

OLD ROCHESTER REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

May 12, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

**Marion – Mattapoisett – Rochester, Massachusetts
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MEETING HELD REMOTELY THROUGH ZOOM**

Members Present: Cary Humphrey, Chairperson, Heather Burke, Vice-Chairperson, Tina Rood, Joseph Pires, Margaret McSweeney, Frances Kearns, James Muse, Michelle Smith and Suzanne Tseki.

Members Absent: NONE.

Others Present: Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent of Schools, Jannell Pearson-Campbell, Asst. Supt. of Teaching & Learning, Howard Barber, Asst. Supt. of Finance & Operations, Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services, Diana Russo, Administrative Assistant to Supt., Michael Devoll, Principal, ORR High School, Silas Coellner, ORR Jr. High School, Kelly Chouinard, Asst. Principal, ORR Jr. High School, Vanessa Harvey, Asst. Principal, ORR High School, Edward Gonet, Member of Student Council, teachers, parents, students and members of the press.

SPECIAL GUESTS: Members of the Tri Town Against Racism, Alison Noyce, Tangi Thomas and Jason Chisolm.

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chairperson Humphrey.

RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT: School Committee Members: Cary Humphrey and Tina Rood

Ms. Burke made the following statement:

Cary, you being the father of girls and me being the mother of boys meant that our paths did not cross while our children were growing up, but I am so thankful I had the opportunity to get to know you through this committee. You have led this committee – whether as chair or otherwise – through some tumultuous times. Your calm and steadfast leadership has, I believe, helped soothe volatile relationships and charted a solid course for the District’s future. What I respect most about the way I’ve seen you serve on this committee, especially as chairperson, is that you seek to engage all members, you listen deeply to everyone and help them be heard, and you are strategic about how to move forward. But the best part is the humor and humility that you mix into it all. Since you first joined the committee in 2013, you have seen victories and used your professional skills to build teams, inform processes, and negotiate contracts that serve the district while being sensitive to all parties. I know that there are losses that still sting. However, even those, are excellent examples of you hearing what administrators, committee members, and students were saying, and digging in to help with the hard work that took those initiatives further than most expected. And I believe that what was disappointing in the moment will prove to be a turning point in setting up conversations and systems that will be important for the District for a long time. Cary, the last few years have been

*unusually active, to say the least, for this committee. You were integral to all of the candidate searches, contract negotiations, budget development, and more. Those who see you leading these public meetings only see the tip of the iceberg of the time and commitment you've given to the students and families of the Tri-Town. On their behalf, I thank you. And I offer my personal thanks, too. I have **really** enjoyed serving with you on this committee.*

Superintendent Nelson made the following statement:

Mr. Humphrey – on behalf of the school administration – we also, want to thank you for your many years of service as a school committee member. We recognize the many hours the role requires to fulfill the duties – especially as a chairperson. This means putting other personal responsibilities on the back burner to serve the school community.

I thank you for always picking up the phone or being willing to meet on short notice to discuss the happenings of the schools. For always providing honest feedback and proposing a direction for the whole to move forward. You have trusted and given the school administration the freedom to do their jobs to the best of their abilities – while always ensuring there is accountability to the school committee at large.

*You have truly been a steady hand on your school committee – always willing to advocate, always willing to help navigate complex situations, but always taking the time to celebrate the many great moments our schools have. As a school leader, I have learned from you the importance of facilitating a meaningful conversation amongst stakeholders - to make sure that all voices have a chance to share their perspective – ultimately and ideally leading to collaborative decision-making. Shortly after the superintendent search – you gave me the book *Beyond Grit* – this book speaks to the importance of a leader utilizing their inner strength and their ability to self-motivate to keep going when it gets difficult. Well Cary, you could not have picked a better book to give me heading into this unique school year! More importantly, in the letter you wrote me that accompanied the book – you urged me to continue to not only develop myself as a leader, but those around me to ensure the school district was as strong as it can be. Thank you for always taking the time to be supportive – I wish you and your family nothing but continued success and thank you for service.*

School Committee member Ms. Rood also thanked Mr. Humphrey for his service to the ORR School Committee and expressed that her family has known the Humphrey family for a very long time, she expressed that their children have always been either in the same school or at times in the same grade, and therefore the Humphreys have always been part of our village and our world, she expressed that her family feels very lucky. She expressed that when she came on to this committee she had a chance to work with Mr. Humphrey about something that we are both very passionate about, which is our schools, she expressed that they don't always come at things the same way, but they have always worked well together and she has always appreciated your leadership and your perspective, she expressed that she appreciates that Mr. Humphrey is always willing to listen to other perspectives as well and she expressed that at the end they both had the best interest of our students at the forefront. She expressed that in her view Mr. Humphrey's leadership really started to come forward during the negotiations with the teacher's union (two cycles ago), she expressed that it could have been a very difficult time and instead we walked away with a contract before school let out and it really did change the tide of where our schools were moving to and it allowed us to really work collaboratively in ways that we hadn't been able to before. She expressed that after that you took over the leadership role as chairperson and as Ms. Burke has expressed "this is the tip of the

iceberg”, what we see of you each month is just a small view of all of the work that you are doing behind the scenes on all of these committees. I’ve enjoyed working with you and I’m glad to be “retiring” with you.

Mr. Humphrey made the following statement:

My family moved to Rochester in the spring of 2003. That fall my daughter Meghan started her 7th grade year at the JR High. For 18 years, my wife Michelle and I have had a daughter on the Jr High/ High School campus. Hundreds of trips to the school for countless events and pickups, but it has been an incredible experience to see all four of our daughters go from RMS to Graduation. Meghan in 2009, Erin in 2013, Emily in 2019 and Faith in just a few weeks with the class of 2021. I would like to thank the many teachers that have worked with my daughters over the years but I would like to recognize a few teachers that have had a positive impact and a hand in all four of our daughter’s education. Ms. Grasier, Mr. White, Dr. Carroll, and Ms. Rapoza. But also a special thank you to Mr. Bernardo, Ms. Tallman, Ms. Morrell and our fearless nurse for many years Ms. Corazinni. Thank you Ms. Dowdall; you make a difference....and of course; Mr. Devoll and Mr. Coellner for your leadership. Mr. Devoll, thank you for all you have done for my daughters Emily and Faith. I have had the opportunity to negotiate on behalf of the school committee for teachers’ contracts. I would like to publicly thank Dr. Colin Everett and Daniel McEvoy for their professionalism as representatives of the teachers’ union. As an elected official representing my home town of Rochester, I have always felt that it was my duty to represent the students and parents of my town. I wanted to ensure that our Superintendent and his team of administrators provided a safe place for our students to learn and grow as young adults. As a former teacher, I have a soft spot for our educators. I have always wanted to make sure that our teachers were equipped with the tools that it takes to make sure that they can provide the very best education to our students. I strongly believe that we have an incredible school system that performs at a very high level. Over the past 8 years I have worked along-side some really great people and made some really good friends. We all have strengths and weaknesses. But to me the sign of a strong school committee is when we put all of our strengths together, and therefore overcome our individual weaknesses. We have an exceptional Central Office TEAM lead by our Superintendent, Mike Nelson. Your leadership, Mike, during this past year has been nothing short of amazing. Your attentiveness towards and support of the Tri-Town against Racism group has been greatly appreciated. We, as a school district, are in GREAT HANDS in the future. In the Wizard of OZ, the man behind the curtain was in fact the Wizard.....In our central office, Michael Nelson may be the wizard, but we have the WOMAN behind the curtain. Diana Russo, she is the backbone of the office and ensures that everyone is well informed and equipped to do their job in a first class way. Thank you Diana for all of your support and help over the years. I will miss you for sure. On June the 5th my daughter Faith will graduate with the class of 2021. On that day, I will be graduating with her. Thank you for the great times while serving on this school committee. I wish you all the very best!

Ms. Burke made the following statement:

Tina, the ORR School Committee, and, frankly, the entire Tri-Town, cannot begin to thank you enough for your passionate, selfless, and thoughtful hard work. It is no exaggeration to say that your efforts have positively impacted thousands of students. And, as an aside, I have to give a shout-out to the ORR school committee members who are assigned here by their elementary school committees. I don’t think the public understands that, for you folks, the ORR School Committee is

essentially a sub-committee assignment. It means you actually serve, like Tina has been since 2015, on three school committees: your local one, ORR, and the joint school committee – AS A VOLUNTEER! Sorry, I digress. Tina, through your public comments and conversations, I know that you put the best interests of Tri-Town **STUDENTS** at the forefront of every decision you made here, every initiative – and there were many! – that you started, and every issue you pressed. Town officials, school administrators, and even this committee didn't always like what you brought up, but nevertheless you persisted. You would not be deterred from fighting for the students, finding the resources they needed, and creating nurturing and academically rigorous environments where every student had the opportunities to find their right path. You knew that “Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time”¹ and so you kept pushing forward, no matter how frustrating it could be. Listing all of your accomplishments as a supporter of our schools' arts, creativity, and athletics, as someone whose keen business acumen helped guide the District and find external funding, and as a school committee member – often the chairperson - would take the entire meeting and more. So, I will just sum up your leadership and generosity like this. Throughout my time on this committee, you have been my inspiration. Your example and dedication have pushed me to give more to the ORR district than I would have otherwise. You have modeled for me how to ask more questions, demand more change, and have higher expectations – all to benefit the students – and I thank you for that. Serving with you has created a heck of a lot of work for me, but also a deep sense of gratitude for helping make a difference. Honestly, Tina, it is hard to imagine you not being out there leading the charge to keep our schools improving for the sake of the students. You have been on the RMS school committee for 15 years after all! And so, while you will not be forgotten – the impact you have had here will be felt for generations - I know you also won't be a stranger to Tri-Town education. You may not serve in an official capacity, but I know you will always be helping the students in ways both large and small. Saying “thank you” for all you have given us doesn't seem like enough, but, thank you. Thank you very much.

Ms. Burke expressed that two books would be donated to the ORR High School Library. *The Cloudbuster Nine* by Anne Keene, the untold story of Ted Williams and the baseball team that helped win world war II in honor of Mr. Humphrey and *Your Next Big Idea* by Samuel Sanders, a book about how to improve creativity and problem solving in honor of Ms. Rood.

Ms. Rood made the following statement:

Good Evening, Wow! What a ride this has been. I appreciate having a few moments of your time to share some thoughts. The number one thing I have learned from being on school committee is that we cannot say Thank you enough for the work done in our schools. I am so grateful to have been a part of this wonderful school system. All those I have been lucky enough to work with Superintendents, Principals, Assistant Principals, Fellow school committee members and all the people who work in our district - it is your dedication to our students that make the Old Rochester School District top notch. On a personal level - There have been drama club directors Paul and Helen, Class advisors, Merri and Michael, Sarabeth and Heather, teachers Randy, Melanie, Michael, and soccer coaches M. Devoll, Coach P and Mr. Kelsey, and so many more who have molded my kids into who they are today. Thanks for your help along the way. To the ORR school

committee who have allowed me to represent them on what has been a most fulfilling journey. To all of the volunteers that I have had the pleasure to work with along the way - Lisa, Jill, Kerry, Kristen, Heather, Diane, Michelle, Julie, Karen, drama mamas and papas, junior semi and senior promenade committees, soccer families, DI families (and volunteers Ms. Barker and Mr. Allain) this committee and many more, you are the unsung heroes of our school and remind our students through your actions that you believe their education is a number one priority. I have mentioned the volunteers in my world - there are many more beyond this - who help in many areas - fundraise, FORM, athletic boosters, team parents, event coordinators, etc.....I thank all of you as well. To the students - for working on committees to provide input and help solve problems for our school. Students Sharing their perspective and advocating for our school is such a gift. This includes work on the strategic plan, presentations at school committee advocating for new clubs and LGBT curriculum, work on a plan to return to school in the time of covid, I will never forget seeing students attend town meetings and speak about the need for updated facilities, I will always appreciate the insight we were given when students shared very real perspective on what students were facing this year - your service to our towns is inspiring and made me even more committed to the work our committee does. As I reflect on my time here I am so proud of initiatives I have been lucky enough to work on and have learned a good deal along the way so I would like to leave some advice to those who follow along in my foot steps

- 1. Even if you arrive with an agenda item be open to what is to come - there are so ways our schools lead the way on new initiatives. Our country and our school is grappling with social justice and equity for all - it is our schools that will lead the way because the students we educate today are the future members of our community and future leaders. Working with our students and their readiness to be a part of the solution is a step in the right direction.*
- 2. Our job is to advocate for our schools and our students. ORR is always working to be better. Before we put the TURF project forward, community members did not know that our district budget did not have a capital line item. An independent study showed that the ORR school budget was below average on funding capital improvements. Our principals have put in the work of developing Education plans - in terms of needs of our school and Gene Jones has worked tirelessly to keep us updated on facility needs. If our town don't hear about these needs from our committee they will never know.*
- 3. That as the ORR representative from an elementary school you have the very special perspective of seeing our kids from pre-k through the transition program at the high school. Use this to remind everyone that no matter what school we are talking about or which town we come from - these are all our kids. Keep true to the Inclusion Model at our schools. Have a mindset that the work we do is for ALL OF OUR STUDENTS and that equity is the goal - this is not easy but it is worth it.*
- 4. Make sure to attend the events at our school - the pep rally, drama performances, band concerts, athletic events, open house to meet the teachers, notice when the flowers are changed because of our wonderful community service group, our clubs at ORR kick butt Debate club, math club, sports, DECA... there is something for everyone - even if you can't attend an event make it your job to know what is happening at our school - celebrating the achievements of our school community throughout the year, at all levels and in all areas - is important. Nothing makes me more proud when I go somewhere and hear people commenting that the kids from Old Rochester are outstanding representatives of our community. Attend graduation and hand a diploma to the kids you know - I can think of no greater honor. Our kids need to know the work they do is*

important and honored - in the classroom, after school, out of school and on the field. Taking opportunities at every turn to be part of and celebrate the work that is done here will remind you why all of the meetings are worth it.

Thank you to all for the opportunity to serve as your representative.

Superintendent Nelson made the following statement:

I want to also personally thank Ms. Rood for her service as a school committee member – for 15 years! When I think of Tina’s contributions to the school community and community at large what comes to mind right away is three things:

- 1. Determination*
- 2. Work Ethic*
- 3. Passion*

In my humble opinion – Tina embodies what it means to work hard towards a goal with extreme willpower and purpose. In all my conversations with her I am always struck by how passionate she is - about what she believes in and what she believes is best for kids. And what I have learned watching Tina as a school committee member is how important it is to contribute to the conversation – to share your perspective. Tina always encourages others to share what they know and what they can offer our schools and respects the power of the school community as a whole.

I have truly appreciated collaborating with you Tina and wish you and your family nothing but happiness and continued success as you move towards your next chapter – which I am sure will involve more public service. During the superintendent search you asked me a very direct question when you were transporting me to my next school visit – you asked me very simply – will I do everything I can for our schools - to make them the best that they can be? What a question that was! Well – I promise you that the answer to that question will continue to be – yes. Our schools will miss you – and I thank you for all of your service.

Mr. Humphrey expressed that he remembers when his children were at RMS with Ms. Rood’s children and all he ever heard was Tina Rood, Tina Rood, Tina Rood, he expressed that she built so much passion into what these kids go through, “you are always there champion, you are always making sure they are represented, and talked out and looked at”. He expressed that Ms. Rood is amazing and he is proud to have served with her on the ORR School Committee.

Mr. Muse expressed that he would like to make a motion to “echo” everything that has been said tonight about Ms. Rood and Mr. Humphrey and just add that he has been fortunate to work with both Mr. Humphrey and Ms. Rood. He expressed that he really appreciates all of their dialogue, all of their debates, he expressed they could agree to disagree, he expressed that a lot has been done and expressed that it is very evident that from your statements and statements that have been made about you both that are both extremely passionate, but also compassionate and that’s what’s made the difference.

Ms. McSweeney expressed that she’s a little nervous Mr. Humphrey and Ms. Rood are both leaving. She expressed that when she first joined the committee she was a little nervous and then she started attending meetings and members were so welcoming, knowledgeable and wonderful and she felt better, and now two of you are leaving, she expressed that these are big shoes to fill. She wished

them best of luck. She expressed it's been amazing working with them and seeing the passion and commitment they have, she expressed it's admirable.

V. General

A. Tri-Town Against Racism Group - Mr. Humphrey expressed that at the last school committee meeting he had asked to place this on the agenda. He expressed that he reached out to Ms. Alison Noyce and she agreed to come to the meeting tonight with some of her colleagues to share their perspective. Mr. Humphrey expressed that he does believe that some progress and he believes they are moving in the right direction.

Ms. Noyce made the following statement:

Thank you and congratulations to you and Ms. Rood, thank you for your service. Thank you for inviting us to attend this meeting, I would like to introduce you to Tangi Thomas and also Jason Chisholm, who is a new member of leadership, he will take the lead in this conversation tonight, we are really excited about him and we know you all will be too once you get to know him, he's a person that is really going to help us move forward to meet our goals of becoming an Anti-Racism community,

Mr. Chisholm made the following statement;

Mr. Chisholm congratulated Ms. Rood and Mr. Humphrey on all their accomplishments.

Hopefully this is a reintroduction to our organization, I've heard our name being mentioned already tonight as well as diversity and inclusion, as you can imagine that is very much anchored into what we are all about at Tri-Town Against Racism, and aspirational, I think our goal is easy to articulate, essentially we just want to create an anti-racism world for all the members of our community, that's easy to say, but to do it is a very lofty goal, it's very ambitious. When we talk about anti-racism, that is not a color or an ethnicity conversation only that is a human conversation, there's a lot that ties into racism and as we look at that challenge we essentially are wanting to help every human being be their best self and present and connect and so that is an opportunity for conversation, an opportunity for education, and an opportunity for understanding and patience. I've joined as the executive director of the Tri-Town Against Racism, I hope we have a lot more opportunities to get to know each other more, I'm hopeful that you are both familiar enough with Alison and Tangi that we don't have to go into their backgrounds. I would like to share with you the feedback that I have received from the leadership team in terms of what the sub-committee has been able to do in terms of willingness to help and work with is has been very positive, and we are looking to build on that. I know that there are a couple of initiatives that we have talked about amongst ourselves that we really like to drive forward with the help of committee members and administrators. One of which is a book reading, we would like to identify a book that really touches upon the topics we feel anchored to our mission and make that a community book reading exercise we also would like to have some sort of a panel, a cadence of that panel is yet to be determined, but essentially what we would like to do is bring in stakeholders from all major components we think of as the community, our mission is very much focused on the Tri-Town, but when we think about what it's going to take to really drive this mission forward it's really going to be stakeholders from four areas, the general community, educational system, law enforcement and first responders and members of the business community

and so what we want to do is make sure we are creating situations, events and opportunities for all of the participants of those groups to come forward and engage in discussion, because we believe it's important to that we are starting to think about how we tackle a lot of things that are going on in the world, whether it's in the schools, outside of the schools, in our zip code or beyond that, we are making sure we are creating an environment that welcomes all people to the discussion, people who agree, people who disagree, that's what we will be working to do and we are not going to be able to that without the support and the help of all of you. Thank you for the opportunity and what we would like to open the floor so that you can ask questions of us.

Superintendent Nelson made the following statement:

Last year and moving into this school year – we talked a lot about the importance of a partnership. The school district wanted to foster and build a strong partnership with Tri-Town Against Racism. In my opinion both parties have made good on that commitment. We are thankful for the work we have done collaboratively and see this year as just the start of many more...

I think we have established an open line of communication and both parties know that the door is always open to partner on anti-racism and equity work.

I know our Anti-Racism Sub Committee has regularly reported out the work that has been done and I would like to thank Tri-Town Against Racism for their regular participation, ideas, willingness to help, and support.

Mr. Chisholm responded to Mr. Nelson as follows:

Thank you Michael, I would love to update you all on a couple of things related to the partnership and communication. As I am a new member to Tri-Town Against Racism, we are building out our board of directors, there are other folks who are on-boarding, at 7:30 we have a meeting with an individual who has agreed to join as a the director of Law Enforcement and First Responders Engagement we have a director of communications and as an action item one of the things that I'm going to do to prepare for our meeting is, we are going to make sure we open line of communication between, our director of communication, myself and other members of the Anti-Racism Sub-Committee and of course anyone on this committee is invited to enter dialogue with us as well. I want to make sure we are being actionable, so that's one of the things that you will hear me repeat a lot whenever we do get together and talk, is let's identify actionable things that we can agree as a take away from any meeting or conversations that we have that we will do collectively, we are all about rolling up our sleeves and doing work and we know that you are as well so I want to make sure we take advantage of that good will. So when we sit down and talk we will get deeper into our plan is and what I imagine the educational component of our community can do to help add to that mission and I would love for you to think about a couple of things as well. Lastly we have an individual who has agreed to be the director K-12 and higher education engagement, that individual's name is Rick DaSilva, he is a teacher over at Tabor Academy, some of you I'm sure are familiar with Rick as well as his family members, who have been in this community for quite some time and he has recently agreed to join us as well.

Ms. Rood expressed that was an exciting announcement. She expressed that she loves that fact that Mr. Chisholm is identifying the entire community, she expressed that somethings things are done in the education realm through student engagement and family engagement however to have all those

other pieces together would be wonderful and she's excited to see more and she's so appreciative of the work being done and she's looking forward to hearing more about the "book reading".

Mr. Humphrey expressed that it makes him proud to hear, especially at his last meeting, from Mr. Chisholm that the goal of we talked about a year ago is really coming to fruition and he expressed his very pleased to see the partnership growing.

Ms. Noyce made the following statement:

We are really grateful to the school committee, particularly the meeting that we had a year ago which was really emotional and really difficult, it was a difficult time for our country, which continues but we were at the beginning of a racial reckoning and we were at the beginning of becoming Tri-Town Against Racism and we were very driven to create some changes in the school that were overdue, and I'm grateful to everyone who is here that was part of that, I'm grateful to Cary, he's always given me an ear and I've often given him an earful, I really appreciate that. I would like to shout out Michael Nelson because you have been a huge support to us, I feel like we really are a partnership, I feel like we all have the same goal, it's our first year of being in existence and we feel good, it's been incredibly busy and incredibly emotional but also rewarding, we are continuing to grow and move forward and adding people to our leadership team, we are very close to becoming a nonprofit. We appreciate your continued support because there's no way we can make any of the changes without you guys so thank you very much.

Mr. Nelson made the following statement:

Thank you for saying that Alison and the feelings are mutual and sincere, I have no doubt that we will continue to go in the direction that the school district and your organization wants to, so I look forward to the work.

I. Approval of Minutes

REGULAR MINUTES

Motion to approve the regular minutes of March 24 2021 (PUBLIC HEARING) as presented
MOTION by Ms. Kearns

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Tseki

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Rood; abstained, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki; yes, Smith: yes)

Motion to approve the regular minutes of March 24, 2021 (REGULAR MEETING) as presented
MOTION by Ms. Kearns

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Burke

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Rood; abstained, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki; yes, Smith: yes)

Motion to approve the regular minutes of April 13, 2021 as amended

MOTION by Ms. Tseki

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Smith

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Rood; abstained, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki; yes, Smith: yes)

B. Full In-Person Pivot – Superintendent Nelson made the following statement:

To start this conversation off – I am extremely excited to acknowledge that this is the first Pivot Update I have given this year where all grade levels are now operating a full in-person learning model. At the same time, we continue to offer a full remote option for students and families for the remainder of this school year – acknowledging that every family has a different scenario they managing and need to make decisions that make sense for them during this pandemic. On April 27th both our Junior High School and High School made the pivot with the help of their planning teams, staff members, facilities, school physicians, town nurses, and other stakeholders. I can't thank the many hands that have continuously made all of our pivots successful enough. This is including, our students and families! Presently: the high school is educating 642 students in our classrooms with 69 remote students. At the Junior High School, the full in-person student body consists of 380 students with 37 participating in the remote learning model. Regarding our COVID-19 data – the weekly Dashboard with our identified data points and mitigation strategies continues to be shared with our school community. At the close of today: The Junior High School reported 2 active covid-19 cases and 4 individuals in quarantine. As for the high school there are also 2 active positive cases and 2 individuals in quarantine due to close contact status. We will continue to monitor all available data in relation to health and safety and respond accordingly. At this time – I'll ask both building principals to report out on the April 27th full in-person pivot and share their perspectives with how the day-to-day operations are going. Mr. Coellner and Mr. Devoll:

Mr. Coellner reported that the full in person pivot has been going smoothly, it's been a great show of collaboration and cooperation coming together to get ready for this pivot, he expressed that watching the restructuring of the classrooms with the desks and the old red dots coming up and the new ones coming down getting projectors mounted in the ceiling to maximize floor space, adjustment to practice on how we serve lunches, staff having a school wide advisory, the teams did "town halls" to address changes in classroom practice, reviewing safety protocols, he reported they also made a lot of google classroom adjustments, mask break coordination and all of that work resulted in the pivot going off without a hitch, everything went smoothly and we are very pleased, he expressed they students are adjusting very quickly and when he checks in with students they are glad to be back together.

Mr. Devoll expressed that he certainly will miss Ms. Rood and Mr. Humphrey but he knows how to reach them. Mr. Devoll reported that the full in person pivot, he reported it's been a great month to be a high school principal at ORR, he expressed it feels like we are back to normal and he believes that part of that normal will be mask breaks where students are walking around the buildings with their friends and their teachers building relationships, he expressed those are some of the nice things that have developed from this experience this year and as a school we are taking inventory of what doesn't have to go away when we return to normal. He expressed that he feels like we are back to normal, he reported that the challenge they faced was lunch because at lunch students do still have to be 6 feet apart, so we have extended the privilege of eating outdoors to juniors and seniors, and made

some changes around senior privileges around their directed studies to give them some more freedom and flexibility, he expressed that it's been an awesome month with the return of our athletics, our clubs, we are building towards a drama production, Mr. Devoll reported that a lot of testing is taking place this month including AP testing, MCAS and AIMSweb and also this past week a schedule was issued to seniors and their parents their senior activities. He expressed it's been an awesome month with tremendous energy and spirit. Mr. Devoll reported that the other adjustment was around the quarantine students, and how to best support them, we didn't feel it was necessary to shift them to a full remote plan while they were quarantining, so what we've done for those students is provide times to our students where our teachers were available for a help desk feature where they could live stream and participate one-on-one with a teacher to support their work. He expressed that teachers have gone out of their way to create opportunities for students during the school day to continue to stay current in the curriculum and receive supports while they're home.

Ms. Rood expressed that she has worked on a lot things through the years and she expressed that the back to school plan last summer was probably the most remarkable, she expressed she had the chance to work with both principals and their leadership and their bringing in various stakeholders to take part in those discussions and the amount of thoughtfulness and time spent thinking about every detail really resulted in the success they have both had this school year. Thank you.

C. ORPEA Health & Safety Report- Superintendent Nelson made the following statement:

It is my understanding that our building administrators and teacher association members met recently and that Mr. Devoll will brief the school committee tonight on their work, Mr. Devoll.

Mr. Devoll reported that this committee met this week and had two issues to report, one was high school specific. We addressed concerns with families who are still making learning plan changes this late in the year. The second concern is with the CO2 levels especially with the warmer temperatures coming in the Spring. Mr. Devoll expressed the committee is concerned about having the windows opened while the chiller is on and can that in fact happen. He expressed that he looks forward to working with Mr. Jones to figure that figure out before it becomes an issue. He reported that PPE is good, he reported that social distancing continues to be a challenge.

D. Approval of International Travel

Mr. Coellner reported that these Holocaust Educational Tours have been done a few times in the past and that last year obviously it was cancelled but now we are at the point that we have to make a commitment if we are planning a June 2022 trip. In your packet is information from the company around their safety protocols. We are looking for approval for international travel in June of 2022.

Ms. Kearns expressed that she remembers having a conversation about international travel earlier in the year and she asked in any travel had taken place this year. Mr. Coellner reported that no international travel took place during this school year. Ms. Kearns expressed that it's important to make it clear to families that there are risks associated with the travel and that they just need to be aware of them.

Ms. Burke expressed that's her concern as well and asked what is the deposit date and what is the refund policy and how will we communicate to families the potential of them losing the deposit.

Mr. Orie reported that they can start enrolling now and up to 120 days before the trip, the deposit is \$95.00 and initially they would lose that and depending on different circumstances it could be more or less it just depends on whether the tour is cancelled or whether it's rescheduled and the enrollment is transferrable.

Ms. McSweeney expressed that as she looks at the itinerary it looks very exciting and it's great to think that we can start having these offerings again for students to enjoy

Motion to approve international travel in June of 2022

MOTION by Ms. Rood

MOTION Seconded by Ms. McSweeney

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Rood; abstained, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki; yes, Smith: yes)

E. Approval of AFS Students for the 21-22 SY

Mr. Nelson expressed that due to COVID we did not participate in this program for this particular school year, however Mr. Devoll would like to speak to it and possible approval for the upcoming school year. Mr. Devoll explained that ORR has a rich history with foreign exchange students and the AFS Organization, he expressed that we haven't had AFS at the high school and we are seeking approval to welcome potential AFS foreign exchange students. Mr. Devoll explained that if approved tonight they would start working on families to host these students for the upcoming school year. Mr. Devoll reported that AFS students have dramatically enhanced our school community through their background and cultural ideas, and he believes it fits well with our vision 2023 and our school improvement plan.

Ms. Burke asked what is in place for students in terms of medical insurance and how unexpected medical expenses or care are handled. Mr. Devoll reported that he doesn't have that information but he can find out and send it to the school committee. He also reported that those issues have occurred with past students and AFS handles it. He expressed that's why AFS is such an important part of the process. Mr. Devoll reported that they have a new club advisor this year, Mr. Michael Nailor and that he will get that information to the school committee. Ms. Burke also encouraged the club advisor to ask about vaccination requirements.

Ms. Kearns asked what countries do the students come from. Mr. Devoll reported that most recently they had Germany, Turkey, Brazil, Italy, Japan, Spain, but they have come from all over the world.

Ms. Burke expressed that when these students graduate at ORR their flag and play their national anthem and it's very moving, Mr. Humphrey agreed. Ms. Rood expressed that the students take part of all the senior events so that they get the full experience, she expressed it's very cool.

Motion to approve foreign exchange students through AFS for the 21-22 SY

MOTION by Ms. Tseki

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Rood

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Rood; abstained, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki; yes, Smith: yes)

F. FY20 Audit Report

Mr. Barber presented the FY 20 Audit Report to the School Committee. Mr. Barber explained that this is an annual financial statement that has to be done because we are a regional school district. Mr. Barber explained that we utilized auditors Roselli, Clark and Associates, he explained that they started in December and wrapped up about a month ago. The auditor's responsibility is to express their full opinion on the full financial statement of the FY20 Budget. He expressed this talks about our cash flow, this talks about the income, about the expenses, talks about their investments. For more information, please refer to attachment A.

Ms. Kearns expressed she appreciates the executive summary and she also thanked him for showing up at Town Meeting this week to provide support she was glad to have the expert there.

Ms. Burke thanked Mr. Barber for the report and asked what happens next with this audit and if a member of the public wanted to look at it is there a way for them to asset it.

Mr. Barber explained that this information is now public since it's being discussed with the school committee in an open meeting and if anyone wants a copy they can contact my office. Mr. Nelson also explained that now that it's been shared with the school committee it will also be shared with the three Town Halls. Mr. Barber reported that he would be sending it via email to the three financial officers of each town.

Ms. Rood asked if there were any action items. Mr. Barber explained that the financial statement itself did not have any specific action items, he did explain that we also have a single act audit which reviews our grants, food service etc., and we have a third one which is the end of year audit, which is the overall financial reporting, Mr. Barber explained that those are also almost wrapped up and he does have some responses back and he's just waiting for the draft to be turned around and be finalized and I will share it with this committee.

Mr. Nelson thanked Mr. Barber for his leadership in the financial office.

V. New Business

C. Business

1. Financial

Mr. Barber expressed that Marion and Mattapoisett have passed the ORR budget and now we have the Rochester meeting on May 24th. Mr. Barber reported that he had good news about the Excess & Deficiency Account, he reported that the E&D audit was completed with the Department of Revenue and as many of you may have been aware when we closed FY19 we had a deficit of about \$140,000, he explained that as he wrapped up FY20 we were able to vet through the final aspects of our ledger and certifying our E&D at \$238,831, which is about \$380,000 swing in a matter of a couple of months. Mr. Barber expressed that the three-year plan is to get the E&D fund up to \$500,000.

Ms. Burke expressed that is amazing news and she feels it's so important for our schools. She expressed that we have always struggled to get that to a more stable position, and she asked that Mr. Barber speak to why it's important to have a healthy E&D Fund. Mr. Barber explained that as a Regional School District we don't have the luxury of asking the towns for free cash if something comes up like our elementary schools could do. He explained that regional school districts build their own budgets and operate their own balance sheets, and we have to recognize what we need to run our day to day operation while we are building our budget, therefore having that E&D gives us that flexibility if something does come up.

Mr. Barber reported that as of May 10, 2021 the Old Rochester Regional School District currently has \$175,342 available of the general funds appropriated in the 2021 Fiscal Year. We are able to identify how our funds are currently encumbered and expended. This report recognizes that of the \$19,702,211 appropriated to the District, 83.04% is directly assigned and is spent/ encumbered to student instruction.

Mr. Barber also reported on Food Service and Facilities.

Mr. Humphrey expressed that he appreciates the stability that Mr. Barber has brought to the financial office.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT- Mr. Humphrey wanted to recognize Mr. Gonet for accomplishments at the DECA competition, he reported he was a DECA Alumni in High School, he expressed that it taught him a lot and it was important to him. He congratulated Mr. Gonet and he expressed that he was proud of him and the whole DECA group. Mr. Gonet thanked Mr. Humphrey and thanked him and the school committee for being supportive of the DECA program. Mr. Humphrey gave Ms. Rood an opportunity to give a last Chairperson's Report. Ms. Rood also congratulated Mr. Gonet. She expressed that she had one last piece of advice for our school committee members, we will be retiring debt in our school and it is important to keep an eye on that and how it can be best used to improve our schools for the future and congratulations to all of our seniors.

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS REPORT –

Teaching & Learning Office- Dr. Pearson Campbell reported on the ELL audit, she also reported that the Professional Development Plan for next year has been approved by the Joint School Committee and we are working on next steps.

Director of Student Services Office – Mr. Davidson reported that SEPAC has met twice since the last meeting, he reported that last month they held the Annual Basic Rights training for parents and guardians and we also had a presentation on Effective Communication. Mr. Davidson reported that all transition meeting have taken place. He reported they are finalizing the Civil Rights and Special Education Audits.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT-

High School – Mr. Devoll reported that the senior events are listed in his principal report, however there were a couple of changes made due to the Monday Holiday, therefore we will have Prom on Wednesday, Senior Awards are now on Friday and Graduation on Saturday.

Mr. Devoll also reported that the High School has participated in a three-part series with our GSA Club at the High School led by two student leaders, they have presented at three staff meetings, a staff awareness and training on GSA Topics, specifically around a more inclusive curriculum, classroom practices, and ways to address the LGBTQ+ population in a more supportive way.

Jr. High School-

Mr. Coellner also reported that the GSA Club at the JHS has been consistent ever since the pandemic started they have been meeting every Thursday at 2:45, he reported they have made significant gains in the advisory with the Responsive Classroom model, where there's always an arrival, announcements acknowledgements and an activity, he explained that they have included a lot of DEI lessons in our advisory and working with the GSA and we focused on a day of silence in April and what it is and how we are missing out on student voices. Mr. Coellner expressed it was really well done by student leaders and he was impressed.

Mr. Coellner also reported on Virtual Field Trip - Just before April vacation, all 7th grade students participated in a live walking tour of Berlin as part of their ELA curriculum. The tour guide walked the students through an old section of the city, where the students learned about “stumbling stones”, historical figures, culture, commerce, and architectural features. The lense through which the tour guide presented was the experience of the Jews living in Berlin during World War II.

SCHOOL COUNCIL: Mr. Gonet reported that we will be returning next year and a new member. Ms. Lord will be graduating and attending college next year. He reported that the project and himself and Ms. Lord have been working on is currently being approved by the Department of Equation. Mr. Gonet also reported that the Student Advisory Councils have been talking about a big initiative for Financial Literacy and they are working on a mandate to give to Commissioner Riley.

B. Committee Reports

1. **SMEC** – Ms. Tseki reported that they met on March 30th and had a presentation from Rockland Trust, discussed some staff movements and the next meeting is May 25th.
2. **Local School Committee-** Ms. Rood reported they met on May 6th and had a presentation on full in person pivot, opted out of school choice and also had a Literacy Presentation. Mr. Muse reported that they last met on May 3 and opted into School Choice and adding 3 more slots for the upcoming year and he also reported that Mrs. Bowman is still on leave. Ms. Smith reported that they met on April 7th and had their budget public hearing, discussed school calendar and we meet again next week.
3. **Tri-Town Foundation-** Ms. Tseki met on April 27th, some of the highlights were welcoming a Michelle Roy as a new member, they are looking forward to presenting the Lighthouse Book Awards and also finalize grant awards.
4. **Budget Sub-Committee-** NONE
5. **Facilities Committee -** NONE
6. **Communication Committee-** Mr. Pires reported that they have not met but all members are active on all the positive events happening at ORR and also getting out pertinent information that is

happening at the schools. Mr. Pires expressed that the committee members are basically advocates for the school.

7. District Agreement Committee- Mr. Burke reported that all three towns chose not to put the Regional Agreement on the Town Spring Warrant and wait until the Fall Special meeting to put it on the warrant.

8. Anti-Racism Committee – Ms. Kearns reported that they met on May 4th and discussed hiring practices, inclusive calendar and linking that to curriculum within the school.

Chairperson Humphrey reviewed future timeline and stated the next meeting is scheduled for June 16th at 6:30 p.m. and the next Joint School Committee is scheduled for June 17th at 6:30 p.m.

OPEN COMMENTS: NONE

XII. Executive Session

MOTION: by Mr. Muse at 8:17 p.m. to enter executive session for the purpose of exception #3 and #7

SECOND: by Ms. Smith

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Rood; abstained, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki; yes, Smith: yes)

MOTION: by Ms. Tseki to go come out of Executive Session at 8:41 pm to adjourn

SECOND: by Ms. Smith

ROLL CALL VOTE:

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Rood; abstained, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki; yes, Smith: yes)

Motion to adjourn at 8:41 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Smith

MOTION Seconded by Mr. Muse

ROLL CALL VOTE

8:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Smith; yes, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki)

Submitted by Diana Russo