

ROCKPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING
Wednesday May 22, 2019

Chairperson Michael Kelley called the regular meeting of the Rockport School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Middle/High School Library. Present were Nicole Altieri, Richard Drost, Michael Kelley, and Mary Porter, Colleen Coogan was absent. Also, present were Superintendent Robert Liebow and Recording Secretary Ingrid Keating.

I. Opening of Regular Meeting

A. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Richard Drost motioned to approve the May 1, 2019 regular minutes as presented.
Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

B. Personnel Actions

Caroline Teague – MS Interventionist – M30-6 = \$61,153

II. Community Participation

A. Student Advisory Representative

The Student Advisory Committee surveyed 61 fifth grade students to learn more about the needs and interest of the Class of 2026. The survey identified increase in freedom and responsibilities and wider range of opportunities as three main interests. Their concerns were quantity and types of homework, academic expectations, transitioning between classes and strictness of rules. Grade six teachers received this information and middle school students visited the 5th graders to explained google forms and answer questions. Class officer elections are tomorrow in the high school, the senior showcase was incredible, prom was last Friday and students are selling produce, from the greenhouse, at the farmers markets on Saturdays.

B. Public Participation

Wally Hess introduced himself and mentioned the work he had done as a business consultant and requested that the School Committee commit to not participating in the School Choice program should his calculation of annual variable costs (which he had undertaken himself and expressed as a single number without any other detail) prove to be accurate. He did not provide those calculations and said "I will not dwell on these numbers as they need further study, but I would like to ask the School Committee to think about what they would like to do if the numbers are accurate." He suggested that we hire a consultant to help us.

Chairperson Michael Kelley thanked Mr. Hess for his input and asked whether he had had a chance to review the four page insert on the school budget in the town meeting booklet or the more comprehensive 15 page *Understanding the 2019 School Budget* document referenced in that insert and available on the school website, as it referenced the Cape Ann Study for Education which has already contacted a consultant to gather basic data about two Cape Ann school systems for the purposes of planning. He added that this data, once gathered will be shared in public sessions and will be used by the committee for strategic planning purposes. Chairperson Kelley pointed out that by state law oversight of the School Budget is held exclusively by the School Committee, who validates every item in the budget requested by the school Superintendent and senior staff in public sessions and that in those sessions all assumptions (including School Choice) are questioned on line-by-line basis for their value as well as their cost. He concluded that it would be inappropriate for the School Committee at this time to react at all to Mr. Hess's unsubstantiated numbers or the conclusion they attempted to draw, and suggested that Mr. Hess was always welcome back.

Zenas Seppela reported that he attended a Sandy Bay Historical Society Meeting where a trio of high school students had been invited to present on local history. Mr. Seppela was pleasantly surprised at the amount of research that took place and how eloquent the students were in presenting. He brought this up at a selectmen's meeting and is pleased to see some of our tax payers money going to such useful purposes.

III. Discussion and Recommended Action

A. RHS Science Self-Study Review

High School Principal Amy Rose and High School Science Curriculum Coordinator Faculty Liason Eric Sabo reported on the Science Self-Study Results and recommendations. They reviewed why a self-study?, MCAS Data, and AP Data. The outside consultant recommended the following be implemented in the next two years: horizontal alignment in Biology to provide a consistent student experience, develop curriculum maps to frame and guide instruction, develop curriculum units and lessons using UbD format, and incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approaches into the planning process. Eric Sabo reported the need to continue with hands on experiences through labs and reports and not just teaching to the test. Teachers will review curriculum maps for alignment with Standards. The department received 2 tiers of support with Sandra Locke focusing on dissecting the 2016 MA state standards, development of UBD maps, units and lessons to support effective instruction, and pedagogy, routines and practices. Gabrielle Schlichtmann's focus was on further increase of student engagement and investment through effective UDL principles and worked with High School Science Teacher Barbara Swanson to further enhance her curriculum to provide rich and meaningful experiences for her honors level students. This year the science department engaged in curriculum- focused work, curriculum mapping, and "homework" to individual teachers as established by Sandra Locke. Next year the staff will complete curriculum mapping, write UbD curriculum, identify common expectations for pedagogy, visit other schools, and use professional development and consultants to assist staff with long-term goals. Areas of strength are the teachers investment and clear desire to reach our students, there is extensive curriculum to provide consistency of instruction across teachers and grade levels, and that teachers value hands on learning experiences. It is recommended that AP data will help guide and facilitate instruction, there is a need to conduct a comprehensive K-8 science review to understand the systemic areas of focus. Eric Sabo will continue to lead the process as outlined in the RHS School Improvement Plan, data from the 2019 MCAS and AP exams will be reviewed to establish benchmarks and priority standards based on specific data, and will provide mid-year progress report to the school committee and superintendent.

B. RMS Foreign Language

Middle School Principal Amanda LaMantia reported that An increase in class size, communication, programming, and at least one full time teacher would be needed to continue French at the middle school level. This model would compromise the possibility of having Spanish 1 carried through 7th and 8th grade and would not lend itself to strong vertical alignment. She explained this years model and how the part time position does not attract a large enough applicant pool and it has been hard to keep new hires. Next years model would offer Spanish in just eighth grade as a core class. This would allow that teacher to be full-time and be a member of the eighth grade team. The school committee wants to continue French but can it be justified, funded, and are there enough students. Public comment covered how French was a key point in understanding the world, potential to become spoken language in the future, lack of FTE's to sustain, low enrollment has been an issue since Charles Symonds was principal, one family chose Rockport school choice because of the option to take French, and scheduling issues. Chairperson Michael Kelley felt that the data they received does not support overriding Principal LaMantia's proposal. Ms. LaMantia feels that the middle school has tried several models and the participation has not increased. This new model will best serve the students and hopes that she can expand the program to include French if future funding allows. The School Committee supports Ms. Lamantia's proposal.

C. RES potential therapy dog and discussion/possible concept approval

Reading Specialist Stacey Twombly and Title I Teacher Julie Raftelis are seeking approval to continue the process of becoming a registered therapy dog and handler team. The dog would help students improve literacy and communications skills, build self-esteem, confidence, and social skills. They would apply for funds to support this project through "Awesome Rockport". They visited Pine Grove School and learned how they use the dog, standards and procedures, training and registration, health and vaccination, licensing, insurance, control and supervision of dog. With the committee's approval they will organized training for both of them and the dog. They have the support of the Wellness Committee and to start services would only be offered in their office. Mrs. Twombly and Mrs. Raftelis will research policy and release forms that would go out to families.

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve the concept and begin the training process.
Seconded: Mary Porter seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

D. YRBS Survey vote to participate

Motion: Mary Porter motioned to participate in the YRBS (Youth Risk Behavior Survey) beginning in the Spring of 2020.
Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

E. 2019-2020 School Calendar Update

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve the revised 2019-2020 school calendar as presented.
Seconded: Mary Porter seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve June 13, 2019 as the last day of school for the 2018-2019 school year.
Seconded: Mary Porter seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

F. School Committee Handbook Review (move to August 21, 2019)

G. Field Trips

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve the out of state overnight field trip, for students, to attend the National History Day completion at the University of Maryland/DC June 9-13, 2019.
Seconded: Richard Drost seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

H. Policy Revise/review

Second reading for the following policies:

File IC/ICA: School Year/School Calendar
File JKAA: Physical Restraint of Students
File LBC: Relations with Non-Public Schools
File LBC-R: Relations with Non-Public Schools – Regulations for Non-Public Schools

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve, as a slate vote, the above mentioned policies as presented.
Seconded: Richard Drost second the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

I. Warrants and Payroll

IV. Information and proposals

A. School Council Update N/A

B. Donations

Daniel King donated a Nordic Track Treadmill to be used in the RMHS Fitness Room.

C. Updates

Sub-committee reports: N/A

Superintendent Report:

Superintendent Liebow reported that Circuit Breaker is being funded at 74.4% which is \$20,000 better than expected, bringing the anticipated total to \$864,104. Mr. Liebow presented the plan for ALICE training for the 2019-2020 school year. It includes: E-training, 2 drills, revise elementary drills to allow for smoother transition to middle school (age appropriate), 6th grade assemblies, high school barricade practice, window exits, and quikclot and tourniquet training for high school students. The committee discussed: opt out of trainings, are we sending out the message that it's going to happen vs. it is highly unlikely to happen, and decided on window exits demonstrations instead of actual student participation.

Mr. Liebow reported that School Brains, Power School and Aspen will present their product for a new student information system to replace Midas. After the committee decides on one vendor and site visits are held he will come back to the committee with a proposal. If a change is made the search committee recommends a mid-year transition.

D. Other Business

V. Correspondence N/A

VI. Future Agenda Items

- A. Tech/Voc Representative (6/11)
- B. Superintendent Goals (6/11)
- C. 3 Year Strategic Plan Review (8/21)
- D. Superintendent's Report/FundFlow (TBA)

VII. Calendar

- A. June 11, 2019, regular meeting
- B. August 21, 2019, regular meeting

VIII. Executive Session

Motion: At 10:11 pm Richard Drost motioned to adjourn the regular meeting
Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Liebow
Superintendent of Schools