

ROCHESTER-STOCKBRIDGE UNIFIED DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2019 – 6:30 PM
@ STOCKBRIDGE CAMPUS
DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order
 - 1.1. Meeting called to order by Carl Groppe at 6:41pm
 - 1.2. In attendance were school board members Carl Groppe, Amy Wildt, Janie Feinberg, and Jenny Austin; administration Bonnie Bourne and Lindy Stetson; SU representation Bruce Labs and Marilyn (interim business manager); and no members of the public.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda
 - 2.1. Janie's discussion with Mary Ellen regarding literacy – 7.2
 - 2.2. Haiti – 7.3
 - 2.3. Black River Design meeting – 7.4
 - 2.4. Annual Meeting and Logistics of School Report – 7.5

3. Public Comment – no public present

4. Consent Agenda
 - 4.1. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, February 5, 2019 (Regular)
 - 4.1.1. Meeting minutes approved.
 - 4.2. Approve Minutes of Wednesday, February 13, 2019 (Special)
 - 4.2.1. Table to regular April meeting. Amy made a motion, Janie seconded. Motion approved.

5. Board Comment – none

6. Reports to the Board
 - 6.1. Superintendent's Report
 - 6.1.1. Tunbridge, Chelsea, Sharon, Roylton/Bethel, and Strafford annual school budgets all passed.
 - 6.1.2. About 30 people from the SU are having two-day training sessions soon in Massachusetts. Talking to Amy Toth regarding potential future training. Janie asked why the P&F staff aren't coming to us to present training. Bruce thought that we got a lower price for materials due to the large amount of materials. Vans cost approximately \$1000 to take the trip down. The SU is paying for staff to attend. There are grant monies going towards paying for this, and the cost to attend does not come out of school budgets. Carl asked if the seminar costs is professional development that the staff are choosing to go to, in lieu of additional summer training, and Bruce and the administration said that is true, that staff that have available professional development (PD) time available are

choosing whether they would like to attend. Carl asked what the cost is for this training. Bruce noted that he does not know off the top of his head what the total cost is. Janie commented she is not questioning the professional development, she is questioning spending \$200K in materials by the SU and then not having them come to us to provide PD. Bruce believed that Mary Ellen has negotiated as much as she can to get what we can out of what we are paying. Janie commented that she has never seen an implementation plan like this without getting some sort of “free” service out of the deal. Lindy commented that teachers going to the training will be sharing what they have learned with other staff members when they return. At Stockbridge there are two primary teachers and one interventionalists going, and one staff member at Rochester is attending. Carl noted that he would like to be aware of 5-digit expenses. Lindy noted that there was oversight from each principal, Lindy and Bonnie, approving staff to go if they had professional development available. Bonnie noted that her level of understanding and expectations is that she would not think to bring a great level of detail regarding professional development to the Board. Amy noted that the only time she would expect to see a great level of detail is if the amount would impact the school budget.

- 6.1.3. Bruce noted that he has been trying to get the audits done by the auditor, SU wide. Marilyn noted that the SU has the numbers, but until the audit has been completed the numbers can’t be considered “final”. Marilyn noted that due to one of the auditors typically used by schools closing, the auditor we are using has been very busy.

6.2. Principal’s Report

- 6.2.1. No written report available.
- 6.2.2. Kids returned to school today from break (today was a make-up day due to the number of snow days this school year).
- 6.2.3. Wednesday night there is an open house for grade 7-12 school choice.
- 6.2.4. Thursday is the last winter wellness day.
- 6.2.5. I Love to Read Week events with various community members reading to kids, including Bruce Labs, Janie Feinberg, two local authors, and others. There was a field trip to Luce Farm the Friday before vacation to end I Love to Read Week.

6.3. Business Manager’s Report - FY20 Draft Budget

- 6.3.1. Budget handed out is draft #1 dated 03/05/2019. Various comments were made regarding the budget presented, with specific requests made by the Board for the administration and/or SU to look into. One section that Bonnie noted needs attention from the administration is the building grounds section, which needs to be clarified. Jenny noted that the totals shown are a “red flag” as it shows an increase from last year in this section. There are still other line items that need to be checked.
- 6.3.2. Jenny commented that the administration needs to be thinking about how we can keep moving forward with providing efficiencies with the merger.
- 6.3.3. Marilyn noted that despite the cost per equalized pupil being above the threshold, the overall impact to taxes would result in a decreased tax rate. This

is due to the change in CLA values for the Towns. Carl noted that we need the next round of the budget from the SU to be under the spending threshold.

- 6.3.4. Bonnie noted one new item in the budget is a swim program for kids in the lower grades (excluding pre-K), that is more of a “survivor” skills program than swim lessons as it goes over safety in the water.

7. Discussion Items

7.1. Municipal Sidewalk Request

- 7.1.1. Bonnie noted there was an inquiry from the Town regarding the potential for Rochester School to plow the sidewalk in vicinity of the school which the Town currently plows. Bonnie noted that at this time we do not have the personnel to do this additional work, and the Board agreed.

7.2. Update on Literacy Work

- 7.2.1. Janie met with Mary Ellen regarding the literacy program. She is convinced that the SU is committed to improving literacy across the SU. Janie noted that achievement should improve with the literacy improvement implementation plan due to enthusiasm of teachers, professional development, etc. However, she thinks that they may not go up as much as there is the potential for. Mary Ellen said that this is a process, and not a program. 15% of students at Rochester are at proficiency. She didn't have the rate for Stockbridge at their meeting. Janie bothered by the proposed program and F&P not giving free materials with the purchase of \$200K in materials. Mary Ellen couldn't give Janie a rubric nor the materials that were analyzed for comparing programs. could be potential for. Carl asked Bruce if Mary Ellen come to the next meeting to give us more information about the planned improvements for the literacy program. Everyone agreed that teachers need to have adequate skills to achieve success.
- 7.2.2. Bonnie noted that we need to shift the paradigm of what it takes for kids to be successful at reading. Bonnie noted that getting kids into the pre-school program that would otherwise not go to pre-school would help for some kids. Bruce noted some kids are behind when they are coming into pre-school.
- 7.2.3. Bonnie suggested having one item on each school board agenda to be talking about student achievement.

7.3. Haiti

- 7.3.1. Janie presented information about Walter Gallup, whom goes on a number of missions doing volunteer medical work. He would like to convert a truck and send to Haiti. Walter was wondering if there is interest in having the Rochester and Stockbridge students paint the truck and he can talk to them about what he does. This could be an opportunity to teach about showing kindness to others. Bonnie and Lindy to discuss and come to the next month's meeting to make a recommendation. Janie will let Walter know that the schools are interested in discussing, and Janie will send contact information to Bonnie and Lindy.

7.4. Black River Design meeting

- 7.4.1. Amy noted that the administration (Bonnie and Lindy), Jenny, and herself met with Black River Design (BRD) this afternoon to discuss the facilities assessment study. The end date for the work is May 1. BRD will be talking to Bonnie and Lindy to schedule a time to go into the buildings to make measurements and have discussions with the principals. BRD will be sending a draft contract to RSUD.
- 7.5. Annual Meeting and Logistics of School Report
 - 7.5.1. There was brief discussion regarding dissemination of materials related to the annual meeting, primarily regarding how reports are addressed and postage. There was mention of wondering whether we make the report available electronically and send out postcards regarding where it is available. It was noted that if we change our distribution method of the annual report that we will need to check and make sure whether the proposed change is acceptable or not.
 - 7.5.2. Amy wondered if we should reschedule the annual meeting date (May 28th, SCS, at 7pm) because it is a day after Memorial Day. It was decided to keep the date as it is currently scheduled.
 - 7.5.3. It was noted that childcare will be provided at the meeting.
- 8. Policy Adoption
 - 8.1. Act to Adopt Policy C7 - Student Attendance
 - 8.1.1. Bruce noted that this is already a policy, and that the revised policy is worded such that the attendance policy of a student is based on the school policy that the student attends (not the town the student lives in). Amy made the notion to approve the revised policy. Janie seconded. Motion approved to modify the policy.
 - 8.1.2. Bruce noted that 21 new policies are being worked on, and there are four future policies to be written.
- 9. Other – none
- 10. Next Meeting Date
 - 10.1. Tuesday, April 2, 2019 @ Rochester Campus-Elementary Library
- 11. Adjourn
 - 11.1. Meeting adjourned at 10:00pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Austin