

ROCKPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING
Wednesday January 16, 2019

Chairperson Colleen Coogan 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, Richard Drost, Michael Kelley, and Mary Porter. Also, present were Superintendent Robert Liebow and Recording Secretary Ingrid Keating.

I. Opening of Regular Meeting

A. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Michael Kelley motioned to approve the January 2, 2019 regular minutes as presented.
Seconded: Mary Porter seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

B. Personnel Actions N/A

II. Community Participation

A. Student Advisory Representative

Student Advisory Representatives Nathaniel Kirby and Amanda Verga reported that Spirit Week will be held February 11th – 15th. DECA participated in Districts at Endicott College, six students placed first. The Twin Light Tribune was “rolled out” to students and there has been an increase in student reporters adding sports columns and recipes. The goal is a wider roll out to the Rockport Community.

B. Public Participation

Ava Corpi is working with the Conservation Committee to organize activities for Earth Day. She is looking for student participation. Nathaniel Kirby will talk to the Green Team to see if they can provide a presentation or activity.

III. Discussion and Recommended Action

A. RHS Science Department Self Study

High School Principal Amy Rose reviewed the high school science department self- study conducted by Sandra Locke. Mrs. Rose met with Department Coordinator Eric Sabo to determine focal points: review how advanced placement classes are taught, alignment of science curriculum through the grades, and focus on core content/frameworks/standards. They found that Biology is for the most part meeting scope and sequence (teachers opted to create CP & H units aligned with the MA standards), Chemistry is not teaching the new standards and they will be working with that staff member to develop UBD for teaching instruction, starting at the base level to determine objective and how it is tied to the standard. Physics will be dissecting current teaching practices vs. standards. There is currently not a great deal of curriculum for administration to review to know what is happening in the classroom and staff have been instructed to submit the curriculum by the end of the school year. The staff is very committed and open to the recommended suggestions. They will be working with a curriculum consultant and will visit Manchester/Essex High School to observe their practices. Mrs. Rose expects the district to see the biggest strides in the next three to five years. Mrs. Rose is committed to presenting the curriculum products and other results of the science department self study with the Department head at the May 15th school committee meeting.

B. RHS Course Catalog Review

High School Principal Amy Rose presented a draft version of next years course catalog. All the courses and descriptions are correct only minor edits will be made; some courses have had name changes to align with what colleges are familiar with. For more options the high school staff is flexible in allowing underclassmen in to higher level elective courses.

Motion: Richard Drost motioned to approve the 2019-2020 RHS Course Catalog as presented.
Seconded: Mary Porter seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

C. Future of Middle School Foreign Language

Middle School Principal Amanda LaMantia reported that she is not ready to make a proposal or ask the school committee to approve the elimination of French in the Middle School, but is thinking about its sustainability. French is a difficult position to fill and retain staff, sometimes there are no applicants. With fewer students enrolling in French it has increased the size of Spanish classes in the high school. The committee discussed with Mrs. LaMantia local comparisons, schedule difficulties, VHS offerings, offering French as an elective in the junior/senior years, and introducing French earlier at lower levels. The committee would like outreach to parents and students prior to making a final announcement/decision to be considered.

D. Changes to Middle School Schedule Proposal

Middle School Principal Amanda LaMantia is looking at a new five day schedule. Issues that motivated her to investigate a change is to better use shared staff with the high school, develop flex time, the inconsistent use of Core Skills and TASC, and what will best meet the needs of students. Flex time could be used for enrichment, self-driven projects, co teaching, and flexibility for students with music and intervention schedules. Mrs. LaMantia does not want it used to do homework. She will have to work out the exact time of classes on Wednesdays, the best name for the flex block, and how will students be scheduled. The next steps will be to roll out to families, address current questions, and how to monitor effectiveness. The school committee appreciated the effort and thoughtfulness of the proposed changes to the middle school schedule and offerings, believed the new schedule would accommodate many of the limitations with the current schedule including the difficulty for students to take interesting electives.

E. Superintendents Goals Review

Superintendent Liebow reviewed the status of his goals.

F. School Committee Goals Review

Chairperson Colleen Coogan reviewed the status of their goals.

G. Field Trips

Motion: Mary Porter motioned to approve the out of state High School Sunapee Ski Trips with the condition that dates and appropriate chaperone ratios will be determined and met..
Seconded: Richard Drost seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

H. Policy revise/review

I. Warrants and Payroll

IV. Information and proposals

A. School Council Update

N/A

B. Donations

Monty Hitschler donated the book "Forward" by Abby Wambach to be added to the Middle/High School Library collection.

C. Updates

Mr. Liebow reported that the legal aspects for the Solect Energy Development power purchase agreement (PPA) (for solar panels on the school roofs) took too long and the window of profitable benefits was lost. He hopes that the PPA will be offered again next fall and the district will apply early for maximum financial benefit.

Sub-committee reports:

Wellness Sub-committee representative Nicole Altieri attended a Town Board of Health Meeting regarding the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Amy Ebstein is the lead person serving and coordinating the process for the Cape Ann communities. The school committee would like action steps and the cost of producing the survey. Mrs. Altieri reported that the results from the survey belong to the school and that the survey may help acquire grant money. Amy Epstien and MaryBeth Murphy are willing to attend a school committee meeting to answer any unanswered questions. The committee discussed if the funds spent on the survey would best be served on already known issues such as vaping.

D. Other Business

V. Correspondence N/A

VI. Future Agenda Items

- A. K-12 Library/Technology (2/6)
- B. Superintendent's Report/FundFlow (2/6)
- C. K-12 Guidance/Deans (3/6)
- D. Social Emotional/Counselors (3/20)

VII. Calendar

- A. February 6, 2019, regular meeting
- B. March 6, 2019, regular meeting

VIII. Executive Session

Motion: Michael Kelley motioned to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:38 pm.
Seconded: Mary Porter seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Liebow
Superintendent of Schools