

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS**

**March 9, 2021**

**School Board Members Present:**

Alison Notte, President  
Joanne Pencak, Clerk  
Brittany Cavacas  
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.  
Ann Dages  
Dena Goldberg  
Kevin Kiefaber  
Matthew Olewnik  
Charlene Seward (6:35 pm)  
Cathy Solsaa  
Hannah Solimano, Student Representative  
Isabella LaFemina, Student Representative

**Members Absent:**

Erin Shimp

**Also Present:**

Superintendent Bill Olsen  
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss  
Director of Finance Ted Plemenos  
Director of Technology Patricia Aigner  
Pati Beaumont  
Meaghan Marsh  
Bianca McKeen  
Steve Sampson  
Greg Schillinger  
Erica Wallstrom  
Jennifer Wigmore

President Notte called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Notte noted all commissioners are in attendance except for Commissioners Seward (8:35 pm) and Shimp. She noted a prior issue with the public accessing panelists links and reviewed the process for the public to access the proper links (on the RCPS website) for viewing Board Meetings.

**CALL TO  
ORDER**

Approval of the Agenda – Motion by Kiefaber/Cavacas (Brittany) to approve regular and consent agendas:

**APPROVAL  
OF THE  
AGENDA &  
CONSENT  
AGENDA**

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes of Previous Meetings
  - 1. Regular Board Meeting – 2/9/2021
  - 2. Budget Information Meeting – 3/1/2021
  - 3. Building Committee Meeting – 2/23/2021
  - 4. Policy Committee Meeting – 2/23/2021
- B. Personnel Memo #619 (Attached)
- C. Bid Memo – HP Elitebook Computers
- D. Policy – Second Reading:
  - 1. Policy #1510 – Public Sessions
  - 2. Policy #1520 – Regular Board Meetings
  - 3. Policy #1530 – Quorum and Attendance
  - 4. Policy #1540 – Order of Business
  - 5. Policy #1550 – Special Board Meetings
  - 6. Policy #1560 – Annual Organizational Meetings
  - 7. Policy #1570 – Board Minutes
  - 8. Policy #1580 – Board Executive Session

Motion was approved unanimously by all those in attendance.

Communication – Public Input – No one from the public registered to address the board.

**COMMUNICA-  
TION**

School/Program Updates – Student Representatives’ Report – RIS spent the last month focused on celebrating reading and a reading challenge. PBIS themes are flexibility and optimism. Parent conferences scheduling has begun. Northeast and Northwest Primary Schools held winter carnivals as part of PBIS and included: snow sculptures, groom ball and sledding. Read Across America was celebrated with mystery readers. Parent Conferences will take place next week.

Rutland Middle School participated in many fun activities including: a school-wide Ka hoot, sledding and a pie eating contest. Spring student led conferences will take place remotely and all student will be dismissed at 11:00 am on Thursday and there will be no school on Friday. At RHS, Mr. Eisenman was named Co-President of the Vermont Alliance for Social Studies. Zachary Nelson and Abed Alawi have been selected to join the council. The winter sports season is wrapping up.

RMS and RHS Update – Assistant Superintendent, Rob Bliss advised that the Vermont Agency of Education has put much of the Continuous Improvement Planning process on hold due to the impact of the pandemic. The VT AOE asked for updated information and implementation efforts where possible. He introduced the RMS Administration.

Principal Pati Beaumont presented Rutland Middle School practices of supporting the social emotional needs of students and adults at RMS, implementing structures that build community and foster relationships (Birch, Hickory and Maples houses, BRIDGES program, Remote Learning Academy) and partnering with the Tarrant Institute. She shared quotes from staff related to the RMS house structure and the following goals:

Goal 1 – K-12 Articulated Curriculum: Meaningful instruction (authentic evidence and transferable skill proficiencies) with units this year: identity, innovation and change and artistic expression. Beginning next year: sustainable development goals, other project-based learning units and professional development focus. A student presentation about connecting the book **Tangerine** to our Identity was shared.

The MTSS Data Analysis process was reviewed.

Assistant Principal Meaghan Marsh reviewed Goal 2 – Establish Relationships and Community Structures: small cohorts of students, development of an inclusive and supportive environment for each student and social emotional curriculum. Includes after school youth council, RHS peer mentors with transition plans, student senate and RIS transitions plans for grade 7 students.

Director of Student Engagement Erica Wallstrom reviewed Goal 3 – Trauma Informed Systems: Identity Unit for all students, Personal Interest Projects (student voice and choice) and personalized system of discipline. Some individual PIP Projects were highlighted.

A report of the BRIDGES in the community program was presented including: Meals on Wheels, internships and other opportunities. Four hundred eighty-four hours of community service have been logged.

February Fun Day was highlighted.

Commissioner Cavacas (Brittany) thanked the Middle School Team for their time and effort and expressed her appreciation for the connection between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders.

Assistant Superintendent Bliss introduced the RHS team – Principal Greg Schillinger noted that an update on continuous improvement goals would presented in the context of the last year. He advised that last time this year a strong NEASC accreditation visit took place, allowing opportunities to improve RHS. Principal Schillinger noted that switching to remote learning

forced the RHS team to slow down and find a way to continue the work and make improvements while relying on many of the robust structures that were in place. He reviewed the process for determining a fully in person model for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and the correlation between grade level and success. He also reviewed the hybrid model for grades 10-12 (every other day, red/white day schedule) and prioritizing learning and relationship building.

Action Planning Goals were reviewed, including: Instruction and Assessment (reviewed by Steve Sampson), Trauma Informed Practices (reviewed by Jennifer Wigmore – Stacey Shortle was recognized for her work in this area at RHS,) and Personalization: Global Studies and STEM - students can still receive those endorsements (reviewed by Bianca McKeen.)

Principal Schillinger acknowledged the work of many staff members including the Assistant Principals who presented tonight for their work in the midst of the pandemic crisis. He noted the seeking out of other standards (NEASC, Marzano Certifications) and looking ahead for teaching and learning, social-emotional learning and personalized learning.

Central Office Reports – Superintendent’s Report – Superintendent Olsen updated the board on the status of COVID-related topics connected to our school community. He noted, while the state reports a steady decline in case counts, we want everyone to be very aware that the virus has not gone away. In fact, we had a bit of a lull in our case counts for a time, but then just this week we had reported to us news of two unrelated cases within our school community. As a community, he asked families to please remain vigilant and to maintain the expectations of the Vermont Department of Health. We know for certain that the virus will be a challenge for all of us through the end of this school year.

On a very positive note, the Vermont Department of Health coordinated with the Agency of Education and the staff at RRMC to facilitate the vaccination of school staff over the next month. Many of our staff took advantage of this over the last few days. He thanked the Department of Health, the AOE, and the staff at the hospital for conducting these clinics.

The Agency of Education has been incrementally rolling out guidance for districts to help us as we plan for recovery for any loss suffered by our students through the pandemic. We know that we will be eligible for federal funds over at least the next two years to help us support students regain any learning loss. Currently, we are required to put together what is called a Recovery Team to map out how we will go about doing this. Just like we had a team last summer that addressed our plan for reopening schools, we will have a team that will address recovery. The three areas of focus for recovery are:

- Mental health and well-being.
- Student engagement and truancy.
- Academic achievement and success.

A team will be assembled by the end of next week, followed by the needs assessment in the following month. The goal is to have a district recovery plan in place, based on our needs, by mid-May.

Superintendent Olsen reminded the board that we are entering our hiring season. Related to that, we have begun the process of replacing the position vacated by RIS Assistant Principal Cathy Farman. Kerry Course is leading the process for that position that has a special education focus. Pam Reed will also be involved in that process.

Superintendent Olsen reminded parents that this Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, is the last of our professional development days that are occurring during the school year. Pam Reed and Patricia Aigner have put together learning opportunities for our staff. This is a special opportunity for our paraeducators to access a variety of professional development based on the needs of their positions.

In regard to Legislation: Alison Notte, and Cathy Solsaa, and Ted Plemenos (and Ann Dages?) have been involved with the efforts of the Weighting Coalition.

There is consideration being given by the Agency of Education to require a statewide Student Information System in some form. Parents would know our Student Information System by the product name of Infinite Campus. SIS contains information on students, grades, behaviors, etc. The concept would be that a common system in some format would create efficiencies. So that may affect the district if implemented, as we would certainly have to align our systems to state requirements, if the decision by the state is to go forward with this.

Superintendent Olsen reminded the Board that the high school will again be hosting the Vermont Global Issues Network Conference through an online format on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Superintendent Olsen provided the Board and the community the understanding that there is not yet any guidance coming from the AOE on graduation and what we can expect in regard to virus protocols for ceremonies. Consequently, the high school administrative team is considering multiple options, as they have to plan ahead for this. When we are clear on what the guidance allows us, we will match our plan for the ceremony accordingly. We will always aim for recognizing the achievements of our 12<sup>th</sup> grade and their families, while ensuring that we do so in a safe manner.

Mr. Olsen extended thanks of the Rutland City Public Schools to Commissioners Joanne Pencak and Matt Olewnik. He noted that even though he has been coming to board meetings for years, he never realized how much board members do until he was able to work so closely this year with Board Members like Matt and Joanne. Students, our families, and our staff have benefitted so much from their service.

President Notte recognized Commissioner Pencak and Olewnik for their service, including their work on the Finance and Planning Committee (Commissioner Pencak) and the Policy Committee (Commissioner Olewnik.)

Committee Reports – Staff Relations Committee Report – Commissioner Goldberg noted that she will present during executive session.

**COMMITTEE  
REPORTS –  
STAFF  
RELATIONS**

Building Committee Report – Chair Shimp not in attendance. President Notte noted that she had attended the last meeting which included the Facilities Assessment Report hand off from Michael Derevjanik to Glenn Scott. The minutes of the meeting were included in the Board Packet.

**BUILDING  
COMMITTEE**

Policy Committee Report – Commissioner Olewnik advised that the Committee is continuing with the cyclical review process and noted that the Committee asked to address the following:

**POICY  
COMMITTEE**

- Policy #2130 – the Committee wanted to make sure new Board Members receive a good orientation and materials.
- Policy #2230 – the Committee wants to get back to the self-evaluation process that got lost during the pandemic and remote meeting. The hope is that the Board will get back to goal setting and retreats.
- Policy #3110 – the Committee desires to continue, in some way, when meetings return to in person in the Board Room, to leverage the new technology (ZOOM and social media) to give the community more access to meetings. Commissioner Solsaa noted that it may allow people with young kids to attend, allow more participation and encourage transparency.

Motion by Solsaa/Cavacas (Brittany) to accept policies for first reading:

**MOTION:  
FIRST  
READING**

Commissioner Dages noted a correction to be made – Policy #2130 Robert Rules of Order instead of “and.”

1. Policy #2110 – Execution of Policy – Administrative Regulations
2. Policy #2120 – Policy Review and Evaluation
3. Policy #2130 – Orienting New Board Members
4. Policy #2210 – Policy Review and Evaluation
5. Policy #2220 – Attendance by Board Members at Conferences, Conventions and Workshops
6. Policy #2230 – Board Self-Evaluation
7. Policy #3110 – School-Community Relations
8. Policy #3120 – School Sponsored Media
9. Policy #3130 – Relations with the Municipal Government
10. Policy #3140 – Flag Display

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Commissioner Olewnik advised that he will get notes to President Notte in regards to where the Committee is leaving off on the review cycle.

Old and New Business – Weighting Study Coalition – President Notte noted that she sent an email earlier today containing some information on the Weighting Coalition. The email included the impact on RCPS, the information presented by Director of Finance Ted Plemenos and a summary document. The Bill is currently in the Senate Education Committee with hopes of action to be taken. She advised that changes are taking place by the hour and communication are being sent out. It is crunch time as this needs to get out of the Senate before cross over. For anyone who is interested and is willing to distribute information/get the message out, Commissioner Solsaa has images and texts for social media, as well as a list of senators and their email addresses.

**OLD & NEW  
BUSINESS**

Commissioner Olewnik thanked the community for supporting the budget.

Commissioner Dages thanked Commissioner Pencak for guidance and leadership and the installation of the Finance and Planning Committee, straight talk and tutoring and Commissioner Olewnik for his calming and thoughtful presence, doing the work. She noted that she will miss his truths and insight.

Motion by Pencak/Kiefaber at 8:08 pm that the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners enter into an executive session with Superintendent Olsen, Assistant Superintendent Bliss and Director of Finance Ted Plemenos for the purposes of discussing personnel/contractual matters the general public knowledge of it which would clearly place the Board at a substantial disadvantage.

**MOTION:  
EXECUTIVE  
SESSION**

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Director of Finance Ted Plemenos left executive session at 8:27 pm.

The Board came out of executive session at 8:39 pm.

**OUT OF  
EXECUTIVE  
SESSION**

Motion by Cavacas (Hurley)/Cavacas (Brittany) to approve the contract renewals of Director of Finance Ted Plemenos and Director of Equity and Inclusion Pam Reed as presented.

**MOTION:  
CONTRACT  
RENEWAL –  
PLEMENOS &  
REED**

Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

Motion by Cavacas (Brittany)/Kiefaber at 8:40 pm that the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners enter into an executive session for the purposes of discussing Superintendent review matters the general public knowledge of it which would clearly place the Board at a substantial disadvantage.

**MOTION:  
EXECUTIVE  
SESSION**

The Board came out of executive session at 9:09 pm.

**OUT OF  
EXECUTIVE  
SESSION**

Motion by Kiefaber/Cavacas (Hurley) to adjourn at 9:09 pm. Passed.

**ADJOURN**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Betty A. Kapitan, Recording Secretary

TO: Board of Education  
 FROM: William K. Olsen, Superintendent  
 DATE: March 4, 2021  
 RE: Personnel Memorandum – Licensed and Non-Licensed

RESOLVE: That the LICENSED and NON-LICENSED SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMO NO. 619 dated **March 4, 2021**, be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

**A. LICENSED SECTION**

1. Appointment

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Jaqueline Hemple	Human Services Instructor/STC	\$50,292.00	8/27/21

2. Retirement

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Patricia Alonso Schaft	World Language Instructor/RHS	6/30/21

3. Resignation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Cathy Farman	Assistant Principal/RIS	6/30/21

**B. NON-LICENSED SECTION**

1. Appointments

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Pro-rated Salary</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Brooke Lipman	Paraeducator/RMS	\$8,824.97	3/1/21
Sarah Wilson	Paraeducator/RHS	\$8,662.71	3/3/21

2. Transfer

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Location</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Lori Pinkowski	Position From: Secretary I at RHS Position To: Secretary III at STC	7/1/21



To: Ted Plemenos, Finance Director  
From: Patricia Aigner, Director of Technology  
Subject: HP Elitebook 850 G6  
Date: 03/03/2021

Rutland City Public Schools put out a request for quotes for **85 each HP Elitebook 850 G7**

**Equipment Details HP Elitebook 850 G7**

- i5 processor
- 16GB RAM
- 512GB SSD
- Warranty 3-Year Parts & Labor Elite Warranty

The following bids returned:

Vendor	Model	Price	Total	Quote #
Top Floor	EliteBook 840 G7 (wrong model)	\$908.00	\$77,180.00	TTF-25619-HPVT
Ormsby	EliteBook 850 G7	\$923.00	\$78,455.00	1823130
Best Buy	EliteBook 850 G8(wrong model)	\$1,667.91	\$142,772.50	238426473
Connection	EliteBook 850 G7	\$995.00	\$84,650.00	25158785.02

We recommend purchasing from Ormsby because they are the lowest bid for the model requested.



To: Ted Plemenos, Finance Director  
From: Patricia Aigner, Director of Technology  
Subject: Ruckus Wireless Access Point  
Date: 12/24/2021

Rutland City Public Schools put out a competitive bid for Ruckus Wireless Points through the national E-Rate Program. Ormsby Computer Systems was the low bid.

We have funds in our network equipment line for the purchase. E-Rate will reimburse the district 80% of the equipment cost.

65 Ruckus R730 dual-band points with management license and support total cost \$53010.75