

ROCKPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING
Wednesday December 7, 2016

Chairperson Martha Morgan called the regular meeting of the Rockport School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the MS/HS Library. Present were Colleen Coogan, Martha Morgan, Rebecca Sly, Heather Nelson, and Mary Porter. Also, present were Superintendent Robert Liebow and Recording Secretary Ingrid Keating.

I. Opening of Regular Meeting

A. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Heather Nelson motioned to approve the regular minutes, from November 16, 2016.
Seconded: Rebecca Sly seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

B. Personnel Actions

RESIGNED:	Roberta Halloran	.8 FTE HS Psychologist/Counselor	11/28/2016
LEAVE:	Victoria Washburne	.6 RMS Reading/.4MS TA	2/27/17 - EOY
	Jamie Orlando	EL Pre-K Teacher	12/23/16-4/24/17
APPOINTED:	Connie Lucido	EL 1 st Grade TA (one year)	11/28/2016 ó EOY
	Linda Morris	Caf Worker increase 2 days/wk	11/15/2016
		4 hrs/day	

II. Community Participation

A. Student Advisory Representative

Student Advisory Representatives Anna Catena, Robert Welcome, and Samantha Cook reported that some students are having a hard time accessing printers if they do not have one at home. They say that Google Docs has helped but that some teachers want hard copies. Martha Morgan wondered if it is possible to have technology available so a student could send a document to a printer at school from home. The students also noticed that teachers do not coordinate assignment and exam dates. They find that they may have to prepare for several large assignments or even exams due on the same day. Mrs. Morgan suggested that they talk with Principal Bach regarding this issue. Savannah Cook reported that it's great that the teachers are using the Chrome Carts. Chrome Carts can be used for assessments, web access and instruction.

B. Public Participation

Damaris Herlihy of 20 Smith Rd. expressed her concern for the class sizes in grade 1. She was under the impression that this "bubble" class in kindergarten would have 4 sections through the lower grades and was surprised to find out that there would only be 3 sections this year. She believes that the education of these students will suffer. In researching she found some resources that indicated that 18 students per class in grades K-3 is optimal. She also learned that there are things being done to help the situation but did not hear any of it first hand from the school. She is wondering if there is policy regarding class size and if not how to implement a policy.

Superintendent Liebow explained that last spring when 1st grade classes were being determined, going from kindergarten to 1st grade, there were 67 students making 3 sections at 22, 22, and 23. There was one retention and one school choice sibling (out of four applications) accepted making a class size of 23 for each. This number remained consistent until October, when two new resident students enrolled making the classes 23, 24 and 24. In October it was decided to add teacher assistants (TA) to support the classrooms. Two classes have fulltime TA's and one teacher, who was offered a full-time TA, opted to have a teacher with recent experience in the system, three days a week. Mr. Liebow did explain that the TA's are not SPED and not assigned to specific students; they are there to support the entire class.

Marc Lorenz of 22 Highview Rd. does not feel that adding a 4th class would be beneficial at this time, but wanted to know if more academic support could be added to this 1st grade.

Chairperson Martha Morgan asked the superintendent to talk with the principal to be sure the support is assigned properly and that parents are kept informed. She asks that the principal check in with the teachers and Mr. Liebow will plan a review in the Spring to take all of this information into consideration for the move to second grade.

III. Discussion and Recommended Action

A. Field Trip requests

Motion: Mary Porter motioned to approve the out of state Positive Culture, Leadership Summit at Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH on December 9, 2016.

Seconded: Heather Nelson seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

B. Website Update

Monty Hitschler and Mike Montgomery from the IT department were in attendance to review the status of the website. Mike Montgomery explained that the transition over to Midas started last March, the website was designed this summer and the teachers received training on August 29th. Currently the grading is fully functional for faculty and students. Midas will be an ñall in oneö spot for SPED, health, learning management system, and teacher and administrative evaluations. All these components will be merged in at a later date, current priority is grading and state reporting while working on calendar issues. Student Representative Anna Catena stated that the students really like the real time grading information. Colleen Coogan says her children like the graphs that show them where they are at in relation to other students and that this information has motivated them in a positive way. Monty Hitschler reported that there has been an issue getting the transcripts data from iPass to Midas. Jodi Goodhue said it was decided to focus on students and teachers needs first then everything else would follow. The committee discussed creating a FAQ page, Mr. Montgomery stated that the help tabs should cover any questions. The committee would also like to see more school information on their sites, such as important dates and clubs/activities. The staff directories are not functioning well, it does not state grade or department, no phone numbers and the email is not connected to our district system. Mr. Liebow suggested getting rid of the phone number icon or have it default to the school phone number. Martha Morgan suggested that a committee, of parents, students, staff and community members, be assembled to review the website. Both the committee and superintendent feel that a timeline is important so that they can answer questions regarding when information will be available on the site. They also feel that the website is the public face for the school system and it needs to be determined who will be putting the information on the site for the principals. The technology department has been offering parent training workshops and have had positive responses from those who attend. The communications sub-committee will schedule regular meetings with Mike Montgomery to discuss the development of the website and timelines, they will report back to the whole committee.

C. Policy Review/Proposal

Motion: Heather Nelson motioned to adopt File: CHCA: Approval of Handbooks and Directives as presented.

Seconded: Rebecca Sly seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Motion: Rebecca Sly motioned to approve revised File JJE: Student Fundraising eliminating ñand/ö in guidelines #1, first sentence.

Seconded: Coleen Coogan seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Liebow explained that the SPED department is going through, a once every six years, Coordinated Program Review (CPR). This review focuses on civil rights, harassment, etc. The SPED attorney Michael Joyce found our bullying policy to be out of date and the district needs a Bullying prevention and

intervention plan. The proposed plan draft will be on the website for public comment for two weeks. The policy will be reviewed by the policy sub-committee and brought before the whole board.

D. Warrants

Motion: Colleen Coogan motioned to approve the warrants as presented, relating to payroll, tuitions, and Food Service.

Seconded: Mary Porter seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

IV. Information and proposals

A. School Council Update

B. Donations

Brace Cove Foundation donated \$2,500 to provide one-on-one music instruction to students at Rockport Public Schools.

C. Updates

Sub-committee reports:

Communications sub-committee member Colleen Coogan stated that the website focus group will be very important in helping to create a public face for the school system.

V. Correspondence

N/A

VI. Other Business

Martha Morgan attended the Massachusetts Suburban Coalition meeting where they discussed raising state funds to sustain public education. They were not able to report if communities would see state funds cut this year. Mrs. Morgan reminded the committee that they sent the state a resolution calling for the full funding of the foundation budget review commission's recommendations. There were suggestions to create more revenue through taxing online purchases and developing a millionaire tax. Mrs. Morgan will draft a letter supporting these revenue resources and will bring it to the committee for consideration.

VII. Future Agenda Items

- A. EL Math Program Review (1/4)
- B. HS Schedule Proposal Discussion (1/4)
- C. Curriculum Cycle Review (1/4)
- D. Superintendent's Report & Fund/Flow (1/18)
- E. Budget presentation to Selectmen (TBD)
- F. EL Handbook final version
- G. Growth Mindset/Co-teaching Forum
- H. Goals Review (1/18)

VIII. Calendar

- A. December TBD, 2016, Budget Presentation to the Selectmen
- B. January 4, 2017, Regular Meeting

VIV. Executive Session

Motion: Rebecca Sly motioned to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:23p.m.

Seconded: Colleen Coogan seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Liebow
Superintendent of Schools