

ROCKPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING
Wednesday January 8, 2020

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, Colleen Coogan, Michael Kelley, and Richard Drost, Cathy Reilly 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 regular minutes from November 6 & 20, 2019 and December 11, 2019.

Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

Motion: Colleen Coogan motioned to approve the regular minutes from December 5, 2019.

Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 3-0. Richard Drost abstained.

B. Personnel Actions

N/A

II. Community Participation

A. Student Advisory Representative

Nathaniel Kirby read the following informal statement on behalf of the Student Advisory Committee:

As you know, on Monday, our school faced one of the most unfortunate events in our history: the violent attack on a middle school student by one of her peers. This is truly a shocking event for our community, and it can be difficult to know how to respond to the flood of emotions that we feel. However, we must keep our eyes fixed on the future, and not dwell in this incident. We are very lucky to have such a strong community in this town, as well as such level-headed leaders. And with this community, we must focus our energies on caring for everyone around us. Now is not the time to lose faith in our students and town; we must be trusting and open to pull our community together and move beyond this chapter.

While we may never fully know what series of events led to this attack, events like this highlight the fact that even in a small community, people can slip through unnoticed. We had hoped that someone would be able to notice before a student went to extreme and violent measures. But we have seen that this social safety net is not infallible. In the aftermath of this, we must continue to expand our support for each other. And critical to this is to keep channels open between students, faculty, and administrators. If we are striving for an environment where we can all share our feelings with each other, and where students can learn and grow, we must have trust in each other. And trust in a school starts with honesty and transparency, and most importantly trust in students. Only when students feel trusted will they truly trust each other and their teachers, and only with this trust can we foster learning while taking care of the whole student.

We want to thank our administrators for their appropriate actions on Monday, for keeping all of us safe, and for working to bring our community together and support the students most affected by this. As we move forward, we hope that this town will remember that our community is what holds us together, and that we will focus on building our trust in each other, caring for each other, and communicating openly with each other, not merely as colleagues, but as a school family.

B. Public Participation N/A

III. Discussion and Recommended Action

A. K-12 World Language

World Language teachers Lil Duffy, Paula Schram, Gillian Twombly and Martha Cox-Stavros reported there is a major shift in approach to language instruction by moving away from “legacy methods” and focusing on comprehensible input. They will be piloting reading proficiency and advanced conversational Spanish. Professional development included attendance at NPEN and workshops on comprehensible input and proficiency-based language instruction. To strengthen the program they will explore scheduling options with administration, would like to restore world language in elementary school, start exploratory year in 6th grade, and increase meeting times in 7th grade curriculum. Students will participate in a “Rockport Gives Back” presentation on May 19th. Students can participate in field trips to Dominican Republic (service trip), Mexico and France. Lil Duffy will apply to PTO for a “teacher request” to fund “Readers” for this school year.

B. Increase in minimum wage increase

Minimum wage has increased January 1, 2020 from \$12.00 to \$12.75 for the crossing guards, daily substitutes and our 3 permanent daily long-term substitutes.

C. Define Website Upgrades (Reschedule)

D. Field Trip

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve the February 2021, out of country, overnight, student enrichment trip to Mexico – The Mayan Trail.
Seconded: Colleen Coogan seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

E. Policy revise/review

The Policy Sub-committee presented the following policies for a first reading:

JBB: Educational Equity
JFABD: Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services
JFABE: Educational Opportunities for Military Children
JFABF: Education Opportunities for Children in Foster Care

F. Warrants and Payroll

IV. Information and proposals

A. School Council Update N/A

B. Donations N/A

C. Updates

Sub-committee reports:

Superintendent Report:

Mr. Liebow presented the FundFlow accounting from November. He also reported that the new handicap accessible school bus was delivered and will be on the road as soon as it is registered and the radio has been transferred from the old bus.

D. Other Business

The committee discussed the frustration that parents had with Riverside Counseling during the parent/guardian forum, which was supposed to discuss concerns, what to say to you child and getting resources for their children after the incident that happened in the middle school on Monday. They found the superintendent, staff and police more informative. They also discussed looking into an anonymous reporting system and how, when and who should get communications out to staff, students and parents/guardians.

V. Correspondence N/A

VI. Future Agenda Items

- A. K-12 Math (1/22/2020)
- B. Technology Department Update (1/22/2020)
- C. School Start Time Stud
- D. CASE Update
- E. Superintendent's Report/FundFlow

VII. Calendar

- A. January 22, 2020, regular meeting
- B. February 5, 2020, regular meeting

VIII. Executive Session

Motion: At 9:10 pm Colleen Coogan motioned to adjourn to executive session, for reasons, under Provision 3 and 5 and will not reconvene in open session after the executive session.

Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 4-0.

Roll call:	Nicole Altieri	yes
	Colleen Coogan	yes
	Richard Drost	yes
	Michael Kelley	yes

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Liebow
Superintendent of Schools