

**RUTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2010**

**School Board Members Present:**

Peter Mello  
Christopher Book  
Hurley Cavacas, Jr.  
Richard Courcelle  
Roberta Dress  
Peter Fagan (6:32 pm)  
Collin Fingon  
Peter Forshay  
Rob Towle

**Also Present:**

Superintendent Mary Moran  
Assistant Superintendent Rob Bliss  
Peter Amons  
Lyle Epton  
Ellie McGarry  
Bill Olsen  
Wil Cunningham  
Glenn Olson  
John Rice  
Kristen Hubert  
Jay Slenker  
Patricia Aigner

**Members Absent**

Wayne Cooke  
Erin Shimp  
Blake Bohlig

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The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Mello noted the absence of Commissioners Cooke, Shimp, Fagan, and Student Representative Bohlig

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

Motion by Book / Forshay to accept the minutes of the Aug. 24, 2010 regular school board meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:  
MINUTES  
08/24/10  
MEETING**

Written Communication - None

**WRITTEN &  
ORAL  
COMMUN-  
ICATIONS**

Oral Communication - None

School Improvement Plans - Mr. Bliss gave an overview of the K-8 School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds. He explained that the district was awarded four SIG grants. Northeast, Northwest, RIS and RMS each received \$50,000 for one year. RHS was awarded \$850,000 which can be used over three years. He said many of the initiatives have been ongoing for a number of years. Mr. Bliss reviewed the approach being taken in grades K-8.

**EDUCATION  
REPORT**

**SCHOOL  
IMPROVE-  
MENT  
PLANS**

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- What are we trying to accomplish? Raising NECAP scores so the schools will no longer be on the "need of improvement" list? Mr. Bliss said the state uses the NECAP scores. We would like to see results improve and will be using other resources such as Aimsweb to better track students. Ms. Moran said in the future, we will be changing to a federally-mandated standard so it will not be the NECAP assessment tool.
- Who do we report to? Mr. Bliss said the team met with the state-appointed SIG liaison. We will be checking in with him a few times a month. He is an advocate for us.
- This is an excellent pro-active approach and we should reap the benefits in the future.
- Does Aimsweb suggest what to do if students are not making progress? Mr. Bliss said Aimsweb will probe specific literacy and math skills. The schools have created intervention approaches. For example, if a student has an issue with XYZ, here are intervention tools to employ.
- What has been our approach to data that we are in need of a full time resource to make it more useful? Mr. Bliss said the primary schools are a year ahead of RIS and RMS in terms of Response to Intervention (RIT) models and use of data. The specific formatting of putting it in a usable model is focused on RIS and RMS. We hope to create a simpler

way and have one holistic set where all the information is in one place. The structure has not been largely looked at and that is what we want to build.

Mr. Olsen, Mr. Olson, and Mr. Rosenberg reviewed the use of the SIG funds at RHS. Mr. Olsen said the school is looking at this as an opportunity. They will look at systems and research to see if there are better ways to help all students. There is a focus on rigor, relevance and relationships. There was an overview of how they approached the plan based upon past work and proposals and what has been identified. This is pro-active rather than re-active approach.

There were questions and discussion from Board members:

- The credit recovery is indicative of making a statement to the students that failure is not an option. It is an excellent idea to try to finding a way for a student to recoup the credit.
- What does Interdisciplinary Teaming implementation look like to a student? Mr. Rosenberg said the pilot has students grouped homogeneously in career prep and honor levels classes. He explained what it would look like. The disciplines working together are Science, Math, and English. American Voices is the other example. That is integrated instruction for grade 11 English and Social Studies.
- How does it look different to a student? Mr. Rosenberg said a major premise is that if you teach the same skill in three arenas, the skill is reinforced in the brain. Also, students have a sense of community. It is a more personalized approach.
- How was the success of the tutorials last year? Mr. Olson said he heard positive comments anecdotally from both students and adults. A number of students self-refer which is a good sign. Teachers have talked about benefits both academically and in building relationships. Mr. Olsen said students were surveyed and there were good reviews. 90% of the students in the tutorials ended up passing their classes.
- How is the teaming approach different for the student logistically? Mr. Rosenberg said American Voices is one period but all year long instead of one semester. He explained the scheduling.
- In addition to the tracking with Aimsweb, is there another way we will have accountability? Mr. Olsen said we have to develop a system to measure all this. Common Assessments will do that. We are looking at a more comprehensive system. Infinite Campus is a big part of that because it will give us grades, SAT scores, NECAP scores. We plan to add certain standards we are asking students to master. It is part of what the Grading Committee will be working on.
- There is almost \$300,000 a year for three years. What is it going to be spent on? Mr. Olsen said professional development and some equipment. A lot of work will take place over the summer and after school. Ms. Moran said Mr. Bliss will give an update of the accounting as we move along.
- We are developing Best Practices. Is the State of Vermont going to capture these from our schools as well as other schools? And if yes, what is the state planning on doing with it? Mr. Olsen said we have a state department liaison. The point is to share a lot of what we are developing. We did not invent these tools. They are being practiced elsewhere.
- With the professional development piece, is there any part which might take care of some of the professional development that we are already doing? Ms. Moran said teachers have their own licensing requirements. This is a focused approach to best practices. The actual funding for contractual requirements cannot come out of the grant but the work will complement what they will be doing. Ms. Moran said the grant funds cannot supplant but they are allowing us to do more.

Ms. Moran said this is an enormous amount of work on the part of the teachers, leadership and students. Mr. Olsen said we are looking to help all students; those who struggle and those who need a greater challenge than what we already offer.

**INSTRUC-  
TIONAL  
TECHNO-  
LOGY  
REPORT**

Instructional Technology Report - Ms. Aigner presented the 2009-2012 Educational Technology Plan with an update and summary of current performance findings. She said the focus this year is communication and collaboration. The model focuses on technology, pedagogy and content knowledge. Data has been added and it will inform us what is happening with the students. Ms. Aigner reviewed some of the steps taken such as adding fiber and using technology in new ways. She said Smart Boards in grades K-2 have had a tremendous impact on the students. Their engagement and enthusiasm is growing. Teachers are finding it invigorating. We need to support adults with professional development and additional resources to classrooms like laptops and Smart Boards which make instruction dynamic. Ms. Aigner said some teachers have become experts in a number of areas and teacher coaches are providing support to their colleagues. Ms. Moran said the written materials from Ms. Aigner show the outcomes and steps. Board members said the presentation was excellent and engaging.

**PERSONNEL**

Motion by Dress / Towle to approve the Licensed and Non-licensed section of the Personnel Memorandum No. 430 dated September 10, 2010 and the Personnel Addendum Memorandum No. 430 dated September 14, 2010, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

**MOTION:  
MEMO #430  
AND  
ADDENDUM  
#430**

The appointments were reviewed by Superintendent Moran. They are attached.

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

**BUSINESS  
REPORT**

Amendment of the 403b Plan - Mr. Amons reviewed the changes to the 403b Plan.

**MOTION:  
AMEND-  
MENT OF  
403b PLAN**

Motion by Forshay / Fagan to approve the amendment to the current 403b Plan and approval of a new, employer matching teachers 403b plan as recommended by the Chief Financial Officer. Motion passed by all those in attendance.

**FOUR  
MOTIONS:  
FOR THE  
AMEND-  
MENT OF  
THE 403b  
PLAN**

Motion by Courcelle / Towle to approve the following: Resolved, that the Employer, effective July 1, 2011, adopts Amendment Number One ("Amendment") to the Rutland Public Schools 403(b) Plan. Motion passed by all those in attendance.

Motion by Towle / Courcelle to approve the following: Further resolved, that Mary E. Moran, Superintendent or Peter Amons, Chief Financial Officer are authorized to execute said Amendment and related materials on behalf of the Employer. Motion passed by all those in attendance.

Motion by Towle / Dress to approve the following: Resolved, that, effective July 1, 2010, the Board adopts the Rutland City Schools Teacher 403(b) Plan ("Plan") for the exclusive benefit of its employees, in compliance with Final IRC Section 403(b) Regulations. Motion passed by all those in attendance.

Motion by Towle / Dress to approve the following: Further resolved, that Mary E. Moran, Superintendent or Peter Amons, Chief Financial Officer are authorized to execute said Plan on behalf of the Board and to take such further action as is necessary to implement said Plan and to communicate the Plan to all employees. Motion passed by all those in attendance.

Expenditures - Mr. Rice reviewed the recommended expenditures. He said that the elevator at Northwest is no longer under warranty. There is now a maintenance contract for it but we did not have it in place in the summer when the problem was noticed. Regarding Efficiency Vermont, Mr. Fagan pointed out that they will be paying \$54,000 towards the improvements. Mr. Rice said the scope of work does not cover the football lighting.

**EXPENDI-  
TURES**

Motion by Courcelle / Towle to approve the following expenditures from the FY11 Contingency Account as recommended by the Chief Financial Officer:

**MOTION:  
APPROVE 3  
EXPENDI-  
TURES TO  
FY11  
CONTIN-  
GENCY  
FUND**

- Charge FY11 Contingency Account \$5,075 for replacement of failed rooftop air conditioning compressor for RHS.
- Charge FY11 Contingency Account \$3,475 for repair of Northwest elevator.
- Charge FY11 Contingency Account \$4,170 for matching funds for RHS outdoor lighting enhancements with Efficiency Vermont.

Motion passed by all those in attendance.

Mr. Mello said with these three expenditures and what was approved out of contingency in August, there is \$225,903 remaining in the contingency line item.

Mr. Rice reviewed the recommendations for FY11 budget expenditures. He said we will attempt to get some value from the old vehicles. Mr. Book said we should be able to accept bids on them.

**BIDS**

Motion by Towle / Fagan to accept the bid of \$18,425 from Alderman's Chevrolet for replacement of pickup truck per FY11 budget as recommended by the Chief Financial Officer. Passed by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:  
ACCEPT BID  
TO  
PURCHASE  
PICKUP  
TRUCK**

Motion by Towle / Fagan to accept the bid of \$20,825 from John C Stewart & Son for replacement of cargo van per FY11 budget as recommended by the Chief Financial Officer. Passed by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:  
ACCEPT BID  
TO  
PURCHASE  
CARGO VAN**

School buses - Mr. Rice said there is money in the FY11 budget for two replacement buses. One is the handicapped bus, model year 2000 and a 1999 bus. He requested bids from three firms and received one bid. DATTCO is the only vendor that could sell us a new International. Commissioner Forshay said the bid is remarkably close to the budgeted amount. Was the bidder informed? Mr. Rice said no. Mr. Rice used last year's price plus a factor increase. He said he believes the other two vendors solicited did not bid because we have an International bus fleet and a non-International vendor has not won this bid for a number of years. The others chose not to bid. Ms. Moran said DATTCO is the New England vendor for new International buses. Commissioner Dress asked if the buses are worn out and Mr. Rice said yes, ten years is a long life for a bus.

**SCHOOL  
BUSES**

Motion by Fingon / Book to accept the bid of \$180,078 from DATTCO for replacement of two school buses per FY11 budget as recommended by the Chief Financial Officer. Passed by all those in attendance.

**MOTION:  
ACCEPT BID  
TO  
PURCHASE  
TWO  
SCHOOL  
BUSES**

Mr. Amons said the roof at the Creative Structures Building at Stafford was bid at \$25,573. He said he considered the option of financing the project versus paying all at once and decided it would be better to pay for it and charge it to contingency. He said there is a lot of paperwork with financing. Commissioner Fingon agreed that it should be paid for now. Mr. Forshay said with this charge to the contingency line item, that would mean 20% of the fund has already been spent. He said that is a commitment rate accelerated from most recent past years and it

**ROOF AT  
CREATIVE  
STRUC-  
TURES  
BUILDING**

is concerning. Commissioner Dress said the crumbling infrastructure has been having an impact. Because there was a hesitation to spend money in the past, it has to be spent now. She said she thinks it seems like a legitimate place to put contingency funds.

**MOTION:  
ACCEPT BID  
TO  
REPLACE  
ROOF AT  
STC  
CREATIVE  
STRUCTURES  
BUILDING**

Commissioner Towle recused himself from the discussion and vote.

Motion by Fingon / Caracas to accept the bid from Doran Roofing to replace the roof at the STC Creative Structures Building and charge it to the Contingency Account in the amount of \$25,573. Passed with one abstention (Towle)

**SUPERIN-  
PENDENT'S  
REPORT**

#### Superintendent's Announcements

- Ms. Moran said it was a terrific opening of school. She complimented all staff. She said the students are very upbeat. Parents are very attentive to schedules and deadlines.
- Parents should be alerted to open houses in all schools.
- Northwest first and second graders went to the state fair. Kindergartners will be going to the apple orchard and first graders will go pumpkin picking.
- Northeast students also visited the state fair. Kindergartners will visit the apple orchard and second graders will study Vermont history at Shelburne Farms.
- RIS had their open house last night followed by their first Parent-Teacher-Collaborative (PTC) meeting of the year. The RIS/RMS Evacuation Drill is scheduled for September 23rd at 9:30. The rain date is September 24.
- The RMS open house date was changed to Sept 30.
- The RHS National Honor Society is planning an ice cream social to welcome the school's exchange student. The Honor Society fund-raised for cystic fibrosis recently at Sugar and Spice.

**ANNOUNCE-  
MENTS**

Commissioner Book asked about the trip to the fair and Ms. Moran said the students visited exhibits, agriculture and tractors. Mr. Bliss said they offer a great student tour focused on the education of agriculture and horticulture.

**SCHOLAR-  
SHIP**

Scholarship - Ms. Moran said the class of 1960 would like to establish a scholarship in the name of Miss Lucy H. Doane, a former Rutland art teacher. She died in May at the age of 101 but was told before she died that the class was endowing a scholarship in her name. The award is \$500 annually to be given to an art student.

**MOTION:  
ACCEPT  
SCHOLAR-  
SHIP IN  
NAME OF  
MISS LUCY  
H DOANE**

Motion by Courcelle / Towle to accept the scholarship by the class of 1960 in the name of Miss Lucy H. Doane. Passed unanimously by all those in attendance.

**COMM.  
REPORT**

Policy Committee - Work Plan - Mr. Bliss said the committee completed a review of policy updates last year. There are pieces of new legislation which need policies and the committee will work on those. After that, they will work on job descriptions. Mr. Book said the committee has to address the International Travel policy.

**POLICY  
COMM.**

Community Engagement - Ms. Moran said budget preparation will begin earlier this year because of Challenges for Change. Mr. Mello said the Board should reflect at a non-school board meeting on what this means. It will be a chance for board members to engage with the community. We need to have budget numbers to the Commissioner by December 15. Budget Buddies has been in place for two years and Mr. Mello asked for board members who would like to work on the committee. Its sole purpose is to inform the electorate prior to voting on the budget.

**NEW  
BUSINESS**  
  
**COMMUN-  
ITY  
ENGAGE-  
MENT &  
BUDGET  
BUDDIES**

Annual Evaluation of Superintendent - Mr. Mello said this is an annual process. Ms. Moran has prepared a self-evaluation which he distributed to Board members. He asked for the forms to be returned to him by September 22 and he will compile the results.

**SUPERIN-  
PENDENT  
EVALUA-  
TION**

Pension Board - Mr. Fingon said the pension board recently met and talked about changing around the composition of the pension board. It is in discussion. They talked about adding more financial people and taking the four person committee down to one person on each side plus adding an employee. He welcomed board members and employees to an upcoming meeting with the investment advisor for an update on the fund.

**PENSION  
BOARD**

Board Calendar 2010-2011 - Mr. Fagan asked if any dates coincide with RHS music dates. Ms. Moran said the music teachers are asked to avoid second and fourth Tuesdays. If a board meeting date changes due to vacation, there may be a conflict.

**OLD  
BUSINESS**  
**BOARD  
CALENDAR  
AND  
AGENDAS**

Mr. Mello said if board members would like to see other topics for board meeting agendas to please let him know.

Mr. Forshay asked if there have been inquiries about district consolidation proposals pursuant to the legislation passed earlier this year. Mr. Mello said he has talked in the past to the chairs of the Rutland Central and Rutland Southwest Supervisory Unions. He will try to get another formal meeting with them. Commissioners Cavacas and Towle will also represent the Board at that meeting. Ms. Moran said the mandate is that Supervisory Unions must initiate dialogue and School Districts may initiate dialogue. Rutland City Public Schools is not a Supervisory Union but a District.

**DISTRICT  
CONSOLID-  
ATION  
PROPOSAL**

Retreat Notes - were distributed.

**RETREAT  
NOTES**

Motion by Forshay / Towle to adjourn at 8:11 pm. Passed.

**ADJOURN**

Respectfully submitted

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Janet Mondlak  
Recording Secretary