

Approved by the Rye School Board at its September 16, 2009 meeting.

**RYE SCHOOL DISTRICT
RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

The monthly meeting of the School Board of the Rye School District was held at Rye Elementary School on August 26, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

School Board Members: Ian Grant, Peggy Balboni, Jeanne Moynahan
Betty Anderson (*arrived at 6:00*)

ABSENT:

Michael Schwartz

Administrators:

Dr. George A. Cushing, Superintendent
Chris Pollet, Principal, Rye Junior High
Patricia-Lane Richardson, Principal, Rye Elementary

Staff:

Kathleen Cole, Teacher
Phoebe Guarnaccia, Teacher

Resident:

Joe Cummins

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Grant called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

On a motion by Mrs. Moynahan and seconded by Mrs. Balboni, the public minutes of July 16, 2009 were accepted as corrected by Mr. Pollet. Vote: Unanimously approved.

The non-public minutes of July 16, 2009 were circulated for review and approval.

Communication

- Dr. Cushing distributed a letter of invitation to opening day.
- Mrs. Moynahan read a letter from Seacoast Hospice regarding RSB's recent donation made in memory of Dr. Cushing's brother, Randy.
- Mrs. Moynahan read a letter from Ann Cushing expressing thanks for donation in her husband's memory.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

H1N1

- Dr. Cushing distributed a 'Parent letter from the Superintendent' addressing the H1N1 flu virus. The letter is posted on the SAU 50 website and the principals are sending a similar letter home to every household.
- Also posted on the SAU 50 website are protocols being following within our schools. The protocol came from a recent conference call with Dr. Jose Montero, Director of NH Department of Health and Human Services. The information Dr. Montero presented was very useful; he

made it clear that the caveat is that what is said today may change based on new information as it is received. There will likely be future conference calls regarding H1N1.

- As part of conference call the school nurses will record flu like symptoms and reports to state.
- Initial report was that H1N1 could affect up to 30% of the population; that has since been raised to 50%.
- Pandemic refers to simultaneous breakout; not severity of illness.
- Protocols for cleaning – Principals have information and have shared information with the custodians. Dr. Montero made it clear that after six hours the germs are dead.
- Julie Day, Public Health Coordinator of the Portsmouth Health Department, will meet with SAU 50 nurses and help coordinate information related to H1N1.
- Dr. Cushing has been invited to be part of Greater Portsmouth Emergency Management Team as a SAU 50 representative.
- Dr. Cushing received a call from Dr. Snow this afternoon regarding spraying for mosquitoes. It is her recommendation that we spray for mosquitoes this Friday after dusk. Notice will be posted about spraying.

Mrs. Moynahan made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to follow Dr. Snow's recommendation to spray for mosquitoes on Friday August 28th. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Administrators Retreat – Dr. Cushing said the administrator's had their annual retreat in August. It was a long, but focused meeting and they worked hard on details of the Learning Compact. He will speak further to this as part of his opening day remarks to staff on August 31st.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Rye Elementary School – Lane Richardson

Ms. Richardson spoke of three new hires at RES for the 2009-2010 school year:

- Sarah Maloney – Guidance
- Laura Bond – Para professional
- Sherri Whitworth – 20% Speech pathologist

Ms. Richardson also commented on the hard work of the custodians this summer noting that the building looks great.

There is an RES staff meeting set for tomorrow at 8:00 a.m., followed by a 12:30 p.m. 504 meeting with Mrs. Lyons and Attorney Kincaid.

Other RES news:

- Cabinets have been ordered and are due in soon
- New student orientation – almost all came and the students who came were excited
- Ms. Richardson met with Jeanette Lindsey of PTA and discussed an option of meeting on non-board meeting week
- Eric Ross running after school sports again this year and co-teaching with Maureen Paul
- Ms. Walsh and Ms. Lyons have been working closely with Ms. Richardson on District in Need of Improvement plan
- Ms. Richardson said all-in-all it was a fairly quiet summer at RES

Rye Junior High School – Chris Pollet

Mr. Pollet reports anticipated enrollment of 204 students

He stated he sent a welcoming letter to his staff and mentioned that for the first time in his many years of administration he did not have to hire any new staff. Within in days of that mailing he found himself in need of replacing a special education aide.

Mr. Pollet, along with Ms. Hughes, Ms. Louney, and Ms. Gilbert has had the opportunity to interview some great candidates for a child-specific special education aide. His hope is to offer the position to one of two final candidates within the next day or two.

RJH Goals

- Focus on student learning and collecting data for higher level conversations
- Non-instructional time – three times a week working on NECAP preparation and test taking skills with students
- Will continue discussion of Learning Compact at RJH after ‘Opening Day’ in Greenland on 8/31

Other RJH news:

- Mr. Pollet complimented Whitcher Construction Company for being so accommodating during the renovation; he said they have been great about minimizing disruption while employees have been in the school and they have really gone above and beyond to work around the staff in the building.
- Mr. Pollet reported 16 of the invited 25 students attended the August 17-21 Math Camp at RJH. He said all three RJH math teachers participated in the camp with the students. Culminating activity for the students was creation of an infomercial on big bags of popcorn.
- Dr. Cushing was able to observe the students at the last day of math camp and commented on the number of parents that sat in and watched presentations.

Ms. Anderson arrived – 6:00 p.m.

Mrs. Balboni asked if every parent will fill out the Follow the Child forms for each of their children.

Mr. Pollet said parents will complete student data sheets for their children.

Mr. Grant asked if every teacher received a completed follow the child form for each student from the previous year teacher or if teachers only completed forms for two students last year.

Dr. Cushing stated that last year completion of these forms was voluntary. He noted the participation of teachers at RES and RJH last year was very high. This year all teachers are to complete the forms for several of their students and that information will be transferred to the next grade teacher at the end of the year.

Mrs. Moynahan wanted to echo Mr. Pollet’s comments on Whitcher Construction. Mrs. Moynahan helped Amy Raymond with summer camp and said the employees of Whitcher were fully accommodating and checked to make sure they were not disrupting Ms. Raymond’s camp.

FINANCIAL

Manifest:

Ms. Anderson proposed, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, a motion to approve the manifest of July 10, 2009 through July 15, 2009 in the amount of \$497,855.25. There were no questions from any Board members. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson proposed, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, a motion to approve the manifest of July 16, 2009 through July 31, 2009 in the amount of \$112,825.52. There were no questions from any Board members. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson proposed, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, a motion to approve the manifest of August 1, 2009 through August 13, 2009 in the amount of \$113,796.49. There were no questions from any Board members. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson proposed, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, a motion to approve the manifest of August 14, 2009 through August 24, 2009 in the amount of \$51,238.16. There were no questions from any Board members. Vote: Unanimously approved. Mr. Grant noted that check #41803 for air quality testing is for \$2,899.40. Last year the District paid \$4,500.00 but secured a lower price after going out to bid for new price.

Request for reimbursement

Mr. Pollet submitted a request for reimbursement for two employees who helped pack up and empty RJH the library for preparation of renovation.

Mr. Pollet explained that much of the packing up of the library had begun prior to the end of school. With just three days notice after school closed, the library had to be completely emptied for work to begin. There was not as much parent support as hoped and Mrs. Coombs and Mr. Fortier took care of everything.

Mr. Pollet has research and development money that hasn't been spent which he would be willing to move to a fund to allow for the reimbursement to Mrs. Coombs and Mr. Fortier.

Mrs. Balboni proposed, seconded by Mr. Grant, a motion to approve reimbursement for work for Mrs. Coombs in the amount of \$420.00 and for Mr. Fortier in the amount of \$210.00.

Discussion followed: Mrs. Anderson asked why the custodians were not asked to do this work. Mr. Pollet said that although Mr. Gordon helped some; custodial staff was not part of it for overtime concerns.

Mr. Grant asked Mr. Pollet how he arrived at \$30.00 hourly rate for the reimbursement.

Mr. Pollet said that is standard summer hourly rate.

Mrs. Anderson expressed concern about paying people outside of RESPA to do RESPA work. Dr. Cushing said this might require a non-precedent setting letter as a matter of record. Mrs. Moynahan expressed concern in that there are many staff members who go above and beyond but do not get extra compensation for those efforts so it would be unfair to compensate these efforts.

Mr. Grant suggested the Board table the issue for further discussion at next month's meeting. Dr. Cushing will follow up with Ms. Sparks for RESPA.

Mr. Grant withdrew his second.

Mrs. Balboni withdrew her motion pending Dr. Cushing's discussion with RESPA.

5th Grade Basketball Program

Mr. Fortier receives a \$4,550 (\$5,000 prior to this year's 10% reduction on all stipends) fee for serving as Athletic Director (AD). He stated that he received an additional stipend for coordinating the 5th grade basketball program in 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. Mr. Fortier did not receive the additional stipend in 2008-2009 but he thought that was because he did not submit an invoice in time. Mr. Fortier said he has been told the stipend for coordinating the 5th grade basketball program was removed from the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 budgets. He submitted a request for consideration to the Board with detail of AD responsibilities that included assessing coaches.

Mrs. Balboni recalled that the AD stipend was raised three years ago for 2007-2008 but her understanding was that coordinating the 5th grade basketball program was part of that. She supports compensation if the AD does all on proposed list. Ms. Anderson echoed that she believes the overall stipend was raised three years ago to include 5th grade basketball.

Mr. Grant asked if the AD provides formal written assessment of coaches as indicated on his presented list of responsibilities. Nobody was aware of formal written assessments of coaches.

Mrs. Balboni suggested that the schools would be best served by one athletic director for both. The Athletic Director's responsibilities should include communication with 5th grade parents in regards to how this basketball program differs from the one offered by Rye Recreation and how it helps students prepare for the 6th grade school-run basketball program.

Mr. Grant stated that give stipends were cut 10% overall and he is a little uncomfortable approving this request.

Mrs. Balboni offered to research notes and minutes on history of the AD stipend and that for coordinating the 5th grade basketball program.

Mr. Grant suggested the request be tabled until the September Board meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Goals - Mr. Grant suggested the Board review the drafted goals and fill in who/how/when as needed so the goals can be approved.

Curriculum, Instruction, Curriculum Assessment

2. District in Need of Improvement Plan

- When – Draft due October 2009; ongoing 2 years

3. Increase Very Satisfied Levels in following areas at RJH and RES:

Foreign Language

Academic studies challenge levels

- This goal needed further discussion at the September meeting

6. Investigate adventure-based learning

- When – October 2009 special meeting

Communication

2. Improve the RJH report cards to be “standard-based” to better understand what students have learned and reflect what a child has learned/mastered

- When – report 12/09 after 1st trimester; partially implement 3rd trimester April 2010

3. Expand role of parents at RJH through the PTA

- How – monthly meetings with PTA executive boards
- When – ongoing

Budget

3. Increased communications on budget process status to parents/teachers/staff
 - Who – Board communications committee; budget committee
 - How – traditional communication
4. Flexible budget mechanism for mid-year budget modifications required by teachers
 - Who – Board, Jim Katkin
 - When – budget process period

Assessment and Accountability

2. Update and create written job descriptions for K-8 and stipend positions
This has been and ongoing goal. Report on process at September Board meeting to prevent further process.
3. Revise K-12 data metrics for tracking trends
 - When – March 2010
5. School Board Self-Assessment
 - How – Mrs. Balboni will draft a report; tie into timing of parent surveys

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan to approve the 2009-2010 Rye School District Goals and Action Plan as presented with the exception of Goal #3 under *Curriculum, Instruction, Curriculum Assessment* Vote: Unanimously approved.

B. Calendar of policy action – done

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:

Dr. Cushing spoke with Mr. Cummins earlier in the afternoon. Mr. Cummins has done some research comparing Math Trailblazers to Singapore math. He will follow up with Ms. Walsh regarding Rye’s math curriculum.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Policies

*ILBA** – Assessment Program*

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to adopt policy ILBA. Vote: Unanimously approved.

BEB – Special School Board Meetings and Emergency School Board Meeting

Ms. Anderson had an issue regarding in-person meeting vs. polling. She didn’t think the policy codified that. Mr. Grant suggested an audio file could serve as record in rare occasion of an emergency meeting. Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to adopt policy BEB. Vote: Unanimously approved.

IL – Evaluation of Curricular Programs

It was agreed to add “and Instruction and Curriculum Coordinator” in the first sentence after ‘Superintendent’. Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to accept second reading of policy IL as modified. Vote: Unanimously approved.

IJOC – Volunteers

Mrs. Balboni stated there is an upcoming field trip Thursday for 4th graders. She suggested having forms at open house. Mr. Grant suggested include cover letter with policy IJOC explaining that this is new this year and required by the state. Discussion followed and it was agreed to discuss further at the September meeting.

It was suggested that the volunteer application form (Appendix B) include a statement that the form/questions are required by the state of NH and indicate RSA as applicable.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to accept second reading of policy IJOC as modified. Vote: Unanimously approved.

*IHAM** – Health Education and Exemption from Instruction Based on Religious Objections*

Mr. Grant asked the principals what their experience has been when a parent wants their child to opt out of part of other curriculum. Mr. Pollet said exemption requests are dealt with on an individual basis with flexibility and strong communication.

Ms. Anderson suggested the title of the policy be changed to ‘Exemption from Health Education Based on Religious Objections’ for clarity.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to adopt policy IHAM as modified. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Physical Plant

- Septic pump RJH being installed
- Septic floats being installed at RES
- Leech field OK

RJH Library

- Roughly on schedule, one week behind; await wire/HVAC inspections
- Pretty much on budget; contingency fund has been tapped very little
- Baseboard hot water heaters to be installed
- Furniture - need to determine budget/contribution from REF. Mr. Grant suggested not to have to tap into business maintenance trust. Will follow up with Mr. Schwartz to determine amount of funds needed.

Energy Insulation cost \$135,000, coming in \$3,800 less than anticipated.

RJH - 38% improvement on loss

Qualify for building aide on energy component

Energy saving will be recognized over four years.

RES – 42% reduction to energy cost.

Special Issues

Will be part of November agenda after PAC meeting

REF

Will put in request for clarification on furniture contribution.

PHS

Freshmen Orientation will be held August 27th – Dr. Cushing will attend

There will be a dance / BBQ that evening for new students

Dr. Cushing also mentioned that Superintendent Ed McDonough will attend the September 23rd SAU 50 Board meeting.

PTA – none

Rye Recreation

Ms. Richardson gave everyone a copy of a letter of introduction from the new Program Director, Peter Sawtell.

Ms. Richardson said she discussed the proposed afterschool liaison position with Lee Arthur. Mrs. Moynahan asked Ms. Richardson to come up with liaison job description.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to approve the afterschool liaison position for a stipend of \$1,500 to be paid by Rye Recreation Department. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Communication – None

Curriculum

Mrs. Balboni has been participating in discussions with Linda Walsh regarding District in Need of Improvement (DINI) Plan. The plan will be available soon. She has also had discussions regarding adventure based learning with Mrs. Walsh.

Budget Committee

Ms. Anderson attended a recent meeting on behalf of Mrs. Balboni. Ms. Anderson felt she was unable to wholly answer many questions regarding the library. As a result Mr. Goldman will set up a meeting with Mr. Katkin and Mr. Grant for further discussion on the project.

Mr. Grant has since spoken Mr. Goldman as follow up to answer questions and agreed to a meeting in September with the Budget Committee.

Mrs. Balboni asked if Mr. Katkin should attend Budget Committee meetings with her.

Mr. Grant suggested that when there is school-related presentation Mr. Katkin should go with our Board representative.

Ms. Anderson said it is important for us to know if there is school-related business on the budget committee's agenda so Peggy, or any other representative, can prepare appropriately.

Energy - done

NEW BUSINESS:

Law-suit against state by New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA) and Local Government Center (LGC) As follow up to Mr. Grant's request it was determined the requested contribution to the litigation against additional retirement costs is one time cost. With the caveat that if LGC does not receive enough money through initial requests to pursue they may request additional contribution.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to contribute the requested \$793.00 to New Hampshire Municipal Association to be part of litigation against additional retirement costs. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Cost of Lunch Analysis

The Board reviewed a report of cost of school lunch analysis provided by Mr. Katkin. There was Board consensus to keep prices as they are and review again next year.

Mr. Grant suggested keeping track of the volume of food sold through the lunch program to see if this has dropped off, and if so why.

Bus Contract

Mr. Grant noted one typo on page 3, paragraph #9 (Greenland should be Rye). Mr. Grant made and initialed the correction in all three originals of the contract.

On a motion by Ms. Anderson, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, the 2009-2010 Transportation Agreement between Rye School District and First Student, Inc. was approved. Vote: Unanimously approved.

OTHER

Dr. Cushing noted RES's enrollment numbers as presented by Ms. Richardson. He said Grade 1 enrollment is trending up and we will keep eye on it. He will report further at the September meeting. His recommendation is to hire an additional aide.

Ms. Anderson said she posted the community garden project on the Federal Volunteer website to highlight this remarkable program and the service given to it. She thanked Mary Coombs for providing her information to submit that entry.

SECRETARY'S REPORT *continued:*

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to accept the non-public minutes of July 16, 2009. Vote: Unanimously approved.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION:

Mrs. Moynahan proposed, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, a motion to go into non-public session at 7:50 p.m. in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 to discuss negotiations. Unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

PUBLIC SESSION:

The Board returned to public session on a roll call vote at 7:57 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Rye School Board will be Wednesday, September 16, 2009. Mr. Grant will confirm meeting time with all. Ms. Anderson asked that the time of regular Board meetings be put on the September agenda for discussion.

ADJOURN:

Mrs. Moynahan proposed a motion to adjourn at 7:59 p.m.

School Board Secretary