

**OLD ROCHESTER REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
January 20, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
Marion – Mattapoissett – Rochester, Massachusetts
REGULAR MINUTES
MEETING HELD REMOTELY THROUGH ZOOM**

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

Members Absent: Suzanne Tseki.

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.

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Chairperson Humphrey.

I. A. Regular Minutes- Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of December 9, 2020 as amended

MOTION by Ms. Kearns

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Burke

ROLL CALL VOTE:

6:2 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeney; yes, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Smith; abstained, Rood: abstained)

I. C. Budget Sub-Committee - Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of December 1, 2020 and December 15, 2020

MOTION by Ms. Burke

MOTION Seconded by Mr. Muse

ROLL CALL VOTE:

(Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Muse; yes)

V. General

A. Update on Reopening Plan

Mr. Nelson read the following statement:

Good Evening School Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address all of you tonight regarding an update to the region's reopening plan. As of today – we continue to operate our schools' hybrid learning model with our students participating in two full days of in-person learning per week, two hybrid-out learning days, and one full day of remote learning. Moreover, some of our more complex learners or students with significant needs continue to receive more in-person learning opportunities. Moreover – our schools continue to meet students and families where they are at by offering remote learning opportunities by request. Our students, families, and teachers continue to make the most of these two learning models by showing true growth mindset ideologies, perseverance, and determination to make teaching and learning meaningful – despite the challenges the pandemic has placed on our schools. We are proud of the fact that we have offered in-person learning opportunities for our students since the start of the school year on September 16th. As of today our high school's enrollment regarding our two learning models sits at 630 hybrid students and 87 remote students.

The junior high school currently recognizes and serves 352 hybrid students and 62 students learning within the remote learning model. Both the junior high school and the high school continue to offer extracurricular opportunities either virtually or in-person. These clubs and opportunities provide additional outlets for our students to connect with their teachers, staff members, and peers in relation to their particular interests. Our student athletes have resumed sports this season at the high school. Although the seasons are modified and there are many safety rules and protocols guiding practices and competitive play that are different for our athletes – it has been great seeing our teams return to action. As we continue to monitor academic progress our two schools have committed to benchmark academic assessments utilizing Aimsweb – this month our schools will assess our students for the second time this school year to ensure that we understand how students are progressing individually. Furthermore, our clinical teams continue to support our students both in-person and virtually to ensure social-emotional success. As we know, students need to feel safe and supported to be able to learn to their maximum potential. From a covid-19 standpoint our school nurses and the town nurses in the Tri-Town continue to answer the call regarding safety protocols and management. They truly have been instrumental in creating the safest environment possible for our students and staff members. On a weekly basis a Dashboard of key indicators and key data points related to the impact of COVID-19 on our schools is shared with the school community. At the close of today the Junior High School has two individuals currently in isolation due to testing positive for COVID-19 and 15 individuals currently quarantining due to close contact status. As for the high school – there are currently 10 individuals presently in isolation having tested positive for covid-19 and 27 individuals in quarantine due to being close contacts. Although there are many key covid-19 indicators and data points we consider and monitor daily – school transmission and staff availability are two of primary interest. We feel assured at the current time that our safety protocols and mitigation factors have guarded our school buildings against in-school transmission of the virus. Specifically, mask wearing, maintaining at least six feet of distancing to the best extent possible, and proper hygiene has proven effective thus far. We continue to urge our students and school community members to follow best practices regarding preventing covid-19 exposure both when in school and outside of school. We continue to be appreciative of the support our schools are being given regarding this complex school year. Later this evening, we will provide a presentation on the newly adopted DESE structured learning time regulations. Other than that particular guidance, there has not been major guidance updates from the DESE regarding covid-19 protocols or transportation guidance. As many of you may be aware, we are anticipating a second wave of fiscal support based on our Title I entitlement amounts. What we are being told is that a second ESSR revenue source should provide four times the original amount that we received earlier this year. This could be between \$100,000 and \$120,000 for the region. I will continue to update the school committee as necessary and thank you all for the opportunity to speak this evening.

Ms. Kearns expressed that she had a few questions but she is willing to discuss them later in the meeting if they would be addressed then. Ms. Kearns expressed that at the last school committee it was communicated that the remote learners only had one foreign language (Latin) opportunity and she asked if that gap had been addressed, and also if administration has done analysis to determine if any other courses are missing for the remote learners. Ms. Kearns expressed that her other question was regarding the results of the survey and what actions we have taken to address some of those concerns.

Mr. Nelson expressed that some of Ms. Kearns concerns would be addressed during the Structured Time on Learning Presentation and asked Mr. Devoll to address the Spanish requirement for Remote Learners. Mr. Devoll stated that starting in semester 2 they would be able to offer Spanish to remote students. Mr. Devoll explained to the school committee that the reason why we couldn't offer it, he explained that it was a software issue and not a willingness to run it. He explained that GradPoint asked the district to hold off until Semester 2 to offer the Spanish courses because they were redoing the online offerings, therefore we did not offer it first semester, but will be offering it second

semester. Mr. Devoll stated that they have reached out to all our remote learning students and we have had some students show interest in signing up. Mr. Devoll stated that the district is able to offer most courses to remote learners, he expressed there is only one course that comes to mind that can't be offered to remote learners and that is AP Computer Science, we offer two and GradPoint is only able to offer one, and these are not taken at the same time so the student can take one and take the other one at another time. Mr. Devoll expressed that's the only that comes to mind.

Ms. McSweeney expressed that in the beginning there were in depth discussions about the tipping point or data that we would have to reach to have another discussion, not necessarily close, she expressed she sees the benefits of staying in school and believes we should do it for as long as possible. She expressed she sees the dashboard reports and the percentages are creeping up, and she's concerned. Ms. McSweeney suggested that as a school committee we might want to revisit this and talk about it at some point and she also asked if the administration has had conversations about this.

Mr. Nelson expressed that he spends the bulk of his day monitoring COVID-19 data, indicators on the dashboard and staying in constant communication town nurses to discuss impacts to our staff and what makes the most sense in terms of our current learning model. Mr. Nelson expressed that the High School does have the highest number of individuals in quarantine and he expressed that some of those numbers are directly correlated to our athletic teams, which we knew that would be a risk in participating in competitive sports. Mr. Nelson expressed that, yes the administration is continuously talking about what makes the most sense, he expressed that he's happy to invite the Town Nurses to participate in future school committee meetings to answer any questions.

Ms. Kearns expressed that she is interested in having a more in depth conversation about this topic and specifically the metrics on the dashboard and what they mean, specifically when a community is triggering into "red" are we supposed to do something, "what does that mean?". Mr. Nelson explained that the "red" designation has meant various things throughout the pandemic with various guidance, he expressed that the most recent guidance reports that even if you are a "RED" community you should be focusing on in school transmission and how it's impacting a particular school or even a particular class. Mr. Nelson explained that every day the school nurses report the COVID 19 data to the building administration, association and town nurses, that information is evaluated on a daily or as needed and then what the school community is seeing on the weekly dashboard is the cumulative numbers of what has happened all week at all the schools in the district, which correlates directly with the department of public health's weekly report that they issue. Mr. Nelson expressed that they typically issue it on Thursday evening, we then update our dashboard to update that information and then publish it on Fridays. Ms. Kearns asked if the dashboard was an FYI? Mr. Nelson expressed that the dashboard serves two purposes, one is the impact of COVID 19 since the beginning of the school year, but also the trends for that particular week. Ms. McSweeney expressed that if we are hearing from the nurses she would also like to hear from the teaching staff, she expressed that she just wants to make sure they school committee is considering how they are feeling about the data metrics. She expressed that if Dr. Everett or someone else would like to speak and let us know the teachers' perspectives it would be wonderful. Mr. Nelson expressed that he would update the school committee at future meetings. Ms. Kearns asked if we have a trigger number for when we move to remote or a trigger number for when we move to full time, is that correct? Mr. Nelson expressed that is correct, there is not a set trigger point, or a particular metric that would trigger us to move to either remote or full in person, and he expressed that position is supported by the three health departments. Mr. Muse expressed while he knows that administration does look at this on a daily basis and while he is aware that there is not one single trigger he does not want to be numb to the rising number of cases, he expressed they are real and he expressed how important it is for the school committee to stay vigilant.

B. ORPEA Health & Safety Report

Mr. Nelson expressed that it's his understanding that building administration and members of the ORPEA met in accordance with the MOA and that Mr. Devoll will summarize that meeting.

Mr. Devoll reported that they met last week and these were the take aways:

1. They discussed human resources and discussed COVID 19 leave changes effective January 1, 2021 and the need for clarification for staff around leave time and attendance clauses in the MOA.
2. HVAC – acceptable readings in the buildings.
3. Humidity readings are low.
4. CO2 is addressed at a room to room basis, and corrective action is taken when necessary. The ORPEA applauded the work of Mike Bauer and the day staff who is quick to solve HVAC/temperature classroom issues.
5. Mr. Devoll expressed the school committee member McSweeney asked about hearing from the teachers and he expressed that he can speak for the teachers and asked that Dr. Everett to do the same if he wished to. Mr. Devoll expressed that teachers have shared this at staff meetings, they feel that when they are in class and engaged in learning they are in a safe place, he expressed that it's when students are in the hallways and taking their mask breaks that the struggle is real around the 6 feet of social distancing, he expressed that is an on-going struggle at the high school, the reminders of social distancing in the non-learning moments.
6. Mr. Devoll expressed that during this meeting they broke off into two groups to discuss structure learning time for the high school and jr. high school.

C. Program of Studies Revision Approval

Mr. Devoll expressed that this year's program of studies revision does not have many changes, however he did hear the committee loud and clear that we needed to add more foreign language opportunities. He expressed that we have heard from our student body and our school council and our teaching staff that there is an interest in resurrecting our Portuguese offering. Mr. Devoll expressed that we are proposing to bring back Portuguese I, he stated that it would be offered to 9th and 10th graders, who would be looking to have a two-year sequence in one in two, with a vision for the program that we would ultimately hire a staff member down the road to bring us to 4 year Portuguese sequence all the way to level 4. Mr. Devoll expressed that Portuguese would not have a 5th year like Spanish and Latin (in form of AP). Mr. Devoll expressed that Mr. Bernardo is able and qualified to teach it next year to students in grades 9 and 10.

Mr. Devoll expressed that the other change would be to add Architecture 3 to reach a year 3 sequence. Mr. Devoll expressed that college admissions offices are looking for a three-year sequence more and more.

Lastly is just cleaning up of a prerequisite language for Physics, Honors Physics and AP Physics. The prerequisite requires the student to have completed Geometry and be concurrently enrolled in Algebra 2.

Ms. Burke expressed that she had a few questions about the Portuguese program because it looks like it will most likely be a significant investment. Mr. Burke asked if the goal is to hire a Portuguese teacher then will we be removing a Spanish or a Latin teacher since the population of foreign language learners is not growing? Mr. Devoll expressed that he along with the Department Head envision the next hire to be someone dually certified in Portuguese and Spanish and he's been assured that those people exist and available especially in this part of the state. Mr. Devoll expressed that he's not looking for a new position, he expressed that he envisions replacing staffing through possible retirements. Ms. Burke expressed that the school committee has taken away the foreign language requirement, therefore she expressed that it's entirely possible that the number of students

taking a foreign language would decline, therefore we would be spreading the same number of students over an increase number of classes, Ms. Burke asked what will be the minimum number of students needed for a class to run a Portuguese class and what happens if the student takes the first two years and the numbers fall off and there's not enough interest to run the class again in year 3 and 4, what happens to those students? Mr. Devoll expressed that he agrees with Ms. Burke, and he expressed that student requests drive the schedule, Mr. Devoll expressed that he will deploy the staff where the student requests fall. Mr. Devoll stated it would be dejavu, he expressed that 9 years ago we had Portuguese I, and we envisioned Portuguese II for the following year, the first year we had 17 students sign up the second year we only had 7, Mr. Devoll expressed that this is the reason why they are only offering it to grades 9 and 10, in case something changes they can still get two years of a foreign language. Mr. Devoll expressed that it's his humble opinion that this will be popular. Ms. Burke stated that these classes will not have an AP or an Honors option. Ms. Burke asked what would be the minimum number to run a class? Mr. Devoll expressed that as a school we have always gone with 15 to run a course. Ms. Burke asked if there is any way to do a survey of 8th graders to find out how many are interested in Portuguese. Mr. Devoll expressed that the process with 8th graders starts sometime in February. Mr. Devoll expressed that Portuguese I is considered an elective right now, and it's targeting the younger students giving them enough time to pivot to another choice if need be. Mr. Devoll expressed that he does understand Ms. Burke's concern.

Mr. Muse expressed that he doesn't believe there is any correlation between the graduation requirement and the number of students taking the classes, he believes that students take a foreign language for a variety of reasons, secondly, if Mr. Devoll is hiring a dually certified teacher there is no fiscal impact on the budget and we would be offering different opportunities to our student body, Mr. Muse expressed that it seems to make sense to do it. Mr. Devoll expressed that they have had a steady participation in foreign language regardless of the requirement. He expressed that we have 6 foreign language teachers with full caseloads.

Ms. Rood expressed that in the end it is a requirement to have a foreign language when you apply to most colleges, she expressed that she doesn't believe we give clear information on a path to follow, she expressed that she was a big advocate for having more foreign languages, but also making sure that students know what path they need to follow for the 4 years. She expressed she has concerns about having a stand-alone class because it doesn't spell out a path or a goal for the student. She expressed that we have to make clear to students the impact of these opportunities. She expressed that it's important for us to provide opportunities for our students but also make sure they are making the right choices about the paths they are following.

Ms. Burke agreed with Ms. Rood and expressed that those choices should happen earlier that they have been typically happening, either through the community or through the school.

Motion to approve the program of studies revision as presented

MOTION by Mr. Muse

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Smith

ROLL CALL VOTE:

7:1 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeny; yes, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Smith; yes, Rood: no)

D. Student Opportunity Act Approval

Last year you may recall if you were on the school committee Dr. White discussing what is called the Student Opportunity Act or what is called the SOA in short.

The SOA requires each district in the Commonwealth to create and submit a three – year evidence based plan for the Commissioner's review. Originally, this work was tied to the potential of increased funding for public schools. We were anticipating approximately a \$30 increase per

student as a result of the SOA. Not substantial funding for us, but funding that we could bundle with other initiatives or resources already in our schools. The Department created a template for this plan which asks each district to make four “Student Opportunity Commitments” in order to close opportunity and achievement gaps among student subgroups.

These four commitments are:

1. Intentionally focusing on student subgroups
2. Adopt, deepen or continue specific evidence-based programs to close opportunity and achievement gaps
3. Monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups
4. Engage families, particularly those families representing student subgroups

Originally – districts were asked to submit these plans during 2019-2020 school year – but after the arrival of the pandemic this work was paused. Since then, the DESE has asked districts to submit their SOAs this month and seek preliminary approval from their school committees. At this point, districts have not seen an increase in funding to support the SOA.

Our principals have drafted a SOA and will walk you through it briefly. It is important to note that the Districts have not seen additional funding yet to support these efforts and that the DESE is indicating that the districts will be asked to review these plans again at a later date based on the impact of COVID-19.

Mr. Devoll reported that the High School concentrated on chronic absenteeism and dropout rates amongst the high needs subgroup as well as credit recovery. He expressed that they targeted a program called “Winter School” which is similar to “Summer School”, it’s a program that helps students recover credit from a past semester.

Mr. Coellner reported that the Jr. High School looked at the accountability data selected the target group of the economically disadvantaged subgroup and concentrated to close the gaps in absenteeism and also concentrated on improving student engagement. Mr. Coellner reported that they use Panorama SEL Survey as well as Responsive Classroom to address the student engagement gap.

Ms. Burke asked who in the school is charged with tracking these metrics and administering the programs to restore credit and improve attendance and prevent drop-out rates, she asked if that would be the guidance department, or the assistant principal’s office, who spearheads the efforts to make improvements in these areas. Mr. Devoll expressed that graduation rates would be our guidance department and attendance rates would be our assistant principal’s office. Mr. Devoll also expressed that they do have a building based team named Pathways to Success that would oversee this “Winter School” offering. He expressed that a teacher is the Chairperson and Mr. Devoll also attends. Mr. Coellner expressed that administration and guidance work very close to on both drop-out rates and absenteeism.

Mr. Devoll expressed that the School Committee would be approving afterschool staffing for struggling students.

Mr. Coellner expressed that at the Jr. High School they would be approving continued support with the Panorama Survey and continued support to train more teachers in Responsive Classroom.

Ms. Rood wanted to clarify that this is a grant that the school was originally applying for this grant before the pandemic started and then it was put on hold by DESE and now is the grant concentrating on supporting student needs because of the pandemic?

Mr. Nelson expressed that it's not a grant, he explained that it is an act approved by lawmakers that advocates for tackling inequity in how funds are directed to districts across the state by requiring more funds for school systems with higher percentages of low-income students and English language learners, he expressed that for us it would have been approximately \$30 per student, this should have all been wrapped up last year, but then with the pandemic happening DESE put everything on hold, Mr. Nelson expressed that recently Commissioner Riley sent out guidance stating that since this is legislation, let's have districts submit a draft and then told Supts that they would be given another opportunity to revise the document. Mr. Nelson expressed that this is more for a compliance standpoint at this time.

Ms. Kearns expressed that she understands what the principals are presenting now, but she expressed that she struggled with following the document she was presented in the school committee drive, she expressed that she had questions and she actually marked up the report with questions to the principals, she expressed that the report as written she couldn't connect with what was just verbally discussed. Mr. Nelson reported that the Principals have already gone into the report and answered some of the questions, he asked Ms. Kearns if there were specific questions that were still unanswered. Ms. Kearns expressed that some of the questions she had were around connecting the percentage rates to the subject in the paragraph for example "we were talking about a decline in dropout rate and chronic absenteeism and the following we had a statement that the dropout rate amongst high needs students increased by 1.9% from 2017 to 2018". Ms. Kearns expressed she was a little confused by the disposition of those two sentences within the document. She expressed that she had a really tough time following the plan.

Mr. Devoll expressed that it's a hard document to follow because of the fact that it's written for two schools.

Ms. McSweeney expressed that she understands the document and can follow it and it might be because of her grant experience, she expressed that she does have a suggestion to administration to enhance the family engagement portion of the SOA, she believes it's lacking, she believes we need to engage with these families in more ways, not just surveys. Ms. McSweeney suggested maybe virtual workshops, or support groups run by other parents.

Mr. Nelson thanked Ms. McSweeney for her comments and he agreed and he envisioned this to be development more in the future.

Ms. Burke wanted to thank the committee beforehand while she makes the following statement: Ms. Burke made the following statement: *"I would like to thank Mr. Nelson for clarifying the context to Ms. Rood's question because I know remember Dr. White talking about this extensively, and I didn't connect the report to it originally, I will just point out that this is a requirement that the state is making the schools do for something they are not currently funding, so I guess you want to think about how much time you want to spend on it and thank the state again for asking us for more work without sufficient financial support, even though the legislation was passed to fund it. Thank you."*

Mr. Nelson thanked Ms. Burke for her comments and expressed he was glad she was able to put them out in that manner, Mr. Nelson expressed that when the commissioner spoke to the superintendents at large about the SOA he could hear some frustration in his voice, in terms of having to task us to submit these at this time.

Motion to approve the approve Student Opportunity Act as presented
MOTION by Ms. Burke
MOTION Seconded by Mr. Muse
ROLL CALL VOTE:

7:1 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeny; yes, Kearns; abstained, Muse; yes, Smith; abstained, Rood: no)

E. FY22 Draft Budget

Mr. Nelson reported that in recent weeks the Budget Sub Committee has been meeting, Mr. Nelson expressed that includes, Mr. Humphrey, Ms. Rood, Ms. Burke and Mr. Muse and has been working with the administrative team on a draft budget for the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Nelson expressed that early on the sub-committee discussed current fiscal situations locally and statewide and also had discussions about the unknown and how both could impact the ORR 7-12 Budget. Mr. Nelson reported that the committee also had discussions about priorities not only at the building level but also at central office and also hearing directly from the school committees on their perspectives and budget process. Mr. Nelson expressed that from there Mr. Barber was tasked to prepare and build a draft preliminary budget with the help and support of the building and central office administrators based on the conversations at the budget sub-committee meetings. Mr. Nelson asked Asst. Supt. Barber if he had any additional comments and would also ask any members of the Budget Sub-Committee to also make any statements they would like. Mr. Barber added that the committee has been able to spend a significant amount of time vetting through major components relative to our level service budget as well as some of the respective needs that the district has recognized in the normal day to day operations, Mr. Barber expressed that there were three specific items that were above a normal level budget, which would come to an equal value of approximately \$140,000 over a level service budget. Mr. Barber expressed that we also have to be mindful of increases in costs, day to day operational costs, contractual services and other expenses are in the budget due to mandates and requirements. Ms. Burke expressed that this is her first official year on the budget sub-committee, she expressed that in past years she has attended but was not a voting member of the sub-committee. Ms. Burke expressed that it's always a challenging process because of the way that Massachusetts funds their school and the way that our towns are set up, it makes it incredibly challenging, because just to maintain the status quo without any improvements it pretty much eats up any amount we would be allocated. Ms. Burke expressed that the fact of the matter is if you are not constantly pushing and trying to improve your schools you are falling behind, because other areas are, she expressed that she's often heard people on this committee that we are here to provide the best educational opportunities for our students and families, but she believes we are here to represent all tax payers and that's how she's approaching her role on the budget sub-committee. Ms. Burke expressed that in a town where the majority of the tax base is residential where we are not an economic center, there's a few strong things driving people to live in our communities and one of the top ones is the quality of the education in these towns. She expressed it's incumbent on us to protect that investment by constantly looking at our schools and seeing where the needs are and working to improve those and not just to maintain the status quo. She expressed that the budget sub-committee has been having these challenging conversations and listening to the building administrators who brought forward the needs that they felt were critical for their buildings and we as school committee members have to continuously advocate and fight for what our administrators say they need. She expressed that the items put forward are reasonable and the committee will continue to look and evaluate them before a final budget is put forward. Mr. Muse expressed that the next step is to work on finalizing the budget. Mr. Muse expressed that it's important to put forward a budget to the full committee that the committee will be able to defend at Town meetings. Mr. Muse expressed that these are very trying times in terms of funding, he expressed it will be a difficult year, he expressed he has been a school committee member for a long time and he agrees with Ms. Burke that we are here to consider all of the tax payers but in the same token advocate for the students and the school. Mr. Muse expressed he is prepared to continue to work and hear more information. Mr. Humphrey expressed that the school committee and the sub-committee has to stand up and help Mr. Nelson and Central Office work through this budget, Mr. Humphrey expressed he realizes it's a tough year with COVID, but we still have to protect the needs of our students. Mr. Humphrey expressed that we have to push for what we really need to continue to have strong schools. Mr. Humphrey expressed

that the sub-committee will continue to report back. Ms. Rood expressed that she will be at the next meeting and she echoed what Ms. Burke said and expressed that if we don't tell the towns what we need they will never know what we need. She expressed that it's important for people to know that those are the needs that exist. Mr. Nelson expressed that the only other thing he would add is that there are still a few big pieces that we don't know about, such as the Governor's budget and chapter 70 funding and the impact on some of the enrollment trends that have occurred this year, he believes it's important to mention that as well, and important for the school committee members to be aware of that as we move forward with the budget process.

F. Structured Time on Learning Discussion

Mr. Nelson reported the DESE adopted new emergency regulations on Structured Time on Learning specifically in light that most districts are operating in remote or hybrid learning models. Mr. Nelson has asked that Mr. Davidson the Director of Student Services to unpack those regulations so that we understand where the district stands.

Mr. Davidson presented the Structured Time on Learning presentation. Please see attachment A.

Mr. Devoll thanked the association and the teacher for their work, Mr. Devoll also thanked the reopening committee, he expressed that the committee did a great job creating a year with all the learning minutes needed in the new regulation. He expressed that just be slightly shortening the passing time from 8 minutes to 5 minutes and gained the 3 minutes of instruction that we needed. Mr. Devoll expressed that his team has looked at bringing in kids on a remote Monday but that actually decreases the instructional learning time, because on Mondays both cohorts get a full day of learning. Mr. Coellner echoed Mr. Devoll's sentiment, it was a great sigh of relief when he started he started to calculate the numbers and realized the JHS was beyond the 35 hours. Mr. Coellner explained that at the JHS they gain time because they don't have the logistics of the movement, Mr. Coellner reported that they are at 38 hours and 20 minutes.

Mr. Nelson also asked Mr. Devoll and Mr. Coellner to report on the remote learning models.

Mr. Coellner reported that the Jr. High School has two versions of remote learning, he explained that one of the team go through the cycle as if they were in the building and the other team that has been operating totally separate since the beginning of the school year, he reported that he receives positive reports about the both models on a regular basis and he gives the teachers a lot of credit for handling both versions as well as they all do. He expressed that one teacher is teaching both 7th grade and accelerated Math and 7th grade and accelerated Science and seems to do it seamlessly. Mr. Coellner expressed that he receives great reports from parents and he's very pleased with how it's going.

Mr. Devoll expressed that the high school remote learning plan has every student login into their class through zoom and then after that it sets them on a self-paced course for the 85 minutes of each class. He reported that he met with Remote students today as they approach the end of the 1st semester, he expressed that some students are taking three different remote classes, some are full year, some are half year and some are A&B which splits into two parts, he expressed that he met with the remote learning students just to go over timelines and make sure they understood the courses and the timelines associated with them and also let them know of new electives available to them.

Ms. Burke expressed that when these new regulations came out she reviewed them and she couldn't figure out we as a school needed to do differently, she expressed she's excited to hear that we don't have to do anything different. She expressed that she wanted to applaud the reopening committees,

she reported that she was an adhoc member at the High School because she couldn't make all the committees, she expressed that the committees worked extremely hard to make sure that we met the guide post that the committee had set from the very beginning that were important to stand by. She expressed that every time a decision was made they would go back to these fundamental principles, she expressed she doesn't remember them all, but she remembers that one of the was the value of interaction between students and teachers and that needed to be incorporated in any way possible, and the hybrid model was designed so that students had as many touch points with teachers as possible and that they weren't going for two or three days without talking with a teacher and that was a critical element, she expressed that another element was that "school was really school, academic rigor was going to be part of your day". She expressed that we can always work to improve the hybrid-out elements because that's new to all of us. She expressed that another component that was important to the committee was to make sure it was equitable for all students and flexible as accommodations were needed. She expressed that it was the student centered approach that came from all our stakeholders that created such a strong program. She expressed that most initiatives in this school community are approached in that manner and she expressed that it's a great community to be part of.

Ms. McSweeney expressed that the work being done at the schools is amazing and it matters not only to our kids but also to our community, she expressed that she is aw struck by the passion and persistence, she thanked everyone for being there every day and making as good as you can for our kids.

VI. New Business

C. Business

1. Financial Report

Mr. Barber reported that as of December 31, 2020 the Old Rochester Regional School District currently has \$2,586,736 available of the general funds appropriated to the FY21 Fiscal Year. Mr. Barber reported that the report given to school committee which is by department identifies how the funds are currently being encumbered and expended. Mr. Barber explained that this report also recognizes that of the \$19,702,211 appropriated to the district, 75.56% is directly assigned and is spent/encumbered to student instruction.

Mr. Barber also reported on food service and facilities departments.

Ms. Burke asked if families have to fill out paperwork or qualify to pick up a meal and is there any cost if you don't qualify? Mr. Barber reported that meals have been identified as "free meals" until June 30, 2021, therefore any family can pick up a meal. Mr. Barber expressed that all you have to do is go to the website and fill out a registration, any child from the ages of 0 to 21 can register.

Ms. Smith wanted to thank the food service workers and Jill Henesey she expressed they are doing a wonderful job. She expressed that the meals are wonderful and she encourage all the families to take part in it.

Ms. Kearns thanked Mr. Barber for sending the reminders to parents.

SCHOOL COUNCIL: Mr. Gonet reported that himself and Ms. Lord met with the Regional Student Council and he reported that they had a similar conversation about adding more foreign language opportunities in schools, Mr. Gonet expressed he will go back to that committee and explain how ORR was able to add Portuguese for next year.

Ms. Rood congratulated Mr. Gonet for being nominated for All State Chorus.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT- Mr. Humphrey expressed that in spite of this year being a difficult year, he believes it’s been one of the smoothest years he can remember of all the years he’s been on school committee. Mr. Humphrey expressed that Mr. Nelson and his staff are doing a great job, he expressed that he trusts 100% that when he meets with the Board of Health, the nurses, the association members you are well prepared to make any kind of decision and bring that to the school committee. Mr. Humphrey wanted Mr. Nelson to know that from my position I believe you have done a phenomenal job, you have a great team and you’re doing a great job.

Mr. Nelson thanked Mr. Humphrey for his kind words and expressed while it sounds cliché it is a “team effort”, my colleagues at Central Office, the Building Administrators, the teachers, the staff members everyone, it’s truly been remarkable how everyone has done their part to make sure everything is running smoothly.

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS REPORT -

Mr. Nelson expressed his condolences to Mr. Gene Jones for the loss of his wife Peggy, he expressed that Gene and Peggy were extremely close and Peggy fought courageously for a very long time, he expressed that our hearts and our thoughts are with Gene and his family at this difficult time.

Mr. Nelson also reported that he did hear back from DESE on an update on the Regional Agreement, he expressed that he has sent the revised agreement to Mr. Humphrey, Ms. Burke, Ms. Rood and the districts legal team for review. Mr. Nelson also shared that the flu shot requirement has been recently suspended by the Department of Public Health, they are recommending that school districts focus on vaccination effort at this time.

Dr. Pearson Campbell reported as follows:

On January 11th, the Office of Teaching and Learning organized a district-wide professional development. Educators met either as district grade level or content areas. Educators were able to choose between meeting face-to-face or via Zoom. The vision for this professional development allowed educators to collaborate with each other to support planning, common assessments, and implementation. I would like to thank the educators for being zoom hosts, which allowed us to have 10 or more meetings using the Zoom platform at the same time, while I was in the background ensuring everyone was able to participate in the various meetings. We also had a keynote speaker Mr. Bronke, who provided us with an engaging interactive professional development that focused on project based learning. As part of the professional development day, we had teacher leaders provided modules to build the capacity of skills using interactive learning such as pear deck, yoga in the classroom, and using various interactive technology. My office received great feedback from the teachers and mentioned they were excited to have choices to choose from as well as the opportunity to collaborate with one another. We are beginning to plan for the 21/22 school year.

We had our first Instructional Council, which brings principals, teachers, and stakeholders together. We acknowledge the work and preparation for the opening of this school year and the importance of examining instruction will be our focus, along with building capacity because of the hybrid in, hybrid out and remote learning. Next week, my office will be inviting educators throughout the district for a grade-level professional learning community to examine curriculum resources to prepare for the 21/22 school year. We as a community will be thoughtful and methodical to support educators and teachers in being reflective of the shift that has occurred this year to move forward. My office of teaching and learning understands the importance of reviewing the history, acknowledging our accomplishments and will prepare for the future to ensure we continue to provide 21st Century Learning, Social-Emotional, and Global Awareness to prepare for the shift for the elementary and secondary level. Our goal is to create a district-wide plan to support literacy, technology integration, and social-emotional/wellness. We are moving forward together preparing students to be successful for years to come!

Mr. Davidson reported that his office is working with a team from the Jr. High School and Senior High School that's working with the department of education working on "my career and academic plan" it's called MYCAP, Mr. Davidson explained that they are in the beginning stages of this. Mr. Davidson explained the "MYCAP" is a student-driven, multi-year process that intentionally guides students in the development of an authentic post-secondary plan for success after high school. Through the *process*, each student, with guidance and support from a caring adult in the school and with input from parents and other mentors, gains the knowledge, skills and experiences in the personal social, career development and academic achievement domains necessary for post-secondary success. As an *instrument*, the MYCAP tool captures and documents the experiences and learning at each grade level within each domain. The instrument may also act as an ePortfolio capturing artifacts that demonstrate success. Mr. Davidson expressed that this program will tie into the SOA and he will bring updates back to the group.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT-

High School: Mr. Devoll expressed he had two quick reminders: On Tuesday, January 26th the high school will be administering the PSAT's and therefore will have a hybrid out day for all students who are not taking the PSAT's. Mr. Devoll explained that is the only day the test can be administered, he explained that it's a nationwide test date. He explained that the only students who will be physically in school that day will be the 200 test takers, all others will be having a hybrid out day. Mr. Devoll reported that he will be bringing to the next school committee meeting senior dates, such as the last day of school for seniors, awards night, graduation date etc., he explained that in a normal school year these events would just be planned, however this year he would feel better if the school committee had this information first hand.

Jr. High School: Mr. Coellner expressed that he's been working with his School Council. Mr. Coellner also talked about **Project 351:** Three hundred and fifty-one eighth grade students are selected to be ambassadors, one for each city and town in the commonwealth. Project 351 is a 12-month program of service learning, leadership development, and civic engagement. When selecting our ambassadors for Marion, Mattapoissett and Rochester, we look for unsung heroes who demonstrate an exemplary ethic of service and the values of kindness, compassion, humility, and gratitude. The Project 351 Ambassadors this year are: Caitlin O'Donnell of Mattapoissett, Nicolas Huaco of Marion, and Nolan Bushnell of Rochester. Mr. Coellner also reported that the Virtual Spelling Bee will be held the week of 1/25. Mr. McEvoy and Mr. Caldarone are organizing the bee. Top students will have the opportunity to continue on to the state and national levels.

B. Committee Reports

- 1. SMEC –** Ms. Tseki was absent but Ms. Smith reported that SMEC did meet this evening and discussed their deficit and possibly accessing their extra funds, she explained that collaborative are treated a little different than a school or a private business so they don't receive the same funding, so they are spending a lot on PPE but they are not being reimbursed.
- 2. Local School Committee-** Ms. Smith reported that Marion met 1/19 and looked at the reopening plan for K-2, she expressed they will meet again in about two weeks. Ms. Rood reported that Rochester School Committee meets on the 21st. Mr. Muse reported that the K-2 full in person plan started this week. Mr. Muse also reported that Principal Bowman will be out on a short medical leave until February vacation.
- 3. Tri-Town Foundation-** NONE
- 4. Budget Sub-Committee-** Discussed during the FY22 Draft Budget.
- 5. Facilities Committee -** NONE
- 6. Communication Committee-** Mr. Pires reported that they had some correspondence and are planning a future meeting to possibly talk about repurposing the communications committee.
- 7. District Agreement Committee-** Mr. Nelson reported earlier in the meeting.

8. Anti-Racism Committee- Ms. Kearns expressed that they have met several times since the last district meeting, she expressed they have been working on two tracks, a list of action items that we will be working on implementing and development some anti-racism activities in the schools in terms of hiring and curriculum review, and the other piece is a survey regarding school culture that will be administered to students, she expressed they are working on the finer details of that. Ms. Kearns reported that Dr. Pearson Campbell and Mr. Davidson submitted a grant that was approved to help fund some of the activities and trainings that we are working on. She reported that the next meeting is February 10th. Mr. Pires also reported that they met with a facilitator by the name of Michelle who can help us get structure and move forward, he expressed she had a lot to offer in her presentation.

Humphrey reviewed future timeline and stated the next meeting is scheduled for March 2nd at 6:30 p.m. and the next Joint School Committee is scheduled for March 11, 2021.

OPEN COMMENTS: Ms. McSweeney wanted to let everyone know that the YWCA is offering an Anti-Racism Training for all school committees, it's happening this Sunday from 4 to 6. She expressed that some members are signed up and she would encourage others to sign up if they could.

MOTION: by Mr. Muse at 8:43 p.m. to enter executive session for the purpose of #7 to comply with comply with the provisions of any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

SECOND: by Ms. Smith

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION: by Ms. McSweeney to go come out of Executive Session at 8:48 p.m. and come out only to adjourn

SECOND: by Mr. Muse

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Motion to adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Smith

MOTION Seconded by Mr. Muse

Submitted by Diana Russo