

ROCHESTER-STOCKBRIDGE UNIFIED DISTRICT

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2018 – 6:30 PM

@ ROCHESTER SCHOOL

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order
  - 1.1. Carl called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.
  - 1.2. In attendance were school board members Carl Groppe, Amy Wildt, Ethan Bowen, Janie Feinberg, and Jenny Austin; Superintendent Bruce Labs, Co-Principals Bonnie Bourne and Lindy Stetson; and one member of the public.
2. Adjustments to the Agenda
  - 2.1. One Planet – add as 8.4
  - 2.2. Curriculum transparency – add as 8.5
  - 2.3. Building planning committee – add as 8.6
  - 2.4. Executive session – add as 12.
3. Public Comment – none
4. Consent Agenda
  - 4.1. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, September 4, 2018 (Regular)
    - 4.1.1. Jenny to edit 9.1.1 to add reference to approval of the standing director's order to disburse payroll without board members needing to directly release the funds. Minutes approved with this revision to be added.
5. Board Comment
  - 5.1. Amy asked when the financial audit would be complete. Bruce noted the auditors are working on this. Ginger is currently out sick with pneumonia. Bruce noted there are ten budgets being wrapped up, and six current budgets that will need to be put together. Audited financial numbers will be presented next month.
  - 5.2. Bonnie asked when school budgets are voted on. Last year it was Tuesday, May 22. If the Board wanted to change it we would need to have a special meeting in advance to make the change ahead of time. Bonnie noted that if it is pushed back the board will have more "real" numbers to work with. Carl noted that if the budget gets voted down there needs to be time before the State's July 1 deadline to go for a revote. Carl noted the Stockbridge vote used to be in May in order to get better tuition numbers to put

into the budget. Amy noted Rochester had moved the school budget vote to April to separate from the Town Meeting day. The annual meeting is currently the fourth Tuesday of May.

## 6. Principals Report

- 6.1. Bonnie and Lindy passed out a principals report as well as goals discussed at a staff working meeting on September 21.
- 6.2. Joint field trips have already started, including apple picking for K-1; Stockbridge grades 5/6 and Rochester grade 6 is going to Starbase in Rutland for 5 days; both school grades 5/6 are going to the Boston Science Museum; both schools grades 5/6 went snorkeling together; and Pre-K at both schools went to a Rainbow Fish play together.
- 6.3. On Sept. 21, a half-day for students, both faculty got together in Rochester to discuss school goals.
- 6.4. Bruce noted that the SU is beginning to implement a new supervision and evaluation model, the Danielson Model, that is an SU-wide initiative.
- 6.5. Both campuses are beginning testing assessments and will be reporting on these soon.
- 6.6. There was a fundraiser at Luce Farm in Stockbridge that was a success.
- 6.7. Stockbridge currently has a weekly newsletter that goes home with students every Thursday in their "Thursday folders". Bonnie noted the goal is to use this example for producing a newsletter in Rochester. Bonnie noted that the starting point is likely to be a monthly newsletter for Rochester students starting in the end of October.
- 6.8. Janie asked if there is a literacy program goal and whether the existing system is being evaluated. It was noted that both schools are currently following the Fountas and Pinnell model. It was noted that there is a desire in both schools for assessment scores to be improved upon. SU-wide the goal is to have students at reading grade level by the end of grade 3.
- 6.9. Bruce's Report
  - 6.9.1. Bruce reminded the board that the last board training is Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 6pm, at Bethel. The State Board was at Bethel today and included a panel with adults and students to see how mergers are going. The focus of the meeting was around the schools that had not merged.
  - 6.9.2. Amy Taft, a literacy expert and principal, has been asked to do a quote on assessing the SU's literacy program. Janie noted that Fountas and Pinnell doesn't necessarily meet best practices. Janie noted that there needs to be more than just a tier 1 program. Bonnie noted a tier 1 should meet most kids, but others will need more time and utilize either tier 2 and tier 3. Different teachers are using different programs and this makes it difficult to have effective professional development when the SU is not using a unified system throughout. Bruce noted the current plan is to have Amy spend a total of 6 days SU-wide in the schools. Bonnie noted she will be asking teachers in advance for information, so the total amount of time for the assessment will be longer than 6 days. Janie noted that

for a comprehensive assessment more time is typically spent in the schools to watch teachers, know what they are teaching, etc. Ethan wondered whether we should be doing a more thorough audit. Bruce noted that Amy could perhaps come back, and this may not be the end of the road with this effort.

- 6.9.3. Carl noted in the past curriculum development and related professional development has been an SU expense, and if there is an increased need for professional development that we will need to know where this expense is being charged. Bruce noted for now the schools should wait on requests for curriculum development to make sure that we know what systems we want to move forward with.
- 6.9.4. A data warehouse was purchased that will assist schools with evaluating assessment data. Bruce noted the goal for kids reading at grade level by the end of grade 3, we need to be working with teachers up through grade 6 to prepare them for middle school. Ethan asked why this is just now a major initiative to attain grade level reading by the end of grade 3. Bruce noted this goal has been in the strategic plan. The SU has been busy with mergers over the last few years, and now are going forward with working on this goal in the strategic plan. Bonnie noted last year at Rochester kids were getting 60% of the time that best practices recommend for math and literacy. Ethan questioned if we are not following best practices, whether it is beneficial to increase the time. Bonnie noted that there is going to be more emphasis on making sure the proper literacy teaching occurs.
- 6.9.5. Principals evaluations are to be complete in December, therefore asking teacher evaluations to be complete before then.
- 6.9.6. Both schools working on a plan for safety procedures to be in place.

## 7. Action Items

- 7.1. Consider and possible acceptance of Quitclaim Deed for Rochester School Property\*
- 7.2. Motion to approve acceptance of the Quitclaim Deed conveying the Rochester School Property from the Rochester Town School District\*
- 7.3. Consider and possible acceptance of Quitclaim Deed for Stockbridge Central School Property\*
- 7.4. Motion to approve acceptance of the Quitclaim Deed conveying the Stockbridge Central School Property from the Stockbridge Town School District\*
- 7.5. \* The above motions are a matter of the separate Rochester and Stockbridge school boards to approve.

## 8. Discussion Items

- 8.1. School District Goals

- 8.1.1. Handout written by Bonnie Bourne and Lindy Stetson
- 8.2. RSUD Name Feedback
  - 8.2.1. At the recent all-staff meeting attended by both school staff, staff thought the name-change was coming together too quickly and thought it should come together more organically. Janie noted that she has heard from people in Bethel that the name change was a bigger change mentally than what was expected. Bruce had noted that it was very forthcoming in Bethel but still people were surprised when the time came. It was decided that a name-change for the Rochester-Stockbridge school district is not an immediate need.
- 8.3. Board Development Proposal – no discussion
- 8.4. One Planet
  - 8.4.1. Table for the November meeting in order to have One Planet representative attend.
- 8.5. Curriculum transparency
  - 8.5.1. Ethan noted he has no way of knowing what his teacher is supposed to be teaching his son. What could the teacher put on paper for parents to know what is going on? What should parents be working on at home? It was noted that sometimes the engagement doesn't happen until there are "red flags". In addition, there may be kids that are ahead in the upper grade of a classroom that need to be challenged. Bonnie and Lindy took note of these questions to think about the best way to communicate these to parents.
- 8.6. Building planning committee
  - 8.6.1. Ethan noted that half the lights in the music room are out in Rochester.
  - 8.6.2. Ethan noted that one of the bathrooms is not working properly. Bonnie noted that there have been repeat efforts to get this bathroom in working order, but is still not working properly. Ethan noted that the White River Valley Players may be willing to help with funding to get this fixed, as it is in the area where they use on occasion. Bonnie will get a quote on what needs to be done to get this fixed, and Ethan will check with the White River Valley Players to see if this is something they are interested in contributing to in order to get this fixed.
  - 8.6.3. Ethan noted that the second bathroom in the lobby, men's room, the light doesn't work.
  - 8.6.4. Next steps for a building committee
    - 8.6.4.1. Bonnie has talked to resident and parent Cricket McCusker, who suggested having an architect led assessment. Bonnie is trying to get example report(s) from other schools (including Tunbridge and/or others) that have had similar assessments conducted to use as a starting point to getting an engineering or architect led assessment.
    - 8.6.4.2. The board is still interested in a building committee, but at this time waiting to have more input from an architect or engineer prior to getting this effort started.

- 8.6.4.3. Bonnie noted it was recommended to set the temperature in areas of the building that are not in use to 55 degrees. If it is going to be very cold, set the temperature up slightly for the short term, and then reset to 55 degrees. In addition, as noted at prior meetings, it was recommended to Bonnie not to drain the sprinkler system at this time.
- 8.6.4.4. There was the question regarding whether funds from the sale of the Dandelion Daycare could fund the facility assessment conducted by an architect or engineer. Amy noted the Dandelion Daycare funds went into an education fund; this is a generic fund where funds could be used for such.

9. Public Comment – none

10. Other – none

11. Next Meeting Date

11.1. **Tuesday, November 6, 2018 @ Stockbridge, 6:30 pm**

12. Executive Session

12.1. Board went into executive session at 8:44pm to discuss a personnel matter

12.2. Board came out of executive session at 8:50pm

13. Adjourn

13.1. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Jenny Austin