

RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
October 13, 2015

School Board Members Present:

Dick Courcelle
Rob Kurchena
Daniel Alcorn
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.
Peter Fagan
Alison Notte
Matthew Olewnik
Joanne Pencak (6:34 pm)
Erin Shimp
Kate Thomas
Christian Wideawake
Nova Wang

Also Present:

Superintendent Mary Moran
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss
Patricia Aigner
Peter Amons
Kerry Coarse
Susanne Engels
Kristin Holsman-Francoeur
Kristin Hubert
Ellie McGarry
Sharon Napolitano
Bill Olsen
Glenn Olson
Steve Sampson
Jay Slenker

Members Absent:

Lydia Gulick

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

CALL TO ORDER
ROLL CALL

Motion by Fagan/Alcorn to accept the minutes of the September 22, 2015 regular school board meeting as written. Minutes stand.

MOTION:
MINUTES
9/22/2015

Written Communications – None

COMMUNICA-
TIONS - ORAL
AND WRITTEN

Audience - None

Oral Communications - None

Performance Excellence Initiative/Progress – The group has been joined by additional members (educators and a paraeducator) and will meet again on October 20, 2015 and November 17, 2015. They are working on the development of goals. They will report after the third meeting has taken place.

PEI PROGRESS

School Program Update – Assistant Superintendent Bliss introduced Susanne Engels, Principal, Northeast Primary School and Kristin Hubert, Principal, Northwest Primary School. He noted that they would present the Primary School Improvement Plans.

SCHOOL
PROGRAM
UPDATE

Ms. Hubert reviewed the 2013-2015 Pre K-2 School Improvement Plan. She noted that it was tied to the Green Mountain Stars Indicators. She explained the utilization of data and that many goals remain in progress. She reviewed Goal #1/Standards Based Grading from the 2015-2017 School Improvement Plan. The plans for Northwest and Northeast were developed together. She advised that collaboration with RIS was challenging due to schedule conflicts.

PreK SCHOOL
IMPROVEMETN
PLAN

Ms. Engels explained that some goals from the Northeast 2013-2015 were also rolled into the 2015-2017 Plan. She reviewed Goal #2/Social and Emotional Learning and Goal

#3/Technology/Curriculum Integration, noting that this draws into what Patricia has presented in the overall District Technology Plan.

Commissioner Fagan said that he had been reading about/researching social emotional learning and finds it fascinating. He asked: Discuss what it is and examples of how it is employed and the reason for learning.

Ms. Engels explained that there is social emotional content (a lot of kids come to school not knowing how to solve problems, share...) and there is process (learning by being posed a challenge, conflict, dilemma... working together to solve problems.) Ms. Hubert noted that the Northwest curriculum is built around the Star Student Program and is explicit in detail (how to self-regulate, make positive connections...and can be applied in a variety of settings.) Kid Community focuses on two positive character traits and these traits are explained in kid friendly language. Local heroes are brought into school for demonstrations. October traits are cooperation and courage. Firemen visited school. It is proactive as opposed to being reactive. Ms. Engels explained if a student is feeling safe and secure, it helps them to cope with frustrations and removes obstacles, helping them to focus.

Chair Courcelle noted that we will be hearing more about social emotional learning and it is a determinate of success at the kindergarten level. Due to the many issues faced by our families, it is very important as we evaluate programs and the whole point of Act 166.

Assistant Superintendent Bliss introduced Jay Slenker, Principal, Rutland Intermediate School.

RIS SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT
PLAN

Mr. Slenker highlighted the goals and progress of the 2013-2015 Rutland Intermediate School Improvement Plan and noted that it was tied to the Green Mountain Stars Program. He explained that many goals have been completed, but some are not complete because we are not ready (i.e. we have not opened the parent portal because there is a lot of work to be done.) He noted that they are working to maximize time to spend collaborating with the primary schools. It's been a challenge because their schedules are nearly exact opposites. He explained the Raider Way program and noted that planning room referrals are greatly reduced. He noted the struggle with NECAP/SBAC scores – some have been brought up, but higher scores have plateaued.

Commissioner Fagan asked: How are you working or planning to work with Pre K – 2 to continue seeing the same expectations in regards to social emotional learning?

Mr. Slenker recognized the primary schools for the enormous amount of work they do in this area. By Grade 4 they are switching classes and social emotional learning really comes into play. He advised that monthly assemblies are held, focusing on the Raider Way attributes and the staff has been working with trauma training. A building wide book study has been done on the heels of a webinar about how to deal with kids coming from trauma. It is challenging when students come in from another district where expectations haven't been laid out clearly.

Commissioner Fagan asked about co-teaching and Responsive Classroom.

Mr. Slenker noted that Responsive Classroom is practiced at RIS. It is great to have a second teacher in the room and that the Special Educator is not acting as a paraeducator. They are teaching. He is not sure where there is a direct connection with social emotional learning and co-teaching. Assistant Superintendent Bliss added that co-teaching works on the premise of focusing on understanding every student and their individual needs, creating deeper relationships. Mr. Slenker noted that Molly Wasserman has brought a new level of understanding and seeing the data for individual students is a powerful tool for teachers. This

along with work from Loren Pepe, Nick Devita and professional development from Dr. Randy Sprick has re-energized the Educational Support Team. WIN Block is being utilized to address NECAP/SBAC scores as we work toward being a 1:1 school (Chromebooks.) Most students stay in classrooms, log on and we are getting real time data on how students are doing.

Commissioner Shimp asked: What is the estimated roll out for parent portal? What is the computer program called where teachers see data? Can teachers share an individual student's data with his/her parent?

Mr. Slenker replied that the computer program is a site labeled as RIS Academic Site. Teachers can log on and see data. Assistant Superintendent Bliss noted that it is a good resource for teachers to use with parent conferences, but is not in a format to create an individual report. It's longitudinal, in the second year and we will see a payoff. WIN Block will continue all year with other opportunities for students who test out.

Commissioner Notte asked if this was how stagnant NECAP scores were being addressed.

WIN Block is being utilized to address this issue.

Commissioner Fagan noted that there are no parents on the planning team and asked if this is being considered for the future?

Mr. Slenker advised that this has been done in the past and is being considered.

Chair Courcelle noted appreciation for all of the plans and how robust the data systems are that are being developed in this district. We are using data to change *I think* to *I know*. He thanked all for their presentations.

Central Office Report –

CENTRAL
OFFICE REPORT

Student Representative Wang noted that PSAT Testing will take place tomorrow at RHS. All sports teams are doing well. The Boys' Soccer Team is currently #1. Football is still undefeated. Attendance at events has been great. Spirit Week was amazing – the pep rally, class competitions and homecoming. The First Annual Powder Puff game was held to raise breast cancer awareness. He and Student Representative Gulick will be visiting other schools and will be reporting on what is happening in other buildings.

Superintendent Moran noted that upcoming Board meetings and tentative topics are listed on the back side of the agenda, as well as Performance Excellence Workgroup Meeting dates. She noted upcoming parent/teacher conferences this Thursday and Friday and recognized Northeast Teachers for accommodating parents with preconference times if they are unable to come during the regular scheduled time. Northeast will hold a Book Fair in the library during parent conferences and will celebrate Red Ribbon Week next week. RIS Students participated in a wonderful Fall Field Day on Wednesday, September 30, 2015 and will also be celebrating Red Ribbon Week activities during the week of October 26, 2015. The College Board has made changes to SATs and have eliminated Saturday PSATS. More students are feeling like they would like to take the PSATs one more time. About 85 juniors will be taking the PSATs. Kudos to Jen Wigmore and the RHS Guidance Staff for coordinating this and to Stafford Technical Center for collaborating with sending schools. Superintendent Moran recognized Mark Raishart and the Stafford Technical Center Forestry, Natural Resources, and Horticulture class for being selected to receive the Governor's Service Award in the K-12 Youth Volunteer Group category.

Act 46 Overview – Superintendent Moran reviewed Act 153 (2010), Act 156 (2012) and Act 46 (2015) and its implications. A set of slides and other materials were provided for the Board for further study. RCPS is the preferred K-12 model school district. There are 12 K-12 districts in the State and 2 K-12 interstate districts. Rutland City is disadvantaged by Act 46. We have been frugal and cut 27 positions. Class sizes are 15 – 23 and will increase next year. Ellie has led a comprehensive analysis which has improved services with costs savings.

Commissioner Fagan pointed out that there are 277 school districts in Vermont and only 251 towns.

Commissioner Cavacas said that he feels we should take a hard look approach and explore cooperation with other districts or not adhere to the caps. He advised that in the past we have listened/adhered to caps while other districts did not and there were no ramifications. There is no equalization, no rhyme or reason. We cut last time. Other large districts did not and nothing happened to them.

Superintendent Moran noted that we had met with Rutland South and Rutland Central for about 6-7 months about 10 years ago regarding cooperation – not consolidating, but trying to work together to reduce increase in costs and provide more opportunities. This has been tried twice, but interest faded.

Chair Courcelle said that we should be open to exploring with neighbor school districts to show the community and tax payers we are serious about quality and resources.

Commissioner Thomas asked, how as a board, do we do this? We go on record tonight. She said she would like to be proactive and suggested forming a subcommittee.

Superintendent Moran advised there have been meetings with Rutland South and Rutland Central board chairs and superintendents to ask: What are you up to? The committee cannot be a subcommittee of the board, but must be recruited by the board. It is important to become more familiar with the framework of Act 46 for moving forward.

Commissioner Fagan asked if a letter, expressing interested, by the Board Chair and Superintendent could be drafted to the two districts. Superintendent Moran asked that we wait for the results of the prior meeting to be respectful of the time frame.

Commissioner Cavacas noted that there are potentially a couple of other districts in need of something and we should explore all options, regardless of geographic issues. This is not a process to close schools, but a process to work more effectively to keep schools open. This is the message that needs to get out there.

Facilities and Finance –

Budget Planning Overview – Peter Amons reviewed the FY 17 budget process. There are about 25 – 30 sub budgets included in the total budget that you will see on November 24, 2015. These sub budgets are due tomorrow. The preliminary budget will be the figure that the Board approves in January. The preliminary budget is submitted to the State and the tax rate will be based on this budget. Often times the final numbers are not known at voting time. With the new soft caps, you can spend over, but if you do it will stream into the taxation formula at twice the normal rate. Unless the Board directs differently, we will present a budget that meets the cap.

Commissioner Fagan asked about past and projected enrollments and asked if students were added, would the equalized pupil count change. These are two completely different numbers derived in different ways with complicated formulas. These numbers will never reconcile with one another.

Commissioner Cavacas noted that the two year average potentially could go up as enrollment shifts, but this is another flaw in legislation.

Commissioner Thomas asked: How are tuition charges decided? We follow State statute. It's an average cost formula.

Chair Courcelle noted that a penalty on towns that exceed the allowable cap has always been a built in factor, but the targets were never brought down low enough to capture many districts. Now almost everyone is capped.

Commissioner Thomas asked: What is the anticipated increase in healthcare costs? A 7.9% increase has been announced, but only 5% was budgeted last year and the increase was only 4.5%, so we don't have to take it all at once. We also have many employees participate in the healthcare insurance buyout, which has been fixed. It will amount to a couple hundred thousand.

Commissioner Kurchena asked: Do you see increases in revenue? Mr. Amons stated he would guess revenues would be flat.

Commissioner Cavacas said that being 19 up with school choice amounts to a cost of \$266,000 on top of everything else because the money doesn't follow students.

Commissioner Fagan stated that we do have the ability to cap the number of students coming in so we don't lose that kind of money.

Superintendent Moran noted that we have a commitment to the students who are already here.

Commissioner Pencak asked: Do we lose the money, or just not receive it? Superintendent Moran stated we don't receive funds for children from other districts.

Enrollment Analysis – Superintendent Moran reviewed the enrollment report included in the Board packet. We have a stable student population.

ENROLLMENT
ANALYSIS

Commissioner Wideawake would like to see more detailed breakdown in regards Rutland Town, Barstow and School Choice Students (page 5 of the enrollment report.)

Motion by Fagan/Thomas to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed sections of the Personnel Memorandum No. 524 dated, October 9, 2015 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

MOTION:
PERSONNEL
MEMO NO. 524
DATED 10/9/15

Superintendent Moran reviewed Personnel Memorandum No. 524.

Commissioner Olewnik asked how many paraeducator positions we are currently looking to fill. We are working on filling two paraeducator positions. Finding paraeducators and Special Educators is a county wide challenge. These positions are in demand.

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Motion by Thomas/Fagan to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed sections of the Personnel Memorandum Addendum No. 524 dated, October 9, 2015 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

MOTION:
PERSONNEL
ADDENDUM
MEMO NO. 524
DATED 10/9/15

Superintendent Moran reviewed Personnel Memorandum Addendum No. 524.

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Committee Reports –

COMMITTEE
REPORTS

Staff Relations – Commissioner Kurchena advised that the Staff Relations Committee is looking forward to getting started with the process of contract negotiations with the REA, AFSCME and RAA.

STAFF
RELATIONS

Building Committee – Commissioner Shimp advised that the building committee met the other day. The RHS Library is 98% complete and a rededication will be scheduled. Past and present Board members and community are to be invited. The HVAC project at RIS is complete. Commissioner Shimp thanked everyone involved in this project. The paving project at RIS is underway and we are looking to add more parking spaces. The Longfellow restoration project is in progress. Heating systems are up and running and being tested.

BUILDING
COMMITTEE

Superintendent Moran noted that our Maintenance Department will be lining the Longfellow parking lot soon and we expect to add 3 – 4 spaces. We will have a painted handicapped parking space instead of just having a sign. There was also a new bell added at the top of the ramp back door to assist visitors with physical challenges. It say “Ring for Assistance” in both print and Braille. This was suggested by a group representing individuals with disabilities and was very well received.

New Business – Chair Courcelle advised that we need to select dates to hold Board meetings in the new Library and other locations in the schools between now and the next meeting. He sees this is an important aspect of service. He encouraged Board members to get out and visit schools.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Notte suggested having a Board member as a liaison for each of the buildings and build this into the regular work as Board members.

OLD BUSINESS

Old Business – Get evaluations back to Chair Courcelle.

Motion by Cavacas/Thomas to adjourn at 8:19 pm. Passed.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted
Betty Kapitan, Recording Secretary

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Mary E. Moran, Superintendent
DATE: October 9, 2015
RE: Personnel Memorandum – Licensed and Non-Licensed

RESOLVE: That the LICENSED and NON-LICENSED SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 524 dated **October 9, 2015**, be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A. LICENSED SECTION

1. Family Medical Leave

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Abby Brodowski	English Teacher/RHS	1/4/16-4/25/16

2. Resignation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Cynthia Wubbenhorst	Special Educator/RMS	9/30/15

3. Middle School Team Leader 2015-16

<u>Name</u>	<u>Team</u>
Kelly Anderson	8 th Grade STEM Team Leader
Lisa Boerner	8 th Grade Humanities Team Leader

B. NON-LICENSED SECTION

1. Resignation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Linda Taft	Paraeducator/NE	9/18/15
Miranda Wells	Paraeducator/ASC	10/20/15

ADDENDUM

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Mary E. Moran, Superintendent
DATE: October 13, 2015
RE: Personnel Memorandum – Licensed and Non-Licensed

RESOLVE: That the LICENSED and NON-LICENSED SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 524 – ADDENDUM dated **October 13, 2015**, be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A. LICENSED SECTION- None

B. NON-LICENSED SECTION

1. Appointments

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Pro-Rated Salary</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Carrie Kennedy	Paraeducator/NE	\$12,902.83	10/13/15
Benjamin Trudo	Technician/District	\$35,269.40	10/26/15