

# **ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

501 West University Drive, Rochester, Michigan

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING/STUDY SESSION**

October 22, 2012

### **MINUTES**

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A Regular Meeting/Study Session of the Board of Education for the Rochester Community Schools, Rochester, Michigan was held on Monday, October 22, 2012, in the Rochester Community Schools Administration Center, 501 West University Drive, Rochester, Michigan. President Jennifer Berwick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Board members led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Jennifer Berwick, Beth Talbert, Jane Pierobon, Pat Piskulich, Chuck Coutteau, Gerald Moore

Members Absent: Lisa Nowak with notice

Others Present: Tresa Zumsteg, Geraldine Moore, Dan Romzek, Beth Davis, Anne Evans, Debi Fragomeni, Debbi Hartman, David Harwell, Irene Larson, John Stoner, Kevin Cumming, Larry Goralski, Charles Rowland, Doug Hill, Dave Pontzious, Gary Cornish, Marsha Shaw and approximately 25 visitors.

#### **ACADEMIC SPOTLIGHT**

Hamlin principal Gary Cornish and nine students in native dress, representing nine different countries, presented to the Board in honor of Cultural Heritage Week at Hamlin. The week includes welcome signs in different languages, display cases with artifacts from different cultures, International Lunch Day, PTA Enrichment programs, and on Friday, the parade of nations.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **A. Secretary of the Board of Education**

Mr. Coutteau shared the following communications that the Board of Education received since the prior meeting: Jenny DeCuir in support of Interim Superintendent Tresa Zumsteg, and the importance of the search for the right person for superintendent; Bernard Ang regarding annual random drug testing for Durham School Services employees; Joshua Raymond regarding the Superintendent's search process; and Rochester PTA Council members Michelle Bueltel, Jennifer Arsenault, and Robin Ingram, related to the Superintendent's search and the community's participation in the process.

**B. Citizens Requesting Placement on the Agenda** – Lorraine McGoldrick spoke on transparency and improving the home school connection, holding school officials accountable, and the need to follow district policies for excused absences, tests and homework.

**C. Members of the Board of Education** – Mr. Piskulich received a communication from Lorraine McGoldrick asking to take another look at student parking passes, and Mr. Clarke's severance package, and from Joshua Raymond regarding the superintendent's selection process; Mrs. Talbert received a communication from Susan Gerrits about the Superintendent's Attributes; Mrs. Berwick received a communication from Kerry Conley regarding the Focus School communication.

## **SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS**

North Hill 5<sup>th</sup> grade student and author, Danny Glazier, gave information on his published book, *If I had 100 Pockets*. Danny wrote this book based on a question asked by his mother on how he felt about going to school. Having 100 pockets would allow him to bring items to school that would make him feel comfortable when away from home.

## **CONSENT ITEMS**

A motion was made to approve the following Consent Agenda items as presented.

- A. To approve Mrs. Berwick, Mrs. Talbert, Mr. Coutteau, Ms. Nowak and Mrs. Pierobon attending the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) Fall Conference on November 9-11, 2012 in the total amount of \$2,110.00. Source of funding: General Fund.

Moved by: Mr. Piskulich

Supported by: Mr. Moore

Ayes: Mr. Piskulich, Mrs. Pierobon, Mr. Moore, Mr. Coutteau, Mrs. Talbert, Mrs. Berwick

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

Motion carried: 6-0

## **REPORTS**

- A. Superintendent's Committee Reports** (Information Item) Dr. Zumsteg, Mrs. Moore and Mr. Romzek

Superintendent's Continuous Improvement Committee – Dr. Zumsteg, Interim Superintendent, shared information from the committee discussion regarding formation of a Policy Committee, with rotating board membership, to review all district policies within a 5-year time period.

Superintendent's Curriculum Advisory Committee – Mrs. Moore, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, shared information from the committee discussion including: an update on all day Kindergarten; update on Focus Schools; and a review of this study session.

Superintendent's Business Operations and Support Committee – Mr. Romzek, Assistant Superintendent for Business, shared information from the committee discussion including: a review of the 2012-12 financial information. The Audit report will be presented to the Board at their November 5, 2012 meeting; the District's participation in a steering committee for financial and Human Resources software to be purchased through an Oakland ISD consortium; an update on the on-going transition with GCA.

- B. Superintendent's Update** (Information Item) Dr. Zumsteg

Dr. Zumsteg discussed the 5-year enrollment trend that shows an annual increase. While other district's enrollments are dropping, ours continues to increase, if only slightly.

She shared information on the district's ethnicity, showing a pie chart of enrollment by ethnic group. Historically, the district seems to be fairly stable in its ethnicity.

Dr. Zumsteg discussed a current debate between the state and county superintendents regarding Focus Schools, and students who move away from them, taking transportation dollars from the classroom.

Dr. Vickie Markavitch, Superintendent, Oakland ISD will be presenting information relating to this issue at the PTA Council meeting on November 2, 2012.

A Board member asked if the state was planning to take another look at the metric that is used and make changes for next year. Dr. Zumsteg responded that it was too soon to tell, but it has become a public issue and many parents feel it is unfair.

Mr. Piskulich added that he understood that the transportation amount set aside is not trivial, but 20% of the transportation budget per school, and is taken away until the end of the year.

### **C. GCA Update** (Information Item) Mr. Romzek

Mr. Romzek introduced the GCA Management team. Patrick McDonough, Senior Regional Manager, introduced his management team: Wolf Werner, Rob Carson, and Todd Fleming.

Their average staff turnover after 90 days is 12.5%. The goal is to have 95% stay on the job by February. A board member shared that if a family attitude is instilled in the employees, they would stay on the job, so as to not let their co-workers down.

Mr. McDonough shared that after drug testing and background checks, new employees are given a 4-hour training session. They then work one-on-one with an experienced employee, job shadowing for three days. At the end of this training period, they are placed. The only additional training that may be required would be to learn to use unfamiliar equipment.

Mr. McDonough stated that the monthly report cards are providing good feedback, and showed the report card grade percentages per zone. Elementary schools seem to have the highest grades, with high schools the lowest. This may be due to the large number of students in the high schools, and the use of these buildings for sports, after school activities and community rentals that go later into the evening.

A board member suggested finding out what is working at the higher graded schools and importing those aspects to other schools. Also developing a team relationship between principals, teachers, and GCA staff.

A board member asked about the criteria for the report cards. Mr. McDonough explained that it is a nine point questionnaire, that includes bathrooms, classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, kitchens, exterior of buildings, trash removal, are you happy with the service, are you pleased with the responsiveness of your management staff.

Lorraine McGoldrick commented that she attended a curriculum night and the floors at RHS were newly washed and wet. There were no signs posted to alert the public. She wondered if the custodial staff could consider a better time to do this type of cleaning. She also stated that her son, a student at RHS, noticed the turnover of the custodial staff.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. School Exec Connect / Superintendent Search Committee** (Action Item) Ms. Talbert

Mrs. Talbert, Superintendent Search Committee Chairperson, reviewed the Search Planning Calendar. Minor changes were made to add additional dates for candidate interviews, if necessary. The list of attributes for the New Superintendent Profile was reviewed and minor additions were made. Additions under "Preferred Skills and Knowledge" were made to include the district's facilities, and collective bargaining knowledge and experience.

Michelle Bueltel addressed the board regarding the Superintendent's Search calendar, suggesting that interviews with administrative groups, parents and teachers be added, as was done in the past. She also recalled the "round robin" interview process that was used when Mr. Pruneau was hired, and said that it made it convenient to meet all the candidates at one time. A Board member responded that there would be opportunities, as in the past, for the candidates to meet with administration, staff and the community. It was agreed that the round robin interview process was a good format, and is a possibility.

Lorraine McGoldrick, community member, concerned with the Superintendent's Attributes list as a way of measuring that will rely on another's interpretation. She is hoping that this process will be done completely and effectively to find the best person for this position.

Shawn Grant, community member, commenting on the language used in the Superintendent's Attributes List and suggesting changes, that within a doctorate degree, business courses are required; and not limiting the doctorate on this list to a PhD.

A motion was made to approve the Superintendent Search Calendar and the New Superintendent Profile as presented:

Moved by: Mr. Coutteau

Supported by: Mrs. Pierobon

Ayes: Mr. Piskulich, Mrs. Pierobon, Mr. Moore, Mr. Coutteau, Mrs. Talbert, Mrs. Berwick

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

Motion carried: 6-0

## **ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

### **A. Citizens Present at the Meeting**

Joshua Raymond, regarding ACT scores and if changes can be made to meet the needs of the district's top 20% of students to be more successful on the ACT and in their college choices.

### **B. Members of the Administration - None**

### **C. Members of the Board of Education - None**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Upcoming RCS Events**

October 26, 2012 Board of Education Retreat, Admin. Ctr., 1-4 p.m.

November 5, 2012 Board of Education Regular Meeting, Admin. Ctr., 7 p.m.

November 19, 2012 Board of Education Regular Meeting/Study Session, Admin. Ctr., 7 p.m.

## **STUDY SESSION**

### **A. ACT/MME (Informational Item) Mrs. Moore**

Mrs. Moore introduced Irene Larson, Director of Assessment and Grants, Kevin Cumming, Adams High School principal, Larry Goralski, Stoney Creek High School principal, and Charles Rowland, Rochester High School principal. Mr. Dave Harwell, Director of Secondary Curriculum, was also present.

Mrs. Larson presented an overview of the test scores and benchmarks and discussed how the college readiness benchmarks are set per subject. She showed the district growth and areas where scores improved. The principals shared how this information is used in the high schools with the teaching staff. Based on these scores, schools added to their School Improvement Plans.

Larry Goralski stated that it is good that student groups are kept together so that assessment and growth can be measured over time. In Science, Inquiry is really deep reading, and is the biggest challenge that is seen in high school. The new evaluation system helps, and staff can really focus on the departmental goal. The goal is to improve and implement ACT style inquiry activities in our science area. Teachers are overlaying some of the strategies of teaching Inquiry into the style of questions and sponge activities that they start their classroom with.

A board member shared that the ACT Biology is really pre-med Biology, not just college Biology. She asked if there is a sequence of Science classes that is more likely to net students the ACT college readiness score. Students going into engineering might need Chemistry and Physics, more than they need an Advanced Biology class, but that class will give them the ACT college readiness scores.

Irene responded that the ACT is more about problem solving and Inquiry, and one doesn't really need that much content in Science to score well.

Kevin Cumming discussed the goal that was established for English, and that every teacher at Adams will incorporate this goal into their classes. It is to increase the number of classroom activities that will promote literacy skills. Strategies that are working or not working will be shared once a month when staff comes together for Professional Development.

Charles Rowland reiterated that it is helpful to look at the same group of students over time, and that middle school staff has done a great job collecting data for incoming freshman at the high schools, to be able to identify those who may need intervention. This allows the high schools to take a look at additional assessments to be sure they are identifying students that may have limited skills, and providing additional programs and assessments for these students. If a child can't read in high school, he will have a difficult time being successful in life. RHS is also focused on what Adams has identified, looking at reading, writing and literacy across the curriculum, to meet the goal that all students be proficient in reading.

A Board member commented that he is glad to see the student growth identified in the test scores, and the principals' individual goals. He stated that this process really begins in Kindergarten.

Brittany Bogle, senior at Adams, commented that she thinks it is really important that the district integrate questions into the classroom that may help on the ACT, since many student do not have additional time to take the prep classes for these types of tests.

Joshua Raymond commented that he would like to see standard deviation noted in the bars that indicate test scores.

Debabrata Sarkar commented that he believes learning is more important than test scores, he would like to see more Science at the core of curriculum, that in the State of Michigan only three subjects are learned well, and considered to be core curriculum, and that we should be comparing our scores with the surrounding school districts.

Mrs. Berwick thanked the principals for attending the meeting and sharing what is taking place in their schools.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

Moved by: Mr. Coutteau

Supported by: Mrs. Talbert

Ayes: Mr. Piskulich, Mrs. Pierobon, Mr. Moore, Mr. Coutteau, Mrs. Talbert, Mrs. Berwick

Nays: 0

Motion carried: 6-0

Respectfully submitted:

Marsha Shaw  
Recording Secretary

Approved by:

  
Charles H. Coutteau  
Secretary, Board of Education