

ROCKPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING
Wednesday October 2, 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, Colleen Coogan, Richard Drost, Michael Kelley, and Cathy Reilly. Also, present were Superintendent Robert Liebow, Recording Secretary Ingrid Keating.

I. Opening of Regular Meeting

A. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Colleen Coogan motioned to approve the regular minutes from September 18, 2019
Seconded: Cathy Reilly seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Motion: Richard Drost motioned to approve the regular minutes from September 2, 2019
Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.
Vote: The motion carried 4-0. Colleen Coogan abstained.

B. Personnel Actions

Elementary School Monitor, Leah Ketchopulos, has resigned from her position effective October, 4, 2019.

II. Community Participation

A. Student Advisory Representative

Nathaniel Kirby reported that High School Music Teacher Nathan Cohen announced, to his students, that he will be taking a sabbatical the second half of the school year. The National Honor Society is working on the video project for the school committee, focusing on the music department, clubs and activities, the society is accepting applications for this school year. Twin Lights Tribune is looking to broaden it's base with staff contributions. Amanda Verga reported that the seniors had a college planning night, where they learned about the application and financial aid process. Students felt the ALICE assembly went well, could not see the tourniquet training and there are still some questions regarding how students get out of the building. Patrick Morin reported that the middle school had an open house last week; it went very well with student help. Grade 8 had a field trip to the state house. High school weekly assemblies are going very well, Dr. Waller sang Rockport High School alma mater. The school committee inquired about students in wheelchairs and participation in ALICE drills. HS Principal Amy Rose explained that the students have had discussions with staff explaining what would happen in a real life situation vs. what happens during a drill, such as the use of elevators during a drill but may not be available in a real incident. There are specific safety plans for students with disabilities, which have been worked on in collaboration with the police and fire departments.

B. Public Participation

High School parent Carrie DeFort attended the meeting to discuss scheduling for honors and music students. She supplied an email she sent to Principal Rose that outlined her frustration with scheduling music vs. electives. Her suggestion is to have music offered before and after school so that students can experience different electives during the day. Principal Rose explained that she has communicated back to Mrs. DeFort clarifying facts about the HS scheduling process, the complexities of scheduling and that even when schedules are created around music students there are (generally less than 3) that may be impacted in a negative way. Chairperson Kelley recommended that Mrs DeFort and Principal Rose have a follow-up conversation. He stated that the schools try to handcraft schedules to make it work, but due to limited blocks and the size of our school it is complex. Mr. Kelley asked the superintendent to discuss the constraints and possible resolutions with the Administrative Team.

Superintendent Liebow presented the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendent Academic Award to Nathaniel Kirby. Nathaniel's accomplishments are: 2019 National Merit Corporation Scholarship

Semifinalist, exhausted course offerings at RHS, will graduate with 8 AP classes and 7 college classes, AP Scholar of Distinction, and a perfect score of 800 on three SAT Subject tests.

III. Discussion and Recommended Action

A. MCAS/AYP

Superintendent Liebow presented the MCAS scores and accountability reports from spring 2019. One of his concerns is chronic absenteeism. The high school has implemented an “N grade” rule, but feel they need to re-evaluate to help avoid abuse. Elementary Principal Todd Simendinger took on absenteeism pretty strongly at the open house. Middle School Principal Amanda LaMantie finds that it is not a unique struggle and does not want to pursue court actions since it would take the student out of school for another day. Discussion on looking at how other districts handle chronic absenteeism and what are some of the factors beyond the students control such as having to babysit for younger siblings during the school day. Next Steps: the elementary school will focus on English Language Arts/Math subgroup student achievement and growth, chronic absenteeism and K-5 science program and assessment review. The middle school will focus on peer observations and instructional feedback, consult and more professional development on UDL, interventionist teacher, process for district IST, social/emotional health, moving data to Galileo system, collaborate closely with curriculum coordinators, additional core class time, and increase option of project based through FLEX. The high school will continue curriculum writing, continue professional development of UDL expand use of Galileo, pre and post standard based assessments to Freshmen through their seminars, RtI team and intervention process, problem-solving/data teams, protocols to focus teachers towards solutions rather than problems, and routine data analysis

B. RHS AP Report

High School Principal Amy Rose presented a Five Year AP Score Summary; she explained that there is nationally accredited curriculum that has to be followed. The AP website offers both teacher and student resources that provide teaching modules and monitoring of students’ progress.

C. RTA MOA’s

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve the MOA, as presented, between the Rockport Teachers Association and the Rockport School Committee regarding payment for 5 additional work days during the summer for the high school guidance counselor

Seconded: Colleen Coogan seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Motion: Cathy Reilly motioned to approve the MOA, as presented, between the Rockport Teachers Association and the Rockport School Committee regarding conditions in order to find a candidate to fill the position of MS/HS Music Teacher for the 2019-2020 school year.

Seconded: Richard Drost seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

D. Field Trip N/A

E. Policy revise/review N/A

F. Warrants and Payroll

IV. Information and proposals

A. School Council Update N/A

B. Donations

Mr. William Flynn donated 100+ art boards, acrylics and gold and silver leaf to the RHS Art Department.

C. Updates

Sub-committee reports:

The Communications Sub-Committee met on September 25, 2019 and created a task list which included creating a draft letter to Representative Tarr and Ferrante commenting on school funding, MASC guidance regarding override outreach, distribution of school budget report, the elementary video to supplement the NHS video, and themes for the videos.

Superintendent Report:

D. Other Business

The CASE contract between Rockport and Gloucester has been signed. Timelines and deliverables were discussed.

V. Correspondence

Response from Chairperson Michael Kelley to Wally Hess.

VI. Future Agenda Items

- A. RTI report (10/16)
- B. Capital Improvement Proposals (10/16)
- C. 3 Year Strategic Plan Review (10/16)
- D. Superintendent's Report/FundFlow (TBA)

VII. Calendar

- A. October 16, 2019, regular meeting
- B. November 6, 2019, regular meeting

VIII. Executive Session

- Motion: At 10:12 pm Colleen Coogan motioned to adjourn to executive session, to discuss possible misconduct (under Provision 5) and will not reconvene in open session after the executive session.
- Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.
- Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Liebow
Superintendent of Schools