have one or two computers.
- How does the Green Mountain Star program work? Mr. Bliss said each school has a team comprised of a principal, a math leader, a literacy leader and a special educator Teams could have other people involved reflecting different strengths. The Global Team involves Ms. Moran, Mr. Bliss and principals. Ms. Moran said RHS is not using Green Mountain Star.
- Can parents can get on the website to help their students? Ms. Aigner said parents can get help through the Parent Portal (grades 7 - 12). Global Classroom is being implemented in those grades in some courses and possibly younger in the future. In grades 3 - 12, parents can go on-line and look at their children's work using Google Docs. Commissioner Fagan said he is glad to see all this and the 24 hour aspect to learning.
- Commissioner Gage said he stopped at one of the elementary schools this morning and was amazed to see how they are using technology. It has progressed a lot in the past few years.
- Ms. Aigner explained the Parent Portal is to be used for checking grades and in the near future, look at assessment results.

Ms. Moran said the technology staff is very spare comprised of the director, educator, network administrator, and two technicians. The teachers who teach technology also are full time teachers supporting this work. Even with the lean department, Ms. Aigner and her team have done a tremendous job. Ms. Moran distributed the Technology offerings this fall offered by the department.

Summer Professional Development Report - Mr. Bliss reviewed the summer offerings for faculty. There are graduate course levels offered in our region and those for school

improvement efforts. 35 faculty members took part in graduate level work. 176 faculty members took part in school improvement efforts. There were 23 faculty members who worked on the RHS School Improvement Grant (SIG) work. Mr. Bliss explained the SIG rubric for the proficiency scales. This is the third and last year of the SIG grant. Ms. Moran said this will be discussed in the future.

**SUMMER
PROFES-
SIONAL
DEVELOP-
MENT, cont.**

Motion by Thomas / Fagan to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 469 dated Sept. 7, 2012 and Addendum dated Sept. 11, 2012, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

**MOTION:
PERSONNEL
MEMO &
ADDENDUM
#469**

The family / medical leave, appointments, and retirement / resignations were reviewed by Superintendent Moran. They are attached.

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

**HIRING
UPDATE**

Hiring Update - Ms. Moran said there are a few paraeducator positions left to fill. The only professional position is the STEM Coordinator at Stafford Tech. This is a new position to help develop the STEM program to serve all high schools and collaborate with RHS.

**BUSINESS
REPORT**

Business Report - None

**SUPERIN-
PENDENT'S
REPORT**

Announcements

- Northwest School held the first STAR assembly. September's themes are trustworthiness, respect and self-control. Thanks to Officer Perkins for leading this. Students went to the Fair last week and it was a great day.
- All schools are practicing evacuation procedures. School leaders will notify families.
- The Northeast School open house will occur on September 13.
- RIS started the new year with a student assembly and introduced the three RRRs.
- RMS welcomed families to open house on September 18. Sports began this week.
- RHS open house is Sept. 19 and the Allen Street open house is Sept. 20.
- Ms. Moran said at the last meeting, Mr. Courcelle asked about the discussion at the Alderboard meeting on the school district's Tax Anticipation Note (TAN). The Alderboard Finance Committee has approved our TAN and she attended the meeting to review the TAN process for the committee. She distributed and reviewed the notes from the meeting and the process. She was asked if the school district could borrow money from the city and she explained that it is not legal to do so. She said the Committee had new members and they previously did not have full information. Mr. Courcelle suggested to Mr. Fagan that perhaps legislation allowing school districts to borrow from their own municipality would be helpful. There was discussion about future tax anticipation note requests and Ms. Moran said she offered to annually explain this to the Alderboard committee.

**ANNOUNCE-
MENTS**

**COMM.
REPORTS**

Committee Reports - None

Student Report - Lena Cohen said students are adjusting to their schedules. The Student Executive Board had their first meeting and reviewed the school constitution. They decided to hold a second anti-cyberbullying coffee house because it was very successful last year. They are working on freshmen class officer elections. There are four spots open on the Executive Board: one each for academic, policy, athletics and activities. Lena said the junior and senior class proms will be joined this year to cut costs and combine efforts. College representatives have been visiting. Sports and clubs have started. Club Giving will have a kids garage sale and will donate money to the Vermont Foodbank this year. Mr. Olsen reviewed the change from two proms to one prom. He said instead of the two proms, there will be a fall Homecoming Dance, which is a new event.

**STUDENT
REPORT**

**NEW
BUSINESS**

**CONTENT
OF
MEETING
MINUTES**

Minutes - Mr. Gage said he would like the meeting minutes to show who said what. He said it will easier to find this out in the future if there are names attached to all comments. Ms. Moran said the recording secretary usually does not include names if it is a general question but if there is an opinion, she includes a name. Commissioner Thomas said she feels that since there is an audio and video record, she is fine without names for every question or comment. Mr. Courcelle said he does not feel it is important to have every name but if someone is taking a position, he feels the current practice is fine. Mr. Gage said the minutes are sometimes used for research. Ms. Moran said audio and video discs are archived forever and people do come in for them or they can be mailed. Minutes are posted on the website or can be printed and mailed. Commissioner Pemrick said she thinks reading minutes are the easiest way to look into something and research it and if names can be in, she thinks it would be better. Ms. Thomas said if it were really important to see who said what, it would be easy to have the date of the meeting and request the tape. Ms. Moran said she will discuss further with the recording secretary.

**OLD
BUSINESS**

**BOARD
CALENDAR**

**COMM.
ASSIGN-
MENTS**

**COMMON
CORE**

Board Calendar - Mr. Courcelle said he and Mr. Mello worked on the goals discussed at the Board retreat. They will be presented at the next meeting.

Committee Assignments - Mr. Courcelle said Board members can discuss assignments with Mr. Mello.

**MOTION:
EXECUTIVE
SESSION**

Mr. Courcelle said he would like to hear more about Common Core at a future meeting.

Motion by Gage / Fagan at 7:40 pm, after a recess, for the board to convene to executive session for the purpose of discussing legal 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.

**PUBLIC
SESSION**

The Board came out of executive session at 8:16 pm.

ADJOURN

Motion by Cooke / Gage to adjourn at 8:16 pm. Passed.

Respectfully submitted

Janet Mondlak, Recording Secretary