

ROCKPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING
Wednesday, April 1, 2015

Chairperson Michael Kelley called the regular meeting of the Rockport School Committee to order at 7:02 p.m. in the MS/HS Library. Present were Martha Morgan and Tracey McLaughlin-Volpe. Susan Brisson and Colleen Coogan were absent. Also, present were Superintendent Robert Liebow and Recording Secretary Ingrid Keating.

- I. A. Approval of Minutes Hold for next meeting need quorum
- B. Personnel Actions

Michael Cunha has been appointed to the position of Elementary Teacher Assistant at the Step 1 rate of the Support Staff Contract at the daily rate of \$105.90
RMHS Assistant Principal Tara Cowe-Spaigi will resign from her position effective June 30, 2015.
Elementary Technology Teacher Cheryl Sullivan has indicated her intent to retire at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.
Elementary Teacher Assistant Buffy Lee has rescinded her intent to retire at the end of this school year.

II. Community Participation

- A. School Council Student Representative N/A
- B. Public Participation N/A

III. Discussion and Recommended Actions

A. K-12 Library Presentation

RMHS Librarian Christine Burke read the Library departments mission statement. Elementary Librarian Katherine Schwinden explained that collection development, physical reorganization, and school and community outreach are her areas of focus. She has added research materials, new high interest books and has weeded out old materials. The picture book section has been moved from the back of the library to the main area so that she is able to supervise the readers and cover the front counter at the same time. She has rearranged the books for better young reader visibility and will have junior sized couches and bean bag chairs for comfortable reading areas. Tina Lamond has painted a Fairy Tales and Fables mural. Three authors and storytellers came to the elementary library during the Book Blizzard. Teachers can sign up for research blocks along with Technology Teacher Cheryl Sullivan giving the students three teachers to help them. The Book Blizzard, Scholastic Book Fair, Rockport Counts Down to Kindergarten and preschool story visits make up her school and community outreach. A typical block with a class involves lesson correlated to the MA and CCSS standards, reader advisory and book check-out, and individual or partner reading time.

RMHS Librarian Christine Burke reported that her day consists of providing individual assistance to students through research, readers advisory, computer programs, citation, evaluation, etc. Ms. Burke reports that 60-135 students visit the library each day and that number is over and above the students that come with a class. She provides teachers with resources, equipment, class instruction, consultation and she maintains the collection. Currently the library has 10,270 holdings which equal 5,706 non-fiction, 4,247 fiction and 417 non-print media. Ms. Burke has created a Miller Library Website, holds a Scholastic Book Fair, and offers Running Counts to encourage students reading. The Rockport Rotary donates 40+ books each year, chosen by Ms. Burke through the Toad Hall Book Store. The school and town libraries cooperate with the summer reading programs, professional development and meet regularly to discuss programs and trends. Ms. Burke reviewed NEASC recommendations. Her concerns for the library are that the homework club is too large for the space and adequate supervision, her budget is being reduced, and complying with the Teach Act copyright.

B. Superintendent's Evaluation

Chairperson Michael Kelley read and explained Superintendent Liebow's evaluation. Mr. Liebow's overall rating is "Proficient." Mr. Kelley noted that with the few "some progress" ratings were because the goal was eliminated or the issue was beyond Mr. Liebow's control. The consensus of the committee is that Mr. Liebow has shown great leadership in changing the climate and culture of the District. They were impressed with his handling of the budget and the Teachers contract. Concerns were that the elementary school received less attention compared to the middle and high school and the RTA having too much influence to restrict Mr. Liebow's ability to improve teaching practices. The committee counts itself lucky to employ such a principled, caring, hard-working and effective administrator and congratulates him on an impressive year of accomplishments.

Superintendent Liebow feels that he does have a close relationship with the RTA but honors follows the language of the teachers' contract when dealing with contract issues. He realized that the teachers' contract is not always on the principal's radar but it is always on the superintendent's. He does not want faculty to feel they have been set-up which might prompt a grievance. Building administrators should seek out building reps and ask them what they think to try and resolve potential problems. Mr. Liebow feels he has included all administrators as a team and if anyone feels left out they should go to the source (him) to discuss. Generally the building principal is the primary mentor for the assistant principal. Mr. Liebow also stated that he tries to stay out of the way of the principals; it's not his place to be involved with the day-to-day activities.

Motion: Martha Morgan motioned to increase Mr. Liebow's salary by 2% and extend his contract to 2021.

Seconded: Tracy McLaughlin-Volpe seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 3-0.

C. Policy Review

The policy sub-committee met with current and retired teachers to discuss the entrance age. The initial change in DOB requirement was developed with a lot of input including surveys. In their experience gifted and talented students are rare, but students have been moved ahead. They would like to see how the child interacts with other students and had suggestions as to how to accommodate that child academically, maybe by spending time in an upper grade level. They agree there should be testing but need to be sure the child is ready socially. The school committee asked to see what other procedures are being done by other school districts.

D. Field trip approval/s

Motion: Martha Morgan motioned to approve the DECA, All-Eastern Festival, and Lime Rock field trips as presented.

Seconded: Tracy McLaughline-Volpe seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 3-0.

IV. Information and proposals

A. School Council Update

B. Donations

\$800 donation from Applied Materials Foundation Employee Engagement Fund: \$200 to grade 2 teacher Jenn Dahlgren, \$200 to Joanne Riley and \$400 to Rockport Elementary Logo Robotics Club.

C. Updates

Sub-committee reports:

The communications sub-committee has a basic outline and working on improvement goals that they will present at a future meeting.

The school committee discussed the website and would like to create a short term Website Sub-committee to investigate improvements to the current site or consider other providers; the sub-committees findings would be brought back, to suggest recommendations to the school committee. They will look for parent volunteers to serve on this committee along with the technology staff.

V. Correspondence

Email from parent Clair Harper regarding PARCC
Email from Mike Duffy, Strategic Partner Advisor/School Improvement Network

VI. Future Agenda Items

- A. Superintendent's Report/FundFlow (4/15)
- B. PBIS Presentation (4/15)
- C. School Committee Self Evaluation (4/15)

VII. Calendar

April 4, 2015, Town Meeting
April 15, 2015, Regular Meeting
May 6, 2015, Regular Meeting

VIII. Executive Session

N/A

Motion: Tracy McLaughlin-Volpe motioned to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:25 p.m.
Seconded: Martha Morgan seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Liebow
Superintendent of Schools