

ROCKPORT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING  
Wednesday May 20, 2020  
Via Zoom

Chairperson Michael Kelley called the regular meeting of the Rockport School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Present were Nicole Altieri, Colleen Coogan, Richard Drost, Michael Kelley, and Cathy Reilly. Also, present were Superintendent Robert Liebow and Recording Secretary Ingrid Keating.

I. Opening of Regular Meeting

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Nicole Altieri motioned to approve the regular minutes from April 29 & May 6, 2020 and executive minutes from April 29, 2020 as presented.  
Seconded: Richard Drost seconded the motion.  
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

A. Personnel Actions

II. Community Participation

A. Student Advisory Representative

Student Advisory Representative Nathaniel Kirby reported that the National Honor Society is holding a fundraiser, through a GoFundMe page, to raise money for nurses and other professional staff at Addison Gilbert Hospital to be used at their discretion. There was a elementary staff parade by vehicle, throughout town to ride by as many students homes as possible. The band and orchestra classes continue to produce videos. The AP tests have been hit or miss for students, some students had tech problems others were fine with the online platform, many students opted out since the mandatory requirement to take the test was waived this year.

B. Public Participation

III. Discussion and Recommended Action

A. Update on remote learning and communications with families

Mr. Liebow reported that the opening for next year is still up in the air. The CDC has new guidelines as to how it may or may not look, he is waiting for the Massachusetts version. Mr. Liebow wonders how to separate students on a bus without several runs, will lunch be in classrooms, desks 6 feet apart all facing forward, will there be staggered schedules or alternating days, bathrooms would need cleaning every half hour, and how to cover that with custodial staff. There are some big hurdles, he will wait for recommendations from the state and tailor it to what we need in Rockport.

Elementary Principal Todd Simendinger reported that the standards have been fully implemented which has caused some stress with the parents because there is more content. He has seen additional needs around social/emotional and behavior at home, guidance has increased their support. The elementary staff parade was an amazing success and wanted to thank the Rockport Police Department for helping with traffic. He believes that the staff appreciated it as much as the students and saw a lot of support from the town's people.

Assistant Principal/Curriculum Coordinator Heather Castonguay was thankful for all the community support they received during the staff parade.

Middle School Principal Amanda LaMantia reported that the transition to the recommended standards is going well. She is concerned with engagement at home and is putting supports in place for those who are struggling. She has also seen an uptick in social/emotional needs and her staff is trying to support as best they can remotely. They are working on a virtual 5<sup>th</sup> grade transition tour for the 1<sup>st</sup> week in June, the Dean

and counselors will do the introductions. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade team will be meeting virtually with 5<sup>th</sup> grade families and will offer a Q & A night. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade will produce a traditional video, there will be a virtual awards nights, and graduation packets, including gift and a certificate, will be delivered to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

High School Principal Amy Rose reported that staff continues to encourage vigor and they discuss how to keep the students engaged. The teachers have been really amazing with the challenges being outside of their norm. She is also seeing an increase in social/emotional issues and sadly thinks it will continue. They are working on the graduation ceremony on June 5<sup>th</sup>. The graduates will line up in Ramsden Way and proceed to a stage to receive their diploma and then on to an area to take photos. She has plans for a more formal graduation August 5<sup>th</sup> if possible.

Director of Student Services Martha explained the current student information system and Aspens version has an add-on. When she used Aspen in the past the new referrals had to be entered by hand and when converting over to a new system they usually ran both at the same time for one year. She discussed District Issued Devices with the committee which brought up many questions regarding insurance, user fees, research other districts and how they handle DID's.

The committee thinks that maybe Monty Hitschler could research options and bring back his recommendations on a few options that might work for Rockport.

B. Technology FY21 and shared services review

Director of I.S. & Technologies Monty Hitschler presented his Rockport Master Technology Plan. It includes planning goals, curriculum integration, staff professional development, administrative efficacy, major project action plan, hardware replacement, and communication/safety/security. Remote learning is the main focus right now and he is researching different options to provide hardware to students who need off campus and would the district need to implement user fees to cover damage or replacement costs. Mr. Hitschler reported that it would be ideal to have a centrally based data system that included SPED and Health data. Suggestion from the committee is to provide a plan sorted out with prioritization, what is a new initiative, and what is funded? Mr. Hitschler stated that next year the focused is on Aspen, professional development, and BYOD. Next summer, if the district is ready, another component could be added to Aspen, depending on cost. The committee discussed available mobility of devices back and forth to school. Mr. Hitschler feels that he can provide equipment at the current level and maybe up to 350 requests, the biggest expense, currently, would be software and connectivity. The committee feels it will need to think through equity issues and user fees. They would like to see some options, maybe research what other schools do, and bring a few recommendations back to the committee for consideration. The committee also suggested a presentation format that would break out a general vs. planned accountability and what has been accomplished to date

C. Policy revise/review

Second reading for the following policies:

File JB: Equal Educational Opportunities

File JF: School Admissions

File JH: Student Absences and Excuses

File JHD: Exclusions and exemptions from school attendance

First reading for the following policies:

File JC: Attendance Areas (do not need this policy, do not have multiple schools/campuses)

File JFBB: School Choice (Reviewed)

File JFBB-1 School Choice

File JICFA Prohibition of Hazing (adoption)

File JICFA-E: Hazing (revision)

File JIH: Interrogation and Searches (revision)

File JII: Student Complaints and Grievances (revision)

Motion: Colleen Coogan motioned to approve the revisions to File BEDH Public Participation at School Committee Meetings and File IC/ICA School Year/School Calendar as presented and the removal of File IHA Basic Instructional Program, File JLA Student Insurance Program, File JLD Guidance Program and File JP: Student Gifts and Solicitations  
Seconded: Cathy Reilly seconded the motion.  
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

D. Warrants and Payroll

IV. Information and proposals

- A. School Council Update N/A
- B. Donations N/A
- C. Updates N/A
- D. Other Business N/A

V. Correspondence

VI. Future Agenda Items

- A. School Improvement Plans (6/17)
- B. School Handbooks (6/17)
- D. School Start Times Recommendation (TBD)
- E. Superintendent's Report/FundFlow

VII. Calendar

- A. June 3, 2020, Regular Meeting
- B. June 17, 2020, Regular Meeting
- C. TBD, Town Meet

. Executive Session

Motion: At 9:44 pm Colleen Coogan motioned to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, and will reconvene in Open Session.  
Seconded: Nicole Altieri seconded the motion.  
Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Roll call: Nicole Altieri yes  
Colleen Coogan yes  
Richard Drost yes  
Michael Kelley yes  
Cathy Reilly yes

Return to Open Session at 9:58 pm.

Mr. Liebow clarified that if there are any user fees for technology equipment that he would bring that before the school committee before moving forward.

The committee made the following motion:

Motion: Colleen Coogan motioned to the negotiated revisions and contract adjustment to the Rockport Teachers Association Agreement in response to Covid-19 pandemic, that were presented in executive session.  
Seconded: Richard Drost seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Jodi Goodhue reported that the RTA met yesterday, with about 75% of their membership in attendance, some members had logistical questions about moving into the future. There was no debate and the vote was unanimous to accept the revisions and modifications as presented. Support was to keep their unit in tact as much as possible. Mr. Liebow presented a powerpoint and explained the agreement. Mr. Liebow was so proud to work with Whitney Day and Jodi Goodhue on this agreement, the association has an understanding of the situation and has partnered with administration to have the least effect possible on our students. The school committee is very impressed by the sacrifice from all the staff.

Mr. Liebow hopes that the same discussions are happening town wide and other departments are looking hard at areas that can be adjusted, there is a lot on the table and we can only control our budget. Mr. Liebow is sure those discussions are happening, but ours is now public and it is over and above the override amount that has already been withdrawn. Jodi Goodhue did state that that was the first question the RTA members had, asking what other town departments doing. She also noted that some stipended positions are filled by non-RTA members, so it effects more people than just the teachers.

Motion: At 10:17 pm Cathy Reilly motioned to adjourn the regular meeting.

Seconded: Colleen Coogan seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Liebow  
Superintendent of Schools