

ROCHESTER-STOCKBRIDGE UNIFIED DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2018 – 6:30 PM
@ STOCKBRIDGE CAMPUS
APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order
 - 1.1. Meeting called to order by Carl at 6:42pm
 - 1.2. In attendance were school board members Carl Groppe, Amy Wildt, Ethan Bowen, Megan Payne, Janie Feinberg, and Jenny Austin; school administration co-principal Lindy Stetson; supervisory representation Bruce Labs and Ginger Maston; One Planet program coordinator Joanne McDonnell; and Todd Binzen on behalf of the Windsor County Partners.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda
 - 2.1. Student Council – 8.3
 - 2.2. Newsletter – 8.4
 - 2.3. VAST / Drivers Education – 8.5
 - 2.4. Executive session added – 10

3. Public Comment – None

4. Consent Agenda
 - 4.1. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, October 2, 2018 (Regular)
 - 4.1.1. Janie motioned to accept the minutes, Ethan seconded. Minutes approved.

5. Board Comment
 - 5.1. Amy noted that she wanted to congratulate the PTO with the recent Book Fair. It was a success for both schools. Jenny noted that the Stockbridge PTO pays for a book for each SCS student, and the profit from sales offsets the cost for providing books to each student.
 - 5.2. Ethan commented on the success of the recent White River Valley shows with over 500 attendees. Janie commented that this was a great use of the space and noted that the auditorium is a gem and could be an important place. There may be a more appropriate name for the space than the “Rochester High School Auditorium”. There are challenges with the space such as the furnace not working adequately, bathroom issues, etc. Amy and Megan’s daughters were involved in the show, and Janie noted that we need to get Stockbridge kids involved.

6. Reports to the Board

- 6.1. Superintendent's Report - Goals/Calendar
 - 6.1.1. Bruce handed out a list of superintendent goals / calendar
- 6.2. Principal's Report
 - 6.2.1. Lindy provided a principal report with detailed report. A few comments included the following.
 - 6.2.2. Students in grades 5/6 have started bonding through the Boston Field Trip. Kids were sent with disposable cameras to take pictures, and it will be interesting to see what they captured.
 - 6.2.3. Kindergarten and first grade classes, combined total about 30 students, have a lot planned are developing great relationships with each other.
 - 6.2.4. Carl asked if we have documentation of these activities. Lindy noted there are lots of pictures being taken. Carl suggested a grade 5/6 project could be to put together a video showing the schools coming together and the video could be incorporated into the Annual Meeting.
 - 6.2.5. Bonnie and Lindy attended professional development together.
 - 6.2.6. Teachers have written goals to work on over the course of the year.
 - 6.2.7. Interviews are currently being conducted for the administration assistant position at SCS.
 - 6.2.8. Rochester School is doing a shelter drill on Nov. 17.
- 6.3. Business Manager's Report
 - 6.3.1. A new payroll staff person began on Monday. However, there was another resignation that same day. Ginger is working with a mentor working on the FY20 budget.
 - 6.3.2. Current expenses through the end of October were distributed. Amy asked if there are any concerns with any numbers that are significantly over budget as compared to where we are in the school year? Ginger noted that the SU assessment is billed quarterly, and that they are billed in advance, therefore that is why the SU assessment expenditures are higher than the 33% that we are through the fiscal year. Additional items that are currently expensed at a higher percentage than where we are through the school year are library services and physical education.
 - 6.3.3. Amy asked when tuition is billed out? These are billed and paid per semester. The first is usually billed in December and the next in April.
 - 6.3.4. Ginger noted we will not see final budget numbers for FY18 for another month. The auditors come in tomorrow for more work. Carl noted we typically get preliminary audit numbers in advance. The last numbers the board has received were in September. Ginger to forward the board the revised draft.
 - 6.3.5. Ethan asked about the turnover at the SU. Ginger noted this is likely from stress due to new software, new coding structure per the State, union contracting, health insurance restructuring, etc. Carl asked if the SU has looked at the number of our staffing levels are compared to other SUs. Ginger noted that our SU has more districts than most other SUs with about the same staffing level.
- 6.4. One Planet Report

- 6.4.1. Carrie McDonnell handed out projected One Planet budget numbers for FY19-20. The program is not asking the RSUD board for more than what has been asked for in the past from the school budgets.
- 6.4.2. The overall goal is to fund 8%, or \$74,000, of the total budget via school board budgeting. This is then broken down for each town in the SU, with Rochester at 7.5% and Stockbridge at 6.0% of the \$74,000. Carrie recommends maintaining the current amounts of \$10,000 and \$9,300. The program aims to have 40% coming from subsidies and families. Right now, these schools' funds account for approximately 27%. The area has a high number of kids that qualify for free/reduced lunch but do not necessarily qualify for subsidies.
- 6.4.3. Carl asked about the Town budgets for the program and whether taking money from two places is common. Carrie noted Rochester wants the money the Town contributes to go towards scholarships for summer. The Town of Stockbridge does not typically request that funds go towards a certain line item. Ethan asked if they have asked the Towns for more money in the past, noting that Rochester pays \$2,920 versus \$5,000 by the Town of Stockbridge. The board suggests asking the Towns of Rochester and Stockbridge for the same amount of money.
- 6.4.4. Funding for the One Planet program for FY19-20 is currently projected to be \$925,000 for the entire school year, for the entire district, which includes eight sites during the school year and six sites during the summer.
- 6.4.5. Jenny asked if there is a minimum number of kids per site needed for funding. Carrie noted there is no minimum number of kids required for funding, but the more the better.

7. PALS North - Mentoring Program presenter

- 7.1. Todd Binzen presented on behalf of the Windsor County Partners, Building Healthy Communities Through Youth Mentors.
- 7.2. Windsor County Partners is a non-profit organization based on matching kids from age seven through middle school age with adults in the area. Typically, the guidance counselor will recognize that a child may need an additional adult in their life for mentorship. The hardest part is typically finding mentors. There are many benefits for mentorship, but one of the goals is added stability in kids' lives and providing a positive role model.
- 7.3. The program requests mentors spend 6-8 hours per month with the child and ask that mentors commit to a 12-month mentorship. Janie noted she knows someone that was a mentor for a kid from age 9 to 17 and made a tremendous impact on this kid's life. The program is currently supporting about 20 mentorship relationships, which is on the lower side compared to prior. At times the program has had times when they were lacking mentors.
- 7.4. Todd can be reached via email at palsnorth@outlook.com.

8. Discussion Items

- 8.1. Career Change Assistance

- 8.1.1. Program where the board can offer a retirement incentive to teachers that have been at the school for at least 10 years at 60% of their salary over a course of three years. The board offers a number of slots and eligible teachers can apply for it. The teachers with the highest seniority get the slots if there are more teachers that apply for it than slots available. The board needs to announce to teachers by Dec. 1 if they are opening up the program for the 19-20 school year.
- 8.1.2. Lindy noted there are strong senior teachers in both schools. It can be a nice gesture to take care of those teachers that have taken care of our kids. Ethan motioned to not offer any career change assistance for the coming school year. Jenny seconded. Motion approved.
- 8.2. Building RFP - Possible Action
 - 8.2.1. Lindy/Bonnie have written a request to the board to put out an RFP for a comprehensive existing conditions assessment and code review.
 - 8.2.2. Lindy questioned whether we want to include the Rochester Elementary School into the assessment. It was noted that both buildings should be included so that the study.
 - 8.2.3. Bruce noted that there is money available through the sale of Rochester's Dandelion Daycare that could be used to fund this study. The money from that sale is in a general education fund.
 - 8.2.4. The study will help to come up with a list of priorities that need to be done and also help determine where the energies should come in for either buildings and recommendations for usage recommendations.
 - 8.2.5. Carl noted the study could provide recommendations for making the buildings efficient and modernized.
 - 8.2.6. Jenny asked what the timeline will be for the RFP and architect/engineer study and what information the board will have for assisting in development of next year's budget. A schedule has not been set yet. Jenny noted that the turnaround for the architect/engineer will take some time, and that the consultant may not be able to jump into the project on day #1 they are hired. It was noted that a line item for facility related items can be put into the study, with actual specific uses to be determined next year.
 - 8.2.7. It was noted that this year the Rochester School heating is to be tracked by building to help get a better handle on actual costs with reduced high school heating.
 - 8.2.8. Goal of getting RFP in the newspaper next week.
- 8.3. Student Council
 - 8.3.1. Ethan noted that his son Wilder was interested in Rochester Elementary having an elementary student council between the two schools. Bruce noted there is interactive equipment at both schools that can be utilized for kids to talk to each other between the two facilities. Ethan to work with Lindy and Bonnie regarding pursuing student council.
- 8.4. Newsletter

- 8.4.1. Lisa Blair is looking for information from the board to include in the Rochester school's monthly newsletter. Jenny will send a monthly bulleted list to Lisa Blair.
- 8.5. VAST / drivers ed
 - 8.5.1. Regarding a recent question from the community, Bruce noted the board does not have the authority to pay for fees associated with schooling, and that only tuition can be paid because VAST students are technically not a student in the district per the lawyer.
 - 8.5.2. Regarding a recent question from the community, Megan asked about drivers' education fees for students and how they are paid. It was noted that at Sharon Academy tuition doesn't include the cost for drivers' education class, but in Randolph the cost is included. It was noted that per State statute drivers' education costs are only covered if the program is approved through the Agency of Education. Carl noted that at Sharon Academy the parents pay for this class. It was noted that each middle/high school has different programs, different classes, different sports teams, etc. It is recommended that parents research these offerings when they decide which middle/high school they send their child to in order to fully understand any fees that they may need to pay. Jenny noted that it could get into a slippery slope situation with future parents asking for other reimbursements, such as paying for their child to utilize another schools sports program or other offering. Megan noted it may be helpful if the school can provide input to parents for how their students can access drivers education.

9. Public Comment – none

10. Executive session

- 10.1. Janie made a move to go into executive session at 8:59 pm. Ethan seconded.
- 10.2. The meeting came out of executive session at 9:26 pm

11. Other

- 11.1. The board accepts the resignation of Casey Reiboldt, administrative assistant at Stockbridge Central School, and wishes her the best in her future endeavors.

12. Next Meeting Date

- 12.1. Tuesday, December 4, 2018 @ Rochester Campus Elementary Library**

13. Adjourn

- 13.1. Meeting adjourned at 9:28 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Austin